

Forest Roads Scheme:

Forestry Programme 2014 - 2020

Introduction

Forest roads enhance the economic viability of forests primarily by improving access for harvesting. In addition, forest roads also provide areas for stacking, drying and chipping of wood. Forest roads also improve the environmental and biodiversity value of forests by increasing edge effects, improve access to deal with fire by providing access for emergency vehicles. The forest road scheme is 100% funded by the exchequer and is approved by the EU as part of the new Forestry Programme 2014 -2020.

Scheme Outline

Grants of up to 100% of eligible costs incurred in the construction of a forest road are available and are paid in two instalments at a ratio of 90:10. The maximum grant rate available is €40/m and the maximum density of



road is 20m/ha. In order to calculate the length of road that can be built the applicant must determine the eligible area; this is based on the thinning schedule of the forest being served by the road.

Where 50% or greater of the area is due for harvesting in the next 3 years the entire area is deemed eligible, otherwise only the area that is going to be thinned can be counted as eligible area.

For co-operative road building (joint applications) this can extend to 5 years.

Additional supports are also provided for:

Support for Bell Mouths

Further additional support is provided by the Department in cases where the proposed forest road bell mouth is at least 2m below the surface of the existing public road. In these cases an additional 30m will be allowed per forest entrance to contribute towards the cost of additional stone required above the normal allowances when building standard entrances.

Special Construction Works

A special construction works (SCW) grant is included in the scheme for 50% of the cost of the SCW up to a maximum of €5,000 per application whichever is the smaller i.e. permanent bridge, large culverts > 1 metre in diameter. This provision is primarily aimed at facilitating the construction of forest roads in environmentally sensitive sites to limit potential adverse impacts from harvesting activities.

Connecting Roads

Forest road developments which connect to an existing forest road network in a public, state owned or private forest can also be supported on application subject to certain criteria.

Grant Rates

Grant assistance will be in respect of costs necessarily incurred in the construction of forest roads subject to the maximum limit laid down in the table below:

Category	Maximum Rate (€/linear metre, excl VAT)	Maximum Density (metre/ha)
Harvesting Road	€40	20
Harvesting Upgrade or Extension as defined	€40	20*
Special Construction Works	Up to €5,000	

* Maximum density will be reduced where a management/upgrade road grant was paid previously

Application procedure

Applications for approval must be made through a Registered Forester to the Approvals Section of the Department's Forest Service in Johnstown Castle, Co Wexford.

Please note: All forest road construction projects (whether availing of grant aid or not) must obtain prior written approval from the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine before works can commence.

Further Information:

Visit www.teagasc.ie/forestry for contact details of your local Teagasc Forestry Adviser as well as up-to-date and detailed information on forestry grant schemes, contact details for Registered Foresters, and much more. See also www.agriculture.gov.ie/forests-service

