

# DON'T USE THE SANTA CRUZ EROSION CONTROL MIX!

*Do you have an erosion problem on your property? Are you thinking of seeding to help stabilize the soil? Make sure not to plant the Santa Cruz Erosion Control Mix!*

## WHY IS THE EROSION CONTROL MIX SO HARMFUL?

Although this mix used to be widely recommended, it contains non-native plants with very weedy attributes including: Blando brome, Hykon Rose Clover and Zorro Fescue.

These weeds are rapidly spread by wind, water, animals, humans, and equipment. Once established, they are almost impossible to remove. They are known to crowd out native bunch grasses, degrade rangeland and diminish wildlife habitat in Santa Cruz County.

## WHAT SHOULD BE DONE INSTEAD?

First, it is important to ensure that whatever you do now will not cause more problems in the future. Be very judicious in choosing what erosion control method to use. Sometimes staying off the slope and doing nothing is the best thing to do, sometimes you might need an expert's opinion and other times doing your own seeding or planting will work great. If you are unsure of what you should do, consult an expert (see right-hand lower panel). If you do decide to plant, make sure you are planting native plants!

## SITE CONDITION CONSIDERATIONS

In order for a plant-based erosion control project to be effective, it is important to think critically about site characteristics. For instance, are there any native plants nearby that are doing well? Is the site in a cool, damp, shady area or in a hot, dry, exposed location? What types of soils are present? Choosing plants that will do well at your specific site will increase the chances that your planting will flourish.



*Erosion control can be both beautiful and effective. Pictured here is a wildflower mix that helps stabilize soil. Make sure the mix you use only consists of natives!*

## INVASIVE PLANTS THAT SHOULD NOT BE USED FOR EROSION CONTROL

- Any type of ivy
- Iceplant
- Periwinkle
- Jubata grass
- Broom (French, Scotch, Spanish, Portuguese)

## STERILE PLANTS GOOD FOR LATE-SEASON EROSION CONTROL

Although native plants are great for long-term erosion control, they can take a few seasons to get established. We recommend two **sterile** grasses that will germinate in winter, stabilize soil quickly and will not become invasive:

- Common barley (*Hordeum vulgare*)
- Sterile wheat

## NATIVES PLANTS GOOD FOR EROSION CONTROL

In general, native shrubs and grasses grow deep, complex root systems excellent for controlling erosion as long as they are suited to the site conditions.

### **Some Grasses to Consider:**

- Meadow barley (*Hordeum brachyantherum*)
- Blue wild rye (*Elymus glaucus*)
- Creeping wild rye (*Leymus triticoides*)
- Purple needle grass (*Stipa pulchra*)
- Nodding needle grass (*Stipa cernua*)
- California brome (*Bromus carinatus*)

## WHERE CAN I GET EROSION CONTROL ADVICE?

**National Resources**  
**Conservation Service/  
Resource Conservation**  
**District of Santa Cruz County**  
820 Bay Avenue, Suite 136  
Capitola, CA 95010  
Phone: (831) 464-2950

**County of Santa Cruz**  
701 Ocean Street  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor – Room 312  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
Phone: (831) 454-2022

For advice on what to plant and when, contact local nurseries specializing in growing native plants and reach out to the Santa Cruz or Monterey chapters of the California Native Plant Society.