

Part 520 – Soil and Water Resource Development

Subpart A – Erosion and Sediment Control

520.0 General

A. Effective erosion and sediment control requires a comprehensive system of engineering and cultural practices applied to the land for the specific purpose of controlling erosion and preventing excessive sediment accumulation. Federal, Tribal and State laws, rules, regulations, and Executive orders emphasize the need to conserve natural resources and to improve the quality of the environment. Erosion and sediment control systems address this need. Landowners, project sponsors, and other partners often request technical assistance from NRCS for planning, design, and construction of erosion and sediment control systems.

520.1 Minimizing Erosion and Sediment during Construction

A. NRCS uses practices and techniques to minimize erosion and sediment for construction operations carried out under all programs. Determine the need for sediment abatement for each site by evaluating the sediment hazard and its relation to the sediment tolerance or standard for the area in question. Conduct a review of State and local standards, established in response to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (the Clean Water Act, as amended), when determining the control necessary for special sites.

B. Include sediment control measures as a part of all engineering plans prepared by NRCS and all construction operations administered by NRCS.

C. Include sediment control measures as a part of all construction operations administered by local organizations for which NRCS provides the engineering design, installation services, or financial assistance.

D. Clearly outline requirements for erosion and sediment control measures in construction contracts. NRCS designs typically include these requirements in the items of work and construction details section.

E. To reduce risks associated with erosion and sediment during construction, prepare plans and specifications to minimize the area of disturbance and duration of exposure of erodible soils. Additional measures include temporary vegetation of disturbed soil, completing work as rapidly as construction schedules allow, installing measures to mechanically retard the rate of runoff, installing sediment traps, minimizing dust on site and on haul roads, installing temporary bridges or culverts, and scheduling construction to avoid periods of inclement weather.