



United States Department of Agriculture

Controlling Erosion on Highly
Erodible Cropland



Conservation Compliance



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Conservation Compliance

- In 1985, the Food Security Act was passed.
- This law stated that erosion must be controlled on land determined to be highly erodible.
- Highly erodible land determined to not be controlling erosion could be “out of compliance” with Food Security Act requirements.



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Conservation Compliance

- **If found to be out of compliance, producers are at risk of losing their Farm Bill program benefits.**
- **Those benefits include:**
 - **FSA loans and financial assistance programs.**
 - **NRCS and FSA conservation program benefits.**
 - **Federal crop insurance premium subsidies.**



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Conservation Compliance

- **The Office of Inspector General (OIG) recently completed an audit of NRCS' highly erodible land compliance policy.**
- **The audit found NRCS in some states has been inconsistently applying the highly erodible land compliance policy defined in the Food Security Act.**
- **NRCS will now implement conservation compliance policy consistently nationwide.**



Conservation Compliance

- **The following conservation compliance issues will be applied more consistently:**
 - **The identification and required treatment of ephemeral gully erosion.**
 - **State-issued guidance for controlling sheet and rill, wind, and ephemeral gully erosion.**



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Conservation Compliance

- This could impact the way producers are currently farming.
- Fields found to have ephemeral erosion will now need to control this type of erosion, regardless if soil leaves the field, or not.



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Conservation Compliance

- **Ephemeral gullies are ditches that develop in fields when concentrated flow from heavy rains and runoff washes away the soil and causes a ditch to form.**



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Conservation Compliance

- An ephemeral gully is able to be farmed across – whereas a classic gully cannot be crossed by field equipment.
- Classic gullies are not required to be controlled.



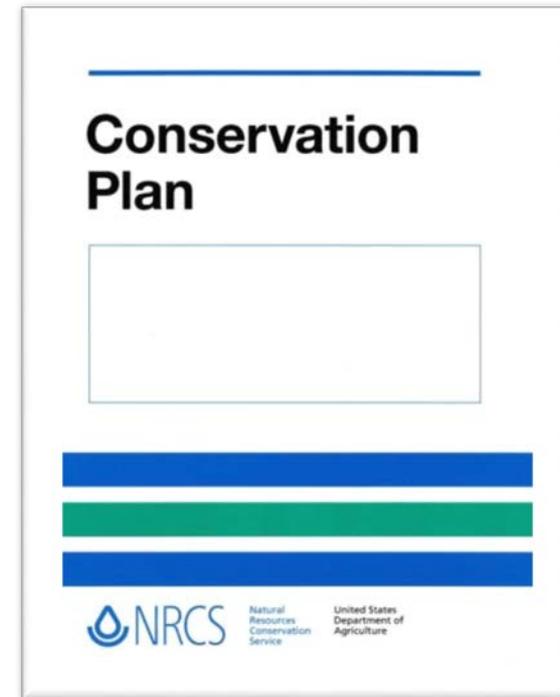
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Conservation Compliance

- NRCS conservationist will work with producers to develop a conservation plan to control ephemeral erosion.
- NRCS conservation programs (EQIP, CSP, etc.) provide funding to assist producers with installing the conservation practices in their conservation plan.



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Conservation Compliance

- **Conservation practices that help control erosion include:**

- **Terraces**
- **Waterways**
- **No-till**
- **Sediment Basins**
- **Cover Crops**



Erosion Control Conservation Practices



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Conservation Compliance

- Producers won't have to make these changes overnight. They will have until Dec. 31, 2019, to have required conservation practices in place.
- NRCS has the flexibility (variances) to work with producers to give them the opportunity to meet the highly erodible land requirements, including the control of ephemeral gully erosion.



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Conservation Compliance

- **Producers are encouraged to visit with the conservationists in their local NRCS office to learn more about their current conservation plan.**
- **If changes are found to be needed, NRCS has the expertise to help producers meet the conservation compliance policy update.**



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