



BMP Inspection Job Aid

Floating Turbidity Barrier (FTB)



DESCRIPTION

A Floating Turbidity Barrier (FTB) is a geotextile or PVC curtain that is designed to control sediment within a body of water. It is also known as a floating silt barrier or turbidity/silt curtain. The barrier typically consists of floats, curtain, ballast, and anchor lines. The barrier may be permeable or impermeable. The FTB supplied must be a standard manufactured product. FTBs of 100 feet or longer are constructed of a series of connected panels.

TYPES

Landowner Stock Pond Sediment Control	Silt Curtain
Floating Silt Barrier	

APPLICATION

FTBs are generally used for perimeter control and sediment barriers. FTBs are used when construction activities will disturb the bank of perennial streams, rivers, ponds, or lakes. They are also used when construction activities require a coffer dam, low water crossing, or other activities that will disturb soil within a water body.

Advantages

- Controls sediment from construction activities where other types of down slope barriers are infeasible
- Protects sensitive wetlands and water bodies
- Can be re-used

Disadvantages

- Limited usefulness in water bodies with high velocities
- May be damaged by large storm events
- After sediment accumulation, FTBs may be difficult to remove
- May inhibit movement of aquatic animals when spanning a waterbody

DESIGN CRITERIA

1. The barrier and installation must be sufficient for a flow condition where the velocity of flow may reach 5 feet per second (or a current of approximately 3 knots).
2. FTBs should be utilized when construction activities extend down a bank, temporary coffer dams are used, or when a linear project crosses a water body.
 - a. A barrier should be installed along the length of disturbed area to function as a downslope perimeter control; or
 - b. Should span the entirety of a perennial stream or river downstream of the disturbed area.
3. Install FTBs on sites where special aquatic or sensitive receiving waters are present. Turbidity FTBs should be utilized to minimize impact.
4. Install FTBs when privately-owned ponds have the potential to be impacted by sediment from the disturbed area of the construction site.
5. FTBs should be utilized when performing work within a stream or river.
6. FTBs should not be installed perpendicular to flow.
7. Ensure access to remove captured trash and sediment from behind the barrier before the barrier is removed.
8. Identify a location on site, if possible, for removed sediment to dry or provide watertight containers and dispose of water-logged sediment properly.
9. If stockpiled, implement the necessary BMPs around the sediment stockpile to prevent sediment deposition and/or runoff.
10. Add something about combining with other BMPs as appropriate
11. Add something about selecting correct height based on water depth.

REFERENCES

[TXDOT Special Specification 5048 Floating Turbidity Barrier](#)