2009 Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Workshop Moves Back to State College
September 22-23, Toftrees Conference Center

The Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads Annual Maintenance Workshop is heading back to State College for the first time since 2003. The event will be held at Toftrees Conference Center on September 22-23, 2009. The workshop has grown in popularity over the years and remains one of the biggest priorities in the Center’s mission of education and outreach. The Workshop will include concurrent classroom sessions about unpaved road maintenance, visits to active and completed field sites, vendor displays, and networking time. While the workshop is intended for Conservation District, Bureau of Forestry, and Municipal personnel involved in PA’s Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Program, outside interest has increased in recent years. Attendees last year hailed from as far away as California and Arkansas. The Center hopes to build upon this increasing interest in 2009 by advertising the workshop to a larger and more varied audience. Look for much more information about the 2009 workshop in future announcements and newsletters.

DGRoads GIS Upgrade

The Center is currently working with the Penn State Institutes for Energy and the Environment to upgrade the DGRoads GIS system used to track worksites within the Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Program. The upgrade will migrate the DGRoads program from ArcView 3.2 to MapWindow GIS software. MapWindow is a free, “open source” software package (more info at www.mapwindow.com). MapWindow GIS was chosen because it is free, easily customizable, not tied to a particular company, and compatible with all windows operating systems. The new program will be in development throughout this year. Any Conservation Districts who wish to be involved in “beta-testing” of the new GIS software later this year should contact Steve Bloser at smb201@psu.edu. Look for more details and updates in the near future.

-Steve Bloser, CDGRS
Center Moves to PSU’s Larson Transportation Institute

The Only Thing ‘Constant’ is ‘Change’

Center’s Move to “LTI”

With the beginning of the New Year the Center has undergone a transfer of academic affiliation within the University from the Penn State Institutes for Energy and the Environment (PSIEE) to the Larson Transportation Institute (LTI). This re-affiliation with the Transportation Institute represents a full circle return to our roots, since it was within this Institute that the Program was originally implemented and the very early 2-day ESM training materials developed.

From the outside, you should not recognize any substantial change in the services that we provide. The only noticeable change will be that Kathy Moir is going to be more relaxed since this new affiliation will make her life a great deal easier. The only other visible change will be a slight name change in the address of the Center to reflect its inclusion into LTI structure. Our office location will not change and telephone numbers will not change.

Why did this change occur?

In 2007, The Penn State Institute for the Environment became the Penn State Institute for ENERGY and the Environment. With this name change came a shift in focus for the Institute. The new director of an ‘energy and environmental’ organization reviewed it and recognized that he had a ‘dirt and gravel road’ center; one that focuses strongly on the environment but a transportation center nonetheless. Located next door to PSIEE, the Larson Transportation Institute is an organization which deals with all sorts of roads and was lacking an environmental component. The fit seems obvious for both Institutes and as it turns out will work out the best for the Center. This re-affiliation will strengthen the Center’s ties to the transportation community both locally and nationally. The Center, as the largest “environmental” component of LTI, looks forward to cooperating on new projects with new partners in the coming years.

What is the Larson Transportation Institute (LTI) (text from LTI website):

The Thomas D. Larson Pennsylvania Transportation Institute (LTI) is the locus for transportation-related research at Penn State. Founded in 1968 and administered through the College of Engineering, the Institute has grown from a small research facility to one of the nation’s leading university transportation centers. LTI pursues a threefold mission of research, education, and service through three research programs: Transportation Infrastructure, Transportation Operations, and Vehicle Systems & Safety. LTI has 47 affiliated academic and research faculty representing colleges, departments, institutes and campuses from across the University system. Engineering departments represented include Civil and Environmental, Mechanical and Nuclear, Architectural, Electrical, Engineering Science and Mechanics, and Industrial and Manufacturing. Other departments represented include Statistics, Fuel Science, Supply Chain and Information Systems, Curriculum and Instruction, and The Behrend College School of Engineering and Engineering Technology. The Institute is the home of several federal and regional centers, including the Bus Research and Testing Center operated for the Federal Transit Administration, the Mid-Atlantic Universities Transportation Center, and the Northeast Center of Excellence for Pavement Technology.
### Miscellaneous

#### Project Spotlight

**Lawrence County Boat Launch and Access Road Dedicated to Soldier**

The Lawrence County Conservation District recently completed the rehabilitation of a newly acquired Fish and Boat Commission access road and boat ramp. The project, located in Wayne township along the Beaver River, was a cooperative effort to honor Sgt. Allan R. Bevington who was killed in action in Iraq in September of 2006. Land for the boat ramp and access road were donated by local resident David Lias. Some materials and services were donated by Cemex and Wolf Creek Holdings. Funding for the $40,000 project came from the County’s Dirt and Gravel Road Program, the Lawrence County Commissioners, and the Ellwood - Wampum Gun Club. The project included drainage improvements and the placement of 480 tons of Driving Surface Aggregate to both the access road and 20 vehicle parking lot. This new site now provides the only public access for motorized boats in Lawrence County. The new public access area was dedicated during a ceremony on October 11, 2008 to Sgt. Bevington who spent much of his youth hunting and fishing in the Beaver Falls Area.

#### Other Center Activities

While the support of Pennsylvania’s Dirt and Gravel Road Program remains our focus, the Center is currently working on several other potential projects including:

- Working with the Schuylkill Center near Philadelphia to layout their access road using Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Practices.
- Environmentally Sensitive Trail Maintenance:
  - Cooperating with Michaux State Forest to rehabilitate several miles of badly eroded ATV trails maintained by the District.
  - Partnering with Shaver’s Creek Environmental Center at PSU to design a new ADA trail in Stone Valley Recreation Area in Huntingdon County.
  - Working to gain support to create a one-day “ESM for Trails” training that will adapt ESM practices currently used on unpaved roads.
- The Center has partnered with the PA Fish and Boat Commission and the PSU Environmental Engineering Department to provide assistance on a project in McKean County that is trying to examine the buffering effects of road-based limestone and crab-shell chitin to neutralize acid precipitation.
- In February, the Center was contracted by the Nature Conservancy of Arkansas to provide a modified Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Training to local road maintenance professionals in Arkansas.
- The Center is Working with the Allegheny National Forest on potential projects there to quantify and reduce the effects from oil and gas drilling roads.

*Look for updates on these and other projects in the future.*

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### Schedule of QA/QC Visits

D&G Program Quality Assurance/ Quality Control visits scheduled in 2009:

- Monroe 3/12
- Northampton 3/25
- Forest 5/13
- Cumberland 5/21
- Union 6/17
- Lehigh 7/23
- Lawrence 8/13
- Snyder 9/3
- Lebanon 10/6
- Montour 10/28

2009 will mark the completion of the first round of QA/QC visits to all districts in the state.

**Contact:**
Mike Klimkos
D&G Program Coordinator
ph: (717) 787-2103
mklimkos@state.pa.us

### 2009 Assessments

Conservation Districts recently completed an assessment of unpaved roads to identify stream pollution sites. Results of the 2007-08 statewide assessment of unpaved roads are currently being compiled. Look forward to a summary of assessment results in the next Center Newsletter. While slightly over 13,000 sites existed statewide in 2007, preliminary estimates for the new assessment is around 16,500 total sites.

*Steve Bloser, CDGRS*
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
(1-866-668-6683)
dirtandgravel@psu.edu
www.dirtandgravelroads.org

Two-Day ESM Training Schedule

Lycoming: March 18-19, 2009
Tioga: May 19-20
Blair: July 14-15
Columbia: October 21-22
Luzerne: April 7-8
McKean: June 16-17
Dauphin: August 11-12
Carbon/Northampton: Nov 17-18

Contact the Center to register for one of the above trainings at 814-865-5355.

2009 Other Events

Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads 2009 Workshop: September 22-23, State College
PSATS annual Conference (Hershey): April 12-22
2009 State Conservation Commission Meetings: 3/18 Harrisburg, 5/19 Johnstown, 7/21 St College w PACD, 9/16 Harrisburg, 11/18 Harrisburg

Kathy Moir, Administrative Assistant
Center for Dirt & Gravel Road Studies
207 Research Unit D
University Park, PA 16802