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

Plan location and design of fence 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 shall be designed, located, and installed to meet appropriate local wildlife and land management needs and requirements. Fence designs shall meet NRCS construction specifications.

Additional bracing, above minimal specifications, may be required on steep slopes or excessively well-drained soils.

CONSIDERATIONS

The fence design and location should consider: topography, soil properties, livestock management, animal safety, livestock trailing, access to water facilities, development of potential grazing systems, human access and safety, landscape aesthetics, erosion problems, soil moisture conditions, flooding potential, stream crossings, and durability of materials. When appropriate, natural barriers should be utilized instead of fencing.

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.

Consider maintenance issues when installing fences and avoid irregular terrain such as gullies and water crossings if possible. Fences should not be constructed in flood prone areas, except when necessary.

Fencing construction requiring the removal of existing fencing materials should provide for proper disposal to prevent harm to animals, people and equipment

Where applicable fences should be marked to enhance visibility as safety measures to animals or people

Design around stream and wetland flow to avoid fencing through wet areas when possible

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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. At minimum plans will include:

- A map showing field identification and the location of fence, gates, and water facilities
- The fence type
- Fence length and how it was determined
- Completed job sheet detailing site specific plans.

The following Construction Specifications are considered part of this standard:

- Barbed Wire
- High-Tensile Smooth Wire
- Electric Fence
- Woven Wire
- Wooden Board

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Maintenance in accordance with the requirements of this standard is necessary throughout the life expectancy of the fence.

Regular inspection of fences shall be part of an ongoing management program. Inspect fences after storms and other disturbances events to ensure the continued proper function. Maintain and repair in a timely manner as needed.

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