

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: October 15, 2024

Indiana County Dirt Gravel Low Volume Road Maintenance Program
Quality Assurance Board
Standards and Administrative Policy (Updated 10/15/2024)

Quality Assurance Board (QAB) composition

The Indiana County Conservation District QAB is composed of a Conservation District appointed chairman (non-voting) and three voting members representing the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Indiana County Conservation District. Voting members can assign alternates but as voting member are limited to one vote. PennDOT Municipal Services also sits on the board as a non-voting technical advisor. QAB members and alternates are as follows:

Brooke Russick (Chairman)
Ariel Coleman (NRCS Delegate), Katie Fraser (NRCS Alternate)
Kyle Wirick (PFBC Delegate), John Dudash (PFBC Alternate),
John Somonick (ICCD Delegate), Greg VanHorn (ICCD Alternate)

Quality Assurance Board rules of conduct

The chairman will be responsible for establishing the meeting agenda and running the proceedings. Voting members will establish policy for the program's operation and distribution of allocated funds consistent with Section 9106. The QAB will make recommendations to the Indiana County Conservation District Board of Directors. All actions of the QAB will require that a quorum of the voting members be present. The chairman will vote only in the event of a tie vote.

Equal access provisions and grant eligibility requirements

Participation in the program is limited to public entities that own public roads with employees/supervisors that have attended the two-day Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Training. A road must be open to public motor vehicle travel for a minimum of 2 consecutive weeks annually in order to be eligible for funding. All potential applicants will be sent equal notification on funding availability, application deadlines, training, and availability of Conservation District owned equipment to ensure a fair and open selection process.

Conflicts of interest

No District Director, Quality Assurance Board Member or District employee shall as a result of this program and their action obtain financial benefit for themselves, their family or business interests for which they are associated. Those individuals shall abstain from voting on the recommendations of policies or projects where they have a vested interest.

Environmental Standards for Products and Procedures

No road maintenance practices and road materials utilized on projects will be permitted if their use is perceived as harmful to the environment or an ecosystem. The non-pollution standards established in the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program Administrative Manual will be referenced with regards to materials used. Quality Assurance Board members will determine if a maintenance practice is detrimental to the environment or an ecosystem. Select products, such as dust suppressants, soil stabilizers, or by-products

from manufacturing processes must be on the “Approved Products List” set by the Program and will require prior Quality Assurance Board approval for use.

Project Ranking

All submitted grant applications will be scored according to the adopted Indiana County Conservation District QAB Project Ranking Criteria. This ranking system is based on the following criteria and considerations: Stream Quality, Percentage of new drainage Best Management Practices, Residential/Safety impacts, Stream distance, Road condition, Pollution frequency, Pollution reduction effectiveness, In-kind contribution, the number of ESM-trained officials, Recent grants, and Grant history. Refer to Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program Project Ranking Criteria Updated August 2022.

Contracts

Work performed under Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road project contracts must be in accordance with guidelines found in the current Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Program Administrative Manual. Deviations from the approved work plan will require prior written approval of the QAB and Conservation District Board of Directors.

Additional Local Policies

Low Volume Road Policy

- Only drainage improvement projects will be funded at this time. Road surface material reimbursements will be limited to only areas directly affected by drainage work.

Pre-application Site Visit Policy

- Pre-application site visits are required for each grant application or will be ineligible for funding.

Cash Advance Policy

- Cash Advances not to exceed 50% of the contract amount will be granted on a limited case-by-case basis at the discretion of the Conservation District.

Indemnity Agreement Policy

- Any grant recipient must enter into an Indemnity Agreement with the Conservation District as prepared by the Conservation District solicitor. No contract can be executed without receipt of the agreement and required documents as stated within the agreement.

Construction Policy

- A District employee appointed to administer the program at the direction of the QAB and District Board of Directors will perform construction site inspections and make recommendations to the municipality on materials and methods of construction. If materials do not meet specifications or the work plan is not being followed, the District employee will make recommendations to the municipality to stop work until corrections are made.

Stream Crossing Policy

- The QAB will limit the number of stream crossing projects per year to a number that can successfully be implemented to meet DGLVR program standards. The limit will be based on the technical ability and time constraints of staff, level of difficulty of projects, and spending deadlines.
- Applicants interested in applying for a stream crossing project must submit a letter of intent to the District prior to submitting a grant application. The QAB will review the letters and then choose which projects can be fully developed into a grant application for consideration of funding.

The following steps outline how to apply for stream crossing projects for the DGLVR program:

1. District staff will announce that Letters of Intent will be accepted for stream crossing projects and provide a template for municipalities to prepare letter(s).
2. District staff will visit all sites to collect basic information about the potential project. Neither a detailed project design nor budget should be prepared at this point.
3. The QAB will review the letters and information collected and rank stream crossing projects separately from other drainage projects. The QAB will choose which, if any, stream crossings they will consider for funding and “invite” those applicants to prepare a full grant application. This does not guarantee funding for those applicants “invited” to apply.
4. District staff will work with the applicant on a detailed plan and budget for a grant application.
5. The QAB ranks all grant applications and awards projects.

Cancellation Policy

- Any grant recipient that cancels a contract without exhausting efforts to complete the contract may be ineligible for funding for subsequent DGLVR grant rounds for 2 years, at the discretion of the QAB.

Project Phasing Policy

- The QAB may approve projects that require multiple phases and contracts to complete. The QAB will rank the whole project once, keeping in mind all phases, fund a feasible portion of the project, and automatically fund subsequent phases of the project each year (as funding, eligibility, and participation allows) until the District deems the project completed. This does not guarantee funding for all Phases of a project.

Any project that requests phasing must meet the following eligibility criteria:

1. All phases of the project must be submitted with the initial grant application. This should provide an overall summary of the work to be completed to the best of the applicant’s ability.
2. Applicant must break down each Phase into separate scopes of work. Each phase should be broken down into a workplan, grant request, and in-kind budget. The scope/size of each phase will vary by applicant and should consider costs, amount of construction, logistics, and capacity to complete work.

3. Phasing plans must be developed in cooperation with ICCD staff. This can be accomplished at the pre-application site visit.
4. Phases proposed must be on the same section of roadway or on connected and continuous section of roadway.

Once a project has been ranked and recommended for funding, one or more phases may be approved for funding. Prior to funding additional phases, a project re-evaluation meeting is required to evaluate municipal interest in completing additional phase(s) and capture fluctuations in materials costs/adjustments to budgets, scope of work changes, and program policy changes.

If a phased project is awarded, the municipality must complete all phases of the project before receiving grants on other roads.

Pre-construction Site Meeting Policy

- Pre-construction site meetings are required for each contract at least two weeks prior to starting construction. Any work completed prior to Pre-construction meeting may be ineligible for reimbursement.