CHANNEL BED STABILIZATION

PRACTICE INTRODUCTION

USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service—Conservation Practice Code 584

Credit: Gary Kramer, USDA NRCS

Channel bed stabilization is accomplished by installing one or more structural measures to stabilize the bed or bottom of a channel.

PRACTICE INFORMATION

Erosion and deposition are naturally occurring stream processes that together are essential to the health of the stream. The stream is considered to be healthy when there is a balance of the two processes.

Channel bed stabilization is applied when an imbalance in a stream system causes damage to the bed of an existing or newly constructed channel. This practice can be disruptive to the aquatic environment of the stream and should be selected only if the problem cannot be solved another way. In most cases, the channel bed stabilization is paired with another practice such as Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580).

Before a bed stabilization practice is installed, conduct a thorough investigation of the cause of the problem. Identify the possible solutions and the potential effect that each one could have both upstream and downstream.

Elements to consider include the changes in erosion and deposition patterns, the improvements or damage to aquatic habitat during construction and over the life of the practice, and the potential safety risks to boaters or swimmers.

This practice has a minimum expected life of 10 years. Operation and maintenance of a channel bed stabilization measure will consist of conducting periodic inspections and repairing or replacing damaged components.

COMMON ASSOCIATED PRACTICES

Channel Bed Stabilization (584) is commonly associated with conservation practices such as Streambank and Shoreline Protection (580), Clearing and Snagging (326), and Open Channel (582).

For more information, contact your local NRCS field office.