Program Funding Update

PA “Senate Bill 1” of 2013 pertaining to transportation funding was introduced by Senator Rafferty on May 3, 2013. The $~2.5 Billion bill proposes to increase funding for roads, bridges, and many other forms of transportation in Pennsylvania. The bill, currently in the House for consideration (as of 6/10/13), contains language that, if enacted, would significantly increase funding to the Dirt and Gravel Road Program (both SCC and Forestry). The bill still needs to get through the House and Governor, all by June 30th, so this month should be exciting! (more info) Lots more details to come if the bill is approved!

Karen Books Leaves Program Coordinator Position

Karen Books has been the Statewide Coordinator of the Dirt and Gravel Road Program with the State Conservation Commission since December of 2009. Karen, who previously worked as a District technician, District Manager, and DEP Field Rep, will continue her role in support of Pennsylvania’s Conservation Districts in her new position as a Water Program Specialist in the Conservation District Support Section of the Department of Environmental Protection. Karen, thanks to support from DEP and SCC, will remain involved in the Program until a new Program Coordinator is up and running. Center staff would like to thank Karen for her efforts over the past few years and wish her the best of luck in the future.

We also want to congratulate Karen on the early arrival of her daughter, Virginia Elizabeth Books, on June 6! Both Karen and Virginia are doing well.

Center Receives 2013 “Karl Mason” Environmental Stewardship Award from PAEP

The Pennsylvania Association of Environmental Professionals (PAEP) awarded the Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies with the 2013 Karl Mason Award on May 9th, 2013. Karl Mason served as PA’s first Environmental Administrator from 1952-1966 and is credited with establishing a holistic vision of environmental management that effects the conservation community to this day.

According to PAEP, the Karl Mason Award is presented to “An organization, project or program that has made a significant contribution toward maintenance or restoration of Pennsylvania’s...continued on page 2
How will this additional funding be handled if it is received?

The currently proposed legislation does not change anything about the structure of the Dirt and Gravel Road Program. It simply increases the funding level. Funds would still be non-lapsing. The Bureau of Forestry would still receive 20% of Program funding.

As far as Conservation District allocations, the SCC and Center jointly run several advisory groups to the SCC. The group that has traditionally been responsible for the allocation formula has been kept up to speed and started preliminary discussions. This group will be instrumental in the potential changes to the Program, although it is important to remember that they only make recommendations, and that the SCC will have the final say. The group is trying to be proactive in preparing for these potential changes, while at the same time not counting the chickens before they hatch.

“Phasing” Projects

Many Conservation Districts have begun to fund projects in phases in order to stretch their dollars or keep more municipalities involved in the Program. Funding a project in “phases” usually involves funding drainage and base improvements in one construction season, then funding Driving Surface Aggregate on the same site the following year. The end result is one complete project done over 2-3 years. Some potential advantages of phasing projects include:

• The project costs can be spread out over multiple years. This can allow Districts with limited funds to keep several projects going simultaneously, as opposed to sitting back and saving up money until one whole project can be funded.
• The drainage and base improvements can be monitored for a year. Anything that was "missed" can then be addressed before the Driving Surface Aggregate, typically the highest cost item, is installed.
• On some projects, especially large road fill jobs, it may be advantageous to let the road “settle” for a season. The road can then be graded prior to DSA placement. If DSA is placed immediately after road filling, any differential settling in the fill material would be reflected in the final road surface.
• There may be a cost advantage to phasing a project instead of “breaking” it into smaller projects. For example, DSA placement can be cheaper (per ton) for larger projects since the mobilization costs are a smaller part of the total price.

Districts can choose to phase projects using a single contract, held open for two years, or by using separate contracts for each phase of project work. The DGRoads GIS system allows for the tracking of phased projects with the use of multiple contracts for a single worksite.

2013 Annual Maintenance Workshop

October 1 & 2, 2013, Lewisburg, PA

The 2013 Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Workshop details are in the process of being finalized. The Workshop will be held at the Best Western Plus “Country Cupboard” in Lewisburg, PA. Lewisburg is in close proximity to several potential field trips partnering with several nearby Conservation Districts and State Forest Districts that are active in the Dirt and Gravel Road Program. Workshop attendance counts as an ESM training “re-certification” for those who have attended the ESM training in the past.

Online Workshop Registration Open! www.dirtandgravelroads.org Select “workshop” in top right corner.
What roads are eligible for funding?

“Other” Eligible Entities

The article in our last newsletter about the PA Game Commission generated questions about their eligibility under the Dirt and Gravel Road Program, so we thought we would clarify exactly who and what is eligible:

**Eligible Roads:** In order to be eligible for the D&G Program, there are a few relatively simple criteria that a road must meet:

- Must be **publicly owned** (see eligible entities below).
- Must be open to public **vehicle** travel at least some of the year (this means PGC or Forestry roads that are only open for hunting season are eligible).
- Must be impacting the waters of the Commonwealth (i.e. a worksite).
- Someone from owning/applying agency must be **ESM certified** within the past 5 years. It should be noted that people are certified, not entities. This means that if the only person with the certification leaves, someone else from the entity must get certified before they are eligible for funding again.
- **Trails for ATVs or non-motorized use** are NOT eligible.
- **Note that work can be done “off the right of way” on private roads, as long as the work is part of a project on the public road, and the work done outside the right-of-way is addressing a problem on the public road.**

**Eligible Entities:** Many public road-owning entities are eligible for funding. Beware though, discovering road ownership is not always straightforward. Sometimes a township can own a road right-of-way through State property. It is important to find out who legally owns and maintains the road.

- **Municipalities:** With over 16,000 miles of unpaved roads, townships are the most common applicant for funding. Note that towns and boroughs are eligible as well.
- **PA Game Commission:** road managers apply to Districts just like a municipality.
- **State Forests:** The Bureau of Forestry administers their own $1 Million Dirt and Gravel Road Program on their Roads. They do **not** apply to Conservation Districts. Only “public use” roads are funded by the Bureau (not administrative roads or drivable trails). Matt Beaver and Jason Hall are the points of contact for more info in the Bureau.
- **State Parks:** While part of DCNR, State Parks do not apply to the Bureau of Forestry for funds. They are eligible to apply to Conservation Districts for funding just like a municipality.
- **Fish and Boat:** PA Fish and Boat Commission access roads are also eligible, and are usually good candidates since they are always near water!
- **County Lands:** Parks and other County lands may contain roads that are eligible for Program funding.
- **Other:** Other public entities may exist that are eligible. **Contact Center or SCC staff for case-by-case eligibility details.**
- **NOT Eligible:** Note that private companies, parks, and conservancies, even non-profits, are NOT eligible for funding. Federal lands such as National Forests, monuments, or Army Corp roads are also NOT eligible.

The Program’s “Quality Assurance/Quality Control” effort:

The QAQC effort visits individual Conservation Districts to assess and recommend improvements to the local Dirt and Gravel Road Program.

The QAQC effort is temporarily on hold because of the staff change at the SCC.

For questions about the QAQC process, contact the State Conservation Commission at 717-787-2103.

Annual Summary Reports

The importance of the Dirt and Gravel Roads Annual Summary Report was on full display in 2012 and 2013 in the effort to increase Program funding. Quick and easy access to the vast amount of GIS data collected and stored by the DGRoads system has been invaluable in summarizing and justifying the Program to lawmakers and others. The GIS system and annual summary reports will continue to be critical to the streamlined nature of the Program, with or without additional funding.

June 2013

-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. Certification within 5 years is required to apply for Program funds.

Have questions or want to schedule an ESM training? Contact Kathy Moir at: (1-866-668-6683) dirtandgravel@psu.edu

Two-Day ESM Training Schedule
Indiana: June 12&13  York/Lancaster/Lebanon: July 10-11
Dauphin/Northumberland/Schuylkill: August 13-14

Contact the Center to register for a training, or to discuss hosting one (814-865-5355). Registration is also available online at www.dirtandgravelroads.org under “edu/training.” Trainings are set up on request in conjunction with County Conservation Districts.

Other Events
SCC meetings: July 15 (Valley Forge), Sept 10 (Hbg), Nov 12 (Hbg)
PACD: Annual Conference July 15-16 (Valley Forge)
Dirt & Gravel Annual Maintenance Workshop: Oct 1 & 2, 2013
2013 maintenance workshop

Best Western Plus Country Cupboard Inn ● Lewisburg, PA ● October 1 & 2, 2013

Register online: www.dirtandgravelroads.org
or
Fax this registration form to: 814-863-6787

On-Site Check-In: Monday, Sept. 30th
Tuesday, Oct. 1st

Scheduled Events:
- Ice-Breaker BBQ on evening of Sept 30th
- Vendor Reception and Award Banquet on Oct 1st at the historic Lewisburg Hotel
- Concurrent Classes
- Invited Speakers
- Field Trips

Municipal and District officials involved in the Program currently have to attend the 2-day ESM training every five years. Beginning in 2009, attendance at the entire two-day workshop will count as a “recertification” of the ESM training requirements for municipal and district officials. See Kathy Moir at the registration desk for sign-in sheet and certification registration cards. (note that it will count for a re-certification only, you must have attended the ESM training at least once in the past)
REGISTER ONLINE!: Please register online if possible. Credit Cards accepted. Registration form below for those who are unable to register online. www.dirtandgravelroads.org (click on 2013 workshop in top right corner)

FIRST NAME: ___________________________ LAST NAME: ___________________________

TITLE: ___________________________ AFFILIATION: ___________________________
(if you are a township, include township and County)

ADDRESS: ___________________________

CITY/STATE/ZIP ___________________________

PHONE ___________________________ FAX ___________________________

EMAIL (REQUIRED) ___________________________

Registration Fee: $220 early bird registration, after August 15, $240 (PA Program affiliated entity)

Vendor Registration Fee: $400 early bird registration, after August 15, $450 (booth space, 1 person attending, includes skirted table and 2 chairs) (additional person(s) same as “regular” registration fee above, attach separate form)

Private Company/Out of State: $380 early bird registration, after August 15, $400 (not vending)

Total Fees: ___________________________

(TCheck made out to Penn State), Send to: Kathy Moir Center for Dirt & Gravel Roads 215 Transportation Research Building University Park, PA 16802

T-Shirt Size (circle one):

Small  Medium
Large  XL
2XL  3XL

I will arrive on Monday, Sept. 30  I am staying at the Best Western

You are responsible for hotel arrangements. Rooms reserved (rate of $77/night) at the Best Western Country Cupboard, (570)524-5500. Please use block of rooms under, “Dirt & Gravel Workshop.” This room rate will be good until September 15th, 2013. Other hotels are in proximity.

Prefered Registration Method: Register online: www.dirtandgravelroads.org

QUESTIONS?? 814-865-5355

Note: Registration and hotel costs are eligible Admin or Education expenses for Program funds.
Dirt and Gravel Road Program Overview

Pennsylvania’s Dirt and Gravel Road Maintenance Program provides grant funding to local municipalities in order to eliminate stream pollution caused by runoff and sediment from unpaved roads. The Program was enacted into law in April 1997, as Section 9106 of the PA Vehicle Code, with $4 Million in annual funding for “environmentally sensitive road maintenance”. Each year, the State Conservation Commission allocates this funding, based on identified need, to County Conservation Districts. Townships and other road-owning entities apply to their local District for these funds to address identified pollution problems using environmentally sound road maintenance practices. All grant applicants must have completed a 2-day training course entitled “Environmentally Sensitive Road Maintenance” focused on lowering maintenance costs and reducing stream pollution.

2012 Summary:

Calendar year 2012 saw a record high level of township in-kind contributions, along with record high total spending on project work within the Program. In-kind contributions continue to play a pivotal role as Conservation Districts try to stretch Program funds further every year (detailed below in “Program Efficiency”).

A total of 197 sites were completed in 50 Counties and 149 townships in 2012. To date, a total of 2,427 Projects have been completed in 65 Counties and 677 municipalities. Over 14,000 pollution sites on unpaved roads have been field-identified and are awaiting funding. More Program info: www.dirtandgravelroads.org

Program Efficiency: 78% of Program funds spent on projects, effectively 115% with in-kind

The Dirt and Gravel Road Program is extremely efficient at focusing funding at “on-the-ground” projects. This is due to tight administrative spending limits and the ability to leverage in-kind funds through Program Participants. When in-kind is included, the Program is effectively 115% efficient at spending money on projects. The details:

- **Allocated to Program Through FY 2011-12**: Total Funding to the District portion of the Program from FY 1997-98 through FY 2011-12. Allocation for FY 2012-13 was not included here because it was not received until September of 2012.
- **Spent on, or Committed to, PROJECTS**: The remaining $13.2 M includes some unencumbered funds and all education and administration expenditures at the State and local level. The Program puts 78% of its allocation “on-the-ground”.
- **In-kind Contributions**: While no match is required statewide, applicants average an in-kind contribution of $0.48 for every Program $1 spent on Projects.
- **“Effective” Project Spending**: $46.8M of project spending, added to $22.4M of in-kind project spending, means the Program has put $69.2M into “on-the-ground” project spending in the form of materials, equipment, and labor.
- **“EFFECTIVE” SPENDING EFFICIENCY**: With $69.2M in projects completed with $60M in funding, the Program has been effectively 115% efficient in putting money “on-the-ground”. For every Program $1, $1.15 of project work is done!
Project Spending:
2012 showed an upturn in project spending on 197 completed sites after several excessively wet years where project work was difficult. $3.55M of Program Funds were spent on projects in 2012 compared to the 10-year average of $3.03M. Township in-kind contributions continued to grow to a record high of $2M in 2012 as Conservation Districts try to stretch the limited Program dollars further. When all project spending is totaled, 2012 saw the most money spent on projects to date with $5.85M. The “other sources” of in kind consist largely of Growing Greener or ARRA stimulus money.

Education:
Education is the cornerstone of the Program's success around the state. The Program’s two major educational efforts, run through the Center for Dirt and Gravel Roads, are the 2-day Environmentally Sensitive Maintenance Course (attendance required to participate in Program), and the Annual Maintenance Workshop.

ESM Course:
A total of 491 people attended the 8 “Environmentally Sensitive Road Maintenance” training courses that were held at various locations around the State in 2012. Since the Program’s inception, there have been 206 ESM course sessions with a total of 6,611 attendees.

Annual Maintenance Workshop
The Annual Maintenance Workshop was held in Dubois, PA in September and drew 180 attendees. Topics highlighted included Marcellus-impacted worksites, “GRS-IBS” bridges, a pipe demonstration, a rock crusher demo, and various classroom presentations. The 2013 Workshop is scheduled for October 1-2 in Lewisburg, PA.

Project Spotlight:
Each one of the 2,427 green or red dots on the map (front) represents a completed project, and has an accompanying story. Johnson Road in Codorus Township, York County, is no different. The existing road was rutted, wet, and muddy, with long parallel ditches that drained runoff through pipes and into nearby tributaries of the South Branch of Codorus Creek. While many Dirt and Gravel Road Program projects add crosspipes to disperse drainage, pipes were actually removed on this 4,000 foot long project. Shale fill was imported to raise the road elevation, and the entire road was out-sloped towards the stream. Parallel ditches, and therefore concentrated drainage to the stream, were effectively eliminated on nearly two-thirds of this roadway. Driving Surface Aggregate, also out-sloped towards the stream, capped off this 2012 project.