

CHAPTER 15

VEGETATION

15-1. Planting zones. The United States has been divided into planting zones, as shown in figure 15-1, to provide a convenient grouping of treatments countrywide. While the following suggestions offer guidelines for developing turf, the use of any given grass species or mixtures should be confirmed by local experience as compiled by state highway commissions, county agents, and local nurseries.

15-2. Turf development.

a. Planting zone 1. Use 40 percent Kentucky bluegrass, 40 percent perennial rye grass, and 20 percent fescue north of latitude 40 within the zone, and Blando brome grass or Harding grass south of latitude 40.

b. Planting zone 2. Use Kentucky bluegrass east of the 97th meridian within the zone and crested wheatgrass in the remainder of the zone. In low rainfall areas (approximately 10 inches and less) or other sites where grasses do not thrive, do not use turf; instead use a 1 to 2 inch blanket of crushed rock or gravel aggregate (riprap). If irrigation is practicable in these low rainfall areas, use Kentucky bluegrass or crested wheatgrass.

c. Planting zone 3. Use a 50-50 mixture of Kentucky bluegrass and Chewings fescue. On sandy or shallow soils, especially those which will not be maintained under high fertility conditions, use 30 percent Kentucky bluegrass and 70 percent Chewings fescue.

d. Planting zones 4 and 6.

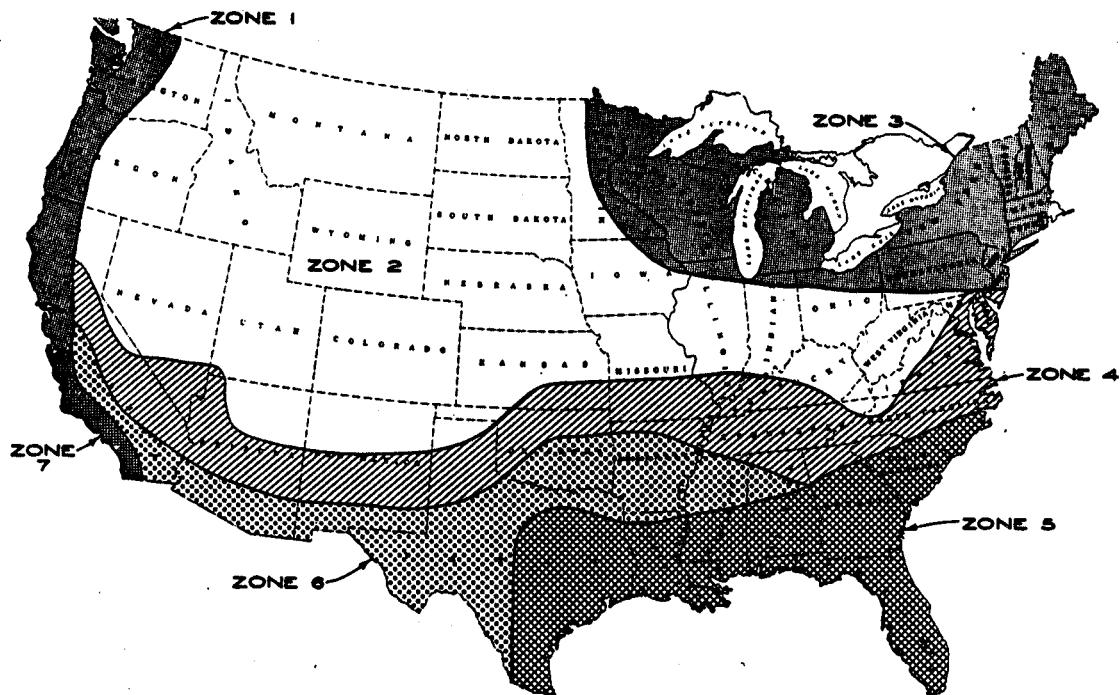
(1) East of the 98th meridian, use common Bermuda grass.

(2) West of the 98th meridian, use common Bermuda grass where irrigation is practicable; otherwise, use native species such as buffalo, blue grama, black grama, galleta, and sand dropseed within areas of recommended use. Use crested wheatgrass in elevations over 4,000 feet. Where average annual rainfall is less than 10 inches, and on other sites where grasses do not thrive, use crushed rock or gravel aggregate (riprap).

e. Planting zone 5. Use Bermuda grass. In eastern Texas and southern Oklahoma, Pensacola bahia may be substituted.

f. Planting zone 7. Use Harding grass or Blando brome grass.

g. Planting zone, Hawaii. Use locally adapted strains of Bermuda grass.



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FIGURE 15-1. PLANTING ZONES

9 Apr 84

h. Planting zone, Caribbean. Use Pensacola bahia grass.

i. Planting zone, Alaska. Use smooth brome grass from northern United States or Canada seed sources.

15-3. Terraces. Erosion control in nonuse areas can frequently be accomplished by terracing along with a well-developed turfing program. The terrace will consist of a low, broad-based earth levee constructed approximately parallel to the contours and designed to intercept overload flow before it achieves great erosive force and to conduct it to a suitable discharge point. A vigorous turf established on the terrace and channel will also aid in controlling erosion.