

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: September 21, 2022

Allegheny County Conservation District Dirt, Gravel & Low Volume Roads Program

- ❖ Open Application Period: June 1st
- ❖ Final Application Deadline: August 31st
- ❖ ACCD Grant Notifications: November

For questions regarding this program, please contact:

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ACCD Dirt Gravel & Low Volume Roads Program

Purpose

Allegheny County Conservation District (ACCD) administers the Dirt, Gravel, & Low Volume Roads (DGLVR) Program in Allegheny County. The DGLVR Program was established to fund projects which promote cost-effective, environmentally sound maintenance practices to correct erosion, runoff and pollution problems.

**Mission of the Dirt, Gravel and
Low Volume Roads Program**

Providing education, technical assistance and funding to minimize the impact of unpaved roads and trails on natural landscapes and hydrology.

Funding for the DGLVR Program

The DGLVR Program uses funds from the motor vehicle license and registration fund to provide monies to municipalities to stabilize dirt, gravel, and low volume roads. The funds are provided to the State Conservation Commission which then allocates the funds to ACCD based on the miles of dirt, gravel, and low volume roads in the county. The ACCD Board of Directors appointed a Quality Assurance Board (QAB) to make decisions regarding the program on a county basis. The QAB is composed of representatives from ACCD, NRCS, and the PA Fish and Boat Commission. ACCD is required to utilize monies from the DGLVR Program to remedy erosion problems, reduce sedimentation of local waterways, reduce stormwater runoff from roadways and promote the concept of “Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance (ESM) Practices.”

ACCD will establish a yearly demonstration project budget from the allocated funds to determine the number of projects that can be supported. The awarded projects will be issued to eligible applicants that are working toward the program's mission. The grant monies can be used for equipment rental, materials, supplies, and man-power necessary to complete the project. Permitting, planning, design, and engineering costs may also be included in the funding request, but are limited to 20 % of the total project costs. For example, if an applicant requests and is awarded \$10,000, the permitting, planning, design and consulting/engineering fees cannot exceed a total of \$2,000. Resurfacing paved roads (sealing or paving) is not a primary focus of the DGLVR Program. Resurfacing costs will be considered as a component part of a larger ESM project. Before funding any resurfacing work on projects, at least one of the following ESM principles must be addressed:

1. Drainage issues.
2. Base instability issues.
3. Other necessary issues such as bank stability, road entrenchment, vegetation, etc.

A minimum 20% match is required of each organization receiving a grant from the DGLVR Program. For example, if an organization requests and is awarded \$50,000, the entire project will have an investment of \$60,000 or more with the inclusion of matching funds. The matching funds can come from in-kind services, salaries, funding from other grants, etc.

Municipalities may submit multiple project applications, but they must be prioritized in each category (Dirt/Gravel and Low Volume). Only the top priority in each category will be considered for funding. After all top prioritized applications are considered, the additional applications will be considered as funding allows.

Program Eligibility

Demonstration project funds are available to public road-owning entities such as municipalities, county parks, PA Game Commission, DCNR, etc. To be eligible to apply for funding, an official from the applying entity must have attended a free 2-day training on ESM practices for unpaved roads within the last 5 years. More information on training dates can be found at

http://www.dirtandgravel.psu.edu/edu_training/esm_course.html.

All projects must apply ESM principles and practices approved by the DGLVR Program in order to address an environmental concern directly related to the road, make improvements to the road system, or to meet all other Program requirements (i.e. permits or approvals).

Applicants who are seeking ESM Certification for the first time are also eligible to participate in ACCD's "First Time Certification Incentive Program." This program will reimburse mileage and hotel expenses, up to \$300, with proof of attendance in the form of a completion certificate for 10 municipalities annually.

In addition, in order to be eligible for the Dirt and Gravel Roads Program, information on dirt and gravel roads owned and/or maintained by the applying entity must have been submitted to ACCD for approval by the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads in Penn State. A dirt and gravel road is any unpaved road (excluding chip sealed) that is open to public access at least part of the year. These include municipal roads, park roads, pavilion access and associated parking areas, etc.

It is not necessary to have submitted dirt and gravel road information if you are applying for the Low Volume Road Program. A low volume road is a road that has an existing paved (including chip sealed) surface with a verified average daily traffic count of less than 500 vehicles a day.

There are three ways which this can be shown:

1. A traffic counter may be set up at the project site for 24 hours.
2. PennDOT maps have traffic allocations for their roads. If the local road connects to a PennDOT road that has less than 500 cars per day, the local road would qualify for the Low Volume Road Program.
3. Cars may be counted at the project site for 2 consecutive hours between 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm. This number is then multiplied by 12 to get the number of cars in a 24 hour period.

Please note, there are additional instructions associated with each option. More information on the validation process can be found at:

http://www.dirtandgravel.psu.edu/pa_program/low_volume_roads/low_volume_roads.html.

The applicant is responsible for validating that the road has 500 vehicles per day or less. This can be completed at any time before the grant contracts are signed. **Validation does not need to be completed in order to submit an application.**

Applicants can submit more than one application. Each application must be restricted to one contiguous location or one type of work throughout an area, for example bank seeding on a series of local roads. ACCD will not consider applications to “conduit” organizations that pass funds on to other organizations or individuals.

How to Apply

Interested applicants must schedule a pre-application meeting with ACCD prior to the application deadline. Please contact Riley Kinney to schedule pre-application meetings by email at rkinney@accdpa.org or phone at 412-291-8004.

To apply for the funds, a one page application with a work plan for the proposed road site is submitted via email to the Allegheny County Conservation District at rkinney@accdpa.org with DGLVR Application in the subject line. The one page application, along with the work plan and supporting attachments, can be found at:

http://www.dirtandgravel.psu.edu/sites/default/files/PA%20Program%20Resources/Program%20Specific%20Resources/Blank%20Forms/GrantApp_WorkPlan_ExpendSheets.pdf

Please see the DGLVR Project Checklist on our website (www.accdpa.org) to ensure you are submitting a complete application. **The provided application template, including budget worksheets must be used.** Project work plans may be hand drawn using the pages provided or computer generated; however, all instructions and additional items listed on

Attachment B of the application must be addressed. Each worksite is reviewed by the Conservation District technical staff to ensure that it meets the program requirements. Qualified project applications are then reviewed by the District's QAB. The ACCD's Board of Directors, upon recommendation from the QAB, will award the grants.

Post-Project Approval

Upon approval of your grant for funding, you will be asked to sign the Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Project Agreement, a two-page contract outlining the duties and responsibilities you have as the project participant and those of ACCD. Several attachments are often included such as the application and work plan, general contract provisions, schedule of payments, project performance report, etc. A blank contract can be viewed at:

http://www.dirtandgravel.psu.edu/pa_program/resources/blank_forms.html. Once ACCD has received your executed contract, 50% of the project funds will be advanced to the applicant. 20% of project funds may be released as needed during the project lifecycle; however, the remaining 30% of the project funds will be held until project completion and final inspection by ACCD.

Construction on all projects must conclude **30 days prior to the contract end** date to allow time to process grant administration.