

## Conservation Practice Standard Overview

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### Hillside Ditch (423)

A hillside ditch is a channel that has a supporting ridge on the lower side, constructed across the slope at defined gradient and horizontal or vertical interval, with or without a vegetative barrier.

#### Practice Information

A hillside ditch will safely control the flow of water by diverting runoff from upland sloping areas to a stable outlet.

This practice applies to steeply sloping sites where surface flow is damaging sloping upland, and there is sufficient soil depth for constructing a hillside ditch system. Hillside ditches shall not be used to provide protection to buildings, roads, or other improvements.

A hillside ditch is used to help control erosion on steep cropland by diverting runoff to a protected outlet. The hillside ditches are installed at designed vertical intervals down the slope and at nonerosive grades within the channels. Adequate outlets for runoff water are required before installing the hillside ditches. The outlets may be constructed waterways or natural waterways that have a protective cover of grass. Other disposal areas such as well-established pasture would be acceptable.



A hillside ditch will require maintenance over the expected life of the practice.

#### Common Associated Practices

A Hillside Ditch (423) is commonly applied with conservation practices such as Grassed Waterway (412), Lined Waterway or Outlet (468), Underground Outlet (620), Grade Stabilization Structure (410), and Critical Area Planting (342).

For further information, contact your local NRCS field office.