

Native Wildflower Enhancements Along the State Byways

Coordinate all planting projects with Kansas Department of Transportation (KDOT) staff.

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Permit

A permit will be needed to do work in the KDOT right-of-way (ROW). Groups will need to create an account to use the KDOT Utility Permit System (KUPS), no fees are required for the permit. The online permit will notify the KDOT area office of the activities that will be occurring in the ROW. Applicants will work with KDOT staff to complete the permit process.

<https://www.ksdot.gov/doing-business/permits/kdot-utility-permit-system-kups>

Planting Locations

Planting will be within KDOT maintained right of way. Select areas that are further than 15ft from the highway shoulder and inside the KDOT right of way fencing. KDOT mows a 15ft safety strip along the shoulder multiple times a season which would limit the potential growth of the native wildflowers. Select areas that will be visible to the traveling public. It might be helpful to install marker tape on ROW fencing or record GPS location data to identify planting areas. This data would be helpful in the future to measure the success of the planting. Always follow KDOT safety requirements while working along roadways.

(Note: Divided highways use a 30ft wide shoulder instead of 15ft)

KDOT Seed Mixes

KDOT has developed specific seed mixes that are used in roadside plantings. Mixes have been developed with the cooperation with various state agencies and stakeholder groups for the different regions of the state. KDOT has two wildflower mixes. Mix #1 is used in Central and Eastern Kansas and Mix #2 is used in Western Kansas (Figure 1,2, & 3). These mixes can serve as a guide to develop a seeding plan for your byway project. There are a wide range of species not included in the KDOT mixes that can be used for these projects.

Purchased Seed

1. Purchase seed from regional suppliers that specialize in native plants.
2. Avoid generic mixes sold on-line or retail stores that might contain non-native species.

Planting

Sow seeds in late fall or early winter. November 15th through April 1st is the typical fall/winter period to get germination the following growing season.

Proper soil seed contact is important for planting. When seeding, lightly rake the area to clear debris and allow seeds better contact with the soil. Most native wildflower seeds just need to be planted in the top ¼ inch of the surface.

Native wildflowers might take 2-5 years to reach full maturity and flower.

Noxious Weeds and “Hitchhikers”

Check the Kansas Department of Agriculture list of noxious weeds to be familiar with the various species found around the state. Most seed mixes from the region will not contain noxious weeds but always check the labels of any purchased seed mixes to confirm compliance.

When moving from location to location along the roadway be sure to remove any “hitchhiker” seeds from clothing before moving on to a new location. These plants are not typically noxious weeds but are considered nuisance species that can out compete with the native flowers and become a dominant species for an area. (Examples: Southern Sandbur, Common Cocklebur, Tick Trefoil, Burdock, Beggar’s Ticks/Spanish Needles, Puncture Vine/Goathead, Buffalobur, Cheatgrass, Hedge Parsley, Stickights)

Websites

The following websites and apps are provided as a courtesy to develop roadside wildflower projects and are not specifically endorsed by KDOT.

Plant Identification

Kansas Wildflowers and Grasses: <https://kswildflower.org/>

Kansas Native Plant Society: <https://www.kansasnativeplantsociety.org/>

USDA Plant Database: <https://plants.usda.gov/java>

K State Extension: <https://www.ksre.k-state.edu/>

Deep Roots (plant information): <https://deeproots.org/find-plants/>

Pl@ntNet (Identification site and phone app): <https://identify.plantnet.org/>



Wildflower Search: <https://wildflowersearch.org/>

Seed Dealers

Kansas Department of Agriculture Approved Seed Dealer:

<https://portal.kda.ks.gov/plant/public/lookup/dealers>

Sharp Brothers Seed Company: <https://sharpseed.com/>

The Buffalo Seed Company: <https://www.thebuffaloseedcompany.com/>

Pheasants Forever: <https://www.pfhabitatstore.com/store/items/KS/>

Star Seed: <https://starseed.nativeseedgroup.com/>

Taylor Creek: <https://www.taylorcreeknurseries.com/product-category/mixed/conservation-mixes/kansas-conservation-mixes/>

Feyh Farm Seed: <https://feyhfarmseed.com/>

Noxious Weeds

Kansas Department of Agriculture: <https://www.agriculture.ks.gov/divisions-programs/plant-protection-weed-control/noxious-weed-control-program>

Apps



Kansas Wildflowers

About this app



Seek by iNaturalist

About this app



PlantNet Plant Identification

About this app



Figures

Figure 1. Seed Mix #1- Used in Central and Eastern Kansas

NATIVE WILDFLOWER MIX 1	
PLS Rate: lbs/ac	Name
0.3	Butterfly Milkweed
0.3	Common Milkweed
0.3	Black Eyed Susan
0.5	Blanket Flower
0.5	False Sunflower
0.5	Lance-Leaf Coreopsis
0.2	Maximilian Sunflower
0.1	New England Aster
0.2	Pinnate Prairie Coneflower
0.2	Plains Coreopsis
0.6	Purple Coneflower
0.3	Upright Prairie Coneflower
0.3	Lemon Mint
0.2	Pitcher Sage
0.2	Wild Bergamot
1	Illinois Bundleflower
0.2	Common Evening Primrose
0.1	Hoary Verbena
0.8	Purple Prairie Cover
0.3	Roundhead Lespedeza
3	Showy Partridge Pea
0.2	White Prairie Clover
10.3	Total (lb)



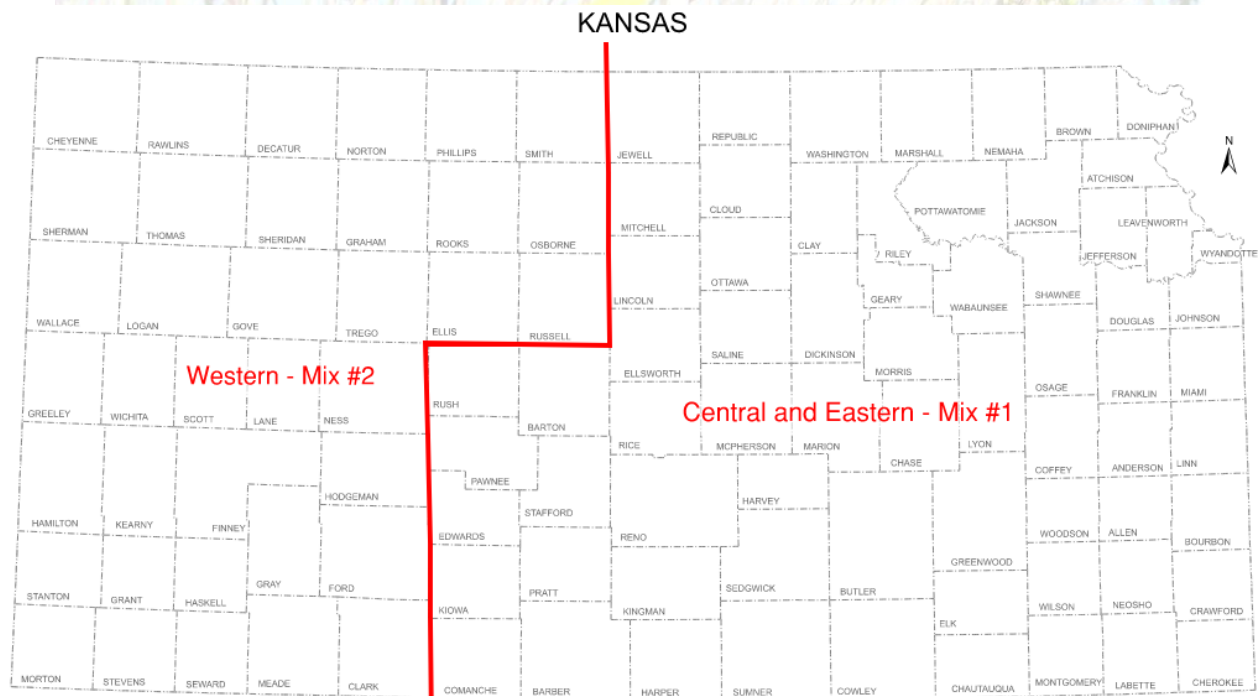


Figure 2. Seed Mix #2- Used in Western Kansas

NATIVE WILDFLOWER MIX 2	
PLS Rate: lbs/ac	Name
0.3	Butterfly Milkweed
0.3	Black Eyed Susan
0.5	Black Sampson Coneflower
1	Blanket Flower
0.2	Maximilian Sunflower
0.2	Plains Coreopsis
0.2	Upright Prairie Coneflower
0.2	Western Yarrow
0.3	Lemon Mint
0.4	Pitcher Sage
1.5	Illinois Bundleflower
0.2	Common Evening Primrose
1	Blue Wild Indigo
0.4	Leadplant
0.4	Purple Prairie Clover
0.3	White Prairie Clover
7.4	Total (lb)



Figure 3. Map of KDOT Wildflower Mix Use



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