

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**CRITICAL AREA PLANTING**

(Acre)

**CODE 342**

**DEFINITION**

Establishing permanent vegetation on sites that have or are expected to have high erosion rates, and on sites that have physical, chemical, or biological conditions that prevent the establishment of vegetation with normal practices.

**PURPOSE**

- Stabilize areas with existing or expected high rates of soil erosion by water and wind.
- Restore degraded sites that cannot be stabilized through normal methods.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

On areas with existing or expected high rates of erosion or degraded sites that usually cannot be stabilized by ordinary conservation treatment and/or management, and if left untreated, could be severely damaged by erosion or sedimentation or could cause significant off-site damage.

**CRITERIA**

**General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes**

Species selected for seeding or planting shall be suited to current site conditions and intended uses. Selected species will have the capacity to achieve adequate density and vigor within an appropriate time frame to stabilize the site sufficiently to permit suited uses with ordinary management activities.

Site preparation and seeding or planting shall be done at a time and in a manner to insure survival and growth of the selected species. Only viable, high quality, and adapted seed or planting stock will be used.

Fertilization, mulching, soil amendments, or other facilitating practices for plant growth shall be timed and applied to accelerate establishment of selected species.

Use of the area shall be managed as long as necessary to stabilize the site and to achieve the intended purpose.

Existing or expected pests that will delay establishment of vegetation will be controlled or excluded as necessary to achieve the intended purpose(s).

Comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Species or mixes that are native and have multiple values are preferred and should be considered.

Avoid species that may harbor pests. Species diversity should be considered to avoid loss of function due to species-specific pests.

**PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Specifications for applying this practice shall be prepared for each site and recorded and filed using the approved specification sheets and narrative statements in the conservation plan.

**OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

Use of the area shall be managed as long as necessary to stabilize the site and achieve the intended purpose.

Inspections, reseeding or replanting, fertilization, and pest control may be needed to ensure that this practice functions as intended throughout its expected life.