

Penn State to recycle tires into roads

Penn State's Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies received a \$696,685 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection to use waste tires to improve dirt roads that are causing silting of local waterways.

The demonstration project, which is intended to use some 500,000 discarded tires from the Starr Tire Pile in Columbia County, which is estimated to hold between six and eight million waste tires. The tire bales as road fill project will take place in Madison and Greenwood townships, near the Starr tire pile.

Penn State's Center for Dirt and Gravel Road Studies will use the tires to fill entrenched and degraded dirt and gravel roads. These roads were identified by Columbia County's Dirt and Gravel Road Program as sediment pollution sites to Mud Creek a tributary of the east branch of Chillisquaque Creek.

The tires will be bailed into 2.5- by 4.5- by 5- foot blocks containing about 100 tires, reports Kevin Abbey, director of the Center. About 5,000 bails will be used to fill the two roads and will incorporate drainage structures to channel runoff to surrounding vegetated areas rather than running down the road into the streams.

This project, if successful, could be applied throughout the commonwealth and could alleviate not only the problems with some unpaved rural roads, but also the problems surrounding tire piles, which include fires, chemical leaching and the creation of breeding grounds for mosquitos, including those that carry West Nile disease.

The project will take during the summer of 2006.

Source: Penn State

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