

## BASIC CONSERVATION SYSTEM QUALITY CRITERIA

- 1) A basic conservation system (BCS) is a system that controls sheet and rill, and wind erosion to the soil loss tolerance level (T), and controls all ephemeral gully and gully erosion. A BCS must be used when agricultural commodities are produced on HEL cropland without cropping history that is converted from native vegetation after December 23, 1985.

**NOTE:** Evidence of cropping history must be from documented sources such as Farm Service Agency records or aerial photography interpretation.

- 2) All erosion calculations for basic conservation systems are based on current erosion prediction technology found in Section I – “Erosion Prediction” of the Field Office Technical Guide. Erosion rates will be expressed as the average annual amount of soil loss in tons per acre per year rounded to the nearest whole number.
- 3) The following criteria must all be met for a conservation system to be considered a BCS.
  - a) Sheet and rill erosion must be controlled to the soil loss tolerance level “T” on the predominant highly erodible soil map unit in the highly erodible field(s).
  - b) Wind erosion must be controlled to the soil loss tolerance level “T” on the predominant highly erodible soil map unit in the highly erodible field(s).
  - c) Ephemeral gully and gully erosion must be controlled regardless of the presence or absence of offsite damages through the use of grassed waterways, critical area planting, or structural practices such as water and sediment control basins, grade stabilization structures, or terraces with underground outlets. The necessity of ephemeral gully and gully erosion control practices will be based on the most erosive condition including the year that sodbusting occurs.