

Livestock Exclusion System

Definition/Purpose

A Livestock Exclusion System means a system of permanent fencing (board, barbed, high tensile or electric wire) installed to exclude livestock from streams and critical areas not intended for grazing to improve water quality. Benefits may include reduced soil erosion, sedimentation, pathogen contamination and pollution from dissolved, particulate, and sediment-attached substances. (DIP)

Policies

1. Livestock exclusion requires permanent fence and the average cost includes cost of all materials, gates, and labor for installation of fencing trails or walkways. It does not apply to livestock exclusion associated with heavy use areas which are less than one quarter acre in size and are located in pastures.
2. A landowner may, as part of a watering tank/trough system or stream crossing, **provide at his/her own cost** the livestock exclusion required in the contract if the technical representative certifies that the fencing is adequate to exclude livestock from the water course and meets current set-back requirements. **The livestock exclusion must be in place prior to submission of a Request for Payment for the tank/trough or stream crossing.**
3. Technical staff shall have the responsibility for determining appropriate set-backs for cost shared fencing in accordance with Agriculture Cost Share Program policy and NRCS standards as follows:
 - a. Cost shared fencing must be set back a minimum of five (5) feet from the top of the stream bank in accordance with NRCS standards. In parts of Critical Water Supply Watersheds a minimum ten (10) foot set back distance is required.
 - b. If livestock are concentrated in the vicinity of the stream or if runoff from areas of livestock concentration could reach the stream, then the cost shared fence shall be set back a minimum of twenty (20) feet from the top of the stream bank (i.e. heavy use area protection measures, loafing lots, barns, feeding stations, watering facilities, stock trails). The only allowable exception to the 20 foot set back requirement for cost shared fencing is that if the tank, heavy use area, etc. is located a minimum of one hundred (100) feet from the top of the stream bank, the set back for cost shared fencing shall be ten (10) feet.
 - c. If stream riparian areas have been damaged or destroyed, then fencing should be set back far enough to permit establishment of woody vegetation on the stream banks.
 - d. If the stream bank or channel erosion is such that there exists the potential for the fence posts to be undermined by the stream during the life of the fence, then set backs should be increased significantly (field determination).
 - e. For all cost shared BMPs which require fencing, a statement indicating the set back distance from the stream bank must be included in the CPO. Also, the

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fencing set back distance should be indicated on the sketch included with the CPO. The sketch should also indicate the distance from the top of the bank to the tank, heavy use area, etc., if applicable. (Note: "Meets set back requirements" is not acceptable. Actual set back distances must be indicated.)

4. All fencing installed at the cooperator's expense must either meet NC Technical Guide Standards or be deemed adequate by District staff.
5. Cost Shared Fencing: Barbed or woven wire must be a minimum of 4 strands and meet NRCS Standard 382 for barbed or woven wire. Electric wire must be a minimum of 3 strands and meet NRCS Standard 382 for permanent electrified wire.

One or two wire electric may be used for stream crossing and for stream-side livestock exclusion fencing within the 100 year floodplain.

6. Livestock exclusion in conjunction with heavy use area protection measures (**loafing lots, barns, feeding stations, watering facilities, stock trails, etc.**) **will be required to have a minimum set-back of 20 feet from the top of the stream bank.** A statement must be included on the contract indicating the established setback distance from the stream bank and must also indicate distance on sketch included with the contract. In a pastured situation, only that localized area of the heavy use area protection measure must meet the minimum set-back requirement of 20 feet for livestock exclusion.
7. Heavy use areas which are components of .0200 waste management plans must meet additional buffer requirements as prescribed in the Interagency Guidance Memorandum.
8. Gates required to make a BMP function may be included.
9. Allowing livestock re-entry to streams or stream banks at any time during the 10-year life-of-a-practice for stream bank protection systems is a violation of the maintenance agreement. **Using livestock to mow stream banks is never allowed!**
10. If cost share is received for cropland conversion to permanent vegetation the cooperator cannot receive cost share for livestock exclusion, watering facilities, etc., on the same field.
11. If significantly less fencing than planned in the CPO is cancelled, expires or is not installed, a statement signed by the technician must be submitted to the Division explaining why the fencing was not installed, why significantly less fencing was installed, or indicating that fencing was installed at the cooperator's expense. The statement should indicate that a site visit was performed, along with the date of the site visit to establish the status of the required fencing. Failure to install required fencing constitutes non-compliance and procedure relative to non-compliance must be followed.
12. ACSP funds shall not be used to cost share for fencing using used materials.
13. Minimum life of BMP is ten (10) years.

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Standards

N. C. NRCS Technical Guide, Section IV, Standards #472 (Access Control) and #382 (Fence).