

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

FENCE

(Ft.)

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. A fence may be applied as part of a conservation management system to facilitate the application of conservation practices that treat the soil, water, air, plant, animal, and human resource concerns.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice may be applied on any area where management of animals or human movement is needed. Fences are not needed where natural barriers will serve this purpose.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

Fencing materials, type and design of the 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 the need, fences may be temporary or permanent.

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

Standard or conventional (barbed or smooth wire), suspension, woven wire, or electric fences shall consist of acceptable fencing designs to control and management of the animal(s) or people of concern and meet the intended life of the practice.

Height, number and spacing of wires will be installed to facilitate the control and management of the animal(s) and people of concern.

Height, size, spacing and type of posts will be used that best provides the needs for the style of fence required and is best suited for the topography of the landscape.

CONSIDERATIONS

The fence design and location should consider: topography, soil properties, livestock management and safety, livestock trailing, wildlife class and movement, location and adequacy of water facilities, development of potential grazing systems, human access and safety, landscape aesthetics, erosion problems, moisture conditions, flooding potential, stream crossings, and durability of materials. When

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appropriate, natural barriers should be used instead of fencing. Consider installing fences in locations that will facilitate maintenance avoiding irregular terrain and/or water crossings.

Where applicable, cleared right-of-ways may be established which will facilitate fence construction and maintenance. Avoid clearing of vegetation during the nesting season for migratory birds.

Fencing across gullies, canyons or streams may require special bracing, designs or approaches.

To facilitate better management, locate fences on boundaries between ecological sites, forage suitability groups or other significant delineations when possible.

Fence design and location should consider ease of access for construction, repair and maintenance.

Fence construction requiring removal of existing unusable fence should provide for the proper disposal of scrap materials to prevent harm to animals, people, and equipment.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications are to be prepared for all fence types, installations and specific sites. Requirements for applying the practice to achieve all of its intended purposes shall be described.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Regular inspection of fences should be part of an on-going maintenance program. Inspection of fences after storm and other disturbance 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 and limb removal and water gap replacement. This includes the prevention of vegetative growth or removal of woody vegetation in the fence.

Remove and properly discard all broken fencing materials and hardware. All necessary precautions should be taken to ensure the safety of construction and maintenance crews.

