

ALTERNATIVE CONSERVATION SYSTEMS

Definition

Alternative Conservation Systems (ACS) for treating sheet, rill, wind, and ephemeral gully erosion on highly erodible land achieve a substantial reduction in existing soil loss rates. This term applies only to conservation plans and conservation systems developed to carry out the provisions of the provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985 (FSA) as amended by the 1990, 1996, and 2002 farm bills.

Quality Criteria

Tobacco or Vegetable Crops in Fields Three acres or Less

- Contour Farming
- Cover Crop
- Conservation Cropping Sequence (Grasses and Legumes in Rotation)

Corn or Similar High Residue Crops in Fields Five Acres or Less

- Contour Farming
- Cover Crop or Residue Management
- Conservation Cropping Sequence (Grasses and Legumes in Rotation)

All Other Agricultural Commodity Crops

Sheet and rill erosion will be controlled to within 2 times the soil loss tolerance rate (T) not to exceed 6 tons/ac/yr. for the dominant soil of the planning unit. Any practice or combination of practices that will control sheet and rill erosion to the minimum level shown in the "Guidelines for Planning Alternative Conservation Systems" may be selected. All gully erosion in cropland fields will be controlled using water disposal systems and critical area treatment.