

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 7, 2023

Potter County Conservation District
Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volume Roads Maintenance Program
Local QAB Policies and Procedures

Standards:

- Resolve road problems based on long-term maintenance and negative water quality impact reduction.
- Utilize the best-available environmentally sensitive maintenance practices for the specific project site.
- Prohibit practices and materials that are environmentally harmful or do not meet the Program's "nonpollution" standards:
 - Materials toxic to aquatic life, as defined by the Clean Streams Law, may not be used where runoff may enter concentrated surface or ground waters.
 - Apply commercial products in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Emphasize the protection of Exceptional Value and High Quality watersheds.
- Adhere to all applicable government laws, regulations, and permit requirements.
- Uphold commitment to continued road owner participation.

General Project Guidelines:

- A representative who will be actively involved with project development and construction shall have received environmentally sensitive maintenance training (ESM) certification within the last 5 years. Eligible road owners who require certification and do not have adequate funding may request reimbursement of up to \$200 to allow staff to attend ESM training.
- An ESM-certified representative from the applying entity is required to meet with the Conservation District on site to develop a prospective site plan prior to November 20th of the year preceding application submission. Pre-application meetings for stream crossing replacement projects must be held prior to September 15th of the year preceding application submission.
- Application generation and project construction shall be completed with oversight by an ESM-certified representative from the road-owning entity.
- Project applications will be ranked between March and April using the District-approved ranking form.
- The District and Road Owner can execute a contract following QAB and District Board approval typically completed in June of the application year. Administrative closeout,

including final reimbursement, must be completed by the last day of December of the following calendar year. Construction, corrections, final inspections, and completion report must be completed, and all project documents including invoices and in-kind contributions must be received 1 week prior to the December District Board meeting to meet the last day of the December closeout deadline. A 1-year contract extension for extenuating circumstances may be granted pending district board approval.

- All contracted labor for contracts exceeding \$25,000.00 is subject to Pennsylvania's Prevailing Wage Law.

Funding Requests:

- There is no maximum request threshold for project applications.
- A maximum of 15% of the grant request can be allotted to equipment and labor supplied by the applicant. Applicant supplied equipment shall be reimbursed at the appropriate FEMA Rate or the established rate by the road owner, whichever is lesser. Equipment and labor provided by a third-party contractor are exempt from this policy.
- A maximum of 20% of the grant request can be used for engineering services, not to exceed \$25,000.00.
- Project applications that contain multiple project phases must include an application for each phase of the project at the time of initial application. A phased project will be ranked for the total scope of work between all phases. This project ranking score will stay with each phase of the project. Subsequent phases of the project must be resubmitted each year to reflect any changes to cost or scope of work. Each phase of the project must be approved and contracted annually.
- Up to 50% of the contract amount can be requested for advance working capital. An additional 20% of the contract amount can be reimbursed following proof of expenditures. 30% of the contract amount will be withheld until final project completion.
- Contract amendments for extension of time or additional funding can be made at the discretion of the District. The project participant must request a funding amendment from the District and receive approval prior to expending funds exceeding the original contract amount. Contract amendments cannot exceed 40% of the original contract amount.
- If for any reason advance grant funds are not expensed, the unexpended sum must be returned to the District in full.

Construction:

- The Pennsylvania One Call System must be utilized prior to any excavation. A copy of the PA 1-Call serial number must be provided to the District.
- An off-right-of-way agreement or easement must be signed by the affected landowner prior to completing any work beyond the right-of-way or installing drainage features that will affect the landowner outside of the right-of-way.

Dirt and Gravel Roads:

- Drainage shall be installed in a manner that prevents accelerated erosion and to the degree that standing or flowing water along the project is absent.
- The existing road base or imported fill shall be crowned at 4-6% prior to road surface material placement.
- Driving surface aggregate shall be the only approved driving surface unless 12" of road fill and 6" of a competent road surface material is placed. Shale shall not be considered an eligible road surface material.
- Entities placing DSA must give the District 30 days advance notice.
- Preparation of the road before DSA placement requires:
 - a. Drainage installations are given a minimum 2-week settling time.
 - b. The road base be graded so that it is devoid of surface imperfections:
 - c. A 4-6% perpendicular slope of the road profile (Crown, Inslope, or Outslope).
 - d. A windrow of material to be placed along each shoulder to brace edges of the DSA (if necessary for safety).
 - e. Notching a 4 1/2" or 6" deep key depending on DSA placement depth into the existing road at the beginning and end points of DSA placement.
- Paver-placement of DSA shall be required for projects that use 500 tons or more of DSA. Grader placement shall be permissible for projects that use < 500 tons of DSA.
- DSA will be placed at an uncompacted depth of 6" or 8" at the discretion of the District.
- Compact DSA with a minimum 10-ton vibratory roller maintaining a 4-6% crown or cross slope by making overlapping lengthwise passes beginning at the ditch or berm-side and working toward the crown or the top edge. In no case shall the roller be run lengthwise on the top of the road crown.
- Utilize appropriate erosion and sediment control best management practices for the scope of work. All disturbed areas shall be permanently stabilized through the use of vegetation or rock.

Low Volume Roads:

- A written traffic study that verifies less than 500 motor vehicles per day travel along the project segment must be provided to the Conservation District prior to signing a contract.
- All drainage and/or base improvements must be corrected prior to making improvements to the road surface.
- Road resurfacing is an eligible grant-requested expense for paved roads that meet all of the above criteria.

Stream Crossings:

- Existing stream crossing structures under four feet in diameter or stream crossing containing multiple pipes are automatically eligible for replacement. Existing structures over four feet in diameter must be less than 75 percent of the bankfull channel width in order to be eligible.
- All stream crossing replacements must follow the DGLVR Stream Crossing Design and Installation Standard whether funded in whole or in part by the Program unless an exemption is applicable as determined by the District.
- Automatic exemptions from the DGLVR Standard apply to stream crossings where the defined bed and bank of the stream does not extend more than 500 feet upslope of the road ditch or the drainage area of the bed and bank coming to the road is 20 acres or less.
- A longitudinal profile survey must be completed by the District prior to application submission to inform project scope, design, and cost estimate.
- The new stream crossing replacement structure must be a single span at a minimum of 125% of the bankfull width.
- Stream crossing replacement design must include streambed features typical of the specific stream including bank margins, streambed materials, low flow channel, grade controls, and other stream features necessary to ensure stream continuity along the affected reach upstream, downstream, and through the road-stream crossing structure.
- All permit applications, site assessment, and design plans and specifications must be submitted to the District for review and written approval before they are submitted for permit review. Draft bid packages must also be submitted to District for review and approval before they are provided to potential bidders.

Outline of Project Sequence:

1. Notify Potter Conservation District of intent to submit an application for funding.
2. Conduct a pre-application meeting at each intended application site prior to November 20th (September 15th for stream crossing replacement application sites).
3. Generate and submit application.
 - a. A maximum of 2 DGLVR applications and 1 LVR application may be submitted by each eligible road-owning entity.
 - b. Assistance from the DGLVR Technician can be provided.
 - c. Incomplete applications will be subject to disqualification at PCCD's discretion.
4. Projects awarded funding will be announced.
5. (LVR) Conduct traffic study.
6. Modify work plan and application with PCCD if necessary. .
7. Sign contract.
8. Request of up to 50% of the contract for advance working capital is allowed.
9. Bid project materials/forward winning bids to the District Technician.
10. Bid project construction if work is not being completed by the road owner.
11. Submit request for contract amendment if necessary.

12. Notify Potter Conservation District prior to the beginning of construction within the duration specified in the contract.
13. Complete the project according to the work plan.
14. Complete inspection of finalized construction and completion report with District staff.
15. Sign project completion report and cost verification of project expenditures.
16. Receive final reimbursement of the remaining funds up to the awarded amount upon board approval.

Criteria for Equal Access:

- Correspondence on program updates and available training dates shall be sent to all eligible public road-owning entities via email and/or other written communication.
- The pre-application period, application, and specific deadlines shall be sent to all eligible entities.
- Special efforts shall be made to engage participants through a telephone conversation or a site visit.
- QAB meetings containing formal actions shall be open to the public and follow the requirements of the Sunshine Act.
- QAB members must abstain from voting on proposed policy or action items for which they have a vested interest.
- Shall prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status.