

Sustainable Development of Road Network as an Element of Shaping the Rural Landscape in Poland

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SUMMARY

Rural roads, which tend to follow the network of historic routes, are an important element of rural heritage. Today rural roads perform a number of functions including: transport function (agricultural transport routes), tourist function (lines along which an observer moves viewing the landscape) and nature-related function (roads may perform a function of wild-life corridors, erosion control, insulation barrier). The road network design has a significant impact on the functional and spatial structure of a rural area and on a rural landscape's functionality and aesthetic value. Depending on the manner in which the road is routed it can make a monotonous landscape more dynamic or make a diverse landscape more static.

The article presents different landscape approaches to designing a road network depending on the function of the roads. The presented approaches were tested in Harta village and its surrounding area of a surface of 2568 ha located in the Podkarpackie region in south-eastern part of Poland where the road layout was significantly changed as a result of the land consolidation process. It is an exceptionally difficult area for performing such works. It is characterised by a diversely shaped terrain, intensive soil erosion processes, a dense network of field access roads and excessive fragmentation of rural land.

The conducted research enabled the authors to create of a set of guidelines for shaping the road network to promote sustainable development of rural landscape in Poland.

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