

Best Management Practice (BMP) for Unimproved Travel Lanes (“YELLOW” LAND USE)

DRAFT: 01/09/2020

Purpose:

To provide design guidance for the use of unimproved travel lanes on the preserved premises in a way that allows for current or proposed agricultural uses while minimizing the potential negative impacts on soil health.

Definitions:

“Travel lane” means a generally linear feature on a farm primarily used for the passage of vehicles, pedestrians, livestock, and/or equipment that is not more than 10 feet wide for one-way traffic or 16 feet wide for two-way traffic, measured from the outside of the tire tracks with an additional 2-foot allowance per side for a shoulder.

“Unimproved Travel Lane” means a travel lane meeting the design criteria set forth in this standard.

Where Practice Applies:

Unimproved travel lanes are generally low to moderate use travel areas between agricultural infrastructure or lanes used to access agricultural fields that have not been modified with the addition of foreign, non-organic material. This standard is intended for travel lanes meant to allow passage of vehicles, pedestrians, livestock, and/or equipment. Please refer to the BMPs for Improved Travel Lanes, Improved Parking and Farmyards, and Temporary Parking for additional guidance.

Design Standards to Qualify for BMP Certification:

The use of unimproved travel lanes shall be in accordance with a farm conservation plan approved by the local soil conservation district and otherwise be compliant with the deed of easement and applicable local and state regulations.

1. Travel lanes shall be the minimum width required to achieve agricultural objectives but not exceed a width of 10 feet for one-way travel or 16 feet for two-way travel, not including up to 2-feet of shoulder per side. ¹
2. Surfaces intentionally compacted through the use of sheepsfoot rollers, vibratory compactors, or similar equipment are not eligible for BMP certification.
3. Unimproved travel lanes are not required to have any underlayment to reduce soil compaction, but removable soil protection grids or mats are encouraged.
4. Travel lanes shall follow the contour of the natural terrain while avoiding steep slopes to the maximum extent practicable.
5. Vegetation is not required to be maintained in the unimproved travel lane but is recommended.
6. Organic mulch or woodchips may be added to the lane surface.

¹ Width based on NRCS-NJ Field Office Technical Guide standards for Access Road (Code 560).

7. Crushed shells or sand may be added to the lane to a cumulative depth of no more than 2 inches. Subsequent additions of crushed shells or sand that increase the cumulative total above 2 inches shall follow the standards set forth in the Improved Travel Lane BMP.
8. Any other surface material added to the lane shall follow the standards set forth in the Improved Travel Lanes BMP.
9. If topsoil needs to be removed from the travel lane, the standards set forth in the Improved Travel Lanes BMP shall be followed. Topsoil stockpiles shall follow the Soil Stockpiling BMP.

Maintenance:

For the duration of the life of the unimproved travel lane, the location and width of the lane shall be maintained to limit soil compaction to the smallest necessary area. Care shall be taken to avoid contamination of the soil with high concentrations of fuel, agricultural chemicals, or other toxic substances that might affect future soil health. Periodic localized maintenance may be required to address minor erosion, potholes and/or rutting but regular (more often than twice per year), or widespread grading or rolling of the lane surface shall follow the Improved Travel Lane BMP.

Restoration:

If restoration of the area is desired, the restoration standards set forth in the Soil Protection Rules shall be followed.