



Conservation Practice Overview

October 2017

Water and Sediment Control Basin (Code 638)

A water and sediment control basin (WASCOB) is an earth embankment or a combination ridge and channel constructed across the slope of a minor drainageway.

Practice Information

The purpose of this practice is to reduce gully erosion, trap sediment, and reduce and manage runoff. WASCOBs are constructed across small drainageways where they intercept runoff. The basin detains runoff and slowly releases it allowing sediment to settle. WASCOBs generally use an underground outlet to control the release and carry the runoff in a pipe to a receiving stream or ditch.



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This practice applies to sites where—

- The topography is generally irregular.
- Gully erosion is a problem.
- Other conservation practices control sheet and rill erosion.
- Runoff and sediment damages land and works of improvement.
- Stable outlets are available.

WASCOBs alone may not be sufficient to control sheet and rill erosion on sloping upland areas. In addition, outlets from water and sediment control basins can provide a direct conduit to receiving waters for contaminated runoff from cropland. For these reasons, additional practices may be needed to adequately protect sloping upland areas from erosion and to protect down-slope water quality.

Common Associated Practices

The Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) Water and Sediment Control Basin (Code 638) is frequently associated with CPSs Conservation Crop Rotation (Code 328); Residue and Tillage Management, No Till (Code 329); Residue and Tillage Management, Reduced Till (Code 345); Cover Crop (Code 430); Critical Area Planting (Code 342); Filter Strip (Code 393); and Nutrient Management (Code 590).

For further information, contact your local NRCS field office.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

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