Michigan Association of Timbermen

Supporting Strong Funding for TEDF Category E – Forest Roads

MAT Supports Maintaining & Strengthening Category E

The Transportation Economic Development Fund (TEDF)
Category E – Forest Roads Program is the only state funding stream dedicated specifically to the construction and reconstruction of forest-related roadways.
These roads are essential to:

- Safely transport raw forest products from harvest sites to mills
- Maintain access to commercial forest land
- Support rural jobs and local economies
- Sustain Michigan's forest products supply chain

Forest roads are economic infrastructure — not optional local streets.

The Funding Reality

- Category E funding has remained at **$5 million annually for more than a decade.**
- During that same period, construction materials, fuel, labor, and equipment costs have increased significantly.
- The purchasing power of the $5 million allocation has declined.
- Fewer miles of road can be constructed or reconstructed each year under current funding levels.

While overall transportation investment has grown, Category E has remained flat.

Why Dedicated Funding Matters

Forest roads:

- Primarily serve rural counties with significant commercial forest land
- Support a major sector of Michigan's manufacturing economy
- Do not function like traditional neighborhood or municipal streets

Because of their specialized purpose, forest road projects may not naturally compete within general road funding formulas.
Category E remains the primary, reliable mechanism for supporting this infrastructure.

Context: Michigan's New Road Funding Package

Michigan has recently enacted a historic road funding package, including substantial new investment in local and neighborhood roads.
MAT appreciates the Legislature's commitment to strengthening transportation infrastructure statewide.

As the new funding structure is implemented, we believe it is important to clarify:

- How forest roads fit within broader funding formulas
- Whether specialized forest access infrastructure is eligible or competitive within neighborhood road allocations
- How rural forest counties will be positioned within the new funding framework

Without clear inclusion, forest roads may not benefit from broader transportation investments.

MAT Position

The Michigan Association of Timbermen urges:

- Continued and strengthened support for Category E funding
- Recognition of forest roads as distinct economic infrastructure
- Ensuring rural forest counties are not unintentionally left behind in statewide transportation policy