

Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council Summary of FY 2024 Budget Request

The Federal Permitting Improvement Steering Council (Permitting Council) requests \$10 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2024, to remain available until expended, to fund the operations of the Permitting Council, including salaries and expenses for 32 full-time equivalents (FTE) in the Permitting Council Office of the Executive Director (OED), to administer and implement the provisions of Title 41 of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST-41) and to fund transfers to other Federal agencies and state, tribal, and local governments to facilitate timely and efficient environmental reviews and authorizations for FAST-41 projects.

This funding, coupled with other appropriations provided in the Infrastructure Investments and Jobs Appropriations Act (Division J of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA)) and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA), gives the Permitting Council the resources necessary to implement the requirements of FAST-41 and advance Congress' and the Administration's commitment to increase investment in U.S. infrastructure, spur economic growth, unlock the full potential of the American workforce, and right historical wrongs in disadvantaged communities.

FY 2022 - FY 2024 Comparison of Appropriations
(Amounts in thousands of dollars)

Budget Account	FY 2022 Actual	FY 2023 Enacted	FY 2024 Request	FY 2023 to FY 2024 Change
Salaries & Expenses				
Appropriations, annual	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000	+\$10,000
Appropriations, IIJA	650	650	650	0
Appropriations, IRA	0	350,000	0	-350,000
Total	\$10,650	\$350,650	\$10,650	-\$340,000
Positions	21	30	33	+3
FTE	15	19	32	+13

The Permitting Council's annual appropriations request for FY 2024 funds the operations of the Permitting Council, including the salaries and benefits of the staff and contractors of the OED, while many of its permitting support initiatives are funded by the appropriations provided by the IIJA and the IRA.

Key initiatives included in the FY 2024 budget request include the following:

- Expanding Participation in the FAST-41 Program** — Recognizing that reviewing and permitting infrastructure projects can involve all levels of government and civil society, the Permitting Council continues to prioritize engagement with stakeholders to raise awareness of and expand participation in the FAST-41 program. Outreach to potential covered project sponsors is essential to increasing the number of FAST-41 covered projects, including potential tribal project sponsors who may still be unaware that the IIJA granted them increased access to FAST-41 benefits.
- Supporting the Administration's Permitting Action Plan** — The Administration's Permitting Action Plan is a critical step toward ensuring that infrastructure projects are delivered on time, on task, and on budget without unnecessary bureaucratic delay. This is especially important as historic investments are made to expand high-speed internet, grow clean transportation, and produce more clean energy with offshore wind, onshore renewable energy, and critical minerals. The Permitting Council will play a key role in ensuring that Federal environmental reviews and permitting processes are effective, efficient, and transparent, and are guided by best practices to achieve timely and efficient authorizations for FAST-41 projects.
- Building Funding Transfer Capability to Address Federal Agency Environmental Review and Authorization Needs** — Timely and efficient environmental reviews and authorizations are contingent on a

resourced workforce of sufficiently skilled professionals throughout all levels of government. With the IJJA authorization to transfer ERIF funds to Federal agencies and state, local, and tribal governments, the Executive Director will bolster the funding transfer capabilities of the Permitting Council OED to distribute the additional resources provided through the IRA to facilitate timely and efficient reviews of FAST-41 projects.

- **Expand Tribal Involvement in Federal Environmental Review and Authorization Processes** — The Permitting Council will lead the implementation of important new policies to expand tribal involvement in Federal environmental review and permitting processes by: continuing outreach to potential tribal project sponsors about the benefits of and ease of access to FAST-41 coverage; expanding the funding transfer program to transfer funds directly to tribes to facilitate timely and efficient environmental reviews and authorizations of FAST-41 projects; refining existing and identifying new best practices to improve agencies' engagement with tribal governments to identify potential impacts to natural, archeological, and cultural resources from covered infrastructure projects; and improving tribal capacity to participate in environmental review and permitting of FAST-41 covered projects, increasing access to available information about the Permitting Council and the FAST-41 program, and providing tools to help agencies achieve and maintain regular, meaningful consultation with affected or interested tribal nations.
- **Supporting the Role of the Permitting Council as a Center of Permitting Excellence** — The Permitting Council provides transparency, accountability, predictability, and capacity building services to support the Federal environmental review and authorization process, including: (i) creating project management tools to facilitate more predictable and cooperative interagency work on infrastructure review and permitting; (ii) facilitating interagency rotational opportunities to increase familiarity of each agency's staff with the procedures and culture of other agencies with which they cooperate; (iii) helping agencies more effectively track their infrastructure project permitting workflows and increase governmentwide compatibility of permitting-related information; (iv) facilitating information exchanges and trainings between industry and Federal permitting agencies; and (v) providing innovative contracting and hiring vehicles to ensure that agencies can access the resources and talent they need for efficient and effective environmental reviews and authorizations for infrastructure projects.

About the Permitting Council

Established in 2015 by FAST-41, the Permitting Council is a unique Federal agency charged with improving the transparency and predictability of the Federal environmental review and authorization process for certain critical infrastructure projects. The Permitting Council is comprised of the Permitting Council Executive Director, who serves as the Council Chair; 13 Federal agency Council members (including deputy secretary-level designees of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Army, Commerce, Interior, Energy, Transportation, Defense, Homeland Security, and Housing and Urban Development, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chairs of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation); and the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality and the Director of the Office of Management and Budget.

The Permitting Council coordinates Federal environmental reviews and authorizations for projects that seek and qualify for FAST-41 coverage. FAST-41 covered projects are entitled to comprehensive permitting timetables and transparent, collaborative management of those timetables on the Federal Permitting Dashboard. FAST-41 covered projects may be in the renewable or conventional energy production, electricity transmission, surface transportation, aviation, ports and waterways, water resource, broadband, pipelines, manufacturing, mining, carbon capture, semiconductors, artificial intelligence and machine learning, high-performance computing and advanced computer hardware and software, quantum information science and technology, data storage and data management, and cybersecurity sectors.