



BMP C120

Temporary and Permanent Seeding

What is it? Seeding is intended to reduce erosion by stabilizing exposed soils. A well-established vegetative cover is one of the most effective methods of reducing erosion.

Where should it be used? Seeding may be used throughout the project on disturbed areas that have reached final grade or that will remain unworked for more than 30 days.

- **Channels** that will be vegetated should be installed before major earthwork and hydroseeded with a Bonded Fiber Matrix. The vegetation should be well established (i.e., 75 - 80 percent cover) before water is allowed to flow in the ditch. With channels that will have high flows, erosion control blankets should be installed over the hydroseed. If vegetation cannot be established from seed before water is allowed in the ditch, sod should be installed in the bottom of the ditch over hydromulch and blankets.
- **Retention/detention ponds and biofiltration areas** should be seeded with the seed mix required by the design and as shown on the plans.
- Mulch is required at all times because it protects seeds from heat, moisture loss, and transport due to runoff.
- **At final site stabilization**, all disturbed areas not otherwise vegetated or stabilized shall be seeded and mulched. Final stabilization means the completion of all soil disturbing activities at the site and the establishment of a permanent vegetative cover, or equivalent permanent stabilization measures (such as pavement, riprap, gabions or geotextiles) which will prevent erosion.
- **All disturbed areas** shall be reviewed in late August to early September and all seeding should be completed by the end of September. Otherwise, vegetation will not establish itself enough to provide more than average protection.

What are the Requirements? Seeding should be done during those seasons most conducive to growth and will vary with the climate conditions of the region. Local experience should be used to determine the appropriate seeding periods.

- The optimum seeding windows are April 1 through June 30 and September 1 through October 1. Seeding that occurs between July 1 and August 30 will require irrigation. Seeding that occurs between October 1

and March 30 will require a mulch or plastic cover until grass cover is established.

- To prevent seed from being washed away, confirm that all required surface water control measures have been installed.
- Soil should be roughened. If compaction is required for engineering purposes, slopes must be track walked before seeding.
- Fertilizer: Slow-release fertilizers should always be used because they are more efficient and have fewer environmental impacts.
- Hydroseed applications shall include a minimum of 1,500 pounds per acre of mulch with 3 percent tackifier. Mulch may be made up of 100 percent: cottonseed meal; fibers made of wood, recycled cellulose, hemp, and kenaf; compost; or blends of these. Tackifier shall be plant-based, such as guar or alpha plantago, or chemical-based such as polyacrylamide or polymers. Any mulch or tackifier product used shall be installed per manufacturer's instructions. Generally, mulches come in 40-50 pound bags. Seed and fertilizer are added at time of application.
- Mulch is always required for seeding. Mulch can be applied on top of the seed or simultaneously by hydroseeding.
- On steep slopes, Bonded Fiber Matrix (BFM) or Mechanically Bonded Fiber Matrix (MBFM) products should be used.
- Areas to be permanently landscaped shall provide healthy topsoil that reduces the need for fertilizers, improves overall topsoil quality, provides for better vegetal health and vitality, improves hydrologic characteristics, and reduces the need for irrigation.
- Areas that will be seeded only and not landscaped may need compost or meal-based mulch included in the hydroseed in order to establish vegetation.
- Seed that is installed as a temporary measure may be installed by hand if it will be covered by straw, mulch, or topsoil.

The following seed mixes include recommended mixes for both temporary and permanent seeding. These mixes, with the exception of the wetland mix, shall be applied at a rate of 120 pounds per acre. This rate can be reduced if soil amendments or slow release fertilizers are used.

Table 4.1 represents the standard mix for those areas where just a temporary vegetative cover is required.

Table 4.1 Temporary Erosion Control Seed Mix

| | % Weight | % Purity | % Germination |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Chewings or annual blue grass <i>Festuca rubra var. commutata</i> or <i>Poa anna</i> | 40 | 98 | 90 |
| Perennial rye - <i>Lolium perenne</i> | 50 | 98 | 90 |
| Redtop or colonial bentgrass <i>Agrostis alba</i> or <i>Agrostis tenuis</i> | 5 | 92 | 85 |
| White dutch clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> | 5 | 98 | 90 |

Table 4.2 provides just one recommended possibility for landscaping seed.

Table 4.2 Landscaping Seed Mix

| | % Weight | % Purity | % Germination |
|---|----------|----------|---------------|
| Perennial rye blend <i>Lolium perenne</i> | 70 | 98 | 90 |
| Chewings and red fescue blend <i>Festuca rubra var. commutata</i> or <i>Festuca rubra</i> | 30 | 98 | 90 |

This turf seed mix in Table 4.3 is for dry situations where there is no need for much water. The advantage is that this mix requires very little maintenance.

Table 4.3 Low-Growing Turf Seed Mix

| | % Weight | % Purity | % Germination |
|--|----------|----------|---------------|
| Dwarf tall fescue (several varieties) <i>Festuca arundinacea var.</i> | 45 | 98 | 90 |
| Dwarf perennial rye (Barclay) <i>Lolium perenne var. barclay</i> | 30 | 98 | 90 |
| Red fescue <i>Festuca rubra</i> | 20 | 98 | 90 |
| Colonial bentgrass <i>Agrostis tenuis</i> | 5 | 98 | 90 |

Table 4.4 presents a mix recommended for bioswales and other intermittently wet areas.

Table 4.4 Bioswale Seed Mix*

| | % Weight | % Purity | % Germination |
|---|----------|----------|---------------|
| Tall or meadow fescue <i>Festuca arundinacea</i> or <i>Festuca elatior</i> | 75-80 | 98 | 90 |
| Seaside/Creeping bentgrass <i>Agrostis palustris</i> | 10-15 | 92 | 85 |
| Redtop bentgrass <i>Agrostis alba</i> or <i>Agrostis gigantea</i> | 5-10 | 90 | 80 |

The seed mix shown in Table 4.5 is a recommended low-growing, relatively non-invasive seed mix appropriate for very wet areas that are not regulated wetlands. Other mixes may be appropriate, depending on the soil type and hydrology of the area. Recent research suggests that bentgrass (*agrostis* sp.) should be emphasized in wet-area seed mixes. Apply this mixture at a rate of 60 pounds per acre.

Table 4.5 Wet Area Seed Mix*

| | % Weight | % Purity | % Germination |
|--|----------|----------|---------------|
| Tall or meadow fescue <i>Festuca arundinacea</i> or <i>Festuca elatior</i> | 60-70 | 98 | 90 |
| Seaside/Creeping bentgrass <i>Agrostis palustris</i> | 10-15 | 98 | 85 |
| Meadow foxtail <i>Alepocephalus pratensis</i> | 10-15 | 90 | 80 |
| Alisike clover <i>Trifolium hybridum</i> | 1-6 | 98 | 90 |
| Redtop bentgrass <i>Agrostis alba</i> | 1-6 | 92 | 85 |

The meadow seed mix in Table 4.6 is recommended for areas that will be maintained infrequently or not at all and where colonization by native plants is desirable. Likely applications include rural road and utility right-of-way. Seeding should take place in September or very early October in order to obtain adequate establishment prior to the winter months. The appropriateness of clover in the mix may need to be considered, as this can be a fairly invasive species. If the soil is amended, the addition of clover may not be necessary.

Table 4.6 Meadow Seed Mix

| | % Weight | % Purity | % Germination |
|---|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Redtop or Oregon bentgrass <i>Agrostis alba</i> or <i>Agrostis oregonensis</i> | 20 | 92 | 85 |
| Red fescue <i>Festuca rubra</i> | 70 | 98 | 90 |
| White dutch clover <i>Trifolium repens</i> | 10 | 98 | 90 |

How do I maintain it?

Any seeded areas that fail to establish at least 80 percent cover (100 percent cover for areas that receive sheet or concentrated flows) shall be reseeded. If reseeding is ineffective, an alternate method, such as sodding, mulching, or nets/blankets, shall be used.

- After adequate cover is achieved, any areas that experience erosion shall be reseeded and protected by mulch. If the erosion problem is drainage related, the problem shall be fixed and the eroded area reseeded and protected by mulch.
- Seeded areas shall be supplied with adequate moisture, but not watered to the extent that it causes runoff.