Dirt and Gravel Roads
2008 Annual Maintenance Workshop

Preliminary plans are underway for the 2008 Maintenance Workshop. The annual event usually draws over 200 attendees from County Conservation Districts, Municipalities, Forestry, and more. The three-day workshop includes concurrent classroom sessions and field trips to demonstration projects to see Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Practices in action. This year’s workshop will be held in Westmoreland County in Southwest PA. Look for details as part of a registration package to be sent out this Spring.

When: October 1-3, 2008

Where: Antiochian Village
(Westmoreland County, north of Ligonier)

The Center’s website has grown in recent years to become a valuable resource to Conservation Districts and other environmental and road maintenance professionals. Here is an overview of the resources contained on the website www.dirtandgravelroads.org:

News: News updates and access to current and past newsletter issues.
Calendar: Dates of ESM trainings and other events related to the Center.
Education & Training: Information about the ESM training and Annual Workshop:
- ESM training background, documentation, attendees, etc.
- Details about the Center’s Statewide Annual Workshop each Fall.
Resources: Various technical documentation including: 19 technical bulletins on specific road maintenance practices; blank D&G Program forms; extensive Driving Surface Aggregate information; approved products list; information and reference material for DGRoads GIS system, and more.
Road Work: Information about specific demonstration projects that the Center has been involved with including 15 “Worksites in Focus” which detail a specific project including practices used, location, and cost.
Research: Information about the Center’s current and past research projects.
About Us: Details about the Center, including map and contact information.

Our Mission...
Providing research, education, and out-reach advocating use of environmentally sound principles and strategies where natural systems interact with things manmade.

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(1-866-668-6683)
Unpaved Road Assessment

Pennsylvania’s sixty-six County Conservation Districts are currently in the middle of a two year assessment of unpaved roads. The assessment process involves the field-verification and inspection of unpaved roads to determine where sediment pollution is adversely affecting local aquatic habitats. The current inventory of 17,000 miles of unpaved roads (red on map below) and 13,000 verified pollution sites (yellow on map below) will be updated during this assessment. Assessments must be completed by the end of 2008. More details can be found at www.dirtandgravelroads.org; click on “Assessment Page” link on the homepage.

Assessment Notes for Districts

Spring is one of the best times of year to work on your County’s unpaved road assessment. Vegetation has not yet obscured your view from the road, and the abundance of water makes determining flow paths much easier. Remember that only sections of unpaved road where runoff enters local waterways should be made into worksites and assessed. Also remember that completed worksites should not be changed or deleted during your assessment, otherwise the financial data contained in these sites will be lost. As always, contact the Center with questions or concerns.

PLEASE! Backup, Backup, Backup

If you are not backing up your worksites, you are asking for trouble! Computer crashes are frustrating enough without loosing days or weeks worth of assessment data and time. I highly recommend making a worksite backup after every day of assessment. Making a backup is quick and easy:

First, use the “create zip file” function. This is the same function used to submit annual summary reports. It creates a zipfile containing all the worksite data. The zipfile will be named “countyname.zip” and will be located in the “C:\ERRI\DGRoads\Zipfiles” directory on your computer.

Second, copy the “countyname.zip” file mentioned above onto a floppy disk, CD, Flash Drive, external hard drive, or network drive. If you add a date to the file name for each zipfile, you will build an archive of saved worksite information. Hopefully you will never need to use it!

-Steve Bloser, CDGRS
ESM Training Background
The 2-day Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance (ESM) Training is an education and outreach effort sponsored by the PA State Conservation Commission’s Dirt and Gravel Road Program and presented through the Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies. To be eligible for grant funding under the program, someone from the applying agency must have attended one of these ESM trainings within the previous five years. The two-day trainings are held regionally throughout PA in cooperation with local County Conservation Districts. The ESM training covers many aspects of road maintenance and focuses on practices to reduce both maintenance costs and environmental impact on unpaved roads.

What is new in 2008?
The Center works every winter to update and improve the ESM training. The “Surface Maintenance” chapter is being completely redone for the 2008 ESM season. In addition to the new chapter, the entire ESM training received an update this winter to incorporate new pictures and reduce repetition. The 2008 ESM training schedule is listed on the back of this newsletter.

The Center’s newest staff member, Tim Ziegler, has been working into the role of ESM Instructor over the past 18 months. Attendees at ESM training in 2008 can expect to see a combination of Dave Creamer, Dave Shearer, and Tim Ziegler in front of the class.

Accreditation
Beginning in the Fall of 2007, ESM training attendees will receive 1.3 Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Credits. The CEUs are from Penn State’s College of Engineering. CEUs are widely used by employers and professional societies to provide evidence of completion of continuing education and training courses.

Increasing Interest
The Center has seen a growth in interest from out-of-state entities in attending the ESM trainings held in Pennsylvania. The Center has developed a strategy that will allow these parties to attend ESM trainings while minimizing the impact they have on District and Center resources. Beginning in 2008, the Center will enact a registration fee for out-of-state entities to attend ESM trainings in Pennsylvania. Attendees from within Pennsylvania will continue to attend free of charge.

In order to minimize financial impacts on Districts and maintain the quality and focus of the ESM training, several guidelines will be followed by the Center when scheduling ESM trainings. First, in order to eliminate any financial burden to host Conservation Districts, the cost of lunches for out-of-state training attendees will be reimbursed to the host District from the Center’s registration charge. Second, although the average out-of-state attendance is expected to be 0-3 per training, the number of out-of-state attendees will be limited to a maximum of 10 at any one training. Finally, if any training session approaches capacity, priority for registration will be given to agencies from within Pennsylvania.

It is the Center’s hope that by following these guidelines, our mission of education and outreach can be expanded, while maintaining the level of training quality that attendees have come to expect. Contact the Center with any questions.

-Steve Bloser, CDGRS
## 2008 Two-Day ESM Training Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Erie</td>
<td>May 21-22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York</td>
<td>July 15-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clearfield</td>
<td>October 14-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susquehanna</td>
<td>June 17-18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wayne</td>
<td>August 12-13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greene</td>
<td>November 5-6</td>
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Contact the Center to register for one of the above trainings or to discuss hosting a training near you. Please contact Kathy Moir at 814-865-5355.

## 2008 Other Events

- **May 11-14:** Annual PSATS (Township Association) convention in Hershey
- **Oct 1-3:** Annual Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Workshop – Ligonier, PA
- **State Conservation Commission Meetings:** 3/13, 5/20, 7/29(w/PACD), 9/16, 11/12

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**Kathy Moir**, Administrative Assistant  
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PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Pennsylvania’s Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Program provides grant funding to eliminate stream pollution caused by runoff and sediment from unpaved roads. The program and its annual $4 Million apportionment for “environmentally sound maintenance” were enacted into law in April 1997, as Section 9106 – PA Vehicle Code. Each year, the State Conservation Commission allocates this “dedicated and earmarked funding”, based on identified need, to County Conservation Districts. Townships and other road-owning entities, after successful completion of required 2-day “Environmentally Sensitive Road Maintenance” training course, apply to local Conservation Districts for these maintenance funds to address identified pollution problems using environmentally sound road maintenance practices.

KEY FACTS about the Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Program

• Stresses site-specific, long-term solutions to prevent erosion and pollution, not “band-aid” fixes.
• Minimal administration; limited to 2% at the state level; limited to 10% at the local level.
• Emphasis on informed local control and environmental soundness puts decision-making at local level.
• Adherence to program values assured through central training, technical assistance, and quality control.
• Reduces pollution while promoting sustainable unpaved roads. “Chip-sealing” or paving is not funded.
• Over 17,000 miles of public unpaved road (forestry roads not included) have been inspected.
• Over 13,000 “Worksites” where road runoff negatively impacts a stream are mapped and assessed.
• Computerized GIS system used for project tracking and central reporting with minimal paperwork.

2007 STATUS

The map below illustrates all of the completed worksites from 1997 through 2007. A total of 1,790 contracts have been completed on 1640 individual worksites totaling 774 miles in length. All sites below have at least one completed contract, red sites have had a contracted completed in 2007.

All information based on reports submitted by individual County Conservation Districts.
### Project Spending

Each year since 1997, Pennsylvania’s County Conservation Districts receive approximately $3 Million in funding that is earmarked solely for project work. The graph on the right illustrates the spending on project work over the decade-long program. After a delayed start, annual spending is now beginning to approach an equilibrium with the $3 Million earmarked for project work each year (red line on graph).

In-Kind Contributions are materials, equipment, and labor costs that are donated by grant recipients. While no in-kind matches are required, the Program has averaged over 37 cents of in-kind contribution for every dollar of grant money. **2007 showed the largest in-kind total in program history with $1,500,000 matched, or 49 cents for every grant dollar.**

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### Aggregate Trends

The most notable trend in projects is the decrease in the amount of Driving Surface Aggregate (DSA) over the past several years. This is a result of both the increased price of aggregate, and the increased emphasis that is being placed on drainage work by many Districts. Since DSA is now approved by PENNDOT for liquid fuels spending, this trend is likely to continue in the future as many Districts try to stretch their funding by focusing on drainage issues over aggregate. DSA is the only approved surface aggregate in the program, but is not required to be used on any project.