



Description and Purpose

Hydroseeding typically consists of applying a mixture of wood fiber, seed, fertilizer, and stabilizing emulsion with hydro-mulch equipment, to temporarily protect exposed soils from erosion by water and wind.

Suitable Applications

Hydroseeding is suitable for soil disturbed areas requiring temporary protection until permanent stabilization is established, and disturbed areas that will be re-disturbed following an extended period of inactivity.

Limitations

- Hydroseeding may be used alone only when there is sufficient time in the season to ensure adequate vegetation establishment and coverage to provide adequate erosion control. Otherwise, hydroseeding must be used in conjunction with mulching (i.e., straw mulch).
- Steep slopes are difficult to protect with temporary seeding.
- Temporary seeding may not be appropriate in dry periods without supplemental irrigation.
- Temporary vegetation may have to be removed before permanent vegetation is applied.
- Temporary vegetation is not appropriate for short term inactivity.

Objectives

EC	Erosion Control	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
SE	Sediment Control	
TR	Tracking Control	
WE	Wind Erosion Control	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
NS	Non-Stormwater Management Control	
WM	Waste Management and Materials Pollution Control	

Legend:

- ☒ Primary Objective
- ☒ Secondary Objective

Targeted Constituents

Sediment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Nutrients	
Trash	
Metals	
Bacteria	
Oil and Grease	
Organics	

Potential Alternatives

- EC-3 Hydraulic Mulch
- EC-5 Soil Binders
- EC-6 Straw Mulch
- EC-7 Geotextiles and Mats
- EC-8 Wood Mulching



Implementation

In order to select appropriate hydroseeding mixtures, an evaluation of site conditions shall be performed with respect to:

- Soil conditions
- Site topography
- Season and climate
- Vegetation types
- Maintenance requirements
- Sensitive adjacent areas
- Water availability
- Plans for permanent vegetation

The local office of the U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is an excellent source of information on appropriate seed mixes.

The following steps shall be followed for implementation:

- Avoid use of hydroseeding in areas where the BMP would be incompatible with future earthwork activities and would have to be removed.
- Hydroseeding can be accomplished using a multiple step or one step process. The multiple step process ensures maximum direct contact of the seeds to soil. When the one step process is used to apply the mixture of fiber, seed, etc., the seed rate shall be increased to compensate for all seeds not having direct contact with the soil.
- Prior to application, roughen the area to be seeded with the furrows trending along the contours.
- Apply a straw mulch to keep seeds in place and to moderate soil moisture and temperature until the seeds germinate and grow.
- All seeds shall be in conformance with the California State Seed Law of the Department of Agriculture. Each seed bag shall be delivered to the site sealed and clearly marked as to species, purity, percent germination, dealer's guarantee, and dates of test. The container shall be labeled to clearly reflect the amount of Pure Live Seed (PLS) contained. All legume seed shall be pellet inoculated. Inoculant sources shall be species specific and shall be applied at a rate of 2 lb of inoculant per 100 lb seed.
- Commercial fertilizer shall conform to the requirements of the California Food and Agricultural Code. Fertilizer shall be pelleted or granular form.
- Follow up applications shall be made as needed to cover weak spots and to maintain adequate soil protection.
- Avoid over spray onto roads, sidewalks, drainage channels, existing vegetation, etc.

Costs

Average cost for installation and maintenance may vary from as low as \$300 per acre for flat slopes and stable soils, to \$1600 per acre for moderate to steep slopes and/or erosive soils.

Hydroseeding		Installed Cost per Acre
High Density	Ornamentals	\$400 - \$1600
	Turf Species	\$350
	Bunch Grasses	\$300 - \$1300
Fast Growing	Annual	\$350 - \$650
	Perennial	\$300 - \$800
Non-Competing	Native	\$300 - \$1600
	Non-Native	\$400 - \$500
Sterile	Cereal Grain	\$500

Source: Caltrans Guidance for Soil Stabilization for Temporary Slopes, Nov. 1999

Inspection and Maintenance

- Inspect BMPs prior to forecast rain, daily during extended rain events, after rain events, weekly during the rainy season, and at two-week intervals during the non-rainy season.
- Areas where erosion is evident shall be repaired and BMPs re-applied as soon as possible. Care should be exercised to minimize the damage to protected areas while making repairs, as any area damaged will require re-application of BMPs.
- Where seeds fail to germinate, or they germinate and die, the area must be re-seeded, fertilized, and mulched within the planting season, using not less than half the original application rates.
- Irrigation systems, if applicable, should be inspected daily while in use to identify system malfunctions and line breaks. When line breaks are detected, the system must be shut down immediately and breaks repaired before the system is put back into operation.
- Irrigation systems shall be inspected for complete coverage and adjusted as needed to maintain complete coverage.

References

Stormwater Quality Handbooks Construction Site Best Management Practices (BMPs) Manual, State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), November 2000.

Guidance Document: Soil Stabilization for Temporary Slopes, State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), November 1999.