

SEDIMENTS

Newsletter of the North Carolina Sedimentation Control Commission

Erosion Control Products - Netting and Snakes

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In 2005, a report was published on snake entanglement in netting that was part of rolled erosion control blankets (RECPs) used in wetland restoration projects in South Carolina¹. The authors reported a total of 19 snakes were found, mostly dead, entangled at the 15 restoration sites, all of which had a single width (2.4 m, 8') of blanket installed. The plastic mesh openings were reported as 10 or 20 mm², with either coconut/straw or coconut filler. The most common snake found was a black racer, which tends to undulate rapidly when trapped, a behavior which only makes matters worse when caught in netting. One of

their recommendations was smaller (<5 mm²) openings, such as are typical of permanent RECPs.

Another report was published in 2011 based primarily on snake entanglements that were reported to state officials in Wisconsin.² The incidents, which occurred in various parts of the state over a period of 7 years, were photographically documented and included several cases of plastic netting used for animal exclusion in addition to RECPs. It appeared that the RECPs were all installed adjacent to streams or wetlands. Additional cases were

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Dead copperhead entangled in plastic netting of an erosion control blanket adjacent to a sediment basin. Photo courtesy Rich McLaughlin, North Carolina State University.

