United States Department of Agriculture

Natural Resources Conservation Service CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD FENCE

CODE 382

(ft)

DEFINITION

A constructed barrier to animals or people.

PURPOSE

This practice is used to accomplish the following purpose:

- Provide a means to control the movement of animals, people, and vehicles to accomplish specific conservation objectives.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

Apply this practice on any area where management of animal or human movement is needed.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Plan, design, and construct this practice to comply with all Federal, State, and local regulations. The landowner must obtain all necessary permissions from regulatory agencies or document that no permits are required. The landowner and/or contractor is responsible for locating all buried utilities in the project area, including drainage tile and other structural measures.

Ensure all fencing materials installed are durable and of high quality, and the type and design of the fence installed meets the management objectives and site challenges. Use permanent, portable, or temporary fences based on management objectives.

Position fences to facilitate changes in management strategies, access requirements, or otherwise meet conservation objectives. The fence design and installation must include height, size, spacing, type of materials, and location of features such as gates and cattle guards.

The fence design and materials must have a life expectancy appropriate for the management system and resource objectives. Base the durability of materials in the design and location of fences on topography, environment, purpose, and management objectives. Specialized bracing,

NRCS reviews and periodically updates conservation practice standards. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact your Natural Resources Conservation Service State office or visit the Field Office Technical Guide online by going to the NRCS website at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/ and type FOTG in the search field.

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designs, and materials may be necessary to cross features such as gullies, canyons, and streams.

Design, locate, and install fences to minimize impacts on local wildlife as appropriate.

Provide for proper disposal of materials when fence construction requires the removal of existing fencing materials to prevent harm to animals, people, or equipment.

CONSIDERATIONS

Consider soil properties, soil moisture conditions, and erosion concerns.
Consider livestock management and adaptive grazing strategies, trailing, access to water facilities, and wildlife deterrence or passage.

Consider animal and human safety concerns by enhancing visibility of fences through design materials, fence markers, signage or fladry systems (line of rope mounted along the top of a fence, from which are suspended strips of fabric or colored flags that will flap in a breeze).

Consider using natural barriers where appropriate and design and locate fences to ease access for construction, maintenance, and landscape aesthetics.

Establish cleared rights-of-way to facilitate fence construction and maintenance where applicable. Avoid clearing of vegetation during the nesting and brood rearing seasons for migratory and ground nesting birds.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Prepare plans and specifications that describe the requirements for applying the practice according to the requirements of this standard. As a minimum, include—

- Plan view or map showing layout of fence and location of gates.
- Details for fence installation showing post spacing, bracing, and gate installation.
- Material quantities and requirements.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Regular inspection of permanent, temporary, and portable fences is a part of an ongoing maintenance program that ensures proper function of the fence for the lifespan of the practice. As a minimum, include the folowing in the operation and maintenance plan:

- Conduct inspections of fences after storms and other disturbance events
- Repair or replacement of loose or broken material, gates, and other forms of ingress and egress
- Removal of trees and limbs
- Repair or replacement of water gaps as necessary
- Repair of eroded areas as necessary
- Repair or replacement of markers or other safety and control features as required
- Maintain fladry or signage as necessary

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