environmentally sensitive maintenance (ESM) training

The two-day ESM training covers many aspects of road maintenance and focuses on practices to reduce maintenance costs and environmental impact from unpaved roads.

Have questions or want to schedule an ESM training? Want to receive future newsletters?
Contact Kathy Moir at:
1-866-No-To-Mud
(1-866-666-6683)
dirtandgravel@psu.edu
www.dirtandgravelroads.org

2008 Two-Day ESM Training Schedule

Wayne: August 12-13
Greene: November 5-6

The Center is beginning to book ESM trainings for 2009. Please contact the Center ASAP if you are interested in hosting an ESM training. Also contact the Center to register for one of the above trainings at 814-865-5355.

2008 Other Events

Oct 1-3: Annual Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Workshop – Ligonier, PA
State Conservation Commission Meetings: 7/29(w/PACD), 9/16, 11/12

www.dirtandgravelroads.org

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University Park, PA 16802

July 2008

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Kathy Moir: Providing research, education, and outreach by advocating the use of environmentally sound principles and strategies where natural systems interact with things mankind.

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University Park, PA 16802
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The Newsletter of the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads at Penn State

Summer 2008

2008 Annual Maintenance Workshop REMINDER

The 2008 Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Workshop will be held October 1-3 in Westmoreland County, 7 miles north of Ligonier. Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Strategies for unpaved roads will be the focus of the workshop. This workshop will feature concurrent classroom sessions, trips to active field sites, Driving Surface Aggregate placement, and a visit to a local quarry. If you have not received registration information, it is available on the homepage of our website at www.dirtandgravelroads.org. For more information, contact Kathy Moir at 814-865-5355 or kmoir@psu.edu.

Unpaved Road Assessment...the home stretch

It may be hard to believe, but there is still only about 5 months left for Conservation Districts to complete their assessment of unpaved roads. Assessment data will be due along with annual summary reports by January 15, 2009. Below are a few tips for the “final push” that many Districts have been “waiting for” to complete their assessment this summer and fall.

• Remember to backup your data. Please remember to make a “zipfile” each day and save it on an external device. This will ensure that your data and time will not be lost if your computer dies.
• If you would like the Center to check on your assessment data, you can e-mail your zipfile to Steve Blosier at smb201@psu.edu just like you would for an annual summary report. Steve can compare your data to previous versions to confirm that your assessment is on track.
• Assessing roads without leaf cover is easier, but don’t wait to long to begin the assessment in earnest.
• If you have misplaced assessment documentation, it can all be found at www.dirtandgravelroads.org under the “assessment page” link on the homepage.
• Contact Steve with any questions at smb201@psu.edu, 814-865-5967.

Antis Township

Ligonier, PA
October 1-3
2008

July 2008
On Unpaved Roads…. DROP the Drop-Inlet…

“They Just Don’t Work, at least not for long”

Over the past year, Center Staff have come across several projects where urban-style grated drop inlets have been used on unpaved roads. The Center does not recommend the use of drop inlets for unpaved roads. Aside from making maintenance such as grading nearly impossible, they will typically develop one of two major problems which render them useless:

1) They clog: In large events where material of significant size is moving in the road ditch, inlets can easily become plugged and buried,

2) They become to high: Unlike the paved surfaces for which these inlets were designed, unpaved road elevations change over time. As is the case in the picture to the right, when the road elevation decreases due to wear or compaction, the inlet is left high and dry above the ditch line.

“Leave drop-inlets where they belong, in the pavement.”

Township Supervisors Convention Summary

Each Spring the annual PSATS (PA State Assn. of Township Supervisors) convention in Hershey brings in hundreds of municipalities from across PA. Center and Program staff man a booth for the three day convention where we discuss the Dirt and Gravel Road Program with municipalities. We also provide anyone who visits us with a map of their municipality highlighting their unpaved roads and worksites. Visitors are also offered Program information and encouraged to contact their Conservation District about the Program. The map above indicates the municipalities which have visited with us at PSATS since 2002, shaded light blue. Dark blue municipalities represent the 200 municipalities who visited and received printed maps in May of 2008. This outreach effort is important because of the high municipal turnover rate.

Oil and Gas Roads

PA’s New “Gold Rush,” the Marcellus Shale...

As many of you are undoubtedly aware, Pennsylvania is experiencing a new flurry of activity in gas exploration and drilling. Much of this is due to the renewed interest in extracting gas from the deep Marcellus Shale layer. There were over 7,000 drilling permits issued statewide in 2006-07 alone. If you are unfamiliar with the Marcellus Shale, the following website provides an excellent brief summary: http://geology.com/articles/marcellus-shale.shtml.

A Question of Roads

Over the past year, the Center has been receiving an ever-increasing number of concerns, questions, and general interest about road issues associated with this new drilling boom. These concerns generally fall into two categories: the effect of heavy hauling on existing public roads; and the environmental effect of poorly planned or constructed private access roads. In order to begin to understand the scope of the problems, and to identify potential solutions, the Center organized a Roundtable meeting in State College on July 16, 2008.

Roundtable

The Center’s “Oil and Gas Road Issues” Roundtable meeting was held July 16, 2008 in State College. Over 75 people attended the meeting including representatives from DEP, Conservation Districts, PA Forestry, Allegheny National Forest, PENNDOT, and more. The 4 hour session opened with brief presentations for several stakeholders, and concluded with open discussion and questions from attendees. Discussion on existing road impacts focused on PENNDOT’s posting and bonding program. Posting a weight limit and requiring haulers to bond a road is the ONLY defensible mechanism that municipalities have to insure their roads are not damaged. Pennsylvania LTAP provides trainings on posting and bonding throughout the State. Discussion on new access road focused on environmental impacts and permitting. Well operations disturbing less than 5 acres of ground must complete and display an Erosion and Sediment control plan. Larger operations must obtain a new “ESCGP-1” permit. Meeting synopsis and other related documents can be found on the Center’s website at www.dirtandgravelroads.org.

Dirt and Gravel Program

Dirt and Gravel Program FY 2008-09 District Allocations will remain exactly the same as 2007-08 allocations. Districts should expect checks to arrive in August of 2008.

2008 schedule of QA/QC visits

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mlklimkos@state.pa.us