

## **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 18, 2024

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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**Lycoming County Quality Assurance Board**

Local Administrative Policy  
As of 9/18/2024

**Quality Assurance Board (QAB) Composition:**

The Lycoming County Conservation District QAB is composed of four members. A non-voting chairman appointed by the Lycoming County Conservation District Board Directors and three voting members. The members are representatives from the following agencies: the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the Lycoming County Conservation District. The chairman of the QAB may not participate in a vote, other than to decide a tie vote. Voting members can assign alternates, but as a voting member, are limited to one vote. QAB voting members are as follows:

District Board Representative (Chairman)

LCCD Representative

PFBC Representative

NRCS Representative

**Quality Assurance Board Rules of Conduct:**

The chairman will be responsible for establishing the meeting agenda and running the proceedings. Members will establish policies for the program's operation and distribution of allocated funds consistent with Section 106. The QAB will rank projects based on set criteria and make recommendations to the Lycoming County Conservation District Board of Directors for project approval. The QAB will make recommendations to the Lycoming County Conservation District Board of Directors for policy approval as well. All actions of the QAB will require that a quorum of the voting members be present.

### **Equal Access Provisions and Grant Eligibility Requirements:**

Participation in the program is limited to eligible road-owning entities and state agencies with employees/supervisors that have current certification and have attended the two-day Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance (ESM) Training. Road projects eligible to be funded must be open to the public at least 2 weeks of the year. The majority of the driving surface must be composed of gravel stone, dirt, or a sealed surface. Request for applications for road projects will be sent to all eligible participants on an annual basis.

### **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, family, or business interests for which they are associated.

### **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 and Gravel Roads 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.

### **Road Owning Entity Eligibility and Work Plan Implementation:**

The person in charge of the work plan development and project implementation must have attended an Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance (ESM) training within the past five (5) calendar years to apply for DGLVR funding. Attendance by individuals not directly involved with the project design and implementation (interns, secretaries, etc.) do not qualify an applicant to be eligible for funding. Engineers are welcome to attend the ESM training, but their attendance does not count as certification for the entities they represent. Alternatively, if an engineer is on staff it would count as ESM certification for that eligible road owning entity. Empowering and educating local eligible road owning entities is one of the primary benefits of the Program.

The ESM certified individual(s) of the eligible road owning entity must be present during construction and provide oversight to ensure the project is being followed according to the work plan as agreed upon between the road owning entity and the Lycoming County Conservation District. If there is more than one (1) eligible road owning employee who had attended the Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance training, both employees must sign the Dirt Gravel & Low-Volume Road contract. In the event that one of the ESM trained employees cannot be on site during construction, the other employee can take his/her place.

Applicants must provide a written narrative with each road application. This narrative should provide enough information to adequately define the scope of the project.

#### **Newly ESM Certified Eligible Road Owning Entity:**

In the event that a road owning entity is newly eligible to the Dirt and Gravel Program, only one (1) contract may be awarded the first year of funding. Also, if a road owning entity has not applied within the past seven (7) years, only one (1) contract may be awarded the first year of funding. The highest scoring of the multiple selected projects may be funded through the program. The remaining ranked and scored applications may be re-submitted the next funding year to be ranked and scored.

#### **Noncompliance Issues**

In the event of noncompliance with program requirements and contract provisions, the QAB may place an eligible applicant on a suspension list, barring them from submitting new applications for a specified timeframe. The duration of the suspension will be at the discretion of the QAB based on the severity of the noncompliance issue.

#### **Local Dirt, Gravel and Low Volume Road Policies:**

##### **Cross Pipes:**

The installation of new cross pipes is an acceptable project cost. Another acceptable project cost is the upsizing of an existing cross pipe. Program funds will not be used to replace existing cross pipes of the same size.

Example: A road project has 3 existing cross pipes, 1 is 15" and 2 are 18". The road owning entity would like all pipes to be 18". There are 2 proposed cross pipe locations totaling 5 cross pipes. Three (3) cross pipes are eligible for program funding, the 2 new and 1 upsized.

### **Project Application Period:**

The QAB has a designated time period for eligible road owning entities to submit their Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road project applications. The Conservation District administrator of the program will send the application packages to eligible entities prior to the first week in January. Once the application package is received the eligible entities may start working on applications immediately. The QAB will accept applications from the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday in January until the last working day in March.

### **Project Funding Spending Deadline**

Road owning entities have 2 years to spend DGLVR funds. If a road owning entity needs an extension, a written request along with a completion timeline needs to be submitted to QAB for review and approval.

### **Resurfacing Low Volume Roads:**

Resurfacing may be granted funding on sections of the road being excavated or disturbed, ex) cross pipes. Using Low Volume Road grant funds for resurfacing LVR projects will be to the discretion of the QAB.

### **Traffic Counts on Low Volume Roads:**

When an applicant or eligible road owning entity performs a traffic count using the "Extrapolation of Existing Data" method, as defined in the Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Road Maintenance Administrative Manual, the applicant shall also include a narrative of how they determined that the LVR being proposed has less than 500 vehicles on an average day. This narrative must also be verified and accepted by the QAB prior to funding any LVR using the "Extrapolation of Existing Data" method.

### **Stream Crossing Structure Replacement Policy:**

Based on the new policy, standard, and technical manual documents passed by the State Conservation Commission in May of 2022, the Lycoming County Conservation District voted to put stream crossing structure replacements on hold for 3 years, beginning in July 2022. The District will reevaluate the hold in 2025 after other Conservation Districts experience the new policy, standard, and technical documents.