

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**FENCE  
(Feet)  
CODE 382**

**DEFINITION**

A constructed barrier to livestock, wildlife or people.

**PURPOSES**

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to facilitate the application of conservation practices that treat the soil, water, air, plant animal and human resource concerns.

**CONDITIONS WHERE THIS PRACTICE APPLIES**

This practice may be applied on any area where livestock and/or wildlife control is needed, or where access to people is to be regulated. Fences are not needed where natural barriers will serve the purpose.

**CRITERIA**

Fencing materials shall be of a high quality and durability, and the construction performed to meet the intended management objectives.

Fences shall consist of either barbed, smooth, or woven wire, or combinations thereof, and must equal or exceed, in strength and durability, one constructed in accordance with the following specification.

Fences shall be positioned to facilitate management requirements.

Standard or conventional (barbed or smooth wire), suspension, woven wire, or electric fences shall consist of acceptable fencing designs to control the animal(s) or people of concern and meet the intended life of the practice.

Height, number, and spacing of wires will be installed to facilitate control and management of the animal(s) and people of concern.

Height, size, spacing and type of posts will be used that best provides the needs for the style of fence required and is best suited for the topography of the landscape.

Special fence designs will be approved by the State Resource Conservationist.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Consider installing fences in locations that will facilitate maintenance avoiding irregular terrain and/or water crossings.

Consider wildlife movement needs when building and locating fences. Where mule deer range the top wire should not be higher than 42 inches with the top two wires 10 inches apart to reduce the hazard of catching deer in the fence. However, if net wire higher than 42" is used, space the top two wire about one inch apart (See Exhibit 22 & 23).

Where antelope range, the bottom wire should be 15 inches above ground surface. If net wire is used, consider installing

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically, and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

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sections of smooth or barbed wire, 100 yards or more in length, every one half mile or leave a gap not greater than 32 inches high in net wire sheep fences. Pass structures or using small cattle guards of six feet wide and four feet in line length, installed about one mile apart can also be used to facilitate Antelope movement

Where big game management is a major consideration, a site specific specification will be developed. **The State Resource Conservatoinist must approve the specifications.**

Consider letdown fences (Modified Specification) for elk movement and/or winter snow pack (See Exhibit 1).

Consider livestock management, handling, watering and feeding when locating fences.

Where applicable, cleared right-of-ways should be established which will facilitate fence construction and maintenance.

Consider soil erosion potential when planning and constructing a fence on steep slopes.

Consider constructing fences on a contour for increased water quantity and quality. When fencing is used to facilitate vegetative management, an increase of surface and ground water can result. Increased water quality will result if the contour fence facilitates a vegetative filter along the fence, which will slow down runoff, and cause deposition, reducing the amount of sediment delivered downslope. Fencing on the contour will cause animals to trail on the contour, which will result in decreased concentrated water flow, reducing sediment and associated pollutants to be delivered into surface water.

Consider introducing animals to electric fencing in a designated training facility. Select a well-fenced area and construct an electric fence across or around the area to allow animals to come in contact with the

electric fence. Normally, a minimum 12 hours of exposure to the electric fence is required. Most animals will be trained in 48 hours. When animals are approaching the fence with caution, they are trained.

To facilitate management requirements, locate fences on range site boundaries, pasture type and classes, or other significant delineations.

### PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications are to be prepared for specific field sites based on the NRCS National and State Fence Standards and Specifications and appropriate state and/or local statutes and/or laws.

Conservation Job Sheet 382-1 & 2 should be used for the planned fence.

### OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Regular inspection of fences should be part of an on-going management program. Inspection of fences after storm events is needed to facilitate the function of the intended use of the fence.

Maintenance and repairs will be performed as needed to facilitate the intended operation of the installed fence.