

USDA
NATURAL RESOURCES
CONSERVATION SERVICE

MARYLAND CONSERVATION
PRACTICE STANDARD

USE EXCLUSION

CODE 472
(Reported by Acre)

DEFINITION

The temporary or permanent exclusion of animals, people, or vehicles from an area.

PURPOSES

This practice may be applied for one or more of the following purposes:

1. To prevent, restrict, or control access to an area;
2. To maintain or improve the quantity and quality of natural resources;
3. To minimize liability and human health concerns.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE
APPLIES**

This practice may be applied on all land uses where a temporary or permanent barrier is needed. It is applicable on sites where the soil, vegetation, or other natural resources need to be protected from uncontrolled access by animals (including livestock) or human activities. It is also applicable where there are safety hazards to animals or people.

This practice is not applicable where livestock are already confined to fenced areas such as in pastures or feedlots.

CONSIDERATIONS

Assess the potential for landowner or user liability before installing barriers.

Consider the potential for soil erosion, especially when barriers will be constructed on steep slopes.

Consider the design of the barrier, and whether it might adversely affect wildlife health and animal movement.

Consider whether restricting public access may be an issue in areas where the right of access was previously established by past use and law.

Consider the need for access by public safety personnel, and assess whether the barrier will unnecessarily restrict activities such as fire control and emergency rescue.

Identify and evaluate any other constraints such as management options, economic feasibility, state and federal regulations, or cost-share program requirements.

Consider using this practice to protect significant archaeological resources or cultural properties from damage.

CRITERIA

Barriers shall consist of either natural and/or artificial measures such as hedges or other tree/shrub plantings, logs, earth-fill, boulders, walls, fences, gates, electronic and sonic devices, or signs.

Barriers shall be adequate to prevent, restrict, or control use by targeted vehicles, animals, or people. Barrier life expectancy shall be adequate for the intended purpose.

Timing and exclusion periods shall be identified as needed to accomplish the intended purpose.

Barriers shall not create a safety hazard. To prevent accidents associated with the use of vehicles, barriers associated with roads and trails shall be adequately marked to safeguard human safety and minimize the risk of liability.

Barriers shall comply with all applicable federal, state and local laws and regulations.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the [Natural Resources Conservation Service - Maryland](#) or visit the [electronic Field Office Technical Guide \(eFOTG\)](#).

Note: Specific cost-sharing programs or other funding sources may dictate criteria in addition to, or more restrictive than, those specified in this standard.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications for use exclusion shall be prepared for each site or management unit according to the Considerations, Criteria, and Operation and Maintenance described in this standard. They shall be recorded on specification sheets, job sheets, narrative statements in conservation plans, or other acceptable documentation.

When this practice is used in combination with another practice (e.g., fence, hedgerow), plans and specifications shall meet the requirements of this standard and the other applicable standard to achieve the intended purpose of the practice. The completed work shall be checked and documented to verify that the practice was completed according to the appropriate drawings and specifications of both standards. Documentation shall be in accordance with the section "Supporting Data and Documentation" in both standards.

Woody vegetation, if used, shall be specified in accordance with the conservation practice standard for Tree/Shrub Establishment, Code 612, or the conservation practice standard for Hedgerow Planting, Code 422, as appropriate.

Fencing, if used, shall be specified in accordance with the conservation practice standard for Fence, Code 382.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

An operation and maintenance (O&M) plan shall be prepared for each use exclusion project. Appropriate Job Sheet(s) may be used to serve as the management plan as well as supporting documentation, and shall be provided to the client. At a minimum, the following components shall be addressed in the O&M plan, as applicable:

1. Inspect the protective barriers at least annually;

2. Take corrective actions as needed to replace damaged barriers;
3. Where exclusion efforts have failed, reassess the need for additional measures to exclude use.

SUPPORTING DATA AND DOCUMENTATION

The following is a list of the minimum data and documentation to be recorded in the case file:

1. Field location and extent of use exclusion in acres. Also note the location of the practice on the conservation plan map;
2. Assistance notes documenting why the practice is needed (i.e., what the problem is, what will be protected, etc.), dates of site visits, discussions with the client, decisions made, and by whom;
3. Completed copy of the appropriate Job Sheet(s), drawings, or other specifications, and management plans. The following items shall be addressed, as appropriate:
 - a. Types of materials, quantities, and methods of installation to be used;
 - b. Final quantities, and documentation for any quantity changes. Include materials certification when requested.

REFERENCES

1. USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service. *Conservation Practice Standards*. Maryland Field Office Technical Guide, Section IV.