

## Why is an erosion plan important?<sup>1</sup>

Half of the world's top soil has been displaced in the last 150 years. Much of this can be attributed to rapid industrialization, urban and rural development, agriculture, as well as natural causes. This may not seem like a catastrophic occurrence until you consider that our top soil layer contains the organics and nutrients needed to grow crops and the necessary vegetation to stabilize the ground we live on. Also, the displacement of the soil into waterways change flow patterns, increase the chance of flooding, and causes the decline of fish species and micro organisms that form the ecology that supports healthy human habitat.



## THE FACTS<sup>2</sup>

- ① Sedimentation due to accelerated erosion is caused by land-disturbing activities such as agriculture, mining, construction, and forestry.
- ① Sedimentation fills streams and lakes used for water supply, increasing the cost of water treatment.
- ① Sedimentation fills streams and lakes used for power generation, increasing the cost of electric power.
- ① Sedimentation fills streams and lakes, increasing the chances of flooding.
- ① Sedimentation destroys fish and their food supply from mountain trout streams to coastal sounds.
- ① Sedimentation destroys wildlife habitat.
- ① Sedimentation can carry harmful chemicals and pollutants that are used on the land.
- ① Erosion reduces property values.
- ① Soil erosion removes the most valuable soils needed to grow food and plants.
- ① Soil erosion removes soil that cannot be replaced for generations.

## Legal History

Sedimentation resulting from erosion was designated as a major source of pollution in the Clean Water Act of 1972. Subsequently, North Carolina adopted Chapter 113A – Article 4 GS described as the Sedimentation Pollution Control Act of 1973 to begin the process of defining erosion as an increasing problem within the development of our state.



<sup>1</sup> Source: worldwildlife.org

<sup>2</sup> Source: NC DEQ