

Lac qui Parle Soil and Water Conservation District



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CONSERVATION COMMENTS

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Erosion Control Practices Can Save Your Soil

Is erosion a concern on your farm? Do you have hillsides, or side-slopes showing sheet or rill erosion? Are there draws that wash out and need to be “worked shut” again so they can be crossed with equipment? If you have any of these problems, you may wish to contact the NRCS or SWCD for suggestions to your problems. Terraces, Grassed Waterways, Diversions, and Water & Sediment Control Basins (WASCB) are all practices that can control erosion problems on the land. Often, cost-share assistance can be obtained for installing these soil conservation practices.

Terraces are earthen embankments, or a combination of a ridge and channel, constructed across the field slope. Their primary purpose is to reduce soil erosion. They may also retain runoff for water conservation.

Water and Sediment Control Basins (WASCB) are earthen embankments constructed across the slope and small watercourses to form sediment traps and water detention basins. They serve to make draws on sloping land easier to farm, reduce watercourse and gully erosion, trap sediment, reduce and manage onsite and downstream runoff, and to improve downstream water quality.

Diversions consist of a channel constructed across the slope with a supporting ridge on the low side. Diversions are used to divert water where it is not wanted. Some examples would be: to break up concentrations of water on long slopes, or land that is too flat or irregular for terracing, divert water away from active gullies or other eroding areas, or steer water away from farmsteads, ag-waste systems, or other structures.

Grassed Waterways are shaped and graded channels, established with vegetation. They are designed to convey surface water to a stable outlet, at a velocity such that erosion does not occur within the channel. They are primarily used to control gully erosion and improve water quality. Grassed waterways are generally used where the amount of runoff from larger watersheds is too large to be controlled by a Terrace or WASCB.

Terraces, WASCBs and Diversions can be built as narrow-based (both sides seeded to grass), grassed-back (front slope farmable, and back slope seeded), or farmable, (both

sides are built at a farmable slope, and the entire embankment is farmed). The most popular practice of the above is the farmable WASCB. Because the farmable structures are flatter, they require more earth and therefore more dollars to construct.

If you have an erosion problem that needs looking at, you can stop at the office, or give us a call at 320-598-7321 Ext. # 3. We can look at the site, discuss it with you, and determine which practices and cost-share programs might fit your situation.