

# Temporary Erosion Control Options

## Handout 6 of 7

Temporary erosion control measures are typically employed:

- When grading and/or construction is being done in phases,
- If grading and/or construction is not completed by the rainy season.

These temporary techniques can also be used in conjunction with permanent revegetation. The following guidelines are used to determine how erosion control seed mixes should be used.



*Erosion damage on Adobe Creek.*

## Erosion control options for work sites with existing native plants

These erosion control options should be followed in most areas along natural creeks, where native trees, shrubs and herbs reside on or near the work site. A site visit or referral of a good series of photos to a landscape professional familiar with native plants or a revegetation specialist may be needed to determine the best approach.

### If no irrigation is available, if the slope is very steep, or if it's late in the season

- Use a non-biological method, such as straw, straw with tackifier, erosion control blankets (jute netting with straw or coir filling), etc. instead of seeding.

#### Benefits:

- The blankets are functional immediately after installation.
- The adjacent native plants will fill in at their own pace.

### If there is absolutely no time to investigate site conditions yet early enough to plant.

- Use a Failsafe mix with 50 lb/ac "Regreen" sterile wheat (*Triticum X Elymus* "Regreen"), with 95 percent minimum purity, and minimum germination of 85 percent.

#### Benefits:

- This plant mix makes few, if any, seeds so it cannot become a weed, and it usually lives only one year.
- The adjacent native plants can seed in thereafter.

## Erosion control options for work sites without existing native plants

These erosion control options should be followed in areas where there is no remaining native vegetation in the area— for example, a site on the back slope of a levee in an urbanized area.

### For sunny slopes 3:1 or flatter

- Use a California native grass mix of: Prostrate *Hordeum californicum* (Prostrate California barley) at 16 pounds per acre (lb/ac), minimum purity 90 percent, minimum germination 80 percent.

*Elymus glaucus* "Berkeley" ("Berkeley" blue wildrye) at 12 lb/ac, minimum purity 95 percent, minimum germination 85 percent.

*Bromus carinatus* "S.F. Bay Area" ("S.F. Bay Area" California brome) at 10 lb/ac, minimum purity 95 percent, minimum germination 85 percent.

- Use a Failsafe mix of:  
50 lb/ac "Regreen" sterile wheat (*Triticum X Elymus* "Regreen"), minimum purity 95 percent, minimum germination 85 percent.
- Use a non-biological method as outlined on reverse.

### For slopes 2:1 or steeper

- Use a California native grasses PLUS mix: The mix for slopes 3:1 or flatter PLUS *Vulpia microstachys* (Three-weeks fescue) at 5 lb/ac, minimum purity 95 percent, minimum germination 70 percent.
- Use a failsafe mix of:  
50 lb/ac "Regreen" sterile wheat (*Triticum X Elymus* "Regreen"), minimum purity 95 percent, minimum germination 85 percent.
- Non-biological method as outlined on reverse.

### For shady slopes

- Use a nonbiological method because grasses tend to require sunny conditions.



*Elymus glaucus* "Berkeley" ("Berkeley" blue wildrye)

### Seed mixes to avoid

Some commercially available seed mixes contain invasive species, which compete aggressively with native plants and will become future fire hazards.

These seed mixes should be excluded from streamside areas. Examples are Blando brome, rose or red clover and annual rye.