POLICY

Department	Policy No.	Page
Agriculture Services	**63-02-23**	**1 of 3**
Policy Title	**Date:**	**Resolution No.**
Soil Conservation	**May 8, 2023**	**RC23-171**

Introduction

The *Soil Conservation Act* States:

Duty of landholder

3 Every landholder shall, in respect of the landholder's land, take appropriate measures
(a) to prevent soil loss or deterioration from taking place, or
(b) if soil loss or deterioration is taking place, to stop the loss or deterioration from continuing.

Municipal officers
15(1) The local authority of a rural municipality
(a) shall appoint at least one soil conservation officer for that municipality

Policy

Birch Hills County recognizes that soil loss and degradation is an agricultural concern under the *Soil Conservation Act* of Alberta. Birch Hills County further recognizes that it is beneficial to the County to promote measures of control and proper management of soil health within the boundaries of Birch Hills County, and protect agricultural productivity and sustainability.

Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy, the following definitions shall apply:

"Control" means to inhibit the loss of soil quality or quantity by erosion, salinization, or desertification.

"County" means Birch Hills County having jurisdiction under the Municipal Government Act and other applicable legislation.

"Degradation" loss of soil quality by salinization or desertification as well as an increase in susceptibility to wind and water erosion.

"Erosion" loss of soil quantity by wind or water

"Landowners" means, in respect to land, the occupant, or if there is no occupant, the owner of the land.

"Reported Field" any field for which a complaint is received as having or potentially having any symptoms or signs of soil loss or deterioration.

"Notice" a legally binding document referred to under the Soil Conservation Act, requiring remedial measures be undertaken by a specified deadline.

"Officer" means municipal staff appointed under Section 8 of the *Agriculture Service Board Act*, or a soil conservation officer appointed under the *Soil Conservation Act*.

"Soil Conservation Act" the *Soil Conservation Act* of Alberta (R.S.A 2000, Chapter S-15) and the *Soil Conservation Regulation* (272/1998) including any amendments or successor legislation thereto.

Guidelines

Responsibilities:

1. The Officer shall encourage voluntary compliance with the requirements of the Soil Conservation Act, through education and extension.

2. The Officer shall attempt to conduct an inspection of all reported fields within 2 business days of receipt of report/complaint.

3. All soil loss or deterioration observed during inspections of private or public lands shall be controlled by the Landowner

   3.1. Control will preferrable result through cooperation and,

   3.2. as a last resort, through enforcement by issuing a notice and/or penalties, as required by the Act, upon the landowner in the event that soil loss or deterioration of lands is unabated.

REEVE

C.A.O

POLICY

Department	Policy No.	Page
Agriculture Services	**63-02-23**	**3 of 3**
Policy Title	**Date:**	**Resolution No.**
Soil Conservation	**May 8, 2023**	**RC23-171**

	Date	Resolution Number
Adopted by Council	May 8, 2023	RC23-171
Updated		