

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATION**

IA-23 EARTHFILL

1. SCOPE

The work shall consist of the construction of earth fills required by the drawings and specifications. The completed work shall conform to the lines, grades, and elevations shown on the drawings or as staked in the field.

2. MATERIALS

All fill materials shall be obtained from required excavations and designated borrow areas. Fill materials shall contain no sod, brush, roots or other bio-degradable materials. Rocks larger than 6 inches in diameter shall be removed prior to compaction of the fill.

3. FOUNDATION PREPARATION

Foundations for earthfill shall be stripped a minimum of 6 inches to remove vegetation and other unsuitable materials. Foundation surfaces shall be scarified to a minimum depth of 2 inches prior to placing fill material.

Foundation and abutment surfaces shall not be sloped steeper than 1.5 horizontal to 1 vertical unless otherwise shown on the drawings.

4. PLACEMENT

Fill shall not be placed until the required excavation and foundation preparation have been completed and the foundation has been inspected and approved by NRCS. Fill shall not be placed upon a frozen surface, nor shall snow, ice, or frozen material be incorporated in the fill.

Adjacent to structures or pipes, fill shall be placed in a manner which will prevent damage. The height of the fill adjacent to structures or pipes shall be increased at approximately the same rate on all sides.

The materials used throughout the earth fill shall be essentially uniform. Selective placement shall be as shown on the drawings or approved by NRCS.

If the surface of any layer becomes too hard and smooth for proper bond with the succeeding layer, it shall be scarified to a minimum depth of 2 inches before the next layer is placed.

The top surfaces of embankments shall be maintained approximately level during construction, except that a cross-slope of approximately 2% shall be maintained to ensure effective drainage.

When moving fill material from the borrow area(s) to the embankment by use of bulldozers only, the following steps shall be followed:

- Immediately after the borrow material is pushed to the embankment, it shall be spread in horizontal lifts placed parallel to the centerline of the embankment.
- Compactive effort will then be applied by operating equipment parallel to the centerline of the fill or embankment.
- Lift thicknesses shall be in strict compliance with Clause 6, below.

Sectional fills are not allowed unless they are shown on the construction drawings.

5. CONTROL OF MOISTURE CONTENT

The moisture content of the fill material shall be adequate for obtaining the required compaction. Material that is too wet shall be dried to meet this requirement, and material that is too dry shall have water added and mixed until the requirement is met.

The moisture content of the fill material shall be such that a ball formed with the hands does not crack or separate when struck sharply with a pencil and will easily ribbon out between the thumb and finger.

Earth foundations under and adjacent to concrete structures shall be prevented from drying and cracking before concrete and backfill are placed.

The application of water to the fill materials shall be accomplished at the borrow areas insofar as possible.

6. COMPACTION

Earth fill shall be compacted by one of the following methods as specified on the plans or in Section 8, Special Specifications. If no method is specified, compaction will be in accordance with Method 1.

- Method 1 - Earthfill shall be placed so that the wheels or tracks of the loaded hauling equipment, traveling in a direction parallel to the centerline of fill, pass over the entire surface of each layer being placed. Low ground pressure vehicles shall not be used for this purpose.
- Method 2 - Two (2) complete passes of a tamping-type roller will be made over each layer. The roller shall be capable of exerting a minimum force of two hundred (200) pounds per square inch.
- Method 3 - Minimum density shall be 90% of the maximum density as determined by ASTM D 698 and as shown on the plans.

The maximum thickness of a lift of fill before compaction shall be 9 inches, unless otherwise indicated on the drawings.

Fill adjacent to structures, pipe conduits, and appurtenances shall be placed in layers not more than 4 inches thick and compacted to a density equivalent to that of the surrounding fill. Methods used to obtain compaction for fine or coarse grained materials are as follows:

- For fine grained materials, hand tamping or manually directed power tampers may be used. Hand compaction only shall be used to compact the earthfill under the bottom half of circular pipes. Manually directed power tampers shall not be used in tight spaces where applying full compactive effort will result in direct contact of the tamper plate with the pipe. Care should be taken so that compaction around the spillway pipe does not cause uplift of the pipe resulting in a void beneath the pipe.
- For coarse grained materials (sands and gravels), vibratory plate compactors shall be used for obtaining compaction. However, hand tamping shall be used to compact the material under the bottom half of circular pipes.

In all cases, follow manufacturer instructions for the specific compaction equipment being used. Heavy equipment shall not be operated within 2 feet of any structure or pipe.

Compacting of fill adjacent to concrete structures shall not be started until the concrete is 7 days old.

7. ISLANDS, MOUNDS, AND LOAFING AREAS ON WETLAND RESTORATION, ENHANCEMENT, OR CREATION PROJECTS

Islands shall be randomly located within the wetland area at locations shown on the drawings or as staked in the field. The orientation of island shorelines shall be random with attention given to prevailing winds to limit wave damage. In general, the side of the island with the longest dimension shall be parallel to the prevailing wind direction. Side slopes of islands shall be as shown on the drawings, but in no case shall be steeper than 6 horizontal to 1 vertical. Island shapes shall be irregular.

Loafing areas shall be constructed in the areas shown on the drawings or as staked in the field and shall be graded to drain runoff water. The elevation of at least one loafing area should be above the maximum water level whenever possible.

Excavated material not suitable for embankments, wetland dikes, or islands can be used to create mounds or blended into surrounding topography to create a natural appearance. Spoil material shall not be spread on existing wetland areas.

Organic soils shall not be used to construct islands, loafing areas, dikes, or embankments.

8. SPECIAL SPECIFICATIONS