Streambank Stabilization

SS-12

Standard Symbol

BMP Objectives

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

Definition and Purpose

Drainage systems including the stream channel, streambank, and associated riparian areas, are dynamic and sensitive ecosystems that respond to changes in land use activity. Streambank and channel disturbance resulting from construction activities can increase the stream's sediment load, which can cause channel erosion or sedimentation and have adverse affects on the biotic system. Best Management Practices can reduce the discharge of sediment and other pollutants and minimize the impact of construction activities on watercourses. Streams included on the 303(d) list by the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) may require careful evaluation to prevent any increases in sedimentation, siltation and/or turbidity to the stream.

Appropriate Applications

These procedures typically apply to all construction projects that disturb or occur within stream channels and their associated riparian areas.

Limitations

Specific permit requirements or mitigation measures such as Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) 401 Certification, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 permit and approval by California Department of Fish and Game may be included in contract documents. If numerical-based water quality standards are mentioned in any of these and other related permits, testing and sampling may be required. Streams included on the 303(d) list by the State Water Resources Control Board because of being impaired by sediment, silt, or turbidity are required to conduct sampling to verify that there is no net increase in sediment load due to construction activities.

Standards and Specifications

PLANNING

- ■ Proper planning, design, and construction techniques can minimize impacts normally associated with in-stream construction activities. Poor planning can adversely affect soil, fish, and wildlife resources, land uses, or land users. Planning should take into account: scheduling, avoidance of in-stream construction; minimizing disturbance area and construction time period; using

pre-disturbed areas; selecting crossing location; and selecting equipment.

Scheduling (SS-1)

- Construction activities should be scheduled according to the relative sensitivity of the environmental concerns and in accordance with SS-1, "Scheduling." Scheduling considerations will be different when working near perennial streams vs. ephemeral streams and are as follows:
  - Construction work near perennial streams should optimally be performed during the dry season (see below).
  - When working in or near ephemeral, intermittent, or perennial streams, construction should be performed during the dry season. By their very nature, ephemeral and intermittent streams are usually dry in the summer, and therefore, in-stream construction activities will not cause significant water quality problems. However, when closing the site at the end of the project, wash any fines (see Washing Fines) that were formed in-situ back into the channel the bed material, to decrease pollution from the first rainstorm ("first flush") of the season. When working near stream channels, erosion and sediment controls (see silt fences, straw bale barriers, etc.) should be implemented on the banks to keep sediment out of stream channel proper.

Minimize Disturbance

- Minimize disturbance through: selection of the narrowest crossing location; limiting the number of equipment trips across a stream during construction; and, minimizing the number and size of work areas (equipment staging areas and spoil storage areas). Place work areas at least 15 m (50 ft) from the stream channel. Provide stabilized access to the stream when in-stream work is required. Field reconnaissance should be conducted during the planning stage to identify work areas.

Use of Pre-Disturbed Areas

- Locate project sites and work areas in pre-disturbed areas when possible.

Selection of Project Site

- Avoid steep and unstable banks, highly erodible or saturated soils, or highly fractured rock.
- Select project site that minimizes disturbance to aquatic species or habitat.

Equipment Selection

- Select equipment that reduces the amount of pressure exerted on the ground surface, and therefore, reduces erosion potential and/or use overhead or aerial access for transporting equipment across drainage channels. Use equipment that exerts ground pressures of less than 5 or 6 pounds per square inch (PSI), where possible. Low ground pressure equipment includes: wide or high

flotation tires (860 to 1850 mm [34 to 72 in] wide); dual tires; bogie axle systems; tracked machines; lightweight equipment; and, central tire inflation systems.

STREAMBANK STABILIZATION

Preservation of Existing Vegetation (SS-2)

- Preserve existing vegetation in accordance with SS-2, "Preservation of Existing Vegetation." In a streambank environment preservation of existing vegetation provides the following benefits:

  Water Quality Protection:

  Vegetated buffers on slopes trap sediment and promote groundwater recharge. The buffer width needed to maintain water quality ranges from 5 to 30 m (16 to 98 ft). On gradual slopes, most of the filtering occurs within the first 10 m (33 ft). Steeper slopes require a greater width of vegetative buffer to provide water quality benefits.

  Streambank Stabilization:

  The root system of riparian vegetation stabilizes streambanks by increasing tensile strength in the soil. The presence of vegetation modifies the moisture condition of slopes (infiltration, evapotranspiraton, interception) and increases bank stability.

  Riparian Habitat

  Buffers of diverse riparian vegetation provide food and shelter for riparian and aquatic organisms. Minimizing impacts to fisheries habitat is a major concern when working near streams and rivers. Riparian vegetation provides shade, shelter, organic matter (leaf detritus and large woody debris), and other nutrients that are necessary for fish and other aquatic organisms. Buffer widths for habitat concerns are typically wider than those recommended for water quality concerns (30 to 500 m [98 to 1,640 ft]).

  When working near watercourses, it is important to understand the work site's placement in the watershed. Riparian vegetation in the headwater streams has a greater impact on overall water quality than vegetation in downstream reaches. Preserving existing vegetation upstream is necessary to maintain water quality, minimize bank failure, and maximize riparian habitat downstream of the work site.

Limitations:

- Local county and municipal ordinances regarding width, extent and type of vegetative buffer required may exceed the specifications provided here; these ordinances should be investigated prior to construction.

Streambank Stabilization Specific Installation:

- As a general rule, the width of a buffer strip between a road and the stream is

recommended to be 15 m (48 ft) plus four times the percent slope of the land, measured between the road and the top of stream bank.

Hydraulic Mulch (SS-3)

- Apply hydraulic mulch on disturbed streambanks above the mean high water level in accordance with SS-3, "Hydraulic Mulch" to provide temporary soil stabilization.

Limitations

- Do not place hydraulic mulch or tackifiers below the mean high water level, as these materials could wash into the channel and impact water quality or possibly cause eutrophication.

Hydroseeding (SS-4)

- Hydroseed disturbed streambanks in accordance with SS-4, "Hydroseeding."

Limitations

- Do not place tackifiers or fertilizers below the mean high water level, as these materials could wash into the channel and impact water quality or possibly cause eutrophication.

Soil Binders (SS-5)

- Apply soil binders to disturbed streambanks in accordance with SS-5, "Soil Binders."

Limitations

- Do not place soil binders below the mean high water level. Soil binder must be environmentally benign and non-toxic to aquatic organisms.

Straw Mulch (SS-6)

- Apply straw mulch to disturbed streambanks in accordance with SS-6, "Straw Mulch."

Limitations

- Do not place straw mulch below the mean high water level, as this material could wash into the channel and impact water quality or possibly cause eutrophication.

Geotextiles, Plastic Covers, & Erosion Control Blankets/Mats (SS-7)

- Install geotextiles, erosion control blankets and plastic as described in SS-7, "Geotextiles, Plastic Covers, & Erosion Control Blankets/Mats" to stabilize disturbed channels and streambanks. Not all applications should be in the channel, for example, certain geotextile netting may snag fish gills and are not appropriate in fish-bearing streams. Geotextile fabrics that are not biodegradable are not appropriate for in-stream use. Additionally, geotextile fabric or blankets placed in channels must be adequate to sustain anticipated

hydraulic forces.

Earth Dikes/Drainage Swales, and Lined Ditches (SS-9)

- Convey, intercept, or divert runoff from disturbed streambanks using SS-9, "Earth Dikes/Drainage Swales, and Lined Ditches."

Limitations

- Do not place earth dikes in watercourses, as these structures are only suited for intercepting sheet flow, and should not be used to intercept concentrated flow.
- Place appropriately sized outlet protection and energy dissipation in accordance with SS-10, "Outlet Protection/Velocity dissipation Devices."

Outlet Protection/Velocity Dissipation Devices (SS-10)

- Place outlet protection or velocity dissipation devices at outlets of pipes, drains, culverts, slope drains, diversion ditches, swales, conduits or channels in accordance with SS-10.

Slope Drains (SS-11)

- Use slope drains to intercept and direct surface runoff or groundwater into a stabilized watercourse, trapping device or stabilized area in accordance with SS-11, "Slope Drains."

Limitations

- Appropriately sized outlet protection/velocity dissipation devices must be placed at outlets to minimize erosion and scour.

STREAMBANK SEDIMENT CONTROL

Silt Fences (SC-1)

- Install silt fences in accordance with SC-1, "Silt Fence" to control sediment. Silt fences should only be installed where sediment-laden water can pond, thus allowing the sediment to settle out.

Fiber Rolls (SC-5)

- Install fiber rolls in accordance with SC-5, "Fiber Rolls" along slope contour above the high water level to intercept runoff, reduce flow velocity, release the runoff as sheet flow and provide removal of sediment from the runoff. In a stream environment, fiber rolls should be used in conjunction with other sediment control methods such as SC-1, "Silt Fence" or SC-9, "Straw Bale Barrier." Install silt fence, straw bale barrier, or other erosion control methods along the toe of slope above the high water level.

Gravel Bag Berm (SC-6)

- A gravel bag berm or barrier can be utilized to intercept and slow the flow of sediment-laden sheet flow runoff in accordance with SC-6, "Gravel Bag Berm." In a stream environment gravel bag barriers can allow sediment to settle from runoff before water leaves the construction site and can be used to isolate the work area from the stream.

Limitations:

- Gravel bag barriers are not recommended as a perimeter sediment control practice around streams.

Straw Bale Barrier (SC-9)

- Install straw bale barriers in accordance with SC-9, "Straw Bale Barrier" to control sediment. Straw bale barriers should only be installed where sediment-laden water can pond, thus allowing the sediment to settle out. Install a silt fence in accordance with SC-1, "Silt Fence" on the down-slope side of the straw bale barrier closest to stream channel to provide added sediment control.

Rock Filter

Description and Purpose:

- Rock filters are temporary erosion-control barriers composed of rock that is anchored in place. Rock filters detain the sediment-laden runoff, retain the sediment, and release the water as sheet flow at a reduced velocity. Typical rock filter installations are illustrated at the end of this Section.

Applications:

- Near the toe of slopes that may be subject to flow and rill erosion.

Limitations:

- Inappropriate for drainage areas greater than 2 ha (5 ac).
- Requires sufficient space for ponded water.
- Ineffective for diverting runoff because filters allow water to slowly seep through.
- Rock filter berms are difficult to remove when construction is complete.
- Unsuitable in developed areas or locations where esthetics is a concern.

Specifications:

- Rock: open-graded rock, 19 to 125 mm (0.75 to 5 inches) for concentrated flow applications.
- Woven wire sheathing: 25 mm (1 inch) diameter, hexagonal mesh, galvanized

20-gauge (used with rock filters in areas of concentrated flow).

- In construction traffic areas, maximum rock berm heights should be 300 mm (12 in). Berms should be constructed every 90 m (300 ft) on slopes less than 5:100 (V:H) (5%), every 60 m (200 ft) on slopes between 5:100 (V:H) (5%) and 10:100 (V:H) (10%), and every 30 m (100 ft) on slopes greater than 10:100 (V:H) (10%).

Maintenance and Inspection:

- Inspect berms before and after each significant rainfall event and weekly throughout the rainy season.
- Reshape berms as needed and replace lost or dislodged rock, and/or filter fabric.
- Inspect for sediment accumulation, remove sediment when depth reaches one-third of the berm height or 300 mm (12 in), whichever occurs first.

K-rail

Description and Purpose:

- This is temporary sediment control that uses K-rails to form the sediment deposition area, or to isolate the near-bank construction area. Install K-rails at toe of slope in accordance with procedures described in NS-5, "Clear Water Diversion."
- Barriers are placed end-to-end in a pre-designed configuration and gravel-filled bags are used at the toe of the barrier and also at their abutting ends to seal and prevent movement of sediment beneath or through the barrier walls.

Appropriate Applications:

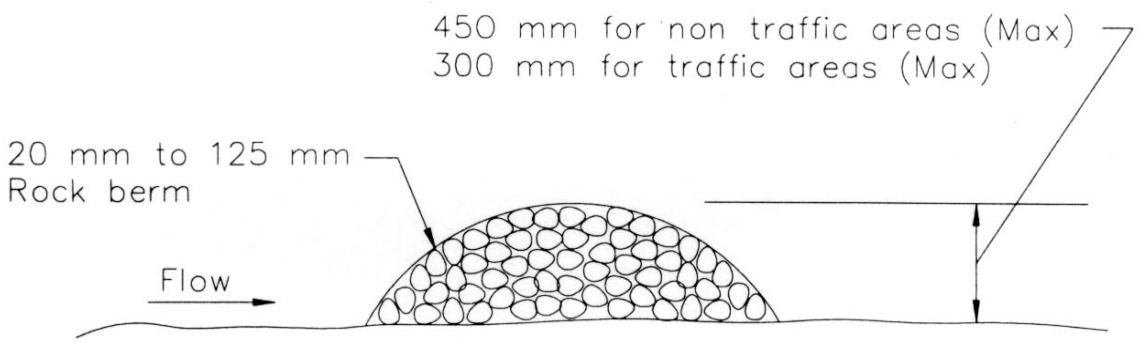
- This technique is useful at the toe of embankments, cut or fill slopes.

Limitations:

- The K-rail method is not watertight and its proper use should be considered accordingly.

Inspection and Maintenance

- Inspect BMPs daily during construction.
- Maintain and repair BMPs.
- Remove accumulated sediment as necessary.



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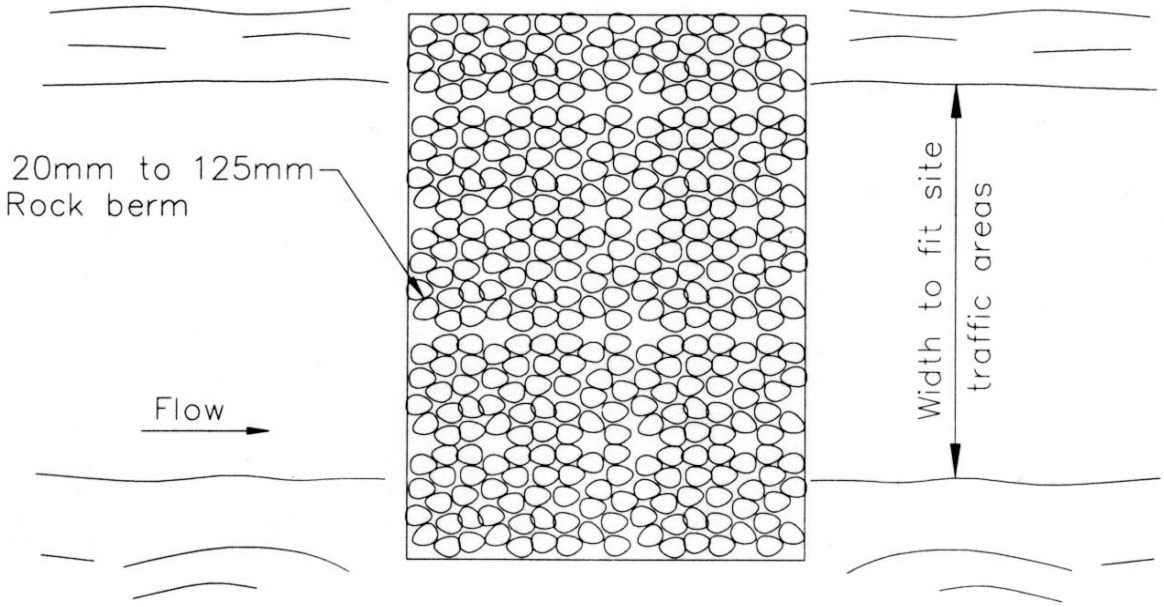

PLAN

TYPICAL ROCK FILTER
NOT TO SCALE