

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

SEDIMENT BASIN

(NO.)

CODE 350

DEFINITION

A basin constructed to collect and store debris or sediment.

PURPOSE

- Preserve the capacity of reservoirs, wetlands, ditches, canals, diversion, waterways, and streams
- Prevent undesirable deposition on bottom lands and developed areas
- Trap sediment originating from construction sites or other disturbed areas
- Reduce or abate pollution by providing basins for deposition and storage of silt, sand, gravel, stone, agricultural waste solids, and other detritus

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies where physical conditions or land ownership preclude treatment of a sediment source by the installation of erosion-control measures to keep soil and other material in place or where a sediment basin offers the most practical solution to the problem.

CRITERIA

Sediment basin design and construction shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.

The capacity of the sediment basin shall equal the volume of sediment expected to be trapped at the site during the planned useful life of the basin or the improvements it is designed to protect. The minimum capacity shall be for a 10-year period at the rate of 0.01 inches/year/acre of drainage area. Construction area minimum storage capacity should be a two-year period. If it is determined that

periodic removal of sediment will be practicable, the capacity may be proportionately reduced.

The design of dams, spillways, and drainage facilities shall be according to [Alabama NRCS Conservation Practice Standards, Pond, Code 378](#); and [Grade Stabilization Structure, Code 410](#), or according to the requirements in [NRCS TR-60 - Earth Dams and Reservoirs and Amendment 1](#), as appropriate for the class and kind of structure being considered.

Temporary basins having drainage areas of 5 acres or less and a total embankment height of 5 feet or less may be designed according to [Alabama NRCS Conservation Practice Standard, Water and Sediment Control Basin, Code 638](#).

All disturbed areas shall be treated as soon as possible after construction ends to control erosion and prevent excess sediment from leaving the site.

Provisions shall be made for dewatering sediment pools if necessary for safety and vector control.

Fencing and other safety measures shall be installed as necessary to protect the public.

Due consideration shall be given to good visual resource management.

CONSIDERATIONS

Large sediment basins may have an effect on the peak discharge rate from a watershed. Planners should consider this, and take steps to mitigate any potential negative effects this may have on riparian habitat downstream from the structure.

Visual aesthetics may be a concern, especially in urban or suburban areas. To address these concerns, the basin could be designed to blend with the surrounding topography, or plantings could be proposed to screen the view from surrounding homes or buildings.

The nesting success and survival rate of ground-nesting species will increase if mowing is delayed until after the nesting season during operation and maintenance operations.

Using native species for revegetation will increase habitat diversity.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications for installing sediment basins shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose.

Provisions for controlling erosion and reducing sediment loss will be included. Specify rates of seed, mulch, and fertilizer, appropriate planting dates, and method(s) of establishment.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

The sediment basin will be inspected after major storms for damage that may affect its function and performance. Any damage will be promptly repaired.

Mow as need to maintain adequate vegetative cover and to prevent the establishment of undesirable species.

REFERENCES

Alabama NRCS Conservation Practice Standards
[Grade Stabilization Structure, Code 410](#)
[Pond, Code 378](#)
[Water and Sediment Control Basin, Code 638](#)

[NRCS TR-60 - Earth Dams and Reservoirs and Amendment 1.](#)