

USDA  
NATURAL RESOURCES  
CONSERVATION SERVICE  
MARYLAND CONSERVATION  
PRACTICE STANDARD  
**ACCESS CONTROL**  
CODE 472  
(Reported by Acre)

**DEFINITION**

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

**PURPOSES**

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

1. To prevent access to an area;
2. To manage the frequency and/or intensity of use to achieve and maintain desired resource conditions.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE  
APPLIES**

This practice may be applied on all land uses where a temporary or permanent barrier is needed to control access to an area. It is applicable on sites where the soil, vegetation, other natural resources, structures or facilities need to be protected from uncontrolled access by animals (including livestock) or human activities. The excluded or controlled area is the location where the practice is applied. For example, access control may be used to exclude or limit livestock access to a stream corridor. This practice is also applicable where there are safety hazards to animals or people.

**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 and 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.

Placement of barriers, locations, dimensions, and materials (e.g., fences, gates, signs, etc.) shall be specified for each area where this practice will be implemented. Timing of access (if any will be allowed) 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.

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

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 \(eFOTG\)](#).

### **PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Plans and specifications for access control 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 controlling access. 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.

### **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

An operation and maintenance (O&M) plan shall be prepared for each access control 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. Frequency of monitoring and inspection. At a minimum, require annual inspection of the access control measures;
2. Take corrective actions as needed to replace damaged barriers;
3. Where control efforts have failed, reassess the need for additional measures to manage or 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 access control 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.
2. U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, 2003. *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways - Part 5, Traffic Control Devices for Low-Volume Roads*. Washington, DC.  
[http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2003r1r2/pdf\\_index.htm](http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2003r1r2/pdf_index.htm)