Purpose of these photo tips:
To take more effective project photos for use in education and outreach efforts for the Program.

Common Photo Issues
- Poor Composition (can't tell what you are looking at);
- Inconsistency in shots, especially before and after;
- Not taking before pictures at all;
- Taking to many "random" photos;
- Storing, organizing, and finding photos when needed;
- Eventually giving up and not taking pictures anymore!

Shoot for Context
- **Zoom out** to capture what is around your focal point;
- You can always crop later, you can't "un-crop";
- People add context and scale.
- If you are taking a picture of something off the road, try to include the road in the picture.
- Use props (hats, bottles, yourself) for scale if alone.
- Shoot from different perspectives (high, low, angle).
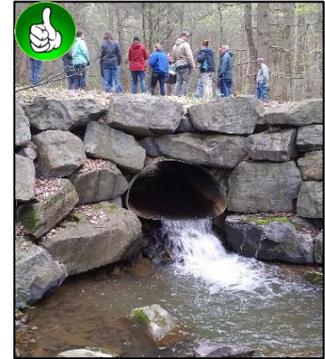
Consider Weather and Lighting
- Intermittent sun/shade makes for BAD pictures;
- Go out on some rainy days to get some pictures of drainage in action.
- When possible, take photos in the same season.

Use Landmarks
- Use anything that will not move, buildings, distinctive trees, utility poles, road signs, mailboxes, fences, etc. for better before, during, and after sequences
- Take pictures looking the same direction.

Photopoints
Photopoints are marked positions where photos can be repeated throughout the life of a project. **The easiest way to establish a photopoint is by pounding a metal fence post into the ground, and placing the camera on the post to take pictures.** Photopoints may only last a day for items such as a crosspipe installation, or they may be used for several months or years to show complex practices or phased projects such as those involving road fill. Using photopoints is the easiest way to ensure that people who are not familiar with your project will be able to follow along and understand what was done.

Zoom out when taking pictures to get more context, and include people or objects for scale reference.

Consider time of year, and avoid intermittent sun/shade.

Use landmarks in before/after pictures, in this case, the house, driveway, and powerline-cut tree in background.

The same eroded ditch is shown much more effectively with a lower perspective and a wheel for scale.

Photopoint Tips

1. Visit the site BEFORE project starts
- Don't forget to take "before" pictures

2. Choose 2-3 points that would be good vantage points
- Off of the road and slightly elevated
- Out of the way of equipment
- Consider all seasons for sun aspect, lighting, vegetation
- Visualize completed site or practices you want to show

3. Put fence post or other marker in the ground
- Use the "U" or "T" shape of the fence post to aim Camera to insure consistency over time.
- Take GPS coordinates in case the post is damaged or lost
- Don't paint the post, as it makes it more likely to be stolen

4. Put camera on post to take picture

5. Repeat Pictures from the post
- During same day for small practices
- Every time you visit for larger practices

Good photos of a good project, but using a photopoint such as the one drawn in above will ensure before and after photos match exactly

Additional Photo Tips

- When visiting a site after construction begins, print and take "before" photos into field. You can use these photos in the field so that you can take the same "during" and "after" photos.
- Use the tips above to improve photo consistency while reducing the number of "random shots" you take. This will remove the clutter, making make storing and finding images easier.
- If you are visiting many roads in a single day and taking pictures, take the first picture on each road either of the road sign, or the road name on a list.

Equipment Options

Most modern smart phones will produce sufficient photographs of your projects. A cell phone or DSLR camera is great for taking single shot photographs but may not be the best choice for time lapse photography. If you are interested in time lapse photography, you may want to consider a dedicated time lapse camera. These cameras allow for multiple time intervals (seconds, minutes, hours, days), can automatically create movies from still images, have excellent battery life, are generally inexpensive and easy to set up, have weather resistant cases, and are an eligible education expense.

Photo Storage

- **Use a simple folder system.**
  - o Allows for fast searching
  - o Eliminates need to rename individual pictures
  - o Allows other or future employees to find pictures
  - o "Date Taken" is stored in photo properties in most modern phones/cameras
  - o Think about how easy it would be for others to find pictures in your system
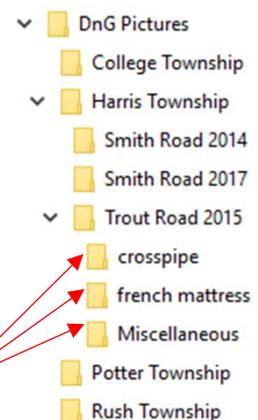- **A recommendation on folder structure**: (use whatever works for you!):
  1) Municipality Name
     2) Road Name - Year
        3) Photopoint name
- Create separate top level DnG and LVR folders
- Store relevant pictures only in photopoint folders (or misc as pictured to right)
- Create a "Miscellaneous" folder to store random pictures for each project
- "Before, During, and After" folders can work, but lead to playing "the match game" to find matching photos.

Actual photos go in these folders, others are organizational only.

Example of a simple file structure based on muni, project, photopoint