

Best Management Practices

Full Road Recontouring



Prepared by: Brian R. Merrill and Ethan Casaday
Roads Trails and Resources Maintenance Section
North Coast Redwoods District
California State Parks



December, 2001

Best Management Practices

Full Road Recontouring

Definition

Excavation of embankment fill from road, stabilization of excavated materials on cutbench to fully recontour natural (pre-disturbance) topography.

Synonymous Terms

Road obliteration, Road removal

Purpose

To eliminate interception and diversion of runoff on road surfaces. To restore subtle topographic features that affect runoff patterns. To restore surface and shallow subsurface hydrology. To prevent erosion of road embankment fill. To prevent direct sediment delivery to the drainage network from failed embankment fill. To prevent runoff diversions that cause severe gulying on roads and slopes below. To prevent mass movements caused by diverted flow directed onto interfluvial slopes. To eliminate direct linkage between streams and roads, which increases sediment transport distance. To eliminate road surface areas that collect water causing inter-basin transfer of runoff to adjacent sub-watersheds causing increased streamflow, bank erosion, channel migration, and inner-gorge mass wasting.

Planning Considerations

- General Plan compliance
- Anticipated future road use
- Access to nearby rehabilitation sites
- Access for future fire protection, resource management, and backcountry patrol
- Road-to-trail conversion potential
- Accessibility to site with heavy equipment and service vehicles
- Offsite disturbance caused by accessing site
- Availability of suitable locations for embankment fill either nearby or offsite
- Stockpiling of woody debris for post-treatment mulching

Construction Specifications

- The excavator shall prepare the site by first removing all trees and brush growing on the cutbank, roadbed, and embankment fillslope. Mulch shall be stockpiled on the top of the cutbank or below the embankment fill. Mulch may be stockpiled in piles but shall be left accessible to the excavator when earthmoving tasks are complete. Trees growing in undisturbed soil that were partially buried by road embankment fill may be left standing, however all embankment fill shall be excavated away from around the base. Care should be taken not to damage roots. An excavator mounted vegetation masticator may be used to remove trees and brush. Tree boles shall be

left a minimum of 24” high for later extraction with the excavator or dozer. If a masticator is used, a dozer may be employed to accumulate and pile ground mulch for use on finished surfaces.

- Following clearing operations, a dozer equipped with rippers shall decompact the inboard ditch and the cutbench portion of the road to a minimum depth of 12 inches. The cutbank shall be stripped of all organic accumulations using the dozer or the excavator or a combination of the two. Small, dispersed organic material shall be mixed and incorporated into the fill material and used to recontour the cutbench. Larger accumulations of organic debris shall be gathered by the excavator and stockpiled with trees and brush removed from the roadway.
- If stable areas exist along the road cutbench, the dozer begins pushing embankment fill into the cutbank in maximum 6-inch lifts. The dozer continues to push material against the cutbank compacting it in lifts until the material becomes too steep on which to operate, or no more fill is available locally. As the dozer cuts embankment fill it leaves a berm on the outside edge to prevent material from being sidecast downslope. At some sites, the dozer may be permitted to travel below the fill, enabling it to cut and move the entire embankment fill onto the road cutbench. This is typical in prairie settings or where vegetation is sparse enough for the dozer to operate off the road without damaging trees and shrubs.
- The excavator follows the dozer and makes a pass removing the berm and what remains of the embankment fill beyond. The excavator completes the slope match at the top of the cutbank. Where a complete match is not possible due to a deficit of fill material, the excavator shall pull down the top of the cutbank where practical and blend with the fill below.
- Where recontoured slopes permit, the final surface is smoothed by back-dragging with the dozer blade, or by sliding the back of the excavator bucket back and fourth across the recontoured slope. Trees and brush removed prior to excavation are raked across the surface with the excavator to remove the equipment tracks, then spread evenly over the surface as mulch.
- Cutbanks exposing seeps or springs shall not be recontoured. Instead, the embankment fill adjacent to the wet area shall be exported to nearby dry section of the road. An outsloped cutbench shall extend along all wet road sections.
- Road through-cuts shall only be treated if the available fill can achieve a full match eliminating the possibility of runoff concentrating in the through-cut. In most cases a crown of soil approximately 5% of the total through-cut depth is left over the finished recontour to ensure runoff does not reoccupy the through-cut. As with road bench fill, through-cut fill shall be well compacted by the dozer depositing the material in minimum 6-inch lifts. Through-cuts that are steeply inclined on the slope shall be drained of subsurface flow using subsurface ditch relief drains. These drains are cut into the outboard berm and daylight on the adjacent slopes. The ditches are backfilled and provide a porous conduit for concentrated subsurface flow. In some cases where through-cuts are steeply inclined, recontouring may not be recommended due to a high probability of post-treatment failure.
- If a long section of road is not suitable for full recontouring, the excavator removes the embankment fill and loads it into a dump truck to be end-hauled to a stable location. The excavator and dozer recover the entire embankment fill and outslope the cutbench of the road. On steep linear grades broad swales are constructed along the road at appropriate locations to convey flow into natural drainage features below the road.

- Cutbanks immediately adjacent to stream crossings are not typically fully recontoured. Instead, the fill is tapered toward the crossing and the cutbank is left exposed. This reduces the slope on each side of the crossing reducing the chance for direct sediment delivery if a post-treatment slope failure occurs. In crossings with gentle sideslopes, cutbanks can be fully recontoured if post-treatment failure is not considered a significant hazard.

Mitigation Measures

Aesthetics

Eliminating road scars and restoring the topography to the natural conditions that existed prior to the road construction will improve aesthetic values. Short-term effects to local forest and prairie settings will occur as vegetation is disturbed for rehabilitation work. Exposed earth and dried vegetation may be visible for several years following treatment. Typically, prairie settings are more widely visible, but recover within several months. Grass reoccupies the disturbed area during the first growing season following construction. Forest settings take longer to recover but have a limited visibility and typically do not affect park viewsheds.

For safety reasons, work areas are closed to the public during construction. Therefore, the general public will not view temporary visual effects at construction sites. Interpretative signs shall be posted with information about the project at the nearest public use area and at all access points. After the closures are lifted, the public will be able to view the work locations, however, the final project condition closely matches the pre-disturbance landform and quickly blends into the surrounding area as duff and herbaceous plants cover the exposed soil. The interpretive panels also help the public visualize the final appearance of the recontoured road.

Trees are removed and scattered on exposed soil as mulch during road recontouring work. This can present a negative aesthetic effect, particularly in a park setting. The effect is transitory, however, as vegetation recovery is generally rapid in the north coast region. Because of the thick understory vegetation and dense stands of trees growing adjacent to work sites, work will not be visible from most public use areas.

Air Quality

Diesel exhaust and dust will be produced as part of the heavy equipment work. Air quality in the vicinity of the work is generally high, unless wildfires or prescribed burns are occurring, and the products of the heavy equipment will be rapidly dispersed. The equipment will be moving through the project sites so that any individual site will not receive prolonged exhaust.

Heavy equipment operations may expose workers in the project area and vicinity to exhaust fumes and dust. Heavy equipment operators shall be cautioned to avoid prolonged exposure to exhaust and dust. The cabs of heavy equipment shall be kept in good serviceable condition to provide protection from exhaust and dust. Seals, windows and doors should be kept in good condition to provide protection when necessary. Detected exhaust leaks shall be repaired immediately to protect workers from exhaust exposure and reduce fire hazard. Project inspectors can position themselves upwind of heavy equipment operations to reduce exposure to exhaust and dust. Dust mask may also be used by operators and inspectors to reduce inhalation of particulates.

Heavy equipment engines and hydraulics generate heat during the work. However, sources of high heat are shielded by equipment covers and do not expose nearby object to high heat. The effects of residual heat diminish rapidly within a short distance of the equipment. Heat shields shall be maintained in good serviceable condition to prevent high heat exposure. The removal of some trees and

brush from the roads prior to removal will allow increased sun into the sites and may increase daily temperatures on the soil surface. However, rapid natural revegetation is expected due to fertile soils, summer fog, and high winter rainfall in this area. Heat generated during road recontouring work will not affect local air temperatures, or regional or global climate.

Biological Resources

A primary goal of road recontouring is the improvement of habitat for, and protection of threatened, endangered, and rare species. Short-term adverse effects will avoid any negative effects to any listed species to the maximum extent practicable. All appropriate design features and mitigation measures shall be incorporated into project planning. Projects shall be conducted in compliance with all applicable State and Federal threatened and endangered species protection laws and regulations.

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) shall be requested in writing to provide Technical Assistance under Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in cases when there is a question about whether a specific project has the potential to effect threatened & endangered (T&E) species. Under Section 10, NMFS and USFWS can provide assistance in project planning and design to avoid effects to T&E species. At the State level, the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) may also provide informal consultation on projects that may effect T&E species.

When effects to T&E species cannot be avoided by design and mitigation an Incidental Take Permit shall be requested under Section 7 of the ESA. A Federal nexus must exist as a requirement for an Incidental Take Permit from a Federal agency under Section 7. If no Federal nexus exists, consideration shall be given to the development of a habitat conservation plan (HCP).

All projects shall be reviewed by the District's State Park Senior Resource Ecologist (SPSRE) to ensure protection of natural, cultural and historical resources. Site visits including the project manager, State Park Senior Resource Ecologist shall occur to develop alternatives that do not negatively affect State Park resources.

The SPSRE shall work closely with the project manager to implement the following practices to protect biological resources:

Plants: Qualified botanists shall conduct rare plant surveys on all roads planned for recontouring prior to project implementation. If any rare plants are located, they shall be avoided to the maximum extent practicable unless greater resource protection needs exist. Greater resource needs include: eliminating stream diversions, stabilizing slopes that are likely to fail, and eliminating concentration of flow on roads. Rare plants that cannot be avoided may be salvaged and transplanted onto appropriate stable ground.

Trees: All trees, regardless of DBH (diameter breast height), growing in road embankment fill will be removed as part of the road recontouring process. Trees greater than 24 inches DBH buried by embankment fill that predate road construction may be retained. Limbs of these trees may be removed if required for access. Small trees, less than 24 inches DBH, buried in embankment fill that predate road construction shall be left whenever practical. Equipment operators shall be required to avoid striking retained trees to minimize damage to the tree structure or bark. Tree roots shall be avoided, as the excavations will not be deeper than original ground surface. Some advantageous roots may be damaged that have grown into embankment fill.

Fish: Road recontouring projects shall be designed to have minimum effects to fish by incorporating practices that reduce erosion of road surfaces and reduce turbidity in streams.

On roads where potential sediment delivery to streams exists, construction activities after October 15th shall proceed only after consultation and approval by NMFS. Work in the rainy season shall occur during dry spells with materials for erosion control on-site at all times. Work shall be conducted so that no more than one-half day's work is active at one time and all work shall be completed by the end of each day. When winterization of access roads is required, all access road shall be winterized prior to any additional earth moving tasks.

Any soil disturbance adjacent to stream channels shall receive evenly distributed mulch coverage with masticated brush and trees to reduce sheet erosion. Mulch generated during the clearing phase of the rehabilitation work shall be used to the maximum extent practicable.

Birds: Potential habitat for the State and Federally listed marbled murrelet exists in various locations throughout North Coast Redwoods District. To avoid noise disturbances, any work within ¼ mile of the suitable habitat for murrelets shall take place after September 15th. Potential habitat for the Northern Spotted Owl exists in various locations throughout North Coast Redwoods District. To avoid noise disturbances, work within 1000 feet of suitable roosting and nesting habitat for Spotted Owl shall take place after July 10. In most cases, habitat trees will not be affected by road recontouring, however, if trees need to be removed that are potential Owl habitat, protocol surveys shall be conducted prior to construction. No habitat disturbances shall occur within 1000 feet of a nesting site.

The Senior State Park Resource Ecologist shall assess each project for the presence of "fully protected" bird species listed under the California Fish and Game Codes. If the potential exists for the presence of these species, USFWS and CDFG consultation shall occur to develop avoidance measures.

Operations shall occur prior to these dates only if approved surveys indicate the absence of protected species or, incidental take permits are obtained from USFWS. The ¼ mile distance rule shall be reduced if geographic features such as a ridge separate the site from suitable habitat (See Technical Assistance Report, April 2001). On sites where background noise is greater than the noise caused by road recontouring equipment, such as adjacent to a major highway, construction may occur prior to the above dates because noise disturbance is no longer an issue.

Amphibians: Qualified biologists shall survey for the presence of suitable habitat for sensitive amphibians at road recontouring locations. Amphibian habitat shall be avoided wherever practicable. Once road fill is removed and drainage is restored, habitat quality both in the crossing vicinity and in the watershed overall will be greatly increased. If listed species are located and avoidance is not practicable, incidental take authorization shall be obtained from CDFG or USFWS.

If rare species are located the project shall be redesigned to preserve individuals and their habitat. If T&E species are encountered the same process outlined under biological resources above shall be used to avoid effects, obtain a take permit or develop a HCP.

Final reports are required on all biological surveys conducted by consultants or contractors. Consultants shall be requested to list any locally designated species or species of concern, should they exist in the project area.

Exotic Plants: Freshly disturbed ground created by heavy equipment during road treatments may provide habitat for exotic plant species. Heavy equipment may also introduce exotic plant seeds or spread existing seed into the landscape. To minimize potential effects, all heavy equipment shall be pressure washed prior to entering the park or moving from a known infested area within the park to a non-infested area. Anti-fungal wash agents may be specified if the equipment has been exposed to any pathogen that could affect park resources. All heavy equipment contracts shall specify pressure washing of the machines prior to entering the park. Park equipment operators are required to pressure wash equipment before transporting to different units within the District.

In areas where exotic species may exploit disturbed soils and dominate the revegetation, treatments using mulch, seeding, herbicide applications or combinations thereof may be used to reduce the invasion of exotic species.

Wetlands: Natural wetland habitat such as marsh, riparian, and vernal pools shall not be filled by road recontouring projects. Some work will occur in riparian corridors at stream crossings. However, equipment will be working within existing road alignments at the crossings and will only treat previously affected areas. Equipment shall remain on existing road alignments to the maximum extent practicable. Equipment may travel off road only when no other alternative is available and after the project inspector and biological consultants have reviewed the route. Where appropriate, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers shall be consulted for permitting work in the vicinity of wetlands.

Wildlife Corridors: Wildlife dispersal or migration corridors may be temporarily altered from the natural migration routes during the heavy equipment work because of daytime noise effects. However, there may be alternative routes adjacent to the work areas suitable for their use. Stabilizing the landform will reduce future potential landslides and large gullies that inhibit wildlife movement.

Cultural Resources

Road recontouring projects require the movement of earth that could have adverse effects on significant cultural resources. Therefore, review under Public Resources Code 5024 is required to identify any significant cultural resources within the area of potential effect for a proposed project. In the event that avoidance of a cultural resource is not practicable, mitigation measures to decrease the effects of a recontouring project to less than significant shall be proposed. Construction monitoring shall take place to decrease the potential for effects to cultural resources in areas of moderate to high sensitivity during construction.

In the event that previously undocumented cultural resources are encountered during project construction (including but not limited to dark soil containing shellfish, bone, flaked stone, or groundstone, or deposits of historic trash), work within 100 feet of that location shall stop until a State qualified archeologist has evaluated the area. If any human bones or remains are uncovered, work shall stop until the County Coroner, State qualified archeologist, and appropriate Native American representatives have evaluated the find. Effects to sacred or religious sites shall be avoided to the maximum extent practicable. If a sacred or religious site exists in a project area, formal State Historic Preservation Office consultation shall occur as well as review by the Native American Heritage Commission.

Abandoned logging and ranch roads have potential cultural or historical significance, either individually or collectively. Therefore, all roads and road networks scheduled for recontouring projects shall be reviewed to determine their historical significance. Individual ranch and logging roads that are eligible for listing with the OHP shall be preserved and protected to the maximum extent practicable.

Road networks that may represent a historical district shall be evaluated within the scope of the project to determine if treatment of roads within the network will negatively affect the network as a whole. All abandoned roads that are proposed for recontouring have already shown evidence of deterioration or have failed in part. Over the long term these roads will fail of their own accord. Roads identified as erosive that are also identified as having cultural significance can be treated with partial recontouring or decommissioning to preserve the road bench and provide improved drainage while preserving the original alignment of the road. Roads with historical significance that do not pose an erosion threat or other threats to natural resources will not be treated and will be avoided by vehicles or heavy equipment.

Geology/Soils

Road recontouring work reduces mass wasting and surface erosion by eliminating the anthropogenic cause of these problems such as roads, landings, and stream crossings. Treatments are designed to restore natural topography and surface hydrology thereby increasing the stability of the rehabilitation sites. Inspectors trained in landform rehabilitation conduct direct oversight of the work to ensure that the treatment designs are complete, have a stable geometry, and blend well into the surrounding natural topography.

Minor slope adjustments and surface erosion may occur after treatment, as soil is re-exposed during the recontouring. However, monitoring of past sites indicates that post-treatment soil loss and mass wasting are minor compared to the soil saved by eliminating road related erosion. Bare ground shall be mulched with vegetation removed during the work to the maximum extent practicable to minimize surface erosion. Road recontouring work will significantly improve the stability of the work sites and reduce surface erosion from the existing condition.

Heavy equipment operators shall be cautioned to minimize their exposure to unstable slopes that may occur naturally or result from the earthmoving process. Inspectors shall continually evaluate slope geometry and caution operators if unstable conditions are indicated. A qualified geologist shall review road recontouring sites during project planning to determine if any geologic conditions exist requiring additional assessment or alteration of prescriptions. If unique features do exist, a licensed geologist shall conduct a geologic assessment/investigation.

The NCRD lies within a highly active seismic region. Portions of the Northern Coast Ranges Fault System (San Andreas Fault Zone), the Mendocino Triple Junction, and the Cascadia Subduction Zone lie within or near the NCRD. Exposure to strong ground shaking is possible throughout the District. Seismic events will expose workers to direct effects from ground shaking, and possible secondary effects from ground rupture, seismically induced mass wasting, and seismically induced tree failure. However, rehabilitation workers are not exposed to a higher level of hazard than those in other settings. The time-weighted-average exposure to seismic hazards is less at rehabilitation site than it would be in an urban or suburban setting. Due to the remote location of most rehabilitation projects, seismic effects are unlikely to affect park visitors or staff. Conditions for tsunami generally do not exist because road recontouring locations are generally inland from water bodies. No volcanic hazards exist in the project vicinity.

Subsidence of land is not anticipated to be a problem at road recontouring locations. Soil and geologic conditions that could result in subsidence such as expansive soils and soluble bedrock do not exist in the NCRD. Road recontouring will not affect unique geologic or physical features.

Hydrology/Water Quality

Existing (altered) drainage patterns will be restored to pre-disturbance patterns. In some cases where pre-disturbance patterns cannot be restored, rehabilitation work may require the realignment of a stream segment. To ensure that channel stability will be maintained, project planners will establish new drainage segments only after thorough review by a qualified geologist, geomorphologist, or hydrologist. Reconnecting diverted streams to their natural flow pattern will increase discharge in abandoned channels. However, significant geomorphic adjustments are not likely to occur due to the increased discharge because the reoccupied channels had originally formed under the post-treatment flow regime. Offsite effects of reestablishing pre-disturbance drainage patterns and discharge shall be evaluated to ensure increased discharge will not adversely impact fluvial geomorphic functioning downstream.

Water quality will be improved as watershed rehabilitation is implemented within an impacted watershed. However, following rehabilitation work a short-term increase in suspended sediment and bed load will occur downstream of the rehabilitation sites that are directly adjacent to streams. Sediment is delivered to the stream from ravel along the adjacent slopes and minor amounts of soil lost downslope during excavation. These effects are limited to the first winter following treatment and in most cases are limited to the first runoff-generating event of the winter. The affect on aquatic habitat is observed immediately downstream of the rehabilitation sites but does not typically extend more than several hundred feet downstream. Sediment delivery from road segments not directly adjacent to streams would be limited to highly mobile debris flows or torrents, which have not been observed during post-treatment project reviews.

In larger subwatersheds rehabilitation work is typically spread over a period of several years so that short-term (post-treatment) water quality effects are not experienced simultaneously. Long-term transport rates of suspended load and bed load will be higher without rehabilitation work, and high volume short-term pulses of sediment typically occur during extreme storm events.

The cumulative effect of recontouring roads on water quality will be a reduction in suspended and bed load transport, improved fluvial-geomorphic functioning, and an improvement in the aquatic habitat throughout the drainage network.

Shallow subsurface flow will be influenced by changes in surface drainage patterns and/or changes in porosity of the soil at rehabilitation sites. Changes in the direction or rate of shallow subsurface flow may be influenced by changes in surface drainage patterns. Because recontouring work typically does not intersect the water table, and no wells exist that provide direct conduits to the groundwater supply, groundwater quality is not likely to be affected.

Road Recontouring projects will not have a significant affect on the amount of groundwater available for public water supplies. Project planning shall identify public water supply and Park water systems that may be affected. Persons responsible for the maintenance of these water systems shall be consulted and if negative effects are anticipated, mutually agreeable mitigations shall be developed.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Failure of, or leakage from, vehicles or heavy equipment could result in the release of hazardous substances (primarily petroleum based products) to the ground or water. Equipment is required to be leak free throughout rehabilitation projects. Leaks that develop are repaired immediately in the field or work is suspended until repairs can be made. Spill kits are maintained on site in the event of accidental spillage. Appropriate agencies shall be notified in the event of significant spillage.

The NCRD has adopted a general safety protocol for backcountry heavy equipment operations. The general protocol outlines broad safety issues common to all projects and presents guidelines on how to address those issues. The general protocol also directs project managers to develop a project specific safety plan for each rehabilitation project. The plan shall identify any existing emergency response plans. The project shall be designed and implemented to avoid any conflicts with existing plans and to avoid any increase in emergency response time.

Workers spend most of their work hours in remote wildland settings and may be exposed to natural hazards consistent with that environment (e.g., wild animals, insects, noxious plant, lightning, wind, etc.). All employees are issued first aid kits and are trained how to respond to anticipated and unanticipated incidents. Employees are asked to disclose any sensitivity that might affect their employment tasks.

Heavy equipment can get very hot during the warmer part of the work season; this equipment is sometimes in close proximity to flammable vegetation. Equipment that is not properly outfitted can generate sparks from exhaust systems. Friction between metal parts crushing rocks could also generate sparks. Spark arrestors or turbo-charging (which eliminates sparks in exhaust) and fire extinguishers are required for all heavy equipment. Heavy equipment itself can be used for fighting fire in the backcountry. The safety plan developed for each project is reviewed by all project staff and includes job site characteristics to reduce the potential for fire. Park staff is required to have a State Park radio on site, which allows direct contact to California Department of Fire Protection and centralized dispatch center. Construction crews shall be required to park service vehicles away from flammable material such as dry grass and brush. At the end of each workday, heavy equipment shall be parked over mineral soil to reduce the chance of fire.

Land Use/Planning

Project design shall include review of any General Plan that has been developed for a park unit. The General Plan shall be used to guide the general direction and level of rehabilitation efforts. Any reference to a project in a General Plan shall be included in the CEQA document. Projects shall not be implemented if they are in conflict with a General Plan.

All projects shall be in compliance with the Resource Management Directives of California State Parks and all State and Federal environmental laws.

Projects shall be compatible with existing land use in the vicinity of projects. The existing land use on State Park property includes recreation and preservation. Road recontouring will not affect agricultural resources. Agricultural resources on adjoining property will benefit from road recontouring by improving water quality and quantity. Illegal agricultural activities have been discovered on State Parks during planning and inventory phase of road recontouring projects. All illegal uses are immediately reported to Park Law enforcement officials. Information signs are placed at all points of entry into project areas prior to implementation, informing the public of the upcoming project to help deter illegal agricultural uses.

In general, established communities do not exist within the boundaries of any North Coast Redwood Parks. Road recontouring will not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community. If a project is identified in an established community, alternative transportation routes shall be developed to mitigate the recontouring of roads. Community members shall be notified of projects that may have any effect on the community and agreements shall be developed that are mutually agreeable.

Mineral Resources

Road Recontouring will not conflict with adopted energy conservation plans. The projects will not involve wasteful and inefficient use of non-renewable resources. Heavy equipment shall be used in as efficient manner as possible and project designers shall continue to research and implement the most energy efficient techniques. Road recontouring will not affect availability of a known mineral resource that would be of future value to the region and residents of the state.

Noise

Noise levels will temporarily increase at the work site, although the noise generally diminishes rapidly with distance. Equipment operation at sites close to campgrounds or residences shall be limited to daytime hours between 08:00 to 16:00 Monday through Friday.

Workers in close proximity to the heavy equipment are exposed to high noise levels. Workers shall be advised to wear ear protection when in close proximity to the heavy equipment. Earplugs shall be provided to all workers and extra earplugs shall be stored in all vehicles and equipment. All operations are in compliance with OSHA regulations.

Population/Housing

Road recontouring will have no cumulative effect on regional or local population projections. Road recontouring will not induce growth of human populations or communities. Road recontouring will not displace existing housing or affect affordable housing.

Public Services

Road recontouring may affect fire protection abilities because the abandoned roads will require additional heavy equipment time to reopen a road to vehicle traffic. Most roads proposed for recontouring are already closed due to crossing failures and natural revegetation. A network of service roads shall be maintained throughout the North Coast Redwoods Parks to aid in fire suppression.

If road recontouring is planned for a road that is currently open to vehicle traffic, park rangers shall be consulted to determine appropriate mitigation measures to maintain law enforcement access. However, road recontouring sites are usually along abandoned roads covered with thick vegetation and numerous road failures. Therefore, road recontouring will not affect emergency access.

Recreation

Road recontouring projects will not directly affect campground facilities within park units. Occasionally if campsites are located close to or downslope of a rehabilitation site, the sites may be temporarily closed for public safety. Backcountry road recontouring areas will be closed to the public temporarily during the construction season to protect visitors from worksite hazards. All trails and roads within the Park backcountry that are not within the project area will remain open during the summer work season. Park visitor services and ranger staff shall be informed of any area closures and will affect visitors or other park operations. Area closure signs shall be posted at all access points to projects and at campground and visitor center kiosks. Official closure notices shall be obtained and posted during the project implementation and post-treatment recovery phases.

Transportation/Traffic

Traffic by workers to and from the work sites will be required on County roads and State highways. Given logistical constraints of the amount of heavy equipment work that can occur simultaneously in the project the maximum number of round trips required per day will be less than 10 in any given park, which is insignificant compared to current levels of traffic.

Heavy equipment is generally transported on a lowboy transport and is classified as a wide load on State highways. All equipment transport operations shall be in compliance with State and local laws and all permits shall be obtained as necessary. Pilot trucks shall be assigned to accompany the transport as required by State and local laws. Transportation of heavy equipment is common on roads and highways in this region due to logging and gravel mining industries.

Parking capacity will not be affected by road recontouring because the projects are located in backcountry areas and do not affect visitor day use areas.

Road recontouring does not increase traffic hazards to the public. Road recontouring eliminates roads and the hazards associated with them.

Road recontouring will not result in conflicts with adopted policies supporting alternative transportation. They will not result in effects to rail, waterborne or air traffic.

Glossary for Best Management Practices

aggrade - the filling of a stream channel with sediment. This usually happens when the supply of sediment is greater than the stream is transporting. Compare to “degrade” and “graded stream.”

alignment - the area affected by a road or trail including the fill slopes, road bench, and cut bank. Also a linear representation of features on a map such as a stream channel.

curvilinear - a curving line. Refers to a meandering trail that curves around boulders and trees following contours across the land at a flat or oblique angle.

cutbench - the portion of a roadway that has been cut into bedrock or native soil. Compare with embankment.

decommissioning - the treatment of a road to eliminate diversion potential during periods of nonuse. A road is typically decommissioned when the road will not be used for a period of time but may be used some time in the future. Decommissioning includes the removal of stream crossing fill and partially recontouring or outsloping road segments between crossings.

degrade - refers to the erosion of a stream channel. This usually happens when the supply of sediment is less than the amount the stream is transporting. Compare to “aggrade” and “graded stream.” Also refers to poor water quality or a disturbed watershed function.

ditch memory - subsurface water flow along a former drainage ditch after road removal is completed. This often occurs when ditches have not been ripped. Also see memory.

ditch relief culvert - see road cross drain

diversion potential - the potential for water to divert down a roadway if a stream crossing becomes plugged. Stream crossings with diversion potential have a high likelihood of contributing massive volumes of sediment to streams if the diversion causes gullies or landslides. Diversion potential is reduced by construction of a fail safe crossing (critical dip with rock armor) or by complete stream crossing removal.

drain lens - buried coarse aggregate wrapped in filter fabric used to drain subsurface water from springs or seeps.

duff - partially decayed organic material composed of needles, leaves, and twigs on the forest floor.

embankment - fill excavated from the cutbench and used to construct the outboard road bench. This is often referred to as the fill slope or outboard fill material.

endhauling - the transportation of excavated material to a stable storage location using a dump truck.

energy dissipater - material such as rock riprap or a structure made of logs, metal pipe, or poured concrete that is used to reduce the energy of flowing water below culvert outlets or dips.

erosion control - activities that prevent soil from being detached and moved down slope including, but not limited to, road removal, revegetation, mulching with brush, out sloping, and compaction of unstable fill.

Glossary for Best Management Practices

(continued)

erosion prevention - cost effective techniques used to prevent erosion before it happens.

fail safe crossing - a stream crossing that has been constructed in a way that has no potential for diversion. The ultimate fail safe crossing would include an oversized culvert, road approaches that slope upward in both directions, a critical dip that drains back into the stream, energy dissipaters, brush rack, and a headwall.

fall line - an imaginary line on a sloped surface that follows the steepest angle. You can think of the fall-line as the line that would be made by a ball rolling down the slope.

fill - material used to construct roads and related structures. Fill can include soil, rock, and large organic debris.

full recontouring - the treatment of a road that completely eliminates (obliterates) the road from the landscape. Full recontouring is accomplished by recovering all available fill and burying the cutbank until the surrounding terrain is fully matched. This type of treatment is also referred to as road removal or road obliteration. See obliteration.

geomorphology - the study of the earth's surface and the processes that shape it. Geomorphology is closely related to geology.

geomorphologist - a person who studies geomorphology.

grade - the natural, proposed, or planned ground surface. Usually grade is set to match the surrounding topography.

graded stream - a stream that, over a long period of time can move as much sediment as is supplied to it. Compare to "aggrade" and "degrade."

gradient - the measurement of the angle along the length of a road or a stream. This term is often confused with grade (see grade).

gully - a steeply sided channel caused by concentrated surface runoff erosion. Gullies can usually be identified by their location away from natural stream valleys.

Humboldt crossing - a stream crossing constructed with logs set parallel to the stream channel and covered with fill.

hydrology - the science dealing with the properties, distribution, and circulation of water on the surface of the land, in the soil and underlying rock, and in the atmosphere. This term is often confused with hydrogeology, which is the science of groundwater.

inboard - refers to the upslope side of a road, trail or other feature.

inboard ditch - a drainage ditch cut along the inboard side of the roadbed to intercept drainage from the slope above or small streams. Inboard ditches usually direct their water through a culvert that crosses under the road.

Glossary for Best Management Practices

(continued)

large woody debris (LWD) - also known as large organic debris (LOD), refers to logs and stumps found in stream channels, road fills, etc., having a diameter greater than 12 inches and a length greater than 6 feet.

legacy road - a road originally constructed for another purpose that remains in use. Many of today's park roads were originally constructed as logging roads but now serve as backcountry access roads.

mass wasting - a general term that includes many types of massive earth movements. These include rock slides, debris slides, debris flows, and earthflows, etc.

meander - a series of gentle curves in a stream, road, or trail.

memory - a subsurface zone where water will preferentially flow due the presence of a gully or inboard ditch buried in recontoured fill. Also see ditch memory.

obliteration - to completely remove the road feature from the landscape. This is accomplished by full recontouring. See full recontouring.

outboard - refers to the downslope side of a road, trail or other feature.

operator - the person operating heavy equipment or other machines.

outsloping - the treatment of a road to eliminate diversion potential along the roadbed during road reengineering. Outsloping includes excavation of some of the road fill along the outboard edge of the road and placing it against the cutbank to eliminate the inboard ditch and provide drainage toward the outside of the road. Outsloped roads are commonly graded and covered with compacted road base to harden the surface.

partial recontouring - similar to outsloping, this term is reserved for roads that are to be removed or decommissioned. The partial recontour often has a steeper cross slope on the former roadbed to ensure proper drainage. Partially recontoured roads are not matched at the top of the cutbank like fully recontoured roads.

permeability - a measure of the rate at which water can pass through soil.

ripping - decompaction of the soil by means of rippers mounted on the rear of a dozer.

roadbed - the surface of the road where driving takes place. The roadbed extends from the inboard ditch or cutbank to the outboard slope break or berm.

road cross drain - a drainage structure which utilizes a culvert to direct water from an inside ditch to an area beyond the outer edge of the road fill.

roadway - the corridor including the cutbank, the inboard ditch, the roadbed, and the embankment.

rolling dip - a shallow dip designed to convey water off of the road surface while allowing vehicles to pass at reduced speed. Rolling dips should be located where stable landscape features exist that can carry runoff without causing erosion.

Glossary for Best Management Practices

(continued)

runoff - rainwater flowing on the surface of the ground. Runoff can be generated by rain falling on saturated ground or from heavy rain that cannot soak in fast enough.

sediment - Silt, sand, clay, and gravel that is moved by water and deposited at some location.

sediment control - activities that filter dirt out of water, including silt fence and sediment retention basins.

slope angle - the angle of the hill slope measured in percent along the fall line.

soil - clay, silt, sand, compost, air, water, and weathered rock mixed in various proportions. Soil consists of horizons or layers that display different amounts of weathering and fertility.

spoils – soil and organic material that is excavated from stream crossings or road embankments that is used for recontouring or can be end-hauled to a stable storage location.

stream crossing - a constructed road section across a natural stream. There are many types of crossings such as bridges, culverts, Humboldt (see definition), and fill crossings.

surfacing – rock aggregate or paving that is placed on the road surface to reduce erosion and weather-proof a road for winter use.

through-cut – a portion of a road that has cutbanks on both sides with drainage flowing down the road or inside ditch.

topography - the natural shape of the land's surface.

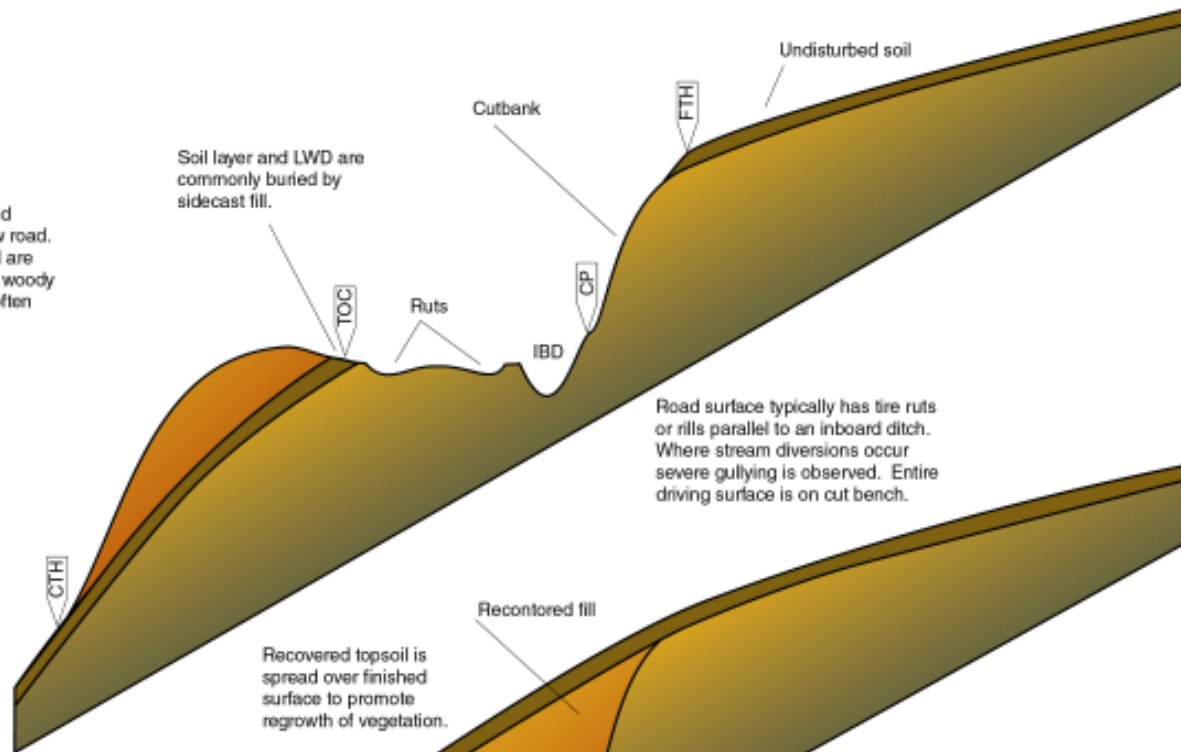
topsoil - the uppermost layer of decayed organic matter, seeds, soil, and microorganisms.

trash rack – a structure located upstream of a culvert inlet designed to trap floating debris to prevent the culvert from becoming plugged.

Full-Cut Bench Road Recontour - Convex Slope Cross Section Cutaway

Before treatment

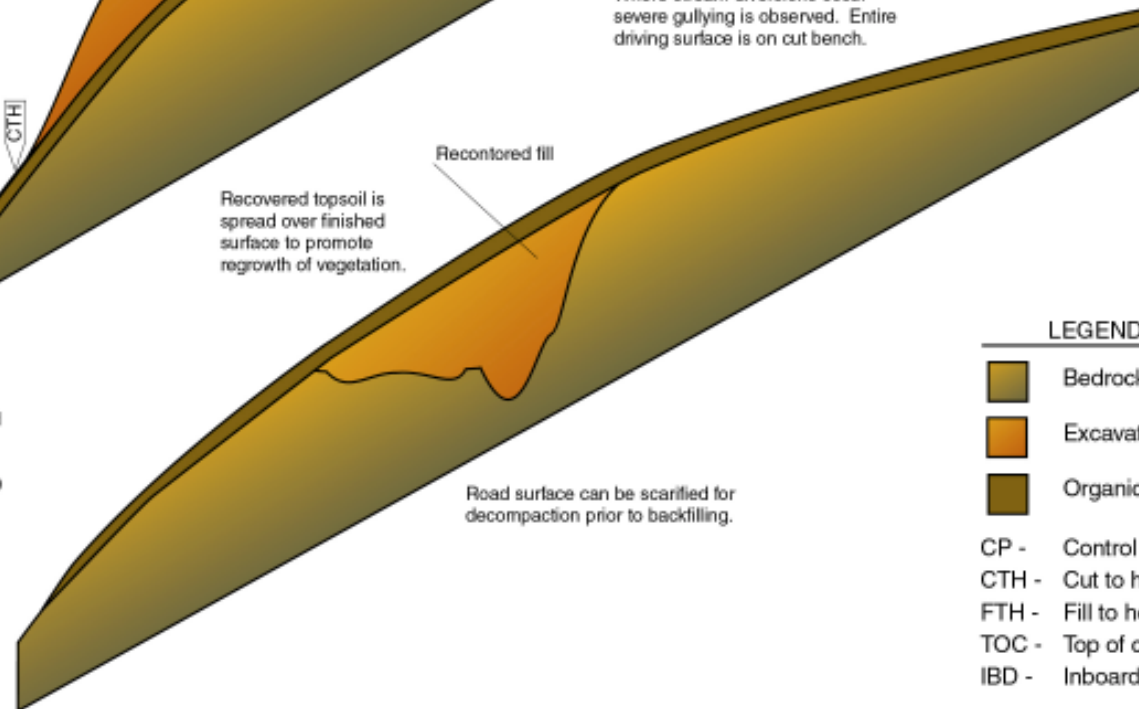
Road fill is sidecast downslope and steepens slope immediately below road. Outboard berms are common and are usually composed of fill and large woody debris (LWD). A layer of LWD is often present along the base of the fill.



Road surface typically has tire ruts or rills parallel to an inboard ditch. Where stream diversions occur severe gulying is observed. Entire driving surface is on cut bench.

After treatment

Road fill is recovered from the outboard fill and replaced into the cut bench. Topsoil is preserved and should be redistributed on finished surfaces. LWD (not shown) should be evenly scattered over the finished work area.



LEGEND

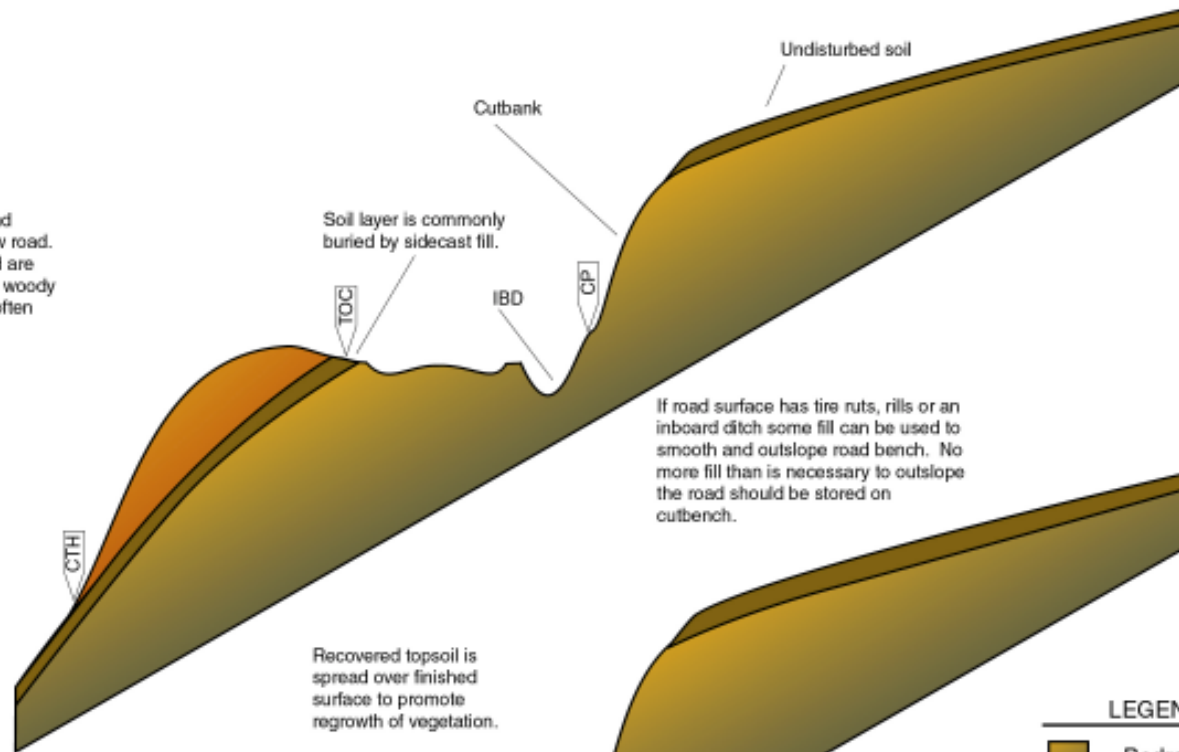
- Bedrock
- Excavated Fill
- Organic soil

- CP - Control point
- CTH - Cut to here
- FTH - Fill to here
- TOC - Top of cut
- IBD - Inboard ditch

Export-Outslope Road Treatment - Convex Slope Cross Section Cutaway

Before treatment

Road fill is sidecast downslope and steepens slope immediately below road. Outboard berms are common and are usually composed of fill and large woody debris (LWD). A layer of LWD is often present along the base of the fill.

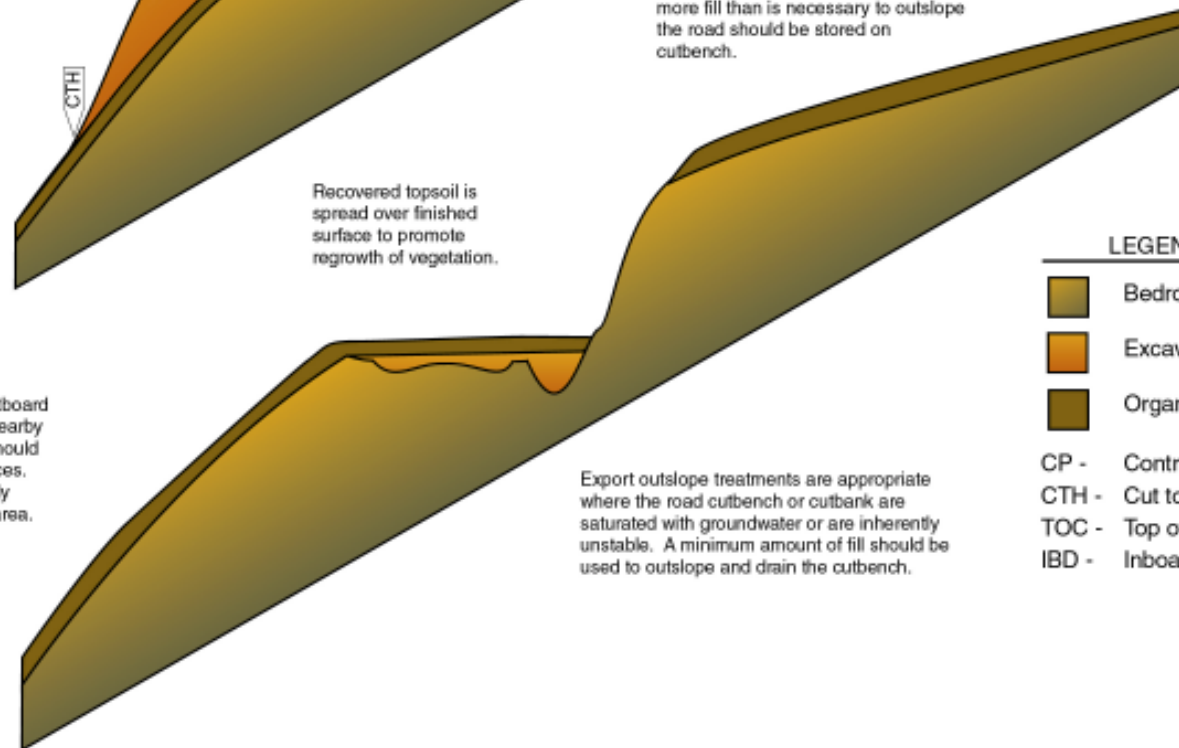


If road surface has tire ruts, rills or an inboard ditch some fill can be used to smooth and outslope road bench. No more fill than is necessary to outslope the road should be stored on cutbench.

Recovered topsoil is spread over finished surface to promote regrowth of vegetation.




After treatment

Road fill is recovered from the outboard fill and moved offsite to another nearby fillsite. Topsoil is preserved and should be redistributed on finished surfaces. LWD (not shown) should be evenly scattered over the finished work area.



Export outslope treatments are appropriate where the road cutbench or cutbank are saturated with groundwater or are inherently unstable. A minimum amount of fill should be used to outslope and drain the cutbench.

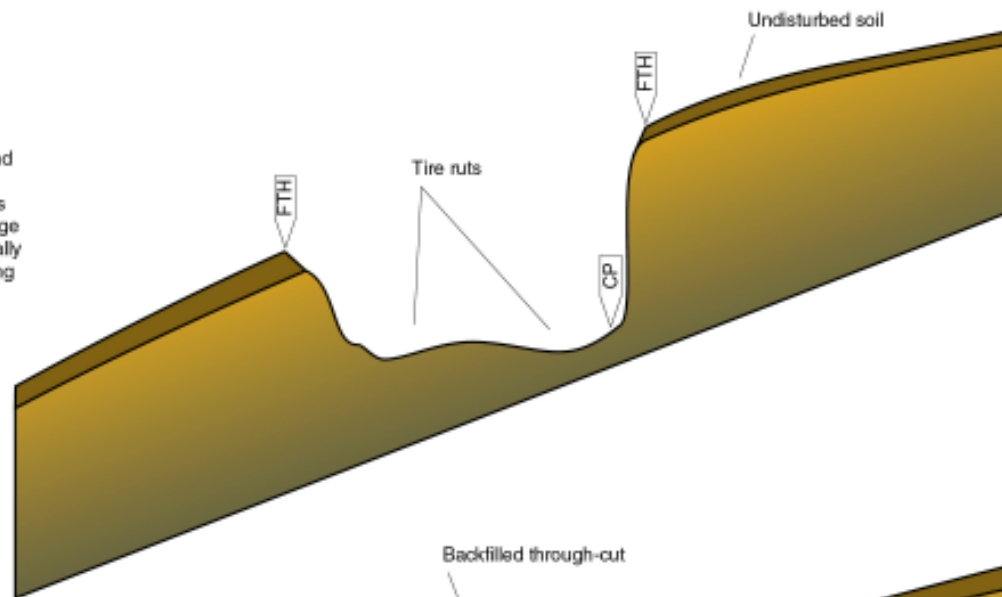
LEGEND

-  Bedrock
-  Excavated Fill
-  Organic soil
- CP - Control point
- CTH - Cut to here
- TOC - Top of cut
- IBD - Inboard ditch

Through-Cut Road Recontour - Convex Slope Cross Section Cutaway

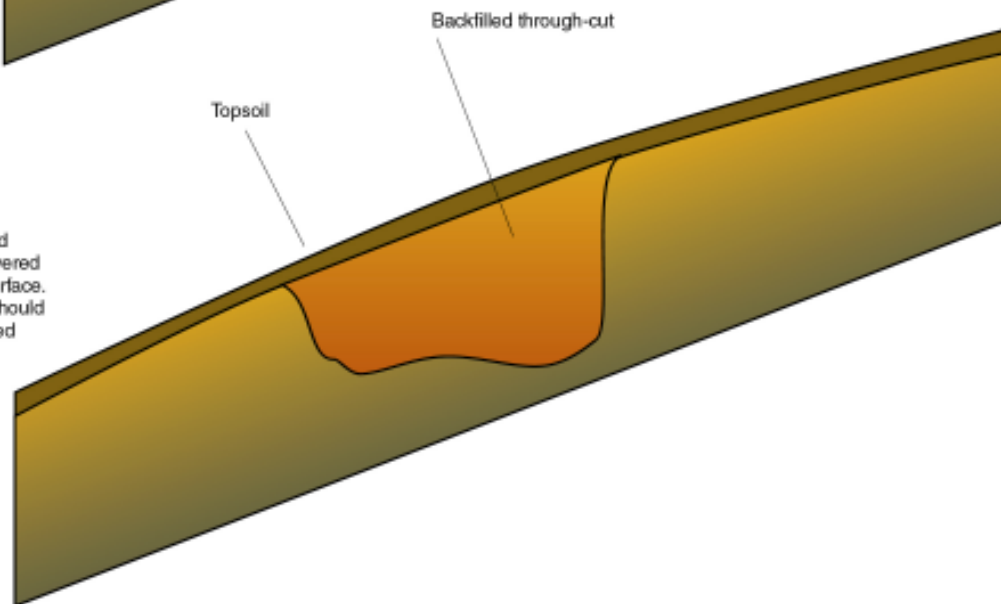
Before treatment

When roads continuously erode and are regraded sideslope through-cuts form. Sideslope through-cuts are also constructed to supply large quantities of fill when needed locally for road repairs or stream crossing fill.



After treatment

Fill is recovered from local area and used to backfill through-cut. Recovered soil is spread evenly on finished surface. Large woody debris (not shown) should be evenly scattered over the finished work area.



LEGEND

- Bedrock
- Excavated Fill
- Organic soil
- CP - Control point
- FTH - Fill to here