

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
INTERIM CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**STRUCTURE SEDIMENT REMOVAL**

(Ac.-Ft.)

**CODE 758**

**DEFINITION**

Removal of sediment from constructed or improved structures or impoundments.

**PURPOSE**

Reduce risks to agricultural resources or conservation practices by removing sediment in order to:

- Restore structure flow capacity;
- Restore water and sediment storage capacity;
- Prevent excessive erosion adjacent to structures; or
- Improve water quality.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

Any structure where the removal of sediment is required to accomplish one or more of the purposes listed above.

**CRITERIA**

Plan and design structure sediment removal to comply with all federal, tribal, state, and local laws and regulations.

**Extent.** The area and depth of sediment removal shall not exceed the area and depth of sediment accumulation. Sediment removal does not include excavation into previously undisturbed soil. Care shall be taken not to damage any component of the existing structure.

**Stability and erosion control.** Smooth and shape all areas impacted by sediment removal activities. Treat surfaces with rock, mulch,

vegetative plantings, or other measures to prevent water or wind erosion.

**Sediment reuse or disposal.** Reuse or dispose of sediment as close as practical to the sediment removal site to minimize haul distance. Place sediment in locations that minimize the risk of sediment transport back into sediment removal areas or bodies of water. Refer to Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) [Conservation Practice Standard 572, Spoil Spreading](#), for criteria on reuse or disposal of sediment material.

**Sediment assessment.** Test sediments that are known or suspected to be contaminated with toxic substances to determine the nature and toxicity of the contamination. Based upon the evaluation, develop a plan to remove and dispose of contaminated sediment in an environmentally sound manner.

Examine the site for the presence of debris such as chemical containers, trash, or other deleterious substances. Develop a plan to remove and dispose of all debris.

Methods for removal and disposal of contaminated sediments and debris disposal are outside the scope of this standard.

**Vegetation.** When practical and consistent with the purpose of the structure or impoundment, restore areas disturbed during sediment removal by planting vegetation. Include native and ecologically suitable species obtained from local sources for vegetation established as part of this practice. Refer to NRCS [Conservation Practice Standard 342, Critical Area Planting](#), for criteria on vegetation establishment.

**Ecologically sensitive areas.** Minimize or avoid disturbance of wetlands, riparian areas, and fish and wildlife habitat sites where possible.

### CONSIDERATIONS

Schedule in-water work to avoid environmentally sensitive periods such as spawning and migration.

Incorporate measures and practices, as needed and practical, to address modified flow conditions such as:

- A lowered hydraulic gradient which may drain adjacent land more quickly.
- Decreased water surface elevation that may adversely affect adjacent land.

Ground-disturbing activities associated with this practice have the potential to adversely affect protected plant species and may encourage the establishment of exotic and/or non-native species. Vegetate disturbed areas to minimize the introduction of non-native species.

Use applicable best management practices to minimize the delivery of fine sediment to adjacent and downstream areas.

### PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications for sediment removal shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose(s).

Construction operations shall be carried out in a manner and sequence so that impacts on the environment will be minimized and held within acceptable limits.

As a minimum and as applicable, include the following items in the plans and specifications:

- Limits of area requiring sediment removal.
- Location of ingress and egress to the site.
- Description of works of improvement and extent of sediment removal.
- Location of disposal areas or location of areas off limits for disposal of debris and sediment.
- Location and description of trees or vegetation to be left undisturbed.
- Method of sediment disposal.
- Manner and sequence of construction operations so that impacts on the environment will be minimized.
- Erosion control measures, as applicable.
- Vegetative requirements for areas denuded and disturbed, as applicable.

All operations shall be carried out in a safe and skillful manner. Safety and health regulations shall be observed and appropriate safety measures used.

### OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Prepare an operation and management plan for the operator. Items to consider are:

- Periodic inspection of sediment removal and disposal areas for signs of wind or water erosion.
- Periodic monitoring of impoundments for the accumulation of sediment and debris.

### REFERENCES

USDA-NRCS. 2008. National Engineering Handbook, Part 632, Sedimentation Geology. Washington, D.C.