Background: FWS is required to submit annually, through the Department of Interior, a report of its Federal Real Property Inventory (RPI), to include roads and parking lots. That report itemizes elements of each asset, to include its location, composition and condition. Each year, station managers are required to certify that their RPI is accurate, and, over the course of five years, regional offices validate the inventory at each station through a Comprehensive Condition Assessment (CCA) performed by the regional Facilities Management Coordinator (FMC), as well as other specialized inspections for specific asset types. One of those specialized inspections is of roads and parking lots. Like a CCA, such an inspection may also result in deferred maintenance (DM) work orders. These DM work orders may be funded through the FWS Transportation program or through the typical DM process. Transportation program funded projects are not required to be DM, and are not limited to the current value of the asset, but funding is restricted to assets designated as public. The Federal Land Transportation Program (FLTP), through which the Service’s Transportation Program is funded, also allows projects that improve visitor access to stations, especially where safety issues exist.

Overview: FWS has a contract agreement with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for condition assessments of both public and administrative roads and parking lots owned and/or managed by FWS. As part of this process, your Regional Transportation Coordinator (RTC) will contact you to participate in a WebEx to review your station’s inventory. This pre-inspection review is referred to as the “data reconciliation” portion of the “Route ID process.” This review and update is imperative, as FHWA inspectors will only inspect the list of roads and parking lots that your RTC provides to them. FHWA inspectors are unable to make on-the-ground corrections to address inventory discrepancies they may discover during an inspection. Data reconciliation is important for both your asset management reporting and potential project funding. The Route ID will not be effective without knowledgeable station input. Once the RTC institutes the changes you identify and has updated your inventory, FHWA will validate the data, updating their version of your inventory, and will establish a date with you for their on-site inspection.

It is a requirement that someone knowledgeable of your station’s roads, and any maintenance or safety issues that exist, accompany the FHWA inspector during the assessment. It is highly recommended that you, as the station manager, attend both the in-briefing and out-briefing with the FHWA inspector.

Inspection work orders are documented by asset number in the Service Maintenance and Management (SAMMS) database. Inspections that cite at least $15,000 in repairs will result in follow-up DM work orders.

The following flow chart illustrates the events in this process. Colored boxes refer to actions or responsibilities of the RTC, the station manager, and the FHWA inspector.
**You can find more information on inventory additions and deletions, as well as required forms, in:**

SM-04, “Acquisition of New Real Property – Required Documentation” and
SM-05, “Disposal Process for Real Property Assets”
located at: [http://www.fws.gov/refuges/facilities/manuals-policies.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/facilities/manuals-policies.html)
How Are Roads and Parking Lots Classified?

Asset Type
The Department of Interior recognizes three asset types for roads: paved, gravel, or native surface (dirt). Conversely, there is only one DOI asset type for parking lots. The surface type of a parking lot is described within its individual data record.

Public or Admin
The first major delineator in the classification of roads or parking lots is whether they are open for use by visitors to drive on (walking isn’t enough) the majority of the year. This will determine whether the road or parking lot is classified as “public” or “administrative.” Only public roads and parking lots are eligible for Transportation Program funding. All roads and parking lots are eligible for deferred maintenance funding, although Tier 3 only in situations approved and requested by regional management.

Functional Classification
The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) utilizes the following functional classifications for FWS roads:

- Class I – Principal Public Road: the main access, main auto tour route, or main thoroughfare for visitors. Must be accessible by two-wheel drive vehicles.
- Class II – Public Connector Road: Provides circulation within the station to areas of interest for the public. Must be accessible by two-wheel drive vehicles.
- Class III – Public Special Purpose Road: Provides circulation for the public to special use areas such as campgrounds or remote areas. These routes are not required to be 2WD accessible.
- Class IV – Administrative Access Roads: Provide access to administrative offices, utility areas, or quarters. Must be accessible by two-wheel drive vehicles. May sometimes allow public access, but not as a primary use.
- Class V – Restricted Administrative Roads: Roads to generally restricted areas, which may be gated for use by maintenance, law enforcement, or fire personnel. These routes are not required to be 2WD accessible. Many of these roads may be open to the public in a limited fashion: only during specific times of the year, or for specific purposes, such as hunting.

Route Number
Route numbers for roads correspond to functional class:

- 010 – 099: Class I (Public, Principal; 2WD)
- 100 – 199: Class II (Public, Connector; 2WD)
- 200 – 299: Class III (Public, Special Purpose; can be 4WD)
- 300 – 399: Class IV (Admin, 2WD)
- 400 – 499: Class V (Admin, Restricted; can be 4WD)

Route numbers for parking lots indicate whether the lot is intended for public or admin use:

- 800 – 899: Admin
- 900 – 999: Public
Tiering of Roads and Parking Lots

“Tiering” was introduced in a 2012 memo from the Chief of the Refuge System as part of a strategy for the realistic reduction of the deferred maintenance backlog. Because many administrative roads and some public roads are perfectly functional as 4WD accessible and are not needed to be 2WD accessible, it made no sense to continue to describe as DM the costs of bringing such roads into 2WD accessibility standards, especially when such roads are often not part of a regular maintenance schedule.

There is some parity between functional class and tiering, in that all Class I roads should be identified as Tier 1. All Tier 1 roads though, are not required to be public. The main entrance to a station and its primary parking area(s), whether or not open to the public, should be identified as Tier 1.

Tier 2 roads and parking areas should have regularly maintained surfaces (such as a crown, cross-slope, ditches, culverts, engineered base materials, etc.) and be accessible by 2WD vehicles.

Tier 3 roads receive below-average traffic for the station, and do not receive regular maintenance. Seasonal conditions may render them impassable.

Tier 3 roads will not be inspected by FHWA. Although DM work orders will not be created for Tier 3 roads, emergency repairs may be approved by the region when station funding does not suffice. Annual condition assessments by the station must verify the existence of and continued mission need for Tier 3 roads and parking lots.