NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

ROAD/LANDING DECOMMISSIONING

(Acres)
CODE 722 WA INTERIM

DEFINITION

This practice includes the planned removal by excavation of sections of a forest management access road system and landing fills from within or near stream channels i.e. riparian areas, the removal of degraded water control structures, berms, cutbanks and the safe disposal of these materials and the stabilization of excavated and filled areas as a result of these operations.

PURPOSES

The purpose of this practice is to reduce sediment delivered to downstream waters and improving water quality for all uses, including listed aquatic species.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies to forest lands where roads, landings and fills were constructed for short term forest management use, have since fallen into disrepair; it also includes roads constructed in riparian corridors and which are causing surface erosion and / or have become sources of sediment for downstream waters as a result of active erosion of slopes, fills and road ditches. This practice does not apply to the creation of new access roads of any type.

CRITERIA

Because each road system and riparian area is unique, decommissioning and obliteration of roads and fills must be done in accordance with site specific characteristics, soils and appropriate critical area stabilization techniques necessary to re-establish vegetation.

Soil mechanics, slope stability and drainage of disposal sites for the fill removed must be considered in the final site plan.

Design for road and fill decommissioning shall conform to the following principles:

1. Associated stream channels, where roads and fills are to be decommissioned, shall be generally stable upstream and downstream of the proposed work.

2. The finished landscape width and side slopes shall be based on stable cross sections above and below the landing or roadfill to be excavated.

3. Maximum excavated side slopes shall not exceed 2:1 without documentation that local soil conditions will allow for slopes steeper than 2:1.

4. Final landscape grade should generally be uniform and based on matching existing invert elevations upstream and downstream of natural slopes.

5. If necessary landscape stability can be achieved with the aid of stabilization measures such as:

   a. Temporary measures including mulch staking or netting, log stabilizers, soil cement bag structures or other practices which provide temporary stabilization until vegetation can become established.

   b. Structural measures including various grade control structures.

   c. Areas selected for disposal of fill shall be stable and free of features which would result in concentrated surface flows (swales, gullies) and subsurface flows (springs, seeps). Surface or subsurface drainage facilities may be required to prevent saturated conditions from developing on fill slopes in disposal areas.

6. Finished slopes of the fill material shall be limited based on the level of compaction provided. Compacted slopes shall be no steeper than 2:1 with the majority of the fill recommended to be 2.5:1 or flatter. Uncompacted slopes shall be no steeper than 2.5:1 with the majority of the fill recommended to be 3:1 or flatter. Foundation preparation, fill placement, moisture and compaction for all fills shall be in accordance with

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the applicable specifications for the level of compaction required.

6. The site shall be re-vegetated in accordance with the plans, Specification 342, Critical Area Planting, 612 - Tree and Shrub Establishment and other applicable plans and specifications.

CONSIDERATIONS

Application of this practice shall consider the severity of sediment delivery potential from each proposed site, access requirements to the site and expected disturbance as a result of providing access to the sites.

Monitoring of vegetation and stability of the disturbed areas should be planned into Operation and Maintenance Activities.

The need for component practice in conjunction with this interim practice standard should be considered in order to make the application of this practice successful. These would include but not be limited to the following practices:

350 Sediment Basin

342 Critical Area Planting

391A Riparian Forest Buffer

422 Hedgerow Planting

490 Site Preparation

572 Spoil Spreading

612 Tree and Shrub Establishment

Water Quantity

This practice may reduce runoff and increase infiltration and percolation. When the tree planting and seeding is established, transpiration rates may be increased which in turn may decrease the amount of water available for stream base flow. Quick return flow will be reduced.

Water Quality

This practice will reduce erosion and sediment production. Where chemicals are used for site preparation or silviculture management, soluble pesticides and nutrients may be leached into the soil and the ground water or may be transported to the surface waters. The temperature of the runoff will be reduced when trees, shrubs and grasses become established... During site preparation, tree planting and seeding operations, sediment yield and associated pollutant loads may be increased temporarily if the area is mechanically disturbed.

Anytime work is contemplated within or adjacent to a riparian area, consideration must be given to cultural resources. Consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer and affected tribes may be in order.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and Specifications for this practice shall be prepared for the specific site conditions in accordance with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose. These items shall describe the kind, amount and quality of materials used, and the sequence, timing and details of construction activity as necessary.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Operation and maintenance shall include monitoring of completed sites for erosion and the condition of vegetation for all disturbed areas. Vegetation that is either dying or dead shall be replaced as necessary. Significant erosion shall be reduced by shaping and re-vegetation or the addition of other stabilizing measures as needed.

The minimum level of monitoring shall be to inspect and document the site conditions annually after the winter season until the site can be determined to be stable and not susceptible to significant erosion.