

## **Important Information Regarding the Contents of this Document**

Please note that the policies and information presented in this document are current through the date given below. The documents made available within the [Center's Conservation Districts web pages](#) are intended to serve as a guide for the policies set by each Conservation District. While these policies may in fact be current at the time of your viewing, it is strongly recommended to contact the relevant Conservation District for the most current version.

Document Current Date: November 16, 2020

**Butler County Dirt, Gravel, and Low  
Volume Road Maintenance Program  
Quality Assurance Board  
Policies and Procedures**

The purpose of the Quality Assurance Board (QAB) in Butler County is to recommend to the Butler County Conservation District Board a grant program for Section 9106 of the PA Motor Vehicle Code. The QAB will assist the Butler County 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 Butler County Conservation District Board of Directors for funding that will address non-point source pollution in affected areas.

The QAB in Butler County will be comprised of one member appointed from the Butler County Conservation District Board, one member from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) (or assigned alternate) and one member from the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PAFBC) (or assigned alternate). The non-voting Chairperson of the QAB will be the District Manager.

The established meeting schedule will be on a monthly basis and also on an as-needed basis as determined by the Chairman. The meeting will be held 30 minutes prior to Butler County Conservation District Board meeting. The meeting schedule will be published in the Butler Eagle.

Minutes of the QAB meeting will be taken by District Staff and will be kept on record and available to the public pursuant to the open records policy.

The QAB meetings will be conducted according to Robert Rules of Order.

**Finance**

The allocated funds will be tracked separately between the Dirt and Gravel Funds, and the Low Volume Roads funds. Any interest accrued from the Dirt and Gravel Road savings account will be transferred at least annually to the construction allocation for Dirt and Gravel Roads. Likewise, any interest accrued from the Low Volume Roads savings account will be transferred at least annually to the construction allocation for Low Volume Roads.

Educational and administration monies not utilized in the funding year they are received will be transferred to the construction allocation and carried over to be used for construction projects.

**Conflict of Interest**

The QAB recommended at their (August 26, 2000) meeting to the District Board that the current policy of "No District Director, QAB member or District employee shall, as a result of this program, be permitted to obtain financial benefits for him/herself, a member of his/her immediate family or a business with which he/she is associated. Understanding that this shall not preclude the payment of normal salary and benefits to employees provided in their normal course of employment

## **Fund Accessibility**

### Equal Access to Funding

Equal access to funding shall be facilitated by the following means:

- Correspondence on program updates, including applications, shall be sent to all eligible entities.
- Special effort shall be made when needed to enlist the cooperation of potential participants through a telephone call or site visit.
- Information, including any application deadlines, shall be publicized through multiple means (website, emails, etc.)
- Quality Assurance Board meetings having formal actions shall be open to the public and follow the requirements of the Sunshine Law.

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

All eligible entities within Butler County are eligible for Dirt and Gravel Road funding provided that the eligible entity has:

- Identified their dirt and gravel roads and provided that inventory to the District
- Developed a list of priority project sites on their dirt and gravel road and provided that list to the District
- Had at least one current employee or elected/appointed representative attend and complete the two day Environmentally Sensitive Road Maintenance Workshop within the last five calendar years.

All eligible entities within Butler County are eligible for Low Volume Road funding provided that the eligible entity has:

- Had at least one current employee or elected/appointed representative attend and complete the two day Environmentally Sensitive Road Maintenance Workshop within the last five calendar years.

## **Funding Criteria**

At the January 22, 2015 Quality Assurance Board meeting, the QAB recommended to the District Board that the “Butler County Dirt, Gravel, and Low-Volume Road Grant Application Ranking Sheet (2014)” be used to score and rank each application. In the case where the highest ranking score application cannot be funded due to insufficient funds, it will be to the Board’s discretion whether or not to fund a lower ranking application which could be funded.

The District Staff will compile all applications for funding into a spread sheet of each application’s score and make the spreadsheet, as well as a copy of each application available to each QAB member prior to the annual meeting.

## **Applications for Funding**

The Dirt, Gravel And Low Volume Road Maintenance Grant Application, developed for statewide use, will be made available to all potential applicants.

Each application will be for one previously verified worksite, or continuous project area. The Conservation District will keep all non-funded projects on file for future funding allocations for one year. There is no restriction to the number of applications that can be submitted by an applicant.

It will also be the policy of the QAB to allow the inclusion of work outside of the applicant's road right of way provided the work is necessary for the successful completion and continued maintenance of non-point source pollution problem corrected on the site.

The QAB will have an open sign up period year-round. All potential applicants will be notified early June to enable interested applicants to submit their grant applications by the given deadline of the Wednesday before Thanksgiving.

The QAB will meet in December for the first round of grant awards. At that time, all submitted applications will be reviewed, ranked and recommended for funding. These recommendations will be given to the District Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting for final approval. The applicants will be notified by letter and proposed contract of their grant application approval. Unallocated funds will be awarded throughout the remainder of the year.

### **Funding Procedures**

All approved contracts will be signed by the District Manager of the Butler County Conservation District. The funds will be distributed by the Conservation District in the following manner:

- ❖ The Conservation District maintains separate accounts specifically for the Dirt and Gravel Road program and the Low Volume Roads program.
- ❖ The contracted party has eighteen months to complete the approved contract with certification by the QAB. If unable to complete in this time, the contracted party may request in writing for an extension on the project, extensions will be approved on a case-by-case basis.
- ❖ Upon the full execution of the project agreement with a eligible entity, BCCD will provide an advanced payment to the project participant in an amount up to 50% of the grant, to be applied toward payment of eligible expenses incurred by the project.
- ❖ BCCD will process subsequent payments to the project participants on an actual cash expended basis.
- ❖ BCCD will withhold at least 30 percent of approved project expenses until satisfactory completion of the project as determined by the QAB/BCCD. Final payment for the project expenses shall be made only after a final inspection by the QAB/BCCD determines that the work was performed in a manner consistent with the project application and the work plan and to the satisfaction of BCCD. All receipts, weigh slips, labor accounting, etc. must also meet or exceed the total grant amount requested prior to remaining funds being released. If totals equal less than the contract amount, only the lesser amount will be forwarded to the contracted party.
- ❖ All claims submitted by the program participant pursuant to the agreement shall be submitted to BCCD in accordance with the schedule and terms and contained in the approved project agreement. The payments will be itemized and show that the use of funds is in accordance with the project cost summary contained in the application and work plan. Claims shall include receipts, weigh slips, and/or other supporting information to document actual expenditures.

- ❖ Grant funds received for materials purchased for the project but not installed by the eligible entity at the end of 18 months from the date of the executed contract must be returned in full to BCCD.
- ❖ Any advanced funds that are unspent or not spent in accordance with the project must be returned to BCCD within 30 days of the contract completion or expiration.

### **Non Pollution Standards**

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

#### **LVR Project Limitations:**

Funding of resurfacing (sealing and paving) will be limited to 50% of the project value.