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Conservation Practice Overview

Heavy Use Area Protection (Code 561)



Heavy Use Area Protection is a way to stabilize a ground surface that is frequently and intensively used by people, animals, or vehicles.

Practice Information

This practice is installed to protect and improve water quality by providing a stable, noneroding surface for areas frequently used by animals, people, or vehicles.

Commonly used surface treatments include concrete, bituminous concrete, and gravel. In some places, it may be necessary to provide a roofed structure over the treated surface to achieve the desired resource protection.

This practice is often used to provide surface stability in areas where concentration of livestock is causing a resource concern. This includes feeding areas, portable hay rings, watering facilities, feeding troughs, and mineral areas. In these areas, provision must be made for the collection, storage, utilization, and treatment of manure and contaminated runoff.

Heavy Use Area Protection can also be used to make recreation areas accessible to people with disabilities.

This practice has a minimum expected life of 10 years. Maintenance requirements for the practice depend on the type of surface chosen by the producer and its intended use. Routine maintenance is needed to ensure the facility operates as designed.

Common Associated Practices

Heavy Use Area Protection (Code 561) may be installed as a stand-alone practice, or it may be applied with other NRCS Conservation Practice Standards (CPSs) to control surface water, such as Diversion (Code 362), Filter Strip (Code 393), or Vegetated Treatment Area (Code 635). It may also be necessary to use NRCS CPSs Access Control (Code 472) or Fence (Code 382) to modify traffic patterns around the area. Other commonly associated NRCS CPSs include Roofs and Covers (Code 367), Waste Storage Facility (313), Prescribed Grazing (528), and Watering Facility (614).

For further information, contact your local NRCS field office.

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