

Conservation Tips

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

Guideline for Re-establishment of Vegetative Cover on Disturbed Areas Along Pipelines

I. FENCING AND DEFERRED GRAZING:

- A. Fence pipeline so that the disturbed area falls in smaller, easier to manage pasture.
- B. The smaller pasture should be rested during the first two growing seasons for the establishment of a good grass cover and then rested in future years to maintain a good cover of grass on the disturbed area.
- C. Fencing of the disturbed area is a must for re-establishment of a good grass cover. Permanent power fences or temporary electric fences offer good alternative methods for this purpose.
- D. Livestock water must be provided on both sides of fenced pipeline. Lanes across pipeline may be necessary. These should be at least 50 feet wide to avoid soil erosion and trailing by livestock.
- E. Additional fencing of pipeline right-of-way should complement existing grazing management program on the ranch.
- F. Permanent exclusion of livestock is not recommended.
- G. Minimum fence width along the pipeline right-of-way should not be less than 50 feet or sufficient width to where trailing of livestock and/or soil erosion does not occur.

II. SEEDING OF RIGHT-OF-WAY

- A. Vegetation is to be seeded along the disturbed area in a clean, firm, weed-free seedbed between January and May 15. Temporary vegetation cover may be planted if pipeline clean-up crews are too late. Example: 1.0 lb/ac sorghum alum. Re-disturbance will be necessary for the following spring planting.
- B. Vegetative species selected should be from list of species as applicable in Pasture Planting, Range Seeding, and/or Wildlife Upland Habitat standard and specifications.
- C. Firming of seedbed is a must where small seeded vegetation plant materials are used. Heavy pipeline equipment is usually very desirable for this purpose.

- D. Fertilize as for Critical Area planting standard and specifications. Example: (Sands) – 20-80-80/ac applied just before last disking and planting. Apply 40-0-0 after seeded plants emerge about May 20. Example: (Acid Soils) – apply 3 tons lime and 20-80-80/ac just before last disking. Apply 40-0-0/ac after seeded plants emerge about May 20. Fragile rangelands, old cropland fields, excessive limy soils, acid soils, etc. usually require several years applications of fertilizer for establishment of plant materials.
- E. Plant Material rates and amounts should be same as for Critical Area Planting. (Double Rates)

III. DIVERSIONS:

Earthen or rock diversion terraces should be constructed across the pipeline right-of-way about 50 to 150 feet intervals depending on steepness of slope and safe outlets to prevent run-off water from following the pipeline. Excess rock placed across the pipeline will prevent livestock from trailing down the pipeline. As a rule of thumb, the settled height of the terrace should be about 2 feet in height and spacing should be in accordance to the following formula = $(.5 (\text{slope } \%) + 2)(100 - \text{slope } \%)$.

IV. LIVESTOCK WATER:

Adequate water distribution should be provided to distribute the grazing.

V. WEED CONTROL

Control weeds by chemical and/or mechanical means as needed for establishment of plant materials.

VI. DOUBLE DITCHING:

This is stock piling topsoil as is done in any Critical Area treatment. A second subsoil layer is ditched so as to cover the pipe. The topsoil is not mixed with the sub-soil. This practice is necessary not just to cropland but especially to rangeland, pastureland, and fragile soils having 1 or 2 ton tolerances.

VII. MULCHING:

Mulching is necessary on steep slopes or on fragile soils where permanent vegetation is difficult to establish. Mulching is highly desirable for tree establishment. See Mulching standard and specification.

VIII. CHISELING:

All soil compacted areas created by non-natural sources (such as heavy equipment) must be chiseled prior to placement of top soil and prior to seedbed preparation and planting. This practice is essential to vegetation establishment

IX. SAFETY:

Always call 1 - 800 - 545 - 6005 before you dig! This includes any practice that displaces soil.