

SECTION III. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

INTRODUCTION

Conservation planning and application will be directed toward the implementation of Resource Management Systems (RMS).

This section of the Field Office Technical Guide contains the performance criteria for land use and conservation treatment in the Conservation District. The performance criteria provide for erosion control; water disposal; management of animal wastes, agricultural chemicals and water; maintenance of acceptable offsite effects; resource management for the productive use of soil, water, plant, and animal resources; and maintenance or improvement of environmental quality. All of these criteria do not necessarily apply to each land use with equal weight. Six major resource concerns have been identified. Each of these six resource concerns must be addressed for a RMS to be fully acceptable. When a resource problem is identified during planning, the RMS used to correct that problem must meet acceptable quality criteria for each resource concern.

These performance criteria were adopted by the _____ Conservation District on _____. These performance criteria define acceptable levels of:

1. Erosion Control and Water Quality
2. Water Disposal
3. Animal Wastes and Agricultural Chemical Management
4. Resource Management
5. Water Management
6. Offsite Effects

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1. Erosion Control - The Resource Management System shall provide for controlling erosion, including sheet and rill, wind, gully, streambank, and other sources of erosion. The combined average annual soil loss from sheet, rill, and wind erosion shall not exceed the soil loss tolerance value (T) for specific soils involved. Gully erosion (both ephemeral and permanent), streambank, and other types of erosion will be managed with practical and normal approaches for the primary land use.
2. Water Disposal - The Resource Management System shall provide for disposal of excess surface water through acceptable outlets. This includes the removal and safe disposal of surface runoff. Performance will be determined by visual inspection. It is considered met if there is no visual evidence of erosion in the watercourse or evidence of sediment load or deposition at the point of disposal.
3. Animal Wastes and Agricultural Chemical Management - The Resource Management System shall provide for the management of animal wastes, other organic matter, pesticides, and fertilizers to achieve the appropriate level of production using current recommendations and regulations. Follow all labels for application of agri-chemicals. Fertilizer will be applied according to soil tests. Comply with all federal, state, and local regulations in the application of pesticides, fertilizers, and other soil amendments. Animal and other wastes shall be managed to prevent contamination of ground and surface waters in accordance with federal and local regulations.
4. Resource Management - The Resource Management System shall provide for management of soil, plant, and animal resources to maintain production and promote acceptable ecological and vegetative conditions, acceptable wildlife habitat quality, improved tilth, salinity control, and minimum soil compaction. These criteria will be met if the targeted resource is managed to maintain or improve the resource base.
5. Water Management - The Resource Management System shall assure that water from all sources is managed to provide acceptable quantity and quality for plant production, animal management, or domestic, municipal, or recreational uses. Quality criteria will be met if the plan complies with all water rights regulations and federal, state, and/or municipal water quality standards.
6. Offsite Effects - The Resource Management System shall assure that offsite effects are at an acceptable level. Offsite effects may include noise, odors, deep percolation of contaminants, and others. Criteria are to be found in federal, state, or local legislation, environmental ordinances, or in technical literature.

DEFINITIONS

Resource Base. These are the soil, water, plant, and animal resources. To protect the resource base, the Field Office Technical Guide is to be used in selecting alternatives for meeting acceptable soil losses, maintaining water quality, and avoiding further deterioration on and off site, and as necessary, improving forest, range, and wildlife resources.

Resource Management System. A combination of conservation practices and management identified by the primary use of land or water that, if installed, will at a minimum protect the resource base by meeting acceptable soil losses, maintaining acceptable ground and surface water quality, and maintaining acceptable ecological and management levels for the selected resource use. Resource management systems, in addition, may include conservation practices or management to protect, restore, or improve the resource base.

Conservation Practice. A measure commonly used to meet a specific need in planning and carrying out soil and water conservation programs for which standards and specifications have been developed. Standards and specifications for conservation practices are found in Section IV of the Field Office Technical Guide.

Performance Criteria. Performance criteria outline the minimal standards acceptable in meeting the objectives of protection of the resource base.

Conservation System. Those systems of conservation practices that adequately control soil erosion on cropland and would represent the cropland erosion control component of a Resource Management System. A conservation system will reduce the erosion rates and will meet the required treatment needed for a producer to farm highly erodible land (HEL) as defined in the 1985 Food Security Act.

Alternative Conservation System. Alternative Conservation Systems (ACS) are various mixes of conservation practices that are considered to achieve acceptable FSA erosion control on highly erodible cropland. They are combinations of practices that substantially reduce erosion on highly erodible cropland being planted to agricultural commodities. ACS do not provide complete protection of the resource base and should only be used in cases where providing complete protection would place an economic hardship on farmers. An ACS, when applied and maintained, will meet the required treatment needed for a producer to farm highly erodible land (HEL) as defined in the 1985 Food Security Act. ACS do not apply to any other program or conversion of native vegetation to cropland.

ALTERNATIVE CONSERVATION SYSTEM

GUIDE SHEET

FOR CROPLAND LAND USE
[Highly Erodible Land]

Major Land Resource Area: Statewide

Applicable Soils: All highly erodible mapping units

ACS are approved for use in Kansas. Alternative Conservation Systems are to be used on a case by case basis when warranted as documented by the district conservationist. The ultimate goal is a complete resource management system with the ACS being only the first step to achieving that goal. When using ACS to reduce erosion, the approved ACS will require a minimum of 50 percent residue cover after planting. When using ACS for wind erosion control, soil loss from wind shall not exceed 5 tons/acre/year unless otherwise approved by the state conservationist.

The following statement shall be placed on all ACS conservation plans to apprise the landowners to the degree of erosion control obtained: "This conservation plan conforms to all requirements of the Conservation Compliance Provisions of the Food Security Act of 1985. It does not, however, provide sufficient soil protection to sustain the land's productivity."

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TREATMENT OPTIONS

Option	Erosion Control	Water Disposal	Animal Waste & Agri-Chem Management	Resource Management	Water Mgmt.	Offsite Effects	Alternative Conservation System
	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]
#1 *Conservation Tillage 50% Residue	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	(X)	X

(X) ACS may or may not address this resource management concern. This will depend upon level of treatment achieved.

*Other conservation practices or combination of conservation practices may be used that will meet or exceed the treatment level provided by conservation tillage - 50 percent residue level.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

FOR

CROPLAND

DEFINITION: Land used for the production of adapted row crops and close-growing crops alone or in association with other crops.

SUITABLE SOILS: In general, suitable soils include Capability Classes I through IV, and with certain intensive treatments, Capability Classes V, VI, and VII. Wetland Types 3-20 (USDI Fish and Wildlife Circular 39) are excluded.

COMPONENTS: Conservation practices which are found in Section IV of the Field Office Technical Guide are available for use in meeting the objectives of the Resource Management System (RMS).

Conservation systems are the erosion control component of the RMS and become the minimum acceptable level for the Food Security Act.

The cropland guide sheets are based on groupings of soil mapping units with similar characteristics and land uses.

Different or additional practices can be substituted to form various combinations for treatment options to achieve both erosion control and complete resource management systems.