



OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

State Budget Office

One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5890

Office: (401) 222-6300

State Fiscal Note for Bill Number:

2026-H 7074

Supplemental Seeding (15 acres including initial mow): \$263,062

Targeted Herbicide Application (101 acres at \$94 an acre): \$9,494

Conservation Mowing Savings: (\$26,113)

Net cost: \$246,443

The large cost of supplemental seeding is related to fixed application costs in existing landscaping contracts. RIDOT currently pays around \$16,940 per acre for seeding, which includes traditional grass seed, site preparation, watering, and one mow. The pollinator seed mix is roughly 1.5 times more expensive, yielding a cost of \$17,537.50 per acre. The change in seed mix results in an increase of \$597.50 per acre.

The cost estimate for supplemental seeding was reached by multiplying:

$$\$17,537.50 * 15 \text{ acres} = \$263,062.50$$

Conservation mowing savings were projected by RIDOT. Mowing costs roughly \$262 per acre per mow. For traditional grass, mowing is conducted twice a year. Conservation mowing only requires one mow, generally in the fall.

In CY 2026, RIDOT plans to expand the "Pollinator Conservation Program" and conservation mowing to sections of I-95, south of the I-295 interchange, and Route 4. This would create a continuous pollinator pathway with the existing adopted acres along the I-295 corridor.

The future fiscal impact of this bill is indeterminate. RIDOT plans to employ pollinator friendly planting and mowing strategies on more state roadways in the future. However, this process depends on site selection and analysis of current planting's effectiveness. RIDOT has no plan to fully replace conventional grass seeding practices, especially when it would not prove effective in fostering pollinator friendly habitats.

Comments on Sources of Funds:

Supplemental seeding and maintenance are typically financed through the Intermodal Surface Transportation Fund. However, federal funds may be available on a matching basis depending on the scope and location of the project.



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Date of State Budget Office Approval: Monday, April 13, 2026

Date Requested: Monday, February 9, 2026

Date Due: Thursday, February 19, 2026

<i>Impact on Expenditures</i>	<i>Impact on Revenues</i>
FY 2026 Indeterminate	FY 2026 N/A
FY 2027 Indeterminate	FY 2027 N/A
FY 2028 Indeterminate	FY 2028 N/A

Explanation by State Budget Office:

This act would require the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) to plant pollinator friendly native species of trees, shrubs, grasses and plants within limits of a roadway, when appropriate.

RIDOT would seek input from certified professionals to determine the types of plants and locations that would most benefit pollinators. Also, all activities performed by RIDOT would comply with § 23 U.S.C. 332.

This act would take effect upon passage.

Summary of Facts and Assumptions:

This bill is anticipated to be passed in late June 2026, for this reason no FY 2026 fiscal impact is reported.

In anticipation of the creation of a broader pollinator planting program, RIDOT worked with the University of Rhode Island to update the roadside pollinator seed mix with native grass and flowers and develop installation best practices.

In CY 2025, RIDOT launched the "Pollinator Conservation Program," which began along the I-295 corridor. This included conservation mowing and planned supplemental seeding and targeted herbicide application. Conservation mowing is conducted once per year, except for areas immediately adjacent to the roadway or construction areas. RIDOT plans to enroll the I-295 corridor into the Monarch Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA). The Monarch CCAA prescribes certain monitoring and corrective actions for adopted acres. These actions would be in lieu of current piecemeal planting which is conducted through individual construction projects. There will be 101 "adopted acres" on the I-295 corridor.

Conservation mowing is anticipated to save RIDOT around 50% of mowing costs on adopted acres. However, these adopted acres will also require supplemental seeding (around 15% of adopted acreage per year) and targeted herbicide applications. For the I-295 corridor "Pollinator Conservation Program," the annual costs are as follows:



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Summary of Fiscal Impact:

The fiscal impact is as follows:

FY 2026: N/A

FY 2027: Indeterminate

FY 2028: Indeterminate

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Fiscal Advisor Signature: _____

