



**KENT COUNTY ROAD COMMISSION  
BOARD POLICY**

**No.  
503**

**Effective Date  
08/06/71**

**Revised Date  
02/09/10**

**Natural Beauty Road**

Policy authored by Managing Director in accordance with Public Act 451 of 1994, Part 357

Public Act 451 of 1994 empowers the Kent County Road Commission to dedicate County local roads as Michigan Natural Beauty Roads. Following are specific procedures that must be followed for the designation of a natural beauty road:

1. Roads must be county local roads. They cannot be collectors or primary roadways. Information on the type of road can be obtained from the Road Commission Maintenance Division.
2. A minimum of 25 landowners within the Township must sign a petition to establish a road or a portion of a road as a “natural beauty road.” Petitioners do not have to actually live on the road being petitioned; they must only live within the Township. Petitions must include the name, location, length and exact beginning and ending points of the road being petitioned, and it must be supported by a statement justifying the designation.
3. The Board of the Road Commission has up to six months after receiving the petition to schedule a public hearing. The hearing will be held in the Township where the road is located. Notices of the hearing must be published in the newspaper for two consecutive weeks and at five different locations along the portion of the road being petitioned. The publication and posting must be made not less than ten days before the public hearing date. The Board will announce its decision within thirty days of the public hearing. If approved, the decision can be reversed within forty-five days of the approval by a petition signed by 51 percent (based upon footage) of the property owners along the designated road.

The designation of a road as a “natural beauty road” will not curtail or reduce existing road maintenance programs, nor will it prohibit an application of sound forest management in the right-of-way. Furthermore, it will not affect the right of a public utility to control vegetation in connection with the maintenance, repair or replacement of facilities that were constructed in a road or across a road prior to its designation. The Department of Natural Resources has developed guidelines (attached) for the maintenance of natural beauty roads, but they are not statutory requirements.