

YORK COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
DIRT, GRAVEL AND LOW VOLUME ROAD MAINTENANCE PROGRAM
QUALITY ASSURANCE BOARD POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

The purpose of the Quality Assurance Board (QAB) in York County is to establish and recommend to the York County Conservation District Board a grant program under Section 9106 of the Pennsylvania Motor Vehicles Code. The QAB will assist the Conservation District in carrying out the Administrative, Educational and Contractual responsibilities of the Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program. The QAB will establish priorities and requirements for funding through the Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program. The QAB responsibilities will include review of applications submitted for funding, conducting site visits (as necessary and determined by the QAB) and recommend eligible applications to the Conservation District Board for funding that will address non-point source pollution in affected areas.

Quality Assurance Board

The QAB in York County will be comprised of two members appointed from the York County Conservation District, one member from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), and one member from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC).

Members may appoint a substitute to attend meetings in their stead in the event of a scheduling conflict. Substitutes should be knowledgeable about the program and their representative's role on the QAB.

Meetings

The established a [quarterly](#) meeting schedule on an annual basis, and also on an as-needed basis as determined by the Chairman. Minutes of the QAB meetings will be taken by the Chairperson and will be kept on record and available to the public pursuant to the open records policy. QAB meetings will be conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order.

Finances

The Conservation District will maintain a separate interest-bearing checking account specifically for the Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program. Any interest accrued from the funds in this checking account must be added to the contractual allocation.

All monies received by the Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program will be utilized in the timeframe allotted by the State Conservation Commission according to the Program guidelines.

Administrative, educational and training monies received and not utilized in the timeframe allotted by the State Conservation Commission will be added to the construction allocation.

Conflict of interest

No District Director, Quality Assurance Board Member, or District Employee, will, as a result of this program, be permitted to obtain financial benefits for himself/herself, a member or his/her

immediate family or a business with which he/she is associated. This shall preclude the payment of normal salary and benefits to employees provided in their normal course of employment.

Equal Access

The Quality Assurance Board will comply with the program agreement's Nondiscrimination Clause.

The actions of the QAB will be approved by the Conservation District Board at the Conservation District monthly meetings. These meetings are open to the public and follow the requirements of the Sunshine Law.

Correspondence on the DGLVR Program updates will be sent to all eligible municipalities and agencies.

Information on application deadlines will be sent to all eligible municipalities and agencies.

Information including application deadlines will be submitted as news releases to the newspapers and various agency newsletters.

Requests to review applications by third parties will be required to follow the District's open file policy.

Eligible Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Practices

The Quality Assurance Board will approve projects that protect and enhance water quality by using environmentally sensitive practices to maintain dirt, gravel and low volume roads in order to reduce dust toxins and sediment-laden runoff from entering the streams. Top priority will be assigned to treat dirt, gravel and low volume roads located in watersheds with higher quality and/or environmentally sensitive or critical areas.

Replacement of Stream Crossings

This section applies to both Dirt and Gravel Road funds and Low Volume Road funds.

This policy is to determine eligibility for stream crossing structural replacement with Program funds. Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance practices applied to the surrounding bridge area (road, stream banks, ditches, high water bypass etc.) are still eligible Program expenses around all stream crossings. Within the limits set forth and approved by the State Conservation Commission, the final decision on funding structure replacement, along with the type of structure used (pipe, box, etc.), is at the discretion of QAB. These qualifications do not exempt projects from any permitting or engineering requirements.

Driving Surface Aggregate

This section applies only to Dirt and Gravel Road funds, not Low Volume Road funds.

Driving surface aggregate meeting PennDOT DSA specifications (MS-0450-0004) is the only road surface material that may be purchased (for D&G projects) with Program funds.

DSA Certification is required for every project where DSA is used. The DSA certification does not apply to an entire quarry. The DSA certification applies only to a particular source or pile of DSA that is being purchased.

Additional certifications are required if the quarry changes the DSA production process (for example switching to a different seam of stone). The DSA certification must be obtained by the grant applicant before aggregate is placed, and must be kept with project files

Technical details for DSA including placement and purchasing specifications are included in the Center's Aggregate Handbook for technical documentation.

Low Volume Roads

This section applies only to Low Volume Road funds, not Dirt and Gravel Road funds.

For the purposes of the LVR Program, a paved road is defined to include any road surfaced with asphalt, hot tar and chip, hot chip seal, bitumen, concrete, or other asphalt-like coating.

The focus of road projects in the Low Volume Road (LVR) portion of the Program should be on similar Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance principles that have been used in the Dirt and Gravel Road Program since its inception. Projects in the LVR Program must contain benefits to both the road systems (improved drainage, reduced surface, ditch & bank erosion, smoother surface, more durable surface, reduced maintenance costs, etc.) and the environmental systems (water quality, stream quality, reduced stormwater flows, improved air quality, increased infiltration). The balance between road improvements and environment benefits should be considered in the local QAB/District project ranking criteria and funding decisions.

Similar to Dirt and Gravel Projects, the focus of LVR projects should be on long term road and environmental improvement projects.

- Routine maintenance of LVR or storm water systems such as cleaning inlets, street sweeping, crack sealing, etc. is not eligible for funding under this program.
- Program funds will not be used to pay for deferred or neglected maintenance on drainage/storm water systems.
- Program funds should not be used to fund any LVR issues that do not provide a long term benefit to the road and to the environment.

The LVR portion of the Program is not JUST a storm water program. Projects, especially in urban areas, need to strike a balance between environmental improvements and road improvements. It will be up to the Conservation District and QAB to determine the proper balance for projects in the county.

The commission recognizes the fact that many LVR component projects will have higher levels of daily traffic and higher levels of posted speed than projects on unpaved roads. Project applicants are required to follow the same safety protocols as with all other road work (flaggers, signs, etc). The funding of any traffic control and safety components of a DGLVR Program project is at the discretion of the county conservation district.

Traffic Counts for Low Volume Roads

Before a contract can be signed for a Low Volume Road project, the applicant is responsible for validating that the road has 500 vehicles per day or less consistent with Commission and any local QAB policy.

- A traffic count is required in order to submit an application.

- Conservation District is responsible for verifying that a count exists, and that the count meets the criteria established in state and local policy.
- Traffic counts are considered valid for a period of 5 years, provided there are no new significant changes in traffic flow volumes or patterns.
- Documentation of traffic counts using a signed "Traffic Count Validation Form" must be retained with project files according to the Commission's record retention policy. Districts may opt to include the completed traffic count validation form as an attachment to the project Contract.

Conservation Districts may, at their discretion, use administrative and education funding to facilitate or support traffic counts for applicants. Districts should insure that all potential applicants have equal access to any traffic count facilitation measures they may employ.

Paying for Asphalt or Other Surfacing

Resurfacing paved roads (sealing or paving) roads is not a primary focus of the LVR Program component. Resurfacing costs can be considered by the QAB as a component part of a larger ESM project. It is at the discretion of the Conservation District and QABs whether resurfacing costs (sealing or paving) will be funded through the Program, either on individual projects or as countywide policy. Before funding any resurfacing work on projects the following ESM principals must be addressed:

- Drainage issues must be properly addressed.
- Base instability issues must be properly addressed
- Other necessary and appropriate issues such as bank stability, road entrenchment, vegetation, etc. must be properly addressed.

Surfacing Unpaved Roads

It is not the intent of the DGLVR program to encourage the sealing or paving of existing dirt or gravel roads and converting them to sealed or paved low volume roads. While eligible entities may choose to seal or pave a DGR project on their own at some future point in time, no Program funds should be utilized for the specific purpose of converting unpaved roads to paved or "tar and chip".

Reclaiming Paved or Sealed Roads to D&G

The DGLVR Program recognizes the value of converting a poorly constructed or poorly maintained LV road into a high quality DGR through full depth reclamation or other similar processes. The Conservation district may utilize either LVR or D&G low volume program component funds for these purposes.

Incentives for Training

All applicants must complete the 2-day Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance training and be currently certified to be eligible for funding. Certification is good for 5-years.

The QAB will consider requests for training expense reimbursement, as "incentives for training road managers and equipment operators", on a case by case basis.

Application Evaluation

In 1998, the QAB drafted criteria to evaluate and prioritize application funding based on suggestions from the State Conservation Commission. These criteria were subsequently approved by the Conservation District Board. These criteria will be reviewed and amended as needed.

Filing Applications for Funding

The QAB will have an open sign-up period year round. All eligible applicants will be notified annually of the deadlines of application submittal and QAB meetings for grant-making cycle.

A pre-application meeting site assessment will be made by at least one QAB member or district employee with project applicant prior to ranking by the QAB.

All applications submitted must contain a signature of a municipal official. The applications will be evaluated, scored, and ranked for priority according to the QAB's Application Evaluation Form.

The one-page Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program Grant Application form, developed for statewide use, will be distributed to all municipalities. Each application will be for one verified worksite, or continuous project area. The Conservation District will keep all non-funded applications on file for future funding consideration. Applicants may choose to revise existing submitted applications. There is no restriction to the number of applications that can be submitted by one applicant.

The QAB will meet quarterly as scheduled. At that time, all submitted applications will be reviewed, ranked and recommended for funding. Applicants that have open contracts at the time of the QAB's meeting will not be considered for further funding until the existing contract is completed. These recommendations will be given to the District Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting for approval. Applicants will be notified in writing of their application approval, grant award and proposed contract.

Funding Distribution

All approved contracts with grantee will be signed by the Chairperson of the York County Conservation District Board or District Manager. Funds will be distributed by the Conservation District in the following manner:

- Upon commencement of a project, the District will forward 50% of the grant amount requested by the participating grantee.
- The grantee has one year to complete the project. If unable to complete the project in one year's time, the applicant may request in writing for a one year extension the project contract.
- The Conservation District will withhold the remaining 50% of the approved grant amount until the project is completed and has been inspected by the QAB and/or District personnel. For the project to be considered complete, all site work must be accomplished and stabilized as indicated in the contract in a manner to be considered satisfactory to achieve the purpose it was designed to, as determined by the QAB and/or the Conservation District.

The grantee is responsible for retaining all receipts, weigh slips, labor accounting, etc. to document materials, equipment and labor expenditures of the entire grant amount (100%). All receipts, weigh slips, labor accounting, etc. must also meet or exceed the total grant amount awarded prior to the final 50% of the grant funds being released. If total expenditures are less than the remaining 50%, only the lesser amount will be forwarded to the grantee. Grant monies that are unspent by the grantee at the end of the effective date of the executed contract must be returned in full to the Conservation District.

Project Maintenance

The QAB policy on the minimum length of maintenance requirements for completed projects is five years from the date of final inspection and satisfactory approval. Maintenance of past projects may be considerations in a District's application ranking criteria.

Non-Pollution Standards

Section 9106(f)(7) of the Pennsylvania Motor Vehicles Code requires the QAB to adopt standards that prohibit use of materials or practices that are environmentally harmful. The State of Policy 83.613(1)(b) formalizes that requirement. In response, the QAB has adopted standards prohibiting the use of materials and practices which are environmentally harmful or do not meet the program's non-pollution standards. These materials include, but are not limited to: noxious weeds, fugitive emission, and dust control products which may pose a problem if they enter a waterbody. Compliance with all existing environmental laws is a condition of purchase under the contracting agreement between the Conservation District and the grantee. An environmentally suitable substitute for dust control, as determined by the State Conservation Commission, may qualify for payment.

Discrimination Clause

The QAB shall prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

Date

QAB Chairperson