

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

FENCE

(Feet)

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.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice may be applied on any area where management of animal or human movement is needed.

CRITERIA

Fencing materials, type and design of fence installed shall be of a high quality and durability. The type and design of fence installed will meet the management objectives and site challenges. Based on need, fences may be permanent, portable, or temporary.

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

Height, size, spacing and type of materials used will provide the desired control, life expectancy, and management of animals and people of concern.

Fences will be designed, located and installed to meet appropriate local wildlife and land management needs and requirements.

- The free movement of wildlife will be considered in all fence designs.
- The least obtrusive type of fence needed to achieve the level of control will be used.
- Spacing, height and type of fence must be

planned to include consideration to ungulates, such as pronghorn, deer and elk, as well as sensitive bird species.

- Construction of this practice must follow conservation measures included in all Fish and Wildlife consultation documents as applicable at the local area.
- Woven-wire, v-mesh wire will not be considered "wildlife friendly", although there may be measures that can be taken to improve wildlife movement. Other wildlife-friendly considerations may be considered on a case by case basis.

If applicable, listed plant species will be protected during fence construction by flagging individual plants or their immediate vicinity prior to construction and by requiring fence alignment to be routed so as to avoid specific areas known to be occupied by listed plant species.

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

CONSIDERATIONS

The fence design and location shall consider the following: 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 appropriate, natural barriers should be utilized instead of fencing,

Consider constructing fences on a contour, considering how the fence will facilitate the prescribed grazing strategy including animal behavior grazing and distribution patterns.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the [NRCS Colorado State office](#) or visit the NRCS Colorado [electronic Field Office Technical Guide](#).

In planning locations of fence, placement should consider natural travel corridors, and presence of attractants to wildlife. Water locations and availability should be considered in planning locations of fencing so as to not interfere with access to wildlife.

Where applicable, fences should be marked to enhance visibility as a safety measure for animals or people.

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

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

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

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, such as brace types, post types, wildlife considerations, and gate/cattle guard locations.

Location and construction measures that are included in Fish and Wildlife Service consultation documents (ie. conference reports, biological opinions) will be included in planning and construction specifications.

Fence construction shall be in accordance with Colorado NRCS Conservation Practice Specification Guide, relevant installation requirements and relevant drawing(s), and a vicinity map with appropriate station numbering for applicable construction measures when applicable.

Reference Range Tech Note 38 and 39 for additional planning materials.

Variance requests or special designs require preapproval from the State Resource Specialist, route requests through the Area Office to the State Rangeland Management Specialist.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Regular inspection of fences should be part of an ongoing maintenance program. Inspection of fences after storms and other disturbance events is necessary to ensure the continued proper function of the fence. Maintenance and repairs will be performed in a timely manner as needed, including tree/limb removal and water gap replacement.

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

REFERENCES

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