ENVIRONMENTAL BULLETIN

A routine publication providing environmental-related guidance to NDOT District Staff and Contractors

NEBRASKA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Upcoming Training

- NeFSMA 2025 Annual Membership Meeting—November 20
- Construction Staff Winter Roundtables—Stay Tuned!

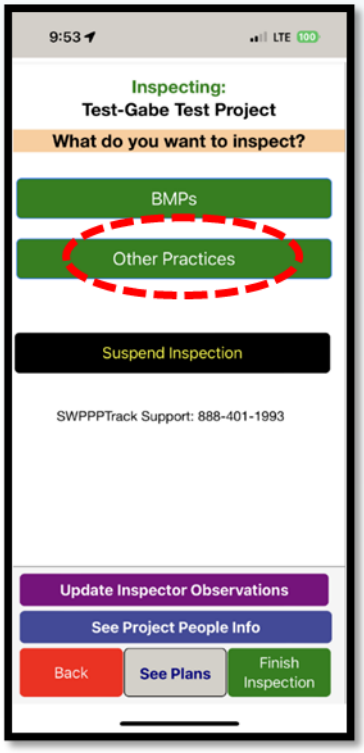
SWPPPTrack Highlight

Using the "Other Practices" Functionality in SWPPPTrack DOT App

It's important to remember the additional functionality located within "Other Practices" in the SWPPPTrack App. In this location you can generate corrective actions on an as needed basis at anytime during your inspection. Some of the more common uses for this will be the following:

Roadway Sweeping and Cleaning: NDOT specifications require that any sediment tracked from vehicles onto roadways must be removed immediately. The use of water trucks to remove sediment from roadways will not be permitted. Use the "Roadway Sweeping and Cleaning" practice to generate corrective work related to sediment track out.

Spill Cleanup: NDOT specifications require that contractors document and clean up all spills occurring on site. In addition, the contractor is required to maintain adequately stocked spill kits to address minor spills that may occur. Use



Winter is Coming!

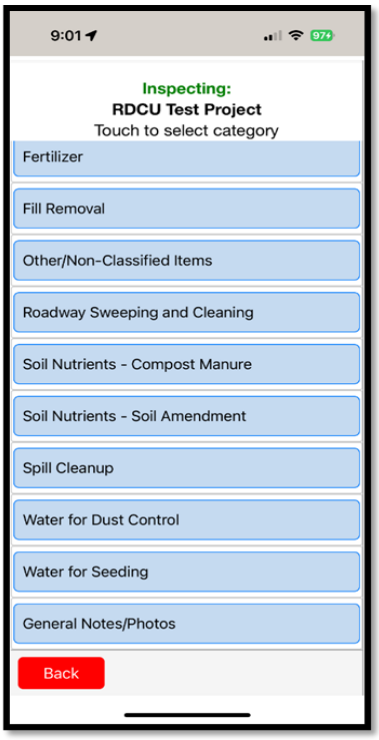
With winter conditions quickly approaching, here are a few tips to ensure that your project will be in compliance with the Construction Stormwater Permit.

- Wetlands & Waterways – Current 404 Permit Special Conditions require some type of erosion control coverage if areas are left open after Sept 15. BMPs for these areas include Temporary Erosion Control Blanket or Temporary Seeding,.
- Frozen Ground and Perimeter Controls – Consider Temporary Mulch or Temporary Seeding for areas that are being actively graded and about to freeze, as vegetation is not likely to establish and you'll need some type of ground cover. Discharge locations must have perimeter controls installed at all times, in the event that runoff occurs during thawing conditions.
- Corrective Actions – Create corrective actions in SWPPPTrack to document work that needs completed before winter conditions prevent BMPs from being installed. SWPPPTrack will establish a due date for all work and will allow you to leverage the Environmental Commitment Compliance Special Provision 115.
- Communicate, Communciate, Communicate! Plan ahead and discuss a stabilization strategy going into winter.

the "Spill Cleanup" practice to generate corrective work related to spills not being managed accordingly.

Water for Dust Control: NDOT specifications require that contractors manage dust on their projects. Water must be applied uniformly to prevent concentrated flows and avoid erosion problems. Use the "Water for Dust Control" practice if dust is not being managed appropriately and a corrective action is needed.

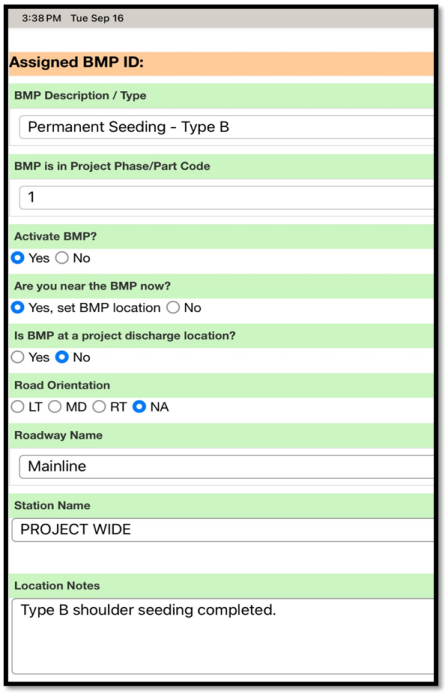
General Notes/Photos: The last practice on the list is titled "General Notes/Photos" and this will allow inspectors to document general comments and photos at any time during the inspection. This practice will not generate a corrective action but rather can be used to highlight best management practices being used throughout the job.



Documenting Permanent Erosion Control BMPs in SWPPPTrack

With the implementation of the new SWPPPTrack system, NDOT now documents the locations and dates of Best Management Practices (BMPs) electronically within the SWPPPTrack DOT App.

In addition to temporary BMPs such as silt fence and silt checks, inspectors must also document the permanent erosion and sediment control BMPs as they are installed. This would include items such as Type A and B seeding with mulch, erosion control blankets and hydromulch. To be more efficient inspectors can group the locations of where each of these items are installed.



For example, if Type B shoulder seeding was installed in one day throughout the entire project, you can document that as one new BMP (Permanent Seeding-Type B) and make a note that it was "project wide." An example of this is shown in the screenshot here.

If additional seeding is completed on another day, then that should be added as a new BMP. Also, only group BMPs of the same type.

Pre-Fabricated Track Out Mats Now on the APL

Stabilized construction exits are commonly used on NDOT construction projects and typically consists of a layer of crushed rock with filter fabric as the base. These are useful in decreasing the amount of sediment carried onto roadways, which can pose safety issues for traffic and contribute to polluting stormwater runoff.

A new pre-fabricated product is listed on the Approved Products List (APL) that can be used to replace the traditional rocked entrance.

Pre-fabricated mats, pictured right, feature a diamond-shaped feature that forces sediment off a wide variety of truck tires.

Benefits of using a pre-fabricated track out include:

- Easy to install and uninstall
- Reusable for up to 10 years
- Virtually maintenance free after installation

As a reminder, if a pre-fabricated exit is installed on an NDOT project, the exit shall be installed according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Approved products available for Track Out Mats can be viewed on NDOT's Approved Products List under the 'Erosion Control' category at: Approved Products - NDOT

The Monarch's Plight

A BRIEF BACKGROUND

Monarch populations have plummeted in recent decades, primarily due to the loss of milkweed, their essential host plant. Modern agricultural practices, including the widespread use of herbicides, have reduced milkweed habitats across the landscape. This, combined with the loss of nectar sources and overwintering sites, has created a perfect storm for monarch decline.

CCAA: A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

In response to this crisis, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has promoted Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances (CCAAs). These voluntary agreements encourage landowners, farmers, energy companies, and transportation agencies to implement conservation measures. CCAAs provide a proactive approach, offering assurances to participants that they will not face additional regulatory burdens if the monarch is listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This encourages participation in habitat restoration and management, with the goal of providing habitat and supporting monarch populations through adjusting management practices to benefit the monarch. NDOT's CCAA was approved in August 2025.

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR NDOT AND NEXT STEPS

This agreement streamlines agency consultations by converting roadway backslope acres into monarch habitat. Acres can be shifted as needed, ensuring roadwork isn't delayed. The CCAA also includes seasonal restrictions on mowing and haying starting in 2026. Please coordinate with Carson Jones (carson.a.jones@nebraska.gov or 402-479-3642) regarding mowing and haying schedules.

American Burying Beetle (ABB) Updates

ABB has significantly impacted grading projects in Districts 6, 7, and 8, with smaller effects in Districts 3 and 4—particularly in securing contractor use sites. To address this, NDOT, FHWA, USFWS, and NGPC have been developing a programmatic agreement since 2022.

A draft Programmatic Biological Opinion (PBO) was received in September 2025, and finalization is expected during the fall of 2025. This agreement will speed project reviews and contractor site approvals. Training sessions for staff working with ABB will be held this winter/spring.

For details, contact Ben Trenne, Jason Jurgens, Matthew Griener, or Erika Hinz.

More No-Product BMPs

Earth checks are not the only "No-Product" BMP. See below for a few more options to use projects.

Slope Tracking is a great BMP to utilize on slopes for 'short-term' stabilization. A good rule-of-thumb for slope tracking is a longevity of 1 to 30 days. Slope tracking should be used in conjunction with perimeter controls, such as silt fence or slash mulch. You can find info on slope tracking in Section 817 of the Spec Book.

A silt trap is a shallow excavation approximately 1 foot deep and of varying width and length. These BMPs are quick to install and useful for dissipating stormwater runoff. Silt traps are paid by the (Each) and maintenance is paid by equipment rental (Hour). Silt trap specifications can be found in Section 815 of the spec book. You can also reference the Special Plans (U-sheets) for build details for silt traps.

Earth Checks — A Best Management Practice

Earth checks can be utilized on NDOT projects as a temporary best management practice (BMP) to help dissipate energy and capture sediment. Earth check specifications can be found in Section 814 of the spec book.

General Guidelines

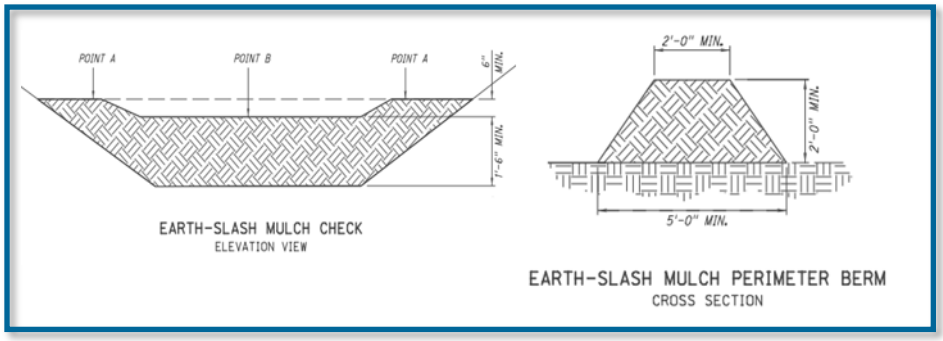
- The "No-Product" BMP – Earth checks are a quick way to help manage stormwater runoff when other BMP options are not readily available.
- When used adjacent to waterways, wetlands, and "Sensitive Areas", ensure that secondary BMPs, such as silt fence, are present to prevent discharge of the check material.
- Checks should be installed immediately after rough grading and can be left in place until finish grading begins.
- Cover crop can be installed in conjunction with earth checks. This combination of a sediment control (earth check) with an erosion control (cover crop) BMP is a great way to stabilize areas as we head into the winter so things are protected come spring.

Inspecting Earth Checks

Below are key criteria to look for when inspecting earth checks…

- Earth checks can be used in ditches or as perimeter berms. Utilize the U-sheets to ensure checks are built to plan
- Earth checks must be cleaned when at 50% capacity by removal and disposal of the silt to maintain functionality.

Earth checks installed with cover crop is a good way to reduce erosion for areas not ready for permanent seeding



Refer to the Special Plans (U-Sheets) in the project plan set for build notes for earth checks

District Showcase

Erosion control blankets and silt checks installed on a large slope. Silt fence is left behind to help protect sensitive area until vegetation establishes.

Here earth checks are installed in ditch line while permanent seeding has been installed on the backslope and cover crop on the foreslope. A good example of phasing in permanent seeding to help reduce erosion risk.

Slash mulch is a great BMP to use as perimeter control. While not available on every project, slash mulch helps filter stormwater runoff and can be left in place upon project completion.

NDOT Erosion and Sediment Control Training Course Guidance

NDOT Erosion and Sediment Control INSPECTOR CERTIFICATION

The NDOT Erosion and Sediment Control Inspector Certification is currently being offered in an online format only. To obtain your new inspector certification please complete both the "Inspector Re-Certification" and "Installer Certification" courses described below.

Participants who successfully complete these courses are awarded a five-year inspector certification and can conduct construction stormwater site inspections on NDOT projects.

NDOT Erosion and Sediment Control INSPECTOR RE-CERTIFICATION Course

Inspector re-certification can be obtained online by accessing the UNL-LTAP training website. This online course provides previously certified and new inspectors (new inspectors must also complete the installer course) a convenient way to re-certify for five years. The course is designed for NDOT construction site operations, supervisors, and managers who will be conducting or assisting with construction stormwater site inspections. Learning objectives include: stormwater permit requirements; erosion and BMPs; good housekeeping and pollution prevention BMPs; inspection and maintenance procedures; and SWPPP management.

Course Link: https://www.ltap.unl.edu/assnfe/searchcourses.asp?csKeyword=erosion

NDOT Erosion and Sediment Control INSTALLER CERTIFICATION Course

This online course is designed for NDOT construction site operators, supervisors, and technicians who will be installing or maintaining erosion and sediment control best management practices (BMPs) on NDOT construction sites.

Learning objectives include: an overview of NDOT's construction stormwater program, NDOT erosion control plan reading, the process of accelerated soil erosion, the distinction between erosion control and sediment control, installation and maintenance requirements for erosion and sediment control BMPs and good housekeeping BMPs.

Participants who successfully complete this course are awarded a five-year installer certification and can install and/or maintain erosion and sediment control BMPs on NDOT projects.

Course Link: https://www.ltap.unl.edu/assnfe/searchcourses.asp?csKeyword=erosion

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Reach out to us for environmental compliance assistance.