

PROCEDURES TO INSURE RECLAMATION SUCCESS¹

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Abstract. Thirty years experience in establishing vegetation on mine sites, hazardous waste areas, development projects, and prairie restoration projects has reinforced the principle that the most important step leading to successful vegetation is seedbed preparation. The most useful implement to prepare a seedbed is the chisel plow or ripper. Wherever there has been heavy machinery grading or applying topsoil, compaction is an issue. Getting this soil loosened and roughened up will enhance moisture and root penetration, and the roughness will deter erosion.

The most important aspect of native seed application, whether drill or broadcast, is to make sure the seed is evenly distributed over the entire site and that the seed is covered, but not buried.

Mulches are important for short-term erosion control, and to help prevent soil crusting. Probably the most important aspect of selecting a mulch is not to introduce weedy or undesirable species. Using weed free certified hay or straw may not prevent the unintentional introduction of smooth brome, crested wheatgrass or possibly even cheatgrass.

The slide presentation will review the above procedures showing various tillage operations, seed drills and mulching operations.

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