

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD
SOUTH DAKOTA SUPPLEMENTS ITALICIZED**

LAND CLEARING

(ac.)
CODE 460

DEFINITION

Removing trees, stumps, and other vegetation from wooded areas.

PURPOSE

This practice may be applied as part of a resource management system to support one or more of the following:

Achieve needed land use change;

Provide improvements in the interest of soil and water conservation.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies to wooded areas where the removal of trees, stumps, brush, and other vegetation is needed in carrying out a soil and water conservation plan, and the land to be cleared will be used according to its capabilities.

CONSIDERATIONS

Water Quantity

Effects on the water budget, especially on volumes and rates of runoff, evaporation, and transpiration.

The impact of soil settling on the variation in rates of runoff immediately after clearing.

Water Quality

Effects on erosion and the movement of sediment, pathogens, and soluble and sediment-attached substances carried by runoff.

Laws and regulations. *This practice must conform to all federal, state, and local laws and regulations. Laws and regulations of particular concern include those involving water rights, land use, pollution control, property easements, wetlands, preservation of cultural resources, and endangered species.*

CRITERIA

The plan shall specify the kinds of timber to be salvaged, lengths of logs, and place of stacking. Method of disposal shall be specified for all material not be salvaged. Clearing and disposal methods shall be according to applicable state laws and with due regard to the safety of persons and property. Where burying is specified minimum cover depth must be at least two feet.

The cleared area shall be left in a neat and sightly condition that will facilitate the planned use and treatment of the land.

The plan shall provide for the measures necessary to protect the cleared area from erosion.

Special attention shall be given to maintaining or improving habitat for fish and wildlife where applicable. Strip clearing, windowing debris, and maintaining den and food trees must be *considered* where compatible with planned uses.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications for land clearing shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

An Operation and Maintenance Plan must be prepared for use by the landowner or operator responsible for operation and maintenance. Minimum requirements to be addressed in the Operation and Maintenance Plan are:

Remove debris and foreign material from area that hinders normal farming or ranching operation.

Maintain good vegetative cover on all slopes and watercourses.

List items specific to the project on the "Operation and Maintenance Worksheet."

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically and updated if needed. The current version of this standard is posted on our website at www.sd.nrcs.usda.gov or may be obtained at your local Natural Resources Conservation Service.

REFERENCES

USDA-NRCS, National Engineering Field Handbook.