

CCRC CROSSROADS

A publication of the Calhoun County Road Commission (CCRC)

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 5

SPRING 2007

UPDATE FROM THE ASSISTANT MANAGING DIRECTOR

Roads are the most used county provided service!!

Calhoun County underwent an extensive strategic planning process in 1993-94, and again in 2002. Recently, the Calhoun County Road Commission (CCRC) had the opportunity to participate in the Calhoun County Strategic Planning Session.

In April 2007, we were proud to participate in this session that provided an opportunity for each department to interact with each other in order to provide better services to our residents, while maximizing efficiencies. Each department focused on answering questions on our economic environment, goals, quality and quantity of services, and collaborative efforts.

CCRC was given the opportunity to present, so we focused on the balancing act we all face in trying to preserve rural areas and character, while allowing for growth to sustain lower levels of unemployment. When our customer base increases due to development, there is very little increase in overall funding for roads, as our revenue source is almost entirely from gas and weight taxes. Road commissions, however, are still charged with maintaining a very important element in infrastructure improvement.

As an organization, we communicated that our focus is to look internally first, before further limiting our road improvement program. Over the past 5 years, our workforce has decreased by 18% because we have not filled vacancies. We have not purchased new equipment in several years and we have consolidated our garage facilities. At the same time, we continue to work with our current workforce on performance and service by challenging ourselves to maintain quality and quantity of services provided by CCRC, as does every other business in today's economic climate.

An important element of the strategic planning session is the effort put forth by each department over the years to strive toward collaborative efforts. The Calhoun County Road Commission has partnered with over 81 agencies, organizations and groups to continue to leverage funding in a more efficient, cost effective manner. By working together, we are best equipped to share equipment, skills, and professional services locally.

As we concluded our presentation, we noted that when you go to work, school, shop, make a leisure trip around the county, need fire or police assistance, or emergency services, they come to you via one of the most used county assets – ROADS.

Your road commission is working hard to insure our residents are serviced with the highest level of quality. As public servants, we maintain one of our county's greatest assets. We look forward to your calls and we thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve you in Calhoun County.

Would you like to share your public organization's information with others? Let us know and we will gladly add your website link to our website.

Just give us a call at 1-800-781-5512
or email us at
info@calhouncrc.net



ATTENTION
Our website address has
changed!!!

Please visit us at:
www.calhouncrc.net

THANK YOU!
To all the townships who
sent in addresses so that we
can notify township
residents of upcoming
roadwork.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

GRAVEL ROADS 2

BRUSH CONTROL 2

SIGN LOCATIONS 3

DRIVE MI CAMPAIGN 3

GRAVEL ROADS

The goal of the gravel road program is to provide services to the rural roads in Calhoun County to keep them conditioned for public transportation and emergency vehicles. Depending upon the time of year, the roads can become a challenge to the motorist.

The key to maintaining a gravel road in “tip top” condition is effective drainage. Drainage is accomplished by constructing a “crowned” cross section. Because of this design, motorists may feel like they are “falling off the road” because the center of the road is several inches higher than the shoulder. Normally, a gravel road will be compacted and without large depressions or potholes.

Gravel roads are graded in the spring and fall. “Rutted” areas may require additional gravel. Some roads may need to be reconditioned due to the deterioration caused by mid-season rain. There may be seasonal frost/thaw cycles that do not make this process possible.

The application of brine or calcium chloride helps to reduce dust and the need for grading. It also provides a bonding substance to the road surface, conserving the amount of gravel that needs to be added throughout a season. CCRC makes two brine applications - one in the late spring and the second in the late fall. Townships may choose to pay for an additional application.

Drainage may be improved by grading or ditch cleaning to help the water drain.



BRUSH CONTROL

The Calhoun County Road Commission (CCRC) is responsible for maintaining approximately 1300 miles of county roads. The management of growth occurring in the road right-of-way such as weeds, brush, and low-hanging roadside tree limbs will increase the motorists’ ability to see warning signs, other traffic, pedestrians and animals crossing the road.

Benefits of brush control include elimination of noxious weeds, reduction in asphalt deterioration, soil erosion control, improvement in road drainage, provides shoulder space for the motoring public in emergencies, reduces damages to vehicles from low hanging limbs and beautifies our county roads.

Most commonly, CCRC uses a machine called a boom mower to trim the roadsides. Due to the infrequency of brush cutting on a given portion of road, the foliage and roadside will typically appear severe in appearance when the brush has been cut. Keep in mind that over a period of 12-24 months, ground cover and foliage will return, but at a lower rate.



Mowing is another alternative to brush control; however, it is expensive and sometimes not a safe option.

If the terrain is rough or inaccessible, we may spray the area with chemical control agents to control brush. The herbicides used in the brush control program have been approved for use in the road right-of-way near human activity areas and environmentally sensitive areas including bodies of water.

