

Critical Area Planting

Definition/Purpose

A Critical Area Planting means an area of highly erodible land that cannot be stabilized by ordinary conservation treatment on which permanent perennial vegetative cover is established and protected to improve water quality. Benefits may include reduced soil erosion and sedimentation.

Policies

1. Critical Area Treatment for Pasture:
 - a) All critical area plantings in pasture must be temporarily fenced to exclude livestock for at least two (2) years (no cost share on temporary fence).
 - b) Any contiguous area greater than one-half (1/2) acre must be permanently fenced to exclude livestock for ten (10) years.
 - c) Any area with slopes greater than 30 percent must be permanently fenced to exclude livestock for ten (10) years and must be planted to trees or permanent wildlife cover.
 - d) Cost Share Program funding may be used for permanent fence.
 - e) If significantly less fencing than planned in the contract is installed, a statement signed by the technician must be submitted to the Division explaining why the fencing was canceled from the contract. (e.g. fencing was installed at applicant's expense). Failure to install required fencing constitutes non-compliance for all BMPs in the stream protection system.
2. All NRCS standards and NC Agriculture Cost Share Program policies relative to vegetation must be followed.
3. Vegetation shall be established including the shaping of the site as needed to eliminate gullies, seedbed preparation, liming and fertilization according to a soil test, the selection of plant species adapted to the site and intended use, and mulching.
4. Soil amendments and/or compost are encouraged to increase soil fertility, organic matter or soil permeability.
5. Existing established vegetation should not be removed, unless its presence interferes with establishing desired vegetation for stabilizing the area.

Agriculture Cost Share Program

CRITICAL AREA PLANTING	
Maintenance Period	5 or 10 years
BMP Units	ACRES
Required Effects	SOIL_SAVED PHOSPHORUS_SAVED ACRES_AFFECTED (planted acres)
JAA/NRCS Standard unless otherwise noted	ECS - 342 - Critical Area Planting
Supporting Practices	ECS - 382 - Fence
CS2 Reference Materials	NC-ACSP-11 Signature Page Map with BMP location, fields, and roads