NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

FENCE
(Feet)

CODE 382

DEFINITION

A constructed barrier to animals or people.

PURPOSE

This practice facilitates the accomplishment of conservation objectives by providing a means to control movement of animals and people, including vehicles:

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice may be applied on any area where management of animal or human movement is needed.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Impact to cultural resources, wetlands, and Federal and State protected species need to be avoided or minimized to the extent practical during planning, design, and implementation of this conservation practice in accordance with established National and Florida NRCS policy; General Manual (GM) Title 420-Part 401, Title 450-Part 401, and Title 190-Parts 410.22 and 410.26; National Planning Procedures Handbook (NPPH) FL Supplements to Parts 600.1 and 600.6; National Cultural Resources Procedures Handbook (NCRPH); and The National Environmental Compliance Handbook (NECH).

Fencing materials, type and design of fence installed shall be of high quality and durability. The type and design of fence installed will meet the management objectives and site challenges. Based on need, fences may be permanent, portable or temporary.

Fence shall be positioned to facilitate management requirements. Ingress/egress features such as gates and cattle guards shall be planned. The fence design and instillation should have the life expectancy appropriate for management objectives and shall follow all federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Height, size, spacing and type of materials used will provide the desired control, life expectancy, and management of animals and people of concern.

All fencing designs shall meet NRCS construction specifications. Design information for NRCS fence construction specifications can be found in the EFOTG, Section IV under conservation practice Fence (382).

CONSIDERATIONS

Consider maintenance issues when installing fences and avoid irregular terrain such as gullies and water crossings if possible. Fences should not be constructed in flood prone areas except when necessary.

A double-brace assembly may be necessary in poorly drained or sandy soils, or on highly irregular terrain.

Consider soil erosion potential when planning and constructing a fence on steep slopes.

Consider wildlife movement when locating fences. In whitetail deer range, the top two wires should be at least 10-inches apart to

minimize the chance of deer becoming entangled.

Where applicable, cleared right-of-ways may be established that would facilitate fence construction and maintenance. Apply necessary erosion control measures to any cleared areas.

Consider livestock handling, watering, shade, and feeding when locating fences.

Determine paddock size needed before cross-fencing is installed.

Consider location and type of livestock water when planning fence placement.

Additional Considerations to Improve Grazing Management

Improve resource by locating fences and size paddocks to:

- improve the management and integrity of natural and farm resources,
- optimize livestock access to water,
- meet livestock forage needs,
- and maintain or improve pasture condition through proper grazing management.

Fencing is part of a resource management plan. See the Prescribed Grazing Practice Standard (Code 528) for determining appropriate grazing management strategies.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Develop detailed plans for each site that are consistent with this standard and the Construction Specification for the particular fence type. At a minimum, plans should include (1) a map showing field identification and the location of fence, gates, and water facilities; (2) the fence type; and (3) fence length and how it was determined (4) a completed job sheet detailing site specific plan specifications.

The following Construction Specifications are considered part of this standard:

- barbed wire
- high-tensile smooth wire fence
- electric fence
- woven wire
- wooden board

DOCUMENTATION AND VARIATIONS

The completed work will be checked and documented to verify that the practice is complete according to NRCS standards and specifications. Supporting data for documentation will include those features of this practice that can be measured and observed such as: length of fence installed, type of fence and materials installed, and signature of the performance checker

Variations from the above materials and installation specifications may be approved by the responsible District Conservationist or someone with appropriate conservation planning authority, provided it is determined that such variation would result in an installation that would equal or exceed a fence installed according to this specification.

Record the variations approved along with an explanation of the reasons why approved variations will result in an installation that will meet or exceed one installed in accordance with the specifications.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Maintenance in accordance with the requirements of this standard is necessary throughout the functional life of the fence.

Regular inspection of fences shall be part of an on-going management program. Fence inspection after storms and other disturbances events is necessary to insure the continued proper function of the fence. Maintenance and repairs will be performed in a timely manner as needed including tree/limb removal.

For electrified fence, use a voltage tester to ensure adequate charge along the entire fence span. Keep heavy vegetation away from electric fences to avoid loss of charge.

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