

ATC: Continues funding for planting and pollinator habitat projects

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PEWAUKEE, Wis. – Recognizing that trees and vegetation are among the features that make communities special places for residents and visitors, American Transmission Co. will continue funding for planting projects in communities in its service area through its Community Planting and Pollinator Habitat programs.

“While we can’t allow trees or tall-growing vegetation in our rights-of-way, we do understand that they are an important part of the landscape,” said ATC Vegetation Management Manager Michelle Stokes. “These programs enable us to encourage and support communities to plant trees and vegetation that will beautify communities in a way that doesn’t compromise the safety and reliability of the electric transmission system.”

The Community Planting Program provides financial support to eligible cities, villages, towns, counties and tribes in ATC’s service area for planting projects on public property, outside transmission line rights-of-way. Program funds can be used to plant trees and other tall-growing vegetation outside the transmission line rights-of-way. ATC has awarded more than 240 communities with funds totaling over \$425,000 since 2013.

The Pollinator Habitat Program provides funding for site preparation; purchasing seed, plugs or plants; labor and installation; or other activities to establish quality pollinator habitat. Unlike the Community Planting Program, the Pollinator Habitat Program promotes planting low-growing vegetation within a transmission line right-of-way.

“Part of the reason for the recent decline in pollinator populations is due to loss of habitat,” said ATC Environmental Project Manager Johanna Sievewright. “The

Pollinator Habitat Program promotes vegetation that is both compatible with our vegetation management practices and it provides habitat for pollinators, which use the utility corridor as a flight path.”

To qualify for either program, applicants must commit that all current and future planting plans and urban forestry activities near high-voltage electric transmission lines will comply with ATC’s maintenance standards. Cities, villages, towns, counties and tribes within ATC’s service area are eligible to apply for funding through the Community Planting Program. The Pollinator Habitat Program also is open to cities, villages, towns, counties and tribes within ATC’s service area, as well as to entities that allow public access to ATC rights-of-way (e.g. nature preserves, non-profits or public land managers).

Applications for the [Community Planting Program](#) and [Pollinator Habitat Program](#) are accepted July 1 through Sept. 30, and award recipients will be selected and notified by the end of the calendar year. Awards for both programs range from \$100 to \$5,000. Additional information can be found at atc-GrowSmart.com.