Part 501 – Authorizations

Subpart B – Repair and Rehabilitation

501.20 General

Many engineering practices require repair or rehabilitation because of advancements in technology, changes in criteria, land use changes, or deterioration from age. A rehabilitated structure must be safe and functional for the design life as extended. As with original design, sound engineering principles must be applied in design of repairs or rehabilitation.

501.21 Scope

Repair or rehabilitation of all engineering practices, originally installed with NRCS assistance or not, must be performed in accordance with provisions of this subpart. These instructions do not apply to operation and maintenance activities.

501.22 Applicable Standards

A. Applicable standards must be determined when assistance is provided for the repair or rehabilitation of a practice originally installed with NRCS assistance. Normally, standards used for the original design are used for the repair or rehabilitation. Current NRCS State and national criteria must be used if the original standards are not acceptable as determined by the approver with appropriate job approval authority (see section 501.4) in light of new engineering knowledge, change in site conditions, or other factors.

B. A practice not originally installed with NRCS assistance must meet current NRCS standards and criteria when the repair or rehabilitation is complete (see section 501.23). This ensures a durable, functional practice that justifies the use of NRCS resources.

C. When repairing a component of a practice or a practice that is an interdependent part of a system, the entire system or practice must be carefully evaluated. The system or practice must be sufficiently sound to permit repair or rebuilding to function as designed.

501.23 Dams Installed Without NRCS Assistance

A. Because of the hazards associated with dams, a careful and deliberate approach is necessary when responding to requests for the repair or rehabilitation of a dam built without NRCS assistance. The condition of the dam must be determined and a comprehensive engineering report prepared before any commitment for assistance is made. The report must describe the current physical condition of the dam, specify the repairs needed to meet NRCS standards, and include an estimate of the costs for repair or rehabilitation. The report is the basis for the decision to commit resources.

B. If the dam exceeds class V (see section 501.4), the report must be prepared by a non-NRCS registered professional engineer experienced in the design and construction of dams. The report must be reviewed as required in section 501.5 in accordance with the job class. Technical acceptance of the report by the State conservation engineer (SCE) is necessary before resources can be committed for repair or rehabilitation.

C. If the dam is class V or below, the owner, sponsor, or an NRCS engineer may prepare the report. An NRCS engineer with appropriate engineering job approval authority must approve the report before resources can be committed.

501.24 Special Conditions

A. If urgent action is necessary to safeguard life and property against flood damage, structure failure, etc., NRCS may provide technical assistance for temporary measures to lessen the immediate threat. If NRCS subsequently makes permanent repairs, they must conform to section 501.22.

B. Repairs or rehabilitations under the Emergency Conservation Program are implemented as specified by the Farm Service Agency. The practices not restored to original or current criteria must be functional. Repaired or replaced practices that may create a safety hazard must be restored to meet current NRCS standards.

C. Repairs or rehabilitation under the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWPP) or other emergency assistance program are carried out in accordance with EWPP rules, but if a repaired or replaced practice would create a safety hazard, it must be restored to meet current NRCS standards.