

**United States Department of Agriculture**

Notice of Proposed Changes to the National Handbook of Conservation Practices for the
Natural Resources Conservation Service

[Docket No. NRCS-2025-0004]

PROPOSED FULL TEXT FOR PRACTICE STANDARD CODE 472

Natural Resources Conservation Service**CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD****ACCESS CONTROL**

CODE 472

(ac)

DEFINITION

The temporary or permanent exclusion of animals, people, vehicles, or equipment from an area.

PURPOSE

This practice is used to manage the timing of use by animals, people, vehicles, or equipment to address one or more of the following purposes:

- Protect plant productivity and health.
- Protect soil from compaction.
- Reduce erosion.
- Reduce water quality degradation.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies on all land uses where sensitive areas need protection from animals, people, vehicles, or equipment. This practice is not used to manage grazing and browsing livestock.

CRITERIA**General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes**

Access and use-regulating activities (e.g., posting of signs, paint blazing trees, and gates) will achieve the intended purpose and include mitigating associated resource concerns to acceptable levels during their installation, operation, and maintenance. Activities will complement other practices specified in the conservation plan. Ensure access points have universal access to emergency personnel, as needed.

Use Web Soil Survey, as needed, to help design the practice.

NRCS reviews and periodically updates conservation practice standards. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact your Natural Resources Conservation Service State office or visit the Field Office Technical Guide online by going to the NRCS website at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/> and type FOTG in the search field.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

NRCS, NHCP
Month Year

CONSIDERATIONS

This practice may improve air quality by reducing traffic and dust emission on unpaved roads and trails. Temporary modifications are allowed to accommodate emergency-level contingencies such as wildfire, hurricane, drought, or flood, if resource conditions are maintained.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Specifications for applying this practice must be prepared for each area and recorded using approved specification sheets, implementation requirements, and other acceptable documentation. At a minimum, for each entity use-regulating activity, provide:

- Identify animals, people, vehicles, and equipment to be regulated and specify the intent, amounts, and timing of exclusion by that entity.
- Drawings to illustrate installation or implementation requirements (if needed).
- Map showing the location of the Access Control.
- Soils map and description of soils, as needed.
- Kind and amount of material needed (e.g., gates, signs, paint slash marks).
- Installation details, including placement and dimensions.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Monitor effectiveness of use-regulating activities routinely and at least annually with changes made to specifications, as necessary. Reapply materials as needed (paint when blazing trees).

REFERENCES

Gucinski, H., M.J. Furniss, R.R. Ziemer, M.H. Brookes. 2001. Forest roads: A Synthesis of Scientific Information. Gen. Tech. Rep. PNWGTR-509. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station. Portland, OR.

U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. 2009. Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways - Part 5, Traffic Control Devices for Low-Volume Roads. Washington, DC. https://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/pdfs/2009r1r2/pdf_index.htm.