

POLICY NO:	AG 008
POLICY TITLE:	ROADSIDE GRASS SEEDING
DEPARTMENT:	AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT
APPROVAL DATE:	ASB 01-02-94 (February 1994)
REVISION DATE:	80-06-15 (June 23, 2015)
REVIEW DATE:	

Background:

Construction, upgrading, and repairs of a road creates a disturbance to the land alongside the road grade. This roadside area then becomes subject to erosion and weeds. It is therefore desirable to establish a protective grass cover to reduce erosion and compete against weeds. This situation qualifies for grant assistance from the province through the Agricultural Service Board (A.S.B.). Much of the success in a roadside seeding program depends on actions taken by Public Works before, during and after the construction phase. A policy emphasizing co-ordinated planning by Public Works and Agriculture will improve the long term results of County roadside grass seeding.

Policy Objectives:

1. Ensure high germination, weed-free, short height growing and sweet clover free grass seed of appropriate species is used in accordance with the Alberta Weed Control Act
2. Establish a protective vegetation cover in roadside ditches quickly.
3. Ensure that this protection remains permanent.
4. Compliment the productivity of adjacent agricultural land.

Procedures:

1. Recognize the Limitations

- a. Many roadside ditches have limited top soil remaining after construction.
- b. Some roadsides are too hard, too soft, too wet, too rough, or too steep to accommodate grass seeding.
- c. The timeliness for seeding will vary, depending on the above limitations and the time of year the construction is completed.

2. Coordinate the Effort

- a. A project of construction or major upgrading and repair of County roads **must include** arrangements (by mutual agreement between Public Works, Agriculture and

Environment, and owners/occupants of adjacent lands) that achieve the objectives as stated in this policy. (see Functional Roadsides document).

- b. Activities such as rock picking, fencing, replacing topsoil, and designing erosion control structures are important considerations to be co-ordinated with seeding the roadside.
- c. From time to time there may be conflicting priorities about the "vegetation" in a ditch. For example, spraying too soon for brush and weeds can sometimes prevent good grass establishment. Wise judgement and long term planning is required to co-ordinate the objectives of this policy with those of other policies and programs. (i.e. Roadside Weed and Brush Control).

3. Equipment

The County will maintain equipment suitable for seeding the roadside to grass. Currently a tractor and harrows with mounted spreader are being used. Hydro-seeding capability is available with brush spraying truck (unit 30).

Summary:

Roadside seeding is a program that provides many benefits to the rural municipality. It can reduce erosion, improve weed control, compliment forage production (haying) and provide aesthetic value. Careful attention to the objectives of this policy will ensure that County roadsides remain functional and not detrimental to agricultural productivity of nearby farmland.