

Conservation Practice Standard Overview

Irrigation Reservoir (436)

An irrigation reservoir is a water storage structure made by constructing a dam, embankment, pit, or tank.

Practice Information

The purpose of an irrigation reservoir is to store water to provide a reliable irrigation supply or regulate the available irrigation stream, improve water use efficiency on irrigated land, provide storage for tailwater recovery and reuse, provide irrigation runoff retention time, and reduce energy consumption. Reservoirs are used where there is an insufficient water supply to meet the irrigation requirements for part or all of the irrigation season; where water is available for storage from surface runoff, streamflow, irrigation canals, or a subsurface source; and where a suitable site is available.

This practice is used to store diverted surface water, groundwater, or irrigation system tailwater for later use or reuse. Additionally, this practice is used to collect and regulate available irrigation water supplies. Reservoirs are designed with consideration given to effects on downstream water flows or aquifers that would affect other water uses as well as the potential for undesirable erosion, sediment, or contaminants. Water temperature changes downstream that could affect aquatic and wildlife communities are also important in some areas.



The irrigation reservoir will require maintenance over the expected life of the practice.

Common Associated Practices

Irrigation Reservoir (436) is commonly applied with conservation practices such as Pumping Plant (533); Irrigation Pipeline (430); Irrigation Systems Microirrigation (441), Sprinkler (442), and Surface and Subsurface (443); Irrigation Water Management (449); and Structure for Water Control (587).

For further information, contact your local NRCS field office.