



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

This information is
applicable to most
spring flooding of
Tennessee soils and
cropping conditions and
covers broad
application.

Tennessee NRCS Guide Sheet

HEL Compliance – Flood Reclamation

The catastrophic rainfall and flooding have left many Tennessee fields in a state of demolition. Upland fields may be riddled with gullies, rills, tile holes, and surface crust. Even fields under well managed conservation cropping systems may have extensive rills and ephemeral gullies that occurred along planting tracks, planter markers, nitrogen knives, or other field operations.

Many of these fields are classified as Highly Erodible Land (HEL). The damages are so severe and widely affected that the entire field will need to be treated by grading gullies and severe rills, and leveling the remaining areas with a field cultivator or finishing tool to facilitate replanting.

In response to this need, NRCS in Tennessee is offering a temporary conservation compliance variance for any replanted fields in counties federally declared and recognized by FSA due to excessive rainfall and flooding. Counties include Benton, Campbell, Cannon, Carroll, Cheatham, Chester, Clay, Crockett, Davidson, Decatur, DeKalb, Dickson, Dyer, Fayette, Gibson, Giles, Hardeman, Hardin, Haywood, Henderson, Henry, Hickman, Houston, Humphreys, Jackson, Lauderdale, Lawrence, Lewis, Macon, Madison, Marshall, Maury, McNairy, Montgomery, Obion, Perry, Pickett, Robertson, Rutherford, Shelby, Smith, Stewart, Sumner, Tipton, Trousdale, Wayne, Williamson, and Wilson.

Details of This Variance:

1. This variance applies only to fields needing replanted or repair work completed in 2010 **due to the May 2010 storms**.
2. Producers must maintain documentation and make it available to NRCS during any future Compliance Status Review. Documentation should include:
 - a. The dates of, the cause of, and the extent of damages to their fields
 - b. 2010 repair work dates, degree of work, and repair methods
 - c. Replant dates and site preparation methods
3. The following guidance, designated as **required**, must be followed for the spring cropping and post harvest activities.
4. This variance only applies to damaged portions of field.
5. In the following season, **resume the approved conservation compliance cropping system in place prior to the disaster**.
6. **If the Recommended activities (numbers 1-4 above) leave crop residue below acceptable levels, seed a winter cover crop to further address compaction, rebuild soil structure, and provide protection for the loosened soil condition.** This will provide adequate residue cover when further fall tillage operations are needed to repair damages.
7. **Repair any other conservation practices that are required in your compliance plan.**
8. If new concentrated flow areas developed that are unlikely to stabilize with your planned cropping system, address these areas with appropriate conservation practice, such as WASCOS, Grassed Waterways, or Grade Stabilization Structures.

Additional Resources:

Tennessee NRCS website www.tn.nrcs.usda.gov Field Office Technical Guide (eFOTG):<http://efotg.nrcs.usda.gov/treemenuFS.aspx>

University of Tennessee <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/fieldCrops/>

IPM Newsletters (flood information starting with issue No. 5; May 6, 2010)

http://www.utextension.utk.edu/fieldCrops/cotton/cotton_insects/ipmnewsletters.htm