EC63-141 What Causes Gullies?

Harold Gilman
Gully in cultivated land caused by water runoff from bromegrass pasture.

Conservation Education Publications

The following circulars form the conservation education series.

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What Causes Gullies?

By Harold H. Gilman

Gullies are caused by running water. The force of the water forms small ditches. If not stopped, these small ditches soon become LARGE GULLIES.
Gullies May Be Caused By:
1. Wagon tracks, tractor tracks or other implements running up and down the hill.
2. Trails made by cattle.
3. Improper drainage ditches made by man.
4. By poor farming methods.

Gullies May Be Found In:
1. Cultivated land.
2. Pasture or rangeland.

Gullies Are Not Good Because They:
1. Destroy fields and farms.
2. Destroy the value of a farm.
3. Serve no useful purpose.
4. Are dangerous for livestock.

How Fast Do Gullies Grow?

It depends on:
1. How much rain and how fast it falls.
2. The steepness of the land.
3. The kind of soil.
4. How man manages the land above and around the gully.