Erosion Control: Beginning with the End in Mind Increases Chances for Success

When an erosion control project fails, it is often because the project was developed and executed without considering all of the variables. By planning your next erosion control project with the end goal in mind, you'll maximize the likelihood for success.

Considerations:
- **Time frame** – Will this be a short or long-term project?
- **Time of year** – The seasons will, in part, dictate what types of materials and seed mixtures will result in optimized establishment and erosion control.
- **Slope aspect** – Slope aspect, inclination, and soil type can impact the functional longevity of the project.
- **Aesthetic considerations** – Will you be applying seed for long-term establishment or decorative vegetation? Native flower mixes, shrubs, native grasses, and some fine fescue types can boost the visual appeal of long-term projects. Vegetation provides long-term erosion protection, improves the aesthetics of a site, and acts as a filter for water run-off.
- **Weather forecast during application and curing time** – Most hydraulically applied products and mixtures take 24-48 hours to cure properly.
- **Projected climatic conditions during the life of the erosion control project** – Will there be enough rainfall for optimal establishment and maintenance? Will the project require heat and drought tolerant vegetation, or require supplemental irrigation?
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The majority of erosion control projects require hydraulically applied product. What factors are involved in achieving your specific project's goal?

The two primary goals when using hydroseed material are erosion control and, or, vegetative establishment. The hydraulically applied vehicle (slurry/mulch matrix) provides erosion control, but is also the medium in which seed is applied.

The applied slurry will have to protect both soil and seed from rainfall. Again, soil type, slope aspect, and slope length all play a part in determining each hydraulic mulch mixture's functional longevity.

Hydraulically applied material – questions to ask
• Should the mulch break down quickly, or should it retain water so that the seeds have moisture to germinate?
• Should the mulch last a long time to help slow down the impact of water flow, and facilitate water infiltration into the soil?
• Should there be any additives in the mulch to increase the mulch-to-soil bonding strength? For example, a bonded Fiber Matrix has a 10% stabilizing emulsion mixed in and provides 6 to 12 months of erosion control.

Additives can be used to improve success. Tackifiers, and mycorrhizal inoculum will increase the success of seeding applications. Crimped fibers and tackifier content ratios can increase the bonding strength of the mulch. Certain hydraulic mulches have a tackifying agent already mixed into each bag.

The amount of tackifying agent will need to increase as the required functional longevity of the mulch increases, and the application rate and percentage of tackifier incorporated into the mulch matrix will relate directly to the steepness of the slope.

Bottom line - you need a game plan. Stover Seed professionals will help you begin with the end in mind. Stover Seed has designed many custom seed and mulch mixtures. They succeed because their characteristics are hand-selected to be in line with each project's goals.

Call before you plan your next project. We'll help you design a successful erosion control plan with an individualized hydraulic application that can save you both time and money.

For more information visit: http://www.stoverseed.com/seeds_erosion.html