# Gravel Roads -The Economic Backbone of the State



ASHE Central Dacotah

ASHE\_- Central Dakota Section

Dale C. Heglund, PE/PLS, NDLTAP Director – May 10, 2016

### **Gravel Roads - Key Points**



Looking Back



Roadway Problem #1



**Expectation Shift** 



What is Gravel?





Helen Keller





# Looking Back.....



FIGURE 1.-The States created out of the Public Domain.

Ľ



1889 North Dakota **Statehood**  1946 - General Land Office, GLO, was abolished and the Bureau of Land Management, BLM, was created Manual of SURVEYING INSTRUCTIONS 1973

> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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Map Book Created By Morton County GIS - A	pril 2011			139-64	



## **Agricultural Growth 1950-2010**

# **1950 = 17.1 Billion Pounds 2010 = 89.4 Billion Pounds 422% Increase**

#### Legend



74,872,000 - 489,000,000 lbs 489,000,001 - 1,023,000,000 lbs 1,023,000,001 - 1,530,000,000 lbs 1,530,000,001 - 3,103,000,000 lbs 3,103,000,001 - 3,976,476,000 lbs







#### Lower 48 states shale plays





North Dakota Rigs and Wells







# **Organized Townships**







### **Oil Exploration Traffic Projections**



Example of predicted traffic flows over road network

Crude oil movements

## **Crop Movement Projections - Wheat**



### State (7,407 miles) 7,407 miles paved with 8% concrete

<u>County/Local (97,662 miles – 59,039 miles gravel)</u> 10,847 miles CMC System with 44% paved Total surfaced = 65,905 miles with 10% paved Total unsurfaced – 31,757 miles with 6% improved

Cities = 1,897 miles total with 189 miles gravel Total miles for state and local roads = 106,965 miles

# The #1 Problem With a Gravel Road:

It's not a paved road!













#### Gravel roads reopen in oil patch **Bismarck Tribune**

Gravel roads were reopened throughout the oil patch Thursday, ending a long stretch when heavy truck traffic was brought to a standstill to prevent roads from being damaged during rain and snow accumulations.

Some counties lifted the ban starting bright and early Thursday while others waited until noon to give roads a bit longer to firm up now that the rains have stopped, giving way to clearer skies and a light breeze.

The ban for anything heavier than 12.000 pounds - about the weight of a pickup - went into effect Sunday or Monday, depending on the location and was the second week of road closures in some areas.

Dennis Nelson, Williams County's highway superintendent, said the inconvenience for some needing to haul heavy loads and freight into the patch was far outweighed by the beneficial moisture after a long, dry winter.

He said he'd been looking at the roads and for now, "They're looking good."

In Billings County, highway superintendent Jeff Iverson said gravel roads were reopened Thursday and the rain and snow had the effect of putting a smile on pretty much everyone's face.

"We were tired of all that brown," said Iverson, adding that the benefit is reduced fire danger in the moist countryside.

Counties post their road status at www.ndenergy.org. The National Weather Service in Bismarck forecasts no significant rain for the next week.

Reach Lauren Donovan at 701-220-5511 or lauren@westriv.com.

# Welcome rainfall not so where the much for oil patch truckers

#### LAUREN DONOVAN **Bismarck Tribune**

Trucks trying to move oil, salt water and other product around the oil patch are encountering a long string of days when gravel roads are closed for heavy-duty

business. The rain and soft drizzle caused counties to close roads again this week, starting Sunday, after being closed for three org. to four days days last week.

As of Monday, the restriction limiting weight to 12,000 pounds - about a pickup weight and excepting school buses - is in effect in McKenzie, Billings, Stark, Dunn, Williams and Mountrail counties. The restriction won't be lifted until conditions dry out again.

This adds up to a substantial number of days when trucks have to severely lighten loads of oil and salt water, and freight, or sit tight until the ban is lifted. "It's one of the longest

stretches since the spring of said.

2012. This is a long one," agreed McKenzie County Commissioner Ron Anderson.

The immediate forecast doesn't look promising for reopening the roads anytime soon, but six hours of warm sunshine, or even just a wind and no more rain could change that outlook in a hurry. Counties post their road status on www.ndenergy.

Dunn County Highway Superintendent Mike Zimmerman said he catches a little grief from out-of-state truckers who come in unaware of the ban.

"I tell them it might cost them a \$1,000 to get stuck a day or two, but the taxpayers have to pay tens of thousands of dollars to repair the roads," he said

He said he turned down an overweight permit Monday from

a trucker who wanted to haul a 446,000 pound load down a

gravel road. "I said, `Uh, no,'" Zimmerman

Overall, there are far fewer trucks moving around the countryside these days, with oil drilling cut back and few wells being hydraulically fractured. Companies are turning to above-ground hoses to move water from ponds or wells to frack sites rather than endless rounds of water tanker trucks, Anderson said.

What hasn't changed is the

need to haul salt water off of oil well sites. Salt water is produced on nearly a one-to-one barrel ratio as oil and roughly 1 million barrels of the salt water is either trucked or piped for deep well injection.

Patrick Walker, owner of a disposal company, 1804 Operating, said his company notices the drop when tankers can't haul away the salt water. He said oil companies maintain enough storage to have a buffer when reads are closed or blocked.

Reach Lauren Donovan at 701-220-5511 or lauren@westriv.com.

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## Expectation Shift.....








# What is Gravel????

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#### 2

U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Highway

## August 2015 GRAVEL ROADS CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GUIDE

## Gravel Roads Part II Back to the Basics



Local Technical Assistance Program Department of Civil Engineering Montana State University-Bozeman Bozeman, MT

2000

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# Specifications and testing are key to gravel acquisition

- Hardness
- Gradation
- Percentage of fractured stone
- Plasticity index (cohesive material clay binder)



## SDDOT Standard Specifications – 2015 Edition Section 882 – Aggregates for Granular Bases and Surfacing

REQUIREMENT	Subbase	Gravel Cushion	Aggregate Base Course	Limestone Ledge Rock		Gravel	Granular	
				Base Course	Gravel Cushion	Surfacing	Gravel	
Sieve		Surfacing						
6 inch								
2 inch	100							
1 inch	70-100	100	100	100	100		100	
3/4 inch		80-100	80-100	80-100	80-100	100	0.000	
1/2 inch		68-91	68-91	68-90	68-90			
#4	30-70	46-70	46-70	42-70	42-70	50-78	50.70	
#8	22-62	34-58	34-58	29-53	29-53	37-67	50-78	
#40	10-35	13-35	13-35	10-28	10-28	13-35	37-67	
#200	0.0-15.0	3.0-12.0	3.0-12.0	3.0-12.0	3.0-12.0	4.0-15.0	57-07	
							13-35	
							4 0-15 0	

Sieve Size	NDDOT Cl 13	Montana Gravel Surfacing	SD & FHWA Gravel Roads Manual	Sample County Spec	Proposed ND Gravel Surfacing
3"			_		
1-1/2"					
1"	100	100		100	100
3/4"	70-100	80-90	100	90-100	70-100
1/2"		60-80			
3/8"				50-90	
No. 4	38-75	50-70	38-75	35-80	38-75
No. 8	22-62	37-60	37-67		22-62
No. 10				20-70	1.
No. 30	12-45				12-45
No. 40		13-35	13-35	10-40	
No. 200	7-15	4-18	4-15	8-15	7-15
PI		4-12	4-12	4-12	4-12
Shale (max %)	12.0				12,0
LA Abrasion (max %)	50				50
NDDOT 4, Fractured Faces	10				10

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## PI=LL-PL













# Who Gets Blamed for Poor Performing Gravel?

### The Operator

The Operator cannot make good gravel out of bad gravel

- Good quality surface gravel may cost more, but it is worth the extra cost
- Quality can only be determined by proper field sample testing in a materials lab
- Approximately \$200.00 per sample











#### Ula' V



# Technology Transfer









Note: 4% crown is equivalent to 1/2 inch per foot drop on the cross slope.















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#### Env

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Hazardous I

#### **Risk-Bas**

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Industrial Asbestos an Paint Service

Employee Ex Assessments

NEPA/Nat

Resource:



7 Classroom Training Sessions in 2015

26 Field Trainings

RDO and Butler Sponsored Lunch at each location

### Total Trained for 2015 = 388













## High shoulders Berms - curbs - secondary ditch





# **Pretend Blading**









# A 25-ton load of gravel covers only 320 linear ft to place one inch of gravel on one mile 20 ft wide.



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### Dramatic Contrast -Similar traffic volume, similar roadway shape, but different surface materials!



# Great contrast in surface condition due to quality difference of surface gravel


#### **Foundation Strength**

- Dynamic Cone Penetrometer, DCP
- Relates cone drop count to resistance
- Translates to soil strength





Figure 7.2. Illustration of dynamic cone penetrometer (DCP).

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#### **Foundation Strength**

- California Bearing Ratio, **CBR-** How strong is the ground, less than 3 = poor
- Compares on-site soil to crushed rock
- CBR less than 0.2 -sink up to your knees
- CBR of less than 0.5 sink up to your ankles
- CBR of 1 your heels will sink about 1/4 inch
- CBR of 4 a spike heel will make a slight indentation

#### Montana County Minimum Road Standards



THE SUM OF LAYERS 2 AND 3 MUST ≥ (GREATER THAN OR EQUAL TO) DESIGN VALUES STATED IN TABLE 6 (GRAVEL ROADS, PAGE A11) - ATTACHED Montana LTAP • 1-800-541-6671 • June 2015



#### Material Design





NDSU



From: Gravel Roads, Maintenance and Design Manual (FHWA/ South Dakota LTAP, April 2005)

Appendix A: Gravel Road Thickness Design Methods **The South Dakota Catalog Design Method** 

The method is rather crude because it only relies on two parameters, heavy trucks and subgrade support condition. Table 6: Suggested Gravel Layer Thickness for New Or Reconstructed Rural Roads.

stimated Daily Number of Heavy Trucks	Subgrade Support Condition(1) Low	Suggested Minimum Gravel Layer Thickness, mm (in.) 165 (6.5)		
0-5	Medium	140 (5.5)		
	High	115 (4.5)		
	Low	215 (8.5)		
5-10	Medium	180 (7.0)		
	High	140 (5.5)		
	Low	290 (11.5)		
10-15	Medium	230 (9.0)		
	High	180 (7.0)		
	Low	370 (14.5)		
25-50	Medium	290 (11.5)		
	High	215 (8.5)		

Notes: (1)Low Subgrade support: CBR<3 percent;

Medium Subgrade support: 3 < CBR ≤ 10 percent;

High Subgrade support: CBR > 10 percent

Estimated daily no. of heavy trucks	Subgrade support condition <sup>1</sup>	Suggested minimum gravel layer thickness, mm (in)
0 to 5	Low	165 (6.5)
	Medium	140 (5.5)
	High	115 (4.5)
5 to 10	Low	215 (8.5)
	Medium	180 (7.0)
	High	140 (5.5)
2010/02	Low	290 (11.5)
10 to 25	Medium	230 (9.0)
	High	180 (7.0)
(1)3 <sup>1</sup> - 14-1	Low	370 (14.5)
25 to 50	Medium	290 (11.5)
	High	215 (8.5)

Table 4.2. Suggested gravel layer thicknesses for new or reconstructed rural roads.

*Notes.* <sup>1</sup> Low subgrade support: average CBR  $\leq$  3 percent; medium subgrade support: 3 percent < average CBR  $\leq$  10 percent; high subgrade support: average CBR > 10 percent. <sup>2</sup> CBR = California Bearing Ratio of the in-place subgrade soils. Methods of estimating CBR are discussed in section 7 of













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## Cost of Treatment vs ADT







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NORTH DAKOTA

DEPARTMENT of HEALTH

- + GENERAL / MISCELLANEOUS RULES
  - Standards of Quality for Waters of the State NDAC 33-16-02.1
  - Control, Prevention, and Abatement of Pollution of Surface Waters NDCC Chapter 61-28 (also applies to ground
- GROUND WATER PROTECTION PROGRAM RULES
- GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF OILFIELD SALT BRINES IN DUST AND ICE CONTROL



### **SDDOT/SDLTAP Surface Gravel Study**

Brookings Site: Constructed in 2011 Observed in 2012, 2013, 2014 & 2015

### **Focus of Test Project**

- Primary focus is on <u>effect of gravel quality</u> on lifecycle cost of gravel road maintenance
- Three types of gravel used in study:
  - 1. Substandard but commonly used meets no spec except top size control one inch minus.
  - 2. Barely meets SDDOT Gravel Surfacing Spec percent passing #200 sieve is low and/or plasticity index (PI) at bottom of range at 4
  - 3. Modified SDDOT Spec higher minimums of 10% passing #200 sieve and PI at 7.



#### Volume of loose aggregate measured in a dry season was the biggest difference in the test sections.



### The float test (loose aggregate)





#### Substandard section – aggregate has moved outward over 4 ft since construction



## Change in Roadway Surface Width Constructed Width – 21.5 ft on all sections

**Constructed Width – Modified Section** 

**Current Width – Oct 2013** 

**Constructed Width – Standard Spec Section** 

**Current Width – Oct 2013** 

**Constructed Width – Substandard Section** 

**Current Width – Oct 2013** 

Current width ranges from 22 ft on modified section (top bar) to 25.25 ft on substandard section (bottom bar)

One of the biggest challenges was finding gravel that meets the modified SDDOT

Specification: "<u>Shall have minimum plasticity</u> <u>index (PI) of seven</u>". (Even higher minimum was considered in project planning)

#### One way to meet modified spec – blend different material from separate sources



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# Road mixing natural clay to get a high quality surface gravel



# The modified section in the spring after construction





Corrugation was a problem on the substandard section. No corrugation on the modified section.

## **Concluding Points**

- Meeting basic SDDOT standard surface gravel specification reduces loose aggregate by 1/3 to 1/2.
- 2012: 405 tons of loose aggregate on substandard section and only 71 tons on modified section.
- No corrugation ever observed on standard or modified material.



## **Concluding Points (Con't)**

- Blade maintenance <u>four times on substandard</u> <u>section</u> and <u>once on modified</u>!
- Some aggregate producers have resisted change prefer to produce as they always have – no close control of % passing the #200 sieve and plasticity index.



# Wyoming

	Substandard Uncompacted	Substandard Compacted	Barely Meets SDDOT Spec Uncompacted	Barely Meets SDDOT Spec Compacted	Modified SDDOT Spec	
Loose gravel (tons/mile)	185	150 100		110	16	
Corrugation (inches in height)	≤1 (2 days after blading and 3 inches of rain)	≤1 (2 days after blading and 3 inches of rain)	None	None	None 22	
Roadway surface width (feet; all built 21½ feet)	26	26	24	24		
Rutting	Rutting ≤1 ≤1		None	None	None	

#### Blending fines into loose aggregate rejuvenates roads

Gravel roads can develop problems due to floating aggregate, an excess of large rocks left on the surface of the road when rainfall, vehicle traffic, or maintenance operations erode the fine particles binding the gravel together.

Local agencies have generally addressed the problem of floating aggregate by simply regraveling a road with an appropriate mix of new gravel and silt or clay fines. However, some parts of Minnesota have limited sources of aggregate, and extracting and hauling it to the road site are becoming more expensive. To help reduce costs, the LRRB sponsored a project to see whether mixing fines into existing aggregate on a road could be an alternative to regraveling.

Test sections in Beltrami County provided significant cost savings over the control section. The section that received 83 tons of crusher dust cost \$3,100 (36 percent) less than the aggregate control section, while the section that received only 50 tons of crusher dust saved \$5,200 (61 percent).

The research suggests that the aggregate rejuvenation procedure will provide local agencies an

option to save money while treating their gravel roads if a suitable binder is available and less expensive than locally available aggregate.

The final report (Aggregate Road Surface Rejuvenation, MnDOT 2015-04) and a technical summary (Blending Fines into Existing Loose Gravel Costs Less Than Regraveling, MnDOT 2015-04TS) are available at **Irrb.org**. *LTAP* 

## Minnesota

NDSU UPPER GREAT PLAINS TRANSPORTATION INSTITUTE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SUPPORT CENTER	Surface Type	нма	AST	Gravel	Dust Control	Stabilized Gravel
Local Road Surface Selection Tool	Total Initial Cost	\$ 927,149	\$ 804,269	\$ 508,773	\$ 568,200	\$ 646,413
Home Analysis Administration Hel	Total Maintenance Cost	\$ 255,799	\$ 227,348	\$ 478,962	\$ 526,793	\$ 395,040
	Total Salvage Value	S 0	S 0	\$ 0	S 0	\$ 0
This analytical tool applies the low-volume road manager	Total Agency Cost	\$ 1,182,948	\$ 1,031,617	\$ 987,735	\$ 1,094,993	\$ 1,041,453

This analytical tool applies the low-volume road manager under the project titled "Local Road Surfacing Criteria (SD study is to develop a methodology that allows the user to co different road surfaces. Specifically, this tool is used to dete maintaining roads with different surfaces and selecting the a specific set of circumstances. More information about this clicking "Software Introduction".

Click "Start Analysis" to start a regular analysis. Click "Administrator Login" to log in if you are an administrator. Detailed user's guide is available by clicking "User's Guide".

Detailed user's guide is available by clicking "User's Guide". <u>DISCLAIMER:</u> Although the information generated by this model has b is believed to be reliable, the information generated by this model is for est Transportation Institute and North Dakota State University make no reprimplied, regarding the accuracy or reliability of the model or results.



Comparision of Cumulative Costs Associated with Different Surface Types



## Geographic Roadway Inventory Tool (GRIT)


# **Unpaved Road Investment Needs (millions)**

Period	Statewide	Oil Patch	Non-Oil
2015-2016	\$548.0	\$299.4	\$248.6
2017-2018	\$547.9	\$299.2	\$248.7
2019-2020	\$547.5	\$298.6	\$248.9
2021-2022	\$545.6	\$296.6	\$249.0
2023-2024	\$541.9	\$292.7	\$249.2
2025-2034	\$2,667.5	\$1,422.9	\$1,244.6
2015-2034	\$5,398.4	\$2 <i>,</i> 909.4	\$2,489.0

# Transportation Learning Network (TLN)



PRESENTATION SERIES 2015-2016

#### Gravel Roads Maintenance - New Manual Review

DATE: April 13, 2016 TIME: 9:00am - 3:30pm CT **REGISTRATION DEADLINE: April 1, 2016 DELIVERY:** Video Conference **PRESENTATION HOURS: 5.5 hours** 

#### PRESENTATION DESCRIPTION

This presentation will help attendees develop a better understanding of the importance of materials, techniques, and equipment needed for maintaining and repairing gravel roads. It will provide technical details for best practices including blading techniques, shoulder management, proper roadway crown concepts and the use of fabrics for the repair of water saturated roadbeds. The workshop will show the benefits to be gained from good maintenance practices, enhance the skills of gravel road maintenance personnel. It will cover the changes to the updated Gravel Roads - Maintenance and Design Manual released last Fall. It will cover how to spec guality gravel, roadway design basics, work zone traffic control and much more.

SPEAKER(S)



Ken Skorseth is currently the Special Projects lead for the South Dakota Local Transportation Assistance Program (LTAP) at SDSU. Ken retired as the SDLTAP Program Manager in the fall of 2015. He has 12 years of experience in the highway and heavy construction industry and eight years as the Deuel County Highway Superintendent. Ken has studied unpaved roads across the US and as far away as New Zealand. He has lectured on the subjects of gravel road maintenance and low volume road maintenance to audiences of engineers, managers, elected officials and maintenance workers over the past 20 years. Ken has been

coined the Gravel Guru. His passion for the subject is contagious. The fruit of Ken's efforts to update and expand the ultimate resource for gravel roads, the Gravel Roads - Maintenance and Design Manual, were unveiled in the August 2015 revised manual release.

#### TARGET AUDIENCE

This presentation is intended for state, county, or city personnel, technical staff, and maintenance forces responsible for maintenance of gravel shoulders or gravel roads. Private contractors employed to perform haul road maintenance on gravel roads are also encouraged to attend. This presentation was last shown on April 9, 2015. While some of Ken's presentation is a repeat, the information is worthy of review. Additionally, Ken has added some new information that will be of interest to those attending a second time. Be the first to hear what's new in gravel roads, sign-up for this must-attend presentation.

#### **REGISTRATION / FEES**

#### **REGISTRATION DEADLINE: April 1, 2016**

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TLN Helpdesk: 701-231-1087 www.tin.learnflex.net www.translearning.org





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# MATERIALS TESTING

Self-Paced Online Training Modules Video Demonstrations



## Contact

Sharon Taylor NDDOT Materials and Research Training Coordinator 701.328.6937 staylor@nd.gov

Rachel A. Leigh North Dakota State University Upper Great Plains Transportation Institute Instructional Design Specialist 701.328.9862 rachel.leigh@ndsu.edu

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- Local Road Needs Study
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## NDLTAP Gravel/Motor Grader Resources

PEOPLE

Roadway design, gravel quality and motor grader operation are key factors for maintaining gravel roadways. NDLTAP's Gravel/Motor Grader Resource section is a one-stop shop for gravel roadway information, providing gravel roadway training and technology ranging from resource publications to hands-on motor grader field training.

**Technical Assistance** 

Create Call-to-Action

Liked

Program

Transport/Freight

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VIEW UGPTI NAVIGATION

- Gravel Roads Manual (PDF, 18278K)
- Montana 2000 Gravel Manual (PDF, 4900K)
- Motor-Grader Maintenance Presentation (PDF, 3549K)
- Slope Meter (PDF, 2024K)
- Gravel Roads Sargent County Township Meeting
- Montana Gravel Road Video Flathead County (MACRS/Montana LTAP production)
- Gravel Road Maintenance: Meeting the Challenge (video) (AMK Production Services)

With more than 50% of North Dakota's 106,00 mile roadway network relying on gravel surfacing it is imperative that gravel roadway technologies be shared and that technology advancements be an integral part of the state's asset management plan.

# Helen Keller

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

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# Thank You!

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NORTH DAKOTA LOCAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

TRANSPORTATION LEARNING NETWORK

