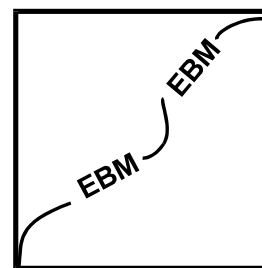
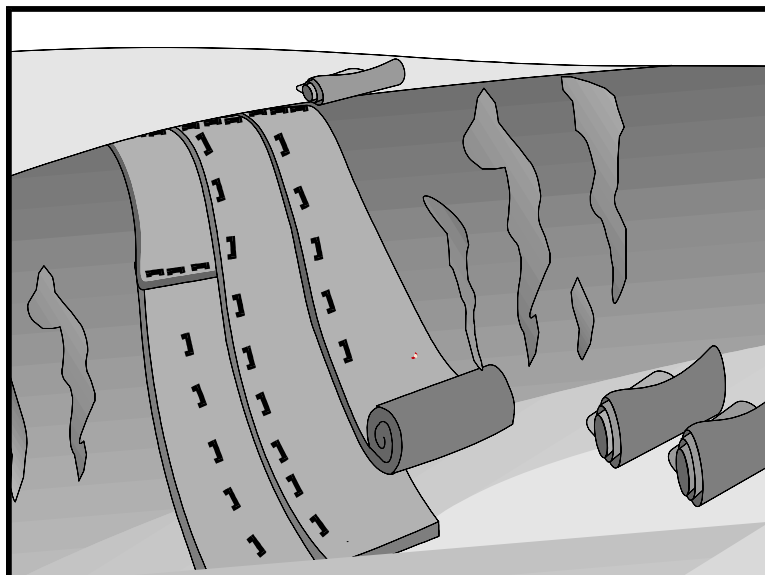


# Geotextiles, Mats, Plastic Covers and Erosion Control Blankets

SS-7



Standard Symbol

## BMP Objectives

- Soil Stabilization
- Sediment Control
- Tracking Control
- Wind Erosion Control
- Non-Storm Water Management
- Materials and Waste Management

### Definition and Purpose

This Best Management Practice (BMP) involves the placement of geotextiles, mats, plastic covers, or erosion control blankets to stabilize disturbed soil areas and protect soils from erosion by wind or water. This is one of five temporary soil stabilization alternatives to consider.

### Appropriate Applications

These measures are used when disturbed soils may be particularly difficult to stabilize, including the following situations:

- Steep slopes, generally steeper than 1:3 (V:H).
- Slopes where the erosion potential is high.
- Slopes and disturbed soils where mulch must be anchored.
- Disturbed areas where plants are slow to develop.
- Channels with flows exceeding 1.0 m/s (3.3 ft/s).
- Channels to be vegetated.
- Stockpiles.
- Slopes adjacent to water bodies of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs).

- Limitations**
- Blankets and mats are more expensive than other erosion control measures, due to labor and material costs. This usually limits their application to areas inaccessible to hydraulic equipment, or where other measures are not applicable, such as channels.
  - Blankets and mats are generally not suitable for excessively rocky sites, or areas where the final vegetation will be mowed (since staples and netting can catch in mowers).
  - Blankets and mats must be removed and disposed of prior to application of permanent soil stabilization measures.
  - Plastic sheeting is easily vandalized, easily torn, photodegradable, and must be disposed of at a landfill.
  - Plastic results in 100% runoff, which may cause serious erosion problems in the areas receiving the increased flow.
  - The use of plastic shall be limited to covering stockpiles, or very small graded areas for short periods of time (such as through one imminent storm event), until alternative measures, such as seeding and mulching, may be installed.
  - Geotextiles, mats, plastic covers, and erosion control covers have maximum flow rate limitations; consult the manufacturer for proper selection.

## Standards and Specifications

### ***Material Selection***

There are many types of erosion control blankets and mats, and selection of the appropriate type shall be based on the specific type of application and site conditions. Selection(s) made by the Contractor must be approved by the Resident Engineer (RE); certification of compliance shall be in accordance with Standard Specifications Section 6-1.07.

### ***Geotextiles***

- Material shall be a woven polypropylene fabric with minimum thickness of 1.5 mm (0.06 inch), minimum width of 3.7 m (12 ft) and shall have minimum tensile strength of 0.67 kN (warp) 0.36 kN (fill) in conformance with the requirements in ASTM Designation: D 4632. The permittivity of the fabric shall be approximately 0.07 sec –1 in conformance with the requirements in ASTM Designation: D4491. The fabric shall have an ultraviolet (UV) stability of 70 percent in conformance with the requirements in ASTM designation: D4355. Geotextile blankets shall be secured in place with wire staples or sandbags and by keying into tops of slopes and edges to prevent infiltration of surface waters under Geotextile. Staples shall be made of 3.05-mm (0.12-inch) steel wire and shall be U-shaped with 200-mm (8-inch) legs and 50-mm (2-inch) crown.
- Geotextiles may be reused if, in the opinion of the RE, they are suitable for the use intended.

## ***Plastic Covers***

- Plastic sheeting shall have a minimum thickness of 6 mil, and shall be keyed in at the top of slope and firmly held in place with sandbags or other weights placed no more than 3 m (10 ft) apart. Seams are typically taped or weighted down their entire length, and there shall be at least a 300 mm to 600 mm (12 to 24 inches) overlap of all seams. Edges shall be embedded a minimum of 150 mm (6 inches) in soil.
- All sheeting shall be inspected periodically after installation and after significant rainstorms to check for erosion, undermining, and anchorage failure. Any failures shall be repaired immediately. If washout or breakages occurs, the material shall be re-installed after repairing the damage to the slope.

## ***Erosion Control Blankets/Mats***

- Biodegradable rolled erosion control products (RECPs) are typically composed of jute fibers, curled wood fibers, straw, coconut fiber, or a combination of these materials. For an RECP to be considered 100% biodegradable, the netting, sewing or adhesive system that holds the biodegradable mulch fibers together must also be biodegradable.
  - **Jute** is a natural fiber that is made into a yarn, which is loosely woven into a biodegradable mesh. It is designed to be used in conjunction with vegetation and has longevity of approximately one year. The material is supplied in rolled strips, which shall be secured to the soil with U-shaped staples or stakes in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.
  - **Excelsior (curled wood fiber)** blanket material shall consist of machine produced mats of curled wood excelsior with 80 percent of the fiber 150 mm (6 inches) or longer. The excelsior blanket shall be of consistent thickness. The wood fiber shall be evenly distributed over the entire area of the blanket. The top surface of the blanket shall be covered with a photodegradable extruded plastic mesh. The blanket shall be smolder resistant without the use of chemical additives and shall be non-toxic and non-injurious to plant and animal life. Excelsior blanket shall be furnished in rolled strips, a minimum of 1220 mm (48 inches) wide, and shall have an average weight of 0.5 kg/m<sup>2</sup> (12 lb/ft<sup>2</sup>), ±10 percent, at the time of manufacture. Excelsior blankets shall be secured in place with wire staples. Staples shall be made of 3.05-mm (0.12 inch) steel wire and shall be U-shaped with 200-mm (8-inch) legs and 50-mm (2-inch) crown.

- **Straw blanket** shall be machine-produced mats of straw with a lightweight biodegradable netting top layer. The straw shall be attached to the netting with biodegradable thread or glue strips. The straw blanket shall be of consistent thickness. The straw shall be evenly distributed over the entire area of the blanket. Straw blanket shall be furnished in rolled strips a minimum of 2 m (6.5 ft) wide, a minimum of 25 m (80 ft) long and a minimum of 0.27 kg/m<sup>2</sup> (6.4 lb/ft<sup>2</sup>). Straw blankets shall be secured in place with wire staples. Staples shall be made of 3.05-mm (0.12 inch) steel wire and shall be U-shaped with 200-mm (8-inch) legs and 50-mm (2-inch) crown.
- **Wood fiber blanket** is composed of biodegradable fiber mulch with extruded plastic netting held together with adhesives. The material is designed to enhance revegetation. The material is furnished in rolled strips, which shall be secured to the ground with U-shaped staples or stakes in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.
- **Coconut fiber blanket** shall be machine-produced mats of 100% coconut fiber with biodegradable netting on the top and bottom. The coconut fiber shall be attached to the netting with biodegradable thread or glue strips. The coconut fiber blanket shall be of consistent thickness. The coconut fiber shall be evenly distributed over the entire area of the blanket. Coconut fiber blanket shall be furnished in rolled strips with a minimum of 2 m (6.5 ft) wide, a minimum of 25 m (80 ft) long and a minimum of 0.27-kg/m<sup>2</sup> (6.4 lb/ft<sup>2</sup>). Coconut fiber blankets shall be secured in place with wire staples. Staples shall be made of 3.05-mm (0.12 inch) steel wire and shall be U-shaped with 200-mm (8-inch) legs and 50-mm (2-inch) crown.
- **Coconut fiber mesh** is a thin permeable membrane made from coconut or corn fiber that is spun into a yarn and woven into a biodegradable mat. It is designed to be used in conjunction with vegetation and typically has longevity of several years. The material is supplied in rolled strips, which shall be secured to the soil with U-shaped staples or stakes in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.
- **Straw coconut fiber blanket** shall be machine-produced mats of 70% straw and 30% coconut fiber with a biodegradable netting top layer and a biodegradable bottom net. The straw and coconut fiber shall be attached to the netting with biodegradable thread or glue strips. The straw coconut fiber blanket shall be of consistent thickness. The straw and coconut fiber shall be evenly distributed over the entire area of the blanket. Straw coconut fiber blanket shall be furnished in rolled strips a minimum of 2 m (6.5 ft) wide, a minimum of 25 m (80 ft) long and a minimum of 0.27 kg/m<sup>2</sup> (6.4 lb/ft<sup>2</sup>). Straw coconut fiber blankets shall be secured in place with wire staples. Staples shall be made of 3.05-mm (0.12-inch) steel wire and shall be U-shaped with 200-mm (8-inch) legs and 50-mm (2-inch) crown.

- Non-biodegradable RECPs are typically composed of polypropylene, polyethylene, nylon or other synthetic fibers. In some cases, a combination of biodegradable and synthetic fibers is used to construct the RECP. Netting used to hold these fibers together is typically non-biodegradable as well.
- **Plastic netting** is a lightweight biaxially-oriented netting designed for securing loose mulches like straw to soil surfaces to establish vegetation. The netting is photodegradable. The netting is supplied in rolled strips, which shall be secured with U-shaped staples or stakes in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.
- **Plastic mesh** is an open-weave geotextile that is composed of an extruded synthetic fiber woven into a mesh with an opening size of less than 0.5 cm (0.2 inch). It is used with revegetation or may be used to secure loose fiber such as straw to the ground. The material is supplied in rolled strips, which shall be secured to the soil with U-shaped staples or stakes in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.
- **Synthetic fiber with netting** is a mat that is composed of durable synthetic fibers treated to resist chemicals and ultraviolet light. The mat is a dense, three-dimensional mesh of synthetic (typically polyolefin) fibers stitched between two polypropylene nets. The mats are designed to be revegetated and provide a permanent composite system of soil, roots, and geomatrix. The material is furnished in rolled strips, which shall be secured with U-shaped staples or stakes in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.
- **Bonded synthetic fibers** consist of a three-dimensional geomatrix nylon (or other synthetic) matting. Typically it has more than 90% open area, which facilitates root growth. Its tough root-reinforcing system anchors vegetation and protects against hydraulic lift and shear forces created by high volume discharges. It can be installed over prepared soil, followed by seeding into the mat. Once vegetated, it becomes an invisible composite system of soil, roots, and geomatrix. The material is furnished in rolled strips that shall be secured with U-shaped staples or stakes in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.
- **Combination synthetic and biodegradable RECPs** consist of biodegradable fibers, such as wood fiber or coconut fiber, with a heavy polypropylene net stitched to the top and a high-strength continuous-filament geomatrix or net stitched to the bottom. The material is designed to enhance revegetation. The material is furnished in rolled strips, which shall be secured with U-shaped staples or stakes in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.

## ***Site Preparation***

- Proper site preparation is essential to ensure complete contact of the blanket or matting with the soil.
- Grade and shape the area of installation.
- Remove all rocks, clods, vegetation or other obstructions so that the installed blankets or mats will have complete, direct contact with the soil.
- Prepare seedbed by loosening 50 mm (2 in) to 75 mm (3 in) of topsoil.

## ***Seeding***

Seed the area before blanket installation for erosion control and revegetation. Seeding after mat installation is often specified for turf reinforcement application. When seeding prior to blanket installation, all check slots and other areas disturbed during installation must be re-seeded. Where soil filling is specified, seed the matting and the entire disturbed area after installation and prior to filling the mat with soil.

## ***Anchoring***

- U-shaped wire staples, metal geotextile stake pins or triangular wooden stakes can be used to anchor mats and blankets to the ground surface.
- Staples shall be made of 3.05 mm (0.12 inch) steel wire and shall be U-shaped with 200-mm (8-inch) legs and 50-mm (2-inch) crown.
- Metal stake pins shall be 5 mm (0.188 in) diameter steel with a 40 mm (1.5 in) steel washer at the head of the pin.
- Wire staples and metal stakes shall be driven flush to the soil surface.
- All anchors shall be 150 mm (6 in) to 450 mm (18 in) long and have sufficient ground penetration to resist pullout. Longer anchors may be required for loose soils.

## ***Installation on Slopes***

Installation shall be in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. In general, these will be as follows:

- Begin at the top of the slope and anchor the blanket in a 150 mm (6 in) deep by 150 mm (6 in) wide trench. Backfill trench and tamp earth firmly.
- Unroll blanket downslope in the direction of water flow.

- Overlap the edges of adjacent parallel rolls 50 mm (2 in) to 75 mm (3 in) and staple every 1 m (3 ft).
- When blankets must be spliced, place blankets end over end (shingle style) with 150 mm (6 in) overlap. Staple through overlapped area, approximately 300 mm (12 in) apart.
- Lay blankets loosely and maintain direct contact with the soil. Do not stretch.
- Staple blankets sufficiently to anchor blanket and maintain contact with the soil. Staples shall be placed down the center and staggered with the staples placed along the edges. Steep slopes, 1:1 (V:H) to 1:2 (V:H), require a minimum of 2 staples/m<sup>2</sup> (2 staples/yd<sup>2</sup>). Moderate slopes, 1:2 (V:H) to 1:3 (V:H), require a minimum of 1½ staples/m<sup>2</sup> (1 ½ staples/yd<sup>2</sup>), placing 1 staple/m (1 staple/yd) on centers. Gentle slopes require a minimum of 1 staple/m<sup>2</sup> (1 staple/yd<sup>2</sup>).

## ***Installation in Channels***

Installation shall be in accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations. In general, these will be as follows:

- Dig initial anchor trench 300 mm (12 in) deep and 150 mm (6 in) wide across the channel at the lower end of the project area.
- Excavate intermittent check slots, 150 mm (6 in) deep and 150 mm (6 in) wide across the channel at 8 m to 10 m (25 ft to 30 ft) intervals along the channels.
- Cut longitudinal channel anchor slots 100 mm (4 in) deep and 100 mm (4 in) wide along each side of the installation to bury edges of matting, whenever possible extend matting 50 mm (2 in) to 75 mm (3 in) above the crest of the channel side slopes.
- Beginning at the downstream end and in the center of the channel, place the initial end of the first roll in the anchor trench and secure with fastening devices at 300 mm (12 in) intervals. Note: matting will initially be upside down in anchor trench.
- In the same manner, position adjacent rolls in anchor trench, overlapping the preceding roll a minimum of 75 mm (3 in).
- Secure these initial ends of mats with anchors at 300 mm (12 in) intervals, backfill and compact soil.
- Unroll center strip of matting upstream. Stop at next check slot or terminal anchor trench. Unroll adjacent mats upstream in similar fashion, maintaining a 75 mm (3 in) overlap.

- Fold and secure all rolls of matting snugly into all transverse check slots. Lay mat in the bottom of the slot then fold back against itself. Anchor through both layers of mat at 300 mm (12 in) intervals, then backfill and compact soil. Continue rolling all mat widths upstream to the next check slot or terminal anchor trench.
- Alternate method for non-critical installations: Place two rows of anchors on 150 mm (6 in) centers at 8 m (25 ft) to 10 m (30 ft) intervals in lieu of excavated check slots.
- Shingle-lap spliced ends by a minimum of 300 mm (12 in) apart on 300 mm (12 in) intervals.
- Place edges of outside mats in previously excavated longitudinal slots, anchor using prescribed staple pattern, backfill and compact soil.
- Anchor, fill and compact upstream end of mat in a 300 mm (12 in) by 150 mm (6 in) terminal trench.
- Secure mat to ground surface using U-shaped wire staples, geotextile pins, or wooden stakes.
- Seed and fill turf reinforcement matting with soil, if specified.

## ***Soil Filling (if specified for turf reinforcement)***

- Always consult the manufacturer's recommendations for installation.
- Do not drive tracked or heavy equipment over mat.
- Avoid any traffic over matting if loose or wet soil conditions exist.
- Use shovels, rakes or brooms for fine grading and touch up.
- Smooth out soil filling, just exposing top netting of mat.

## ***Temporary Soil Stabilization Removal***

- When no longer required for the work, temporary soil stabilization shall become the property of the Contractor. Temporary soil stabilization removed from the site of the work shall be disposed of outside the highway right-of-way in conformance with the provisions in Standard Specifications Section 7-1.13. If approved by the RE, the contractor may leave the temporary soil stabilizer in place.



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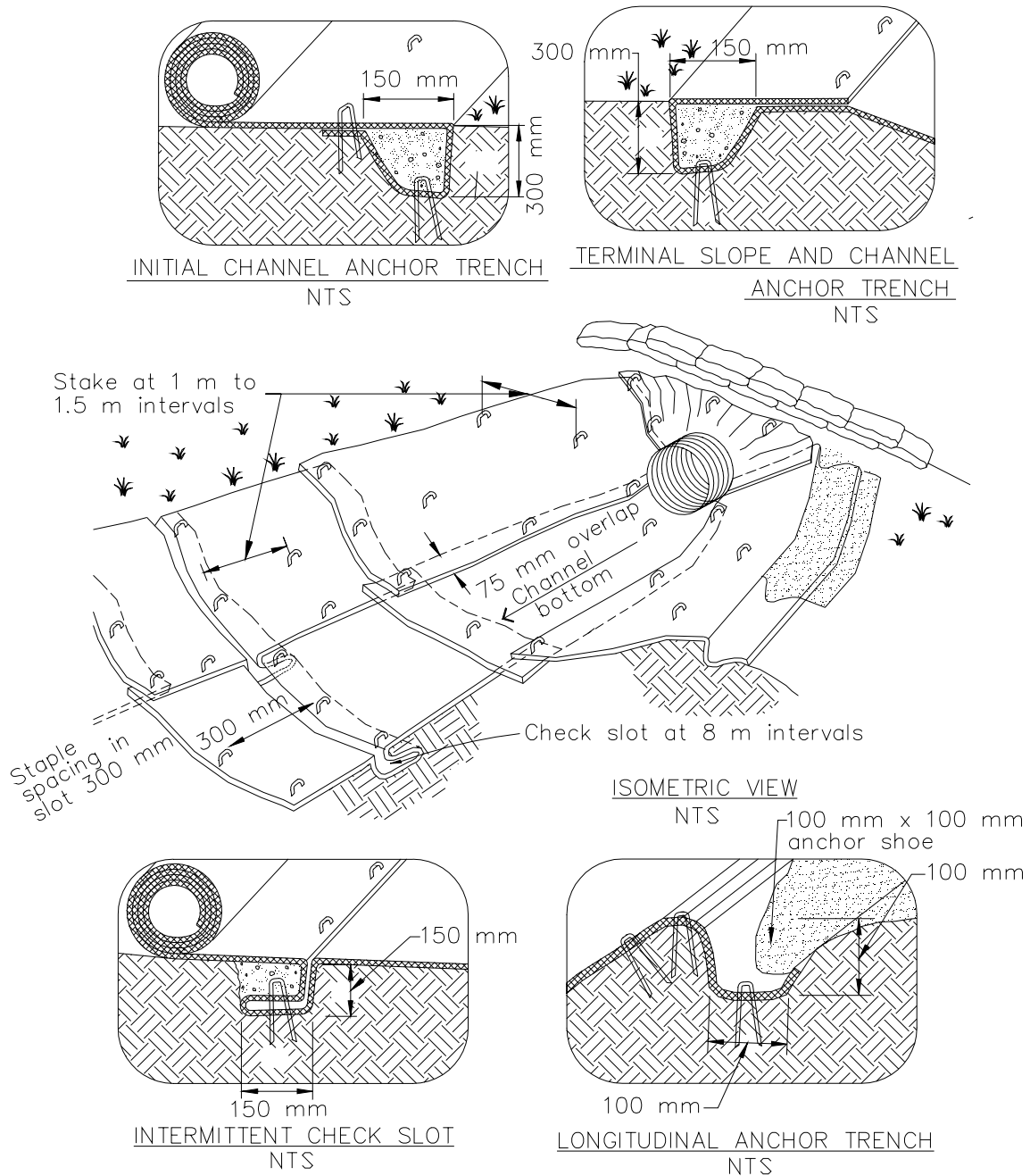
## Maintenance and Inspection

Areas treated with temporary soil stabilization shall be inspected as specified in the special provisions. Areas treated with temporary soil stabilization shall be maintained to provide adequate erosion control. Temporary soil stabilization shall be reapplied or replaced on exposed soils when area becomes exposed or exhibits visible erosion.

- All blankets and mats shall be inspected periodically after installation.
- Installation shall be inspected after significant rain storms to check for erosion and undermining. Any failures shall be repaired immediately.
- If washout or breakage occurs, re-install the material after repairing the damage to the slope or channel.



## Typical Installation Detail



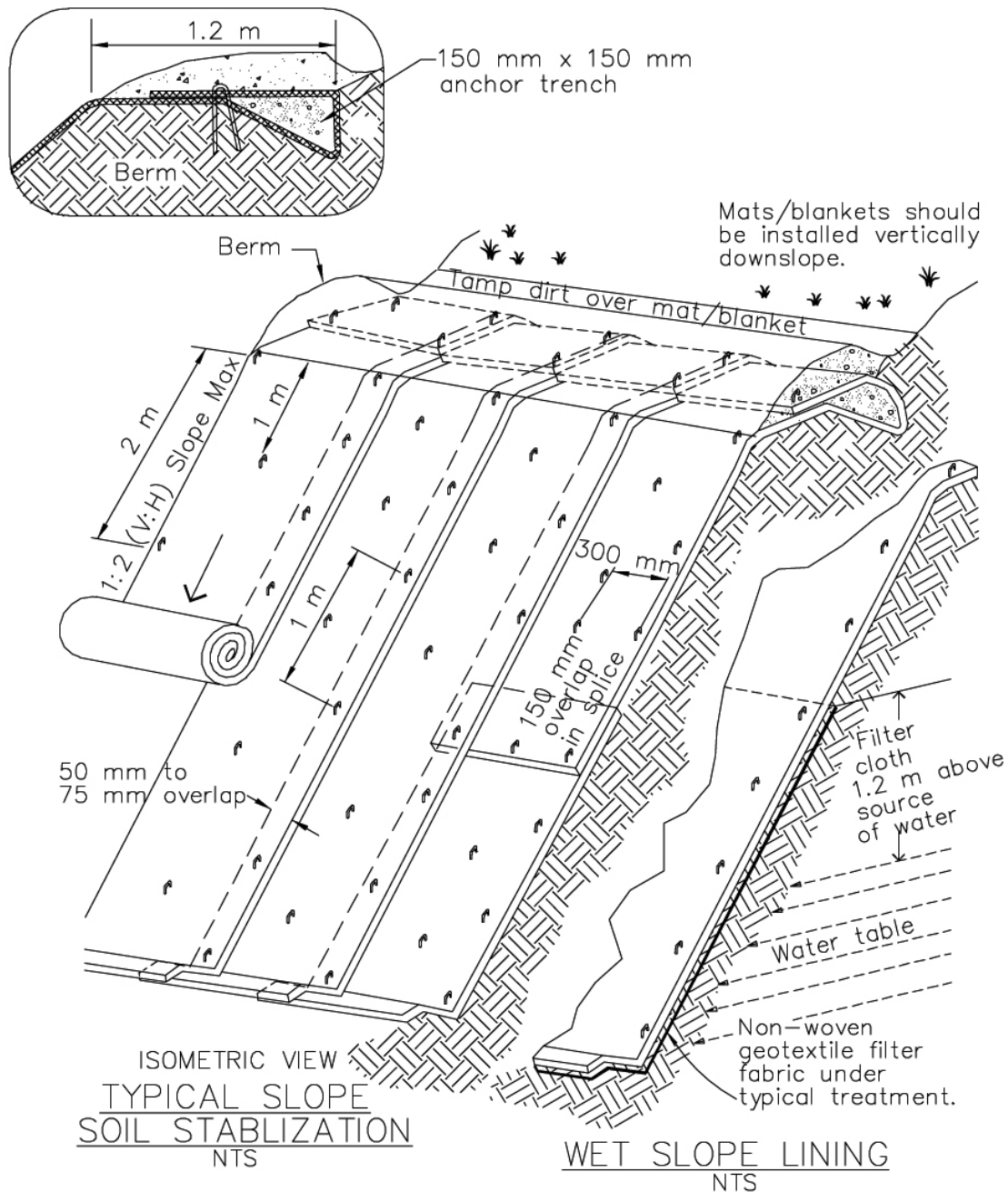
### NOTES:

1. Check slots to be constructed per manufacturers specifications.
2. Staking or stapling layout per manufacturers specifications.
3. Install per manufacturer's recommendations

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## Typical Installation Detail



### NOTES:

1. Slope surface shall be free of rocks, clods, sticks and grass. Mats/blankets shall have good soil contact.
2. Lay blankets loosely and stake or staple to maintain direct contact with the soil. Do not stretch.
3. Install per manufacturer's recommendations