

Roof Runoff Structure (Code 558)—The agency added inventory and assessment information, clarified the language and organization of the standard, added conditions and criteria for capturing roof runoff for other uses, and added considerations.

Surface Roughening (Code 609)—NRCS resource concerns were associated with each of the conservation practice purposes. Revised the condition where the practice applies to stress the practice is “emergency tillage” and not the primary method of erosion control. The general criterion for the random roughness based in the “soil erodibility factor” from the former Wind Erosion Equation was removed as the current technology is now based on the Wind Erosion Prediction System technology.

Tree/Shrub Pruning (Code 660)—The agency added two new purposes, and updated the criteria, considerations, plans and specifications, operation and maintenance, and references sections of *Tree/Shrub Pruning (Code 660)*. The original DEFINITION of *Tree/Shrub Pruning* was retained. Two PURPOSES were added to address soil quality and energy use. They are, “Maintain or improve soil quality and organic matter content”, and “Reduce energy use.” Other purposes were rephrased for clarity and consistency but their meanings are unchanged. The CRITERIA section on methods and timing for pruning, and minimizing damage to the residual plant, was split into several separate sections and clarified. A restriction on treating cuts, and another on pollarding, was added. Timing to minimize disturbance to wildlife, formerly in Considerations, was moved to this section. A section on “Additional Criteria for Maintaining Health and Vigor” was added; material on pruning to limit insect infestations and plant diseases was moved to this section and expanded to address root pruning. A section on “Additional Criteria to Maintain or Improve Soil Quality” was added, calling for pruning residues to remain on site unless insect or disease considerations prevail. Finally, a section on “Additional Criteria to Reduce Energy Use” was added for situations where alternative methods are available and one is less energy-intensive than others.

CONSIDERATIONS: Additional considerations were placed in this section, including those for the effects of pruning on plant health, retaining and treating pruning residues for soil quality, pruning for disease or pest control, and pruning for fire hazard reduction. A reference to NRCS Conservation Practice Standard (CPS)

Woody Residue Treatment (Code 384) was included for treatment of pruning residues when needed, and a reference to NRCS Conservation Practice Standard (CPS) *Forest Stand Improvement (Code 666)* was added for situations where disease or pest control requires cutting or killing entire trees. The PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS section was expanded to include a list of the minimum information needed to prepare a plan. The OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE section was expanded to include additional requirements for controlling invasive plants. The REFERENCES were updated to include more current information.

Waste Transfer (Code 634)—The agency removed ‘hauling waste material with equipment or vehicles’ from the conditions where this practice is applied and expanded the design criteria information specific for waste transfer pipelines.

Water Well Decommissioning (Code 351)—The agency revised the purposes and criteria sections. Disinfection was moved from criteria to considerations.

Wildlife Structure (Code 649)—This is a new National Conservation Practice Standard with a five-year lifespan. Prior to this new National Conservation Practice Standard, there existed no minimum requirements for applying fish and wildlife structures or retrofitting existing structures as needed to improve management and conservation of fish and wildlife habitats, and to achieve their intended purpose. To address this technical gap, an Interim National Conservation Practice Standard, “Fish and Wildlife Structures” (Code 734) was developed and tested in several states. Ultimately, States recommended conversion of this interim standard to a new National Conservation Practice Standard. “Structures for Wildlife” does not apply to structures benefitting aquatic species. During field testing, NRCS found that most habitat structures for aquatic species (e.g. fish ladders) are adequately addressed in other National Conservation Practice Standards. Also discovered during the testing process, was that the interim standard (Code 734) did not provide for retrofitting existing structures that pose a threat to wildlife. This standard corrects that oversight by providing for retrofitting existing structures, such as the installation of wildlife escape ramps to existing water troughs and retrofitting existing fencing to allow for safe passage by wildlife.

Signed this 6th day of August, 2014, in Washington, DC
Jason A. Weller,
Chief, Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Natural Resources Conservation Service

[Docket No. NRCS-2014-0012]

Notice of Availability of the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) for the Upper Kanab Creek Watershed Vegetation Management Project

AGENCY: Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), USDA.

ACTION: Notice of Availability of the Finding of No Significant Impact.

SUMMARY: This notice announces the availability of NRCS’s adoption, under provisions provided for in 40 CFR 1506.3, of an Environmental Assessment (EA) prepared by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for the Upper Kanab Creek Watershed Vegetation Management Project, dated April 2012.

ADDRESSES: Copies of the EA and FONSI are available upon request from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building, 125 South State Street, Room 4010, Salt Lake City, Utah 84138.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gary McRae, Resource Conservationist, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Wallace F. Bennett Federal Building, 125 South State Street, Room 4010, Salt Lake City, Utah 84138; telephone: (801) 524-4599.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NRCS prepared the FONSI in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act after reviewing the EA and concurring with the analysis and findings therein, and the finding that the proposed project modifications described in the EA will not result in significant impacts to the environment.

The project area encompasses the upper portion of the Kanab, Arizona-Utah 4th level, 8-digit HUC (#15010003). The project is needed to rehabilitate vegetation communities.

Signed this 8th day of August 2014, in Salt Lake City, Utah.

David C. Brown,
State Conservationist.

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