

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: June 24, 2019

DIRT, GRAVEL AND LOW VOLUME ROAD MAINTENANCE PROGRAM
STATEMENTS OF POLICY
Elk County Conservation District
(Adopted: June 24, 2019)

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION POLICIES & STANDARDS

1. Criteria for Equal Access:

- Correspondence on program updates shall be sent to all eligible entities (municipalities and other agencies.)
- Application with a specific deadline shall be sent to all eligible entities.
- Special efforts shall be made to enlist the cooperation of participants through a telephone conversation or a site visit.
- Information, including any application deadlines, shall be properly publicized, which may include; newspapers, newsletters, radio, social media, and email.
- QAB meetings having formal actions shall be open to the public and follow the requirements of the Sunshine Law.
- Prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.

2. Application Process:

- All applications for DGLVR Program funding must be received on the “Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program Grant Application” form that has been approved by the State Conservation Commission (SCC). The form must be signed by the applicant.
- Applications will be received on a continual basis. All applications received will be ranked together on a regular cycle.
- QAB has the right to extend deadline dates at their discretion.
- Each application will be for one worksite, or continuous project area.
- The Elk County Conservation District (ECCD) will not keep non-funded projects on file. Applicants must re-apply if a project is unfunded and they wish to be considered in a future funding cycle.
- There are no restrictions to the number of applications that can be submitted by one project participant.
- Conservation District staff will review applications for administrative completeness and to insure they comply with established Program policies and guidance.
- A project sketch, location map, and itemized costs are a required part of the grant application.
- District staff is encouraged to work with applicants to revise the scope of their applications that do not meet Program standards.
- ECCD staff may make minor changes to the application and have the applicant show concurrence by initialing and dating the change. In cases where significant changes are needed to the application work plan, the ECCD staff should work with the applicant to create a new application that represents an acceptable project. Examples of “significant changes” may include: changes in project scope, recommended design changes, considerations for engineering and permitting costs, resizing of stream crossing structures, etc.

- The Conservation District may, at their discretion, refuse to accept incomplete applications or applications that do not properly address environmental issues.
- Applications that ECCD staff deem complete and potentially acceptable to the Program will be forwarded to the local Quality Assurance Board (QAB) for review prior to the scheduled QAB meeting.
- The QAB will review and prioritize applications based on established written criteria and make funding recommendations to the Elk County Conservation District Board.
- The QAB operates in an advisory capacity only. All applications for funding must be acted on by the ECCD Board “sunshined” meeting.
- All applicants should be notified in writing or via email of the funding decisions of the ECCD Board.
- Applicant must have ESM certified individual on site throughout project work activities.

3. Project Ranking:

- Projects will be ranked by the QAB as outlined in established Application Ranking Sheet.
- ECCD and QAB will use the Application Ranking Sheet as a guideline in helping to determine project priorities. However, the final decision on projects that are to be funded are at the discretion of the QAB and ECCD Board.

4. DGLVR Funding Categories:

- The Dirt and Gravel/Low Volume Road funds will be kept in separate accounts where they will be divided into the following categories:
 - Road maintenance projects - 80%
 - Education/Training - 10%
 - Administration - 10%
- The use of any un-approved materials or practices used on a trial basis must be approved by the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads prior to implementation.

5. Certification and Final Payment:

- Final payment for the project expenses shall be made only after a final site inspection has been made ECCD staff and/or QAB members to determine the work performed is consistent with the project application, the work plan, within program guidelines, and to the satisfaction of the ECCD.
- A Project Performance Report will also be completed by the ECCD staff during this site visit. The site visit should also include the presence of at least one representative of the project participant.
- All claims submitted by the program participant pursuant to this agreement shall be submitted to the District in accordance with the Schedule of Payments and the terms and conditions contained in the approved project agreement.
- The claims shall be itemized and show that the utilization of funds are in accordance with the project cost summary continued in the approved project application and work plan. Claims shall include receipts, weigh slips, and/or other appropriate supporting information to document actual expenditures on the project.

6. Environmentally Harmful Practices and Materials:

- The Elk County Conservation District's DGLVR Program will not fund the use of any practice or material that may be harmful to the environment. For a list of materials that meet program standards and are approved by the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads (see website <http://www.dirtandgravelroads.org/>). The use of any un-approved materials or practices used on a trial basis must be approved by the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads prior to implementation.

7. Stream Crossing Structural Replacement Policy

- This section applies to both Low Volume Roads and Dirt and Gravel Roads.
- All stream crossing projects must comply with the standards and policies set forth by the State Conservation Commission (SCC) and the Penn State Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies (Center). This includes; replacement eligibility requirements, bank-full-width requirements, and aquatic organism passage considerations

8. Driving Surface Aggregate (DSA) Guiding Principles

- Technical details for DSA including; DSA composition, certification, proper placement and purchasing specifications can be found on the Center's website, technical bulletins, and Aggregate Handbook. Please refer to those resources for technical documentation.
- Application of DSA to dirt and gravel roads is not a primary focus of the Program. Utilization of DSA can be considered by ECCD as a component of a larger project.
- All drainage work, road base work, bank stability issues, vegetation management and other necessary work areas must be completed prior to the application of DSA materials.
- DSA placement in excess of 500 feet in length must be placed with a paving machine.
- DSA placement is not to occur after October 15 without prior consultation with ECCD staff.
- All projects with DSA placement must meet the requirements for prior testing of the DSA materials as outlined by the SCC and Center policies and guidelines.

9. Low-Volume Road Project Guidelines

- For the purposes of the LVR Program, a "paved" road is defined to include any road surfaced with asphalt, "tar and chip", "chip seal", bitumen, concrete, or other asphalt-like coating.
- The ECCD will not pay for surfacing materials except for those areas where the surface was removed to install drainage structures or to conduct other work.
- All LVR projects must adhere to the traffic count policy.

10. 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 or less per day.
- All traffic counts must comply with the methods and standards set forth by the State Conservation Commission (SCC) and PSU Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies.

- The ECCD will NOT pay to have traffic counts completed. However, the costs associated with conducting traffic counts may be considered as in-kind expenses.
- Eligible entities may contact the ECCD to have ECCD staff conduct a traffic study. This will be done on an as available basis and on a first-come-first served basis.
- The ECCD will consider traffic data valid for 5 years.
- Should a traffic study indicate that the volume of vehicles exceeds 500 daily, a new traffic study may be completed the following year.
- Documentation of traffic counts must use a signed "Traffic Count Validation Form."

11. Training Incentives

- The ECCD will provide 5 points on the Ranking Sheet for entities that send a representative to the annual ECCD program updates meeting. (max of 5 points)
- The ECCD will provide 2 points on the Ranking Sheet for each current ESM certified individual that is currently employed by the eligible applicant entity. (max of 6 points)

PROCEDURES FOR QAB BOARD CONDUCT

1. Meeting Schedule and Procedures:

- The QAB may meet twice per year and on an as needed basis. Specific dates and time will be determined by the QAB members and ECCD staff. All recommendations of the QAB must be presented to the District Board for final approval. All QAB meetings will meet Pennsylvania's Sunshine Act 65 Pa.C.S.A. § 701. There must be a quorum (at least 3 of the 4 QAB members), to vote on any recommendations to the District Board. The QAB chairman may vote to decide a tie or in absence of one of the other QAB members. Meeting minutes must be kept and made available to the District Board and general public. QAB meetings may be held via conference call as long as they meet the public notice requirements described above.

2. Conflict of Interest:

- No District Director, Quality Assurance Board member, or District employee, shall as a result of this program, be permitted to obtain financial benefits for himself/herself, member of his/her immediate family or a business with which he/she is associated. This shall preclude the payment of normal salary and benefits provided in their normal course of employment.