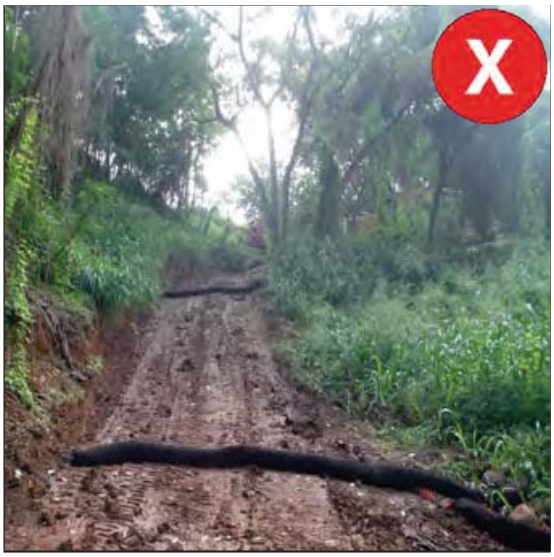
Check Dams

Temporary devices placed across channels, ditches or swales reduce scour and erosion by reducing flow velocity and promoting sedimentation.

What to Inspect

- ☐ Is height of check dam effective?
  - The center of the check dam must be lower than the ends to prevent water from running around the ends and causing additional erosion.
- ☐ Are check dams adequately spaced to slow the velocity of flow?
  - The bottom of the upstream check dam should be at the same elevation as the top of the downstream check dam.
- ☐ Is there evidence of sediment bypassing the check dam?
- ☐ Are there traces of undercutting?
- ☐ Does the rock check dam have dislodged stones?
  - Repair/replace check dams that get pushed out of position by a heavy flow.
- ☐ Is geotextile filter fabric installed under rock check dams?
- ☐ Has accumulated sediment reached one-half the height of the check dam?

Check Dams



If ends of the check dam are lower than the center, storm water can flow around the ends, causing additional erosion and limits the effectiveness of the BMP.



The center of check dams must be lower than the ends to prevent water from flowing around the ends.



Check dams must be repaired/ reanchored when they are damaged or undermined.



Frequent maintenance should be done to ensure check dams are functioning properly.