

Land Smoothing

Definition/Purpose

Reshaping the surface of agricultural land to planned grades for the purpose of improving water quality.

Improve Water Quality by:

1. Reducing nutrient loss
2. Reducing concentrated flow of water from an agriculture field
3. Improving infiltration

Policies

1. Land must be agricultural land that is being used for crop production. Land must be suitable for practice intentions.
2. Land must be graded to the extent needed to eliminate concentrated flow and achieve sheet flow for non-bedded crops.
3. Land Smoothing must be accompanied by one or more of the following best management practices (contract must specify which accompanying practices apply):
 - a. Conservation Tillage or Long-Term No-till on all fields where Land Smoothing is applied. Burning of crop residue is not permitted, unless NC Cooperative Extension or NCDA&CS Regional Agronomist certifies that burning is recommended to control a pest infestation.
 - b. Water Control Structures that intercept all drainage acres from fields where Land Smoothing is applied.
 - c. Riparian Forest Buffer or Filter Strip that intercepts all drainage acres from fields where Land Smoothing is applied.
4. Refer to the average cost list for per acre cost for light and heavy smoothing. Accompanying BMP at established rate or average cost. NOTE-3 year maximum annual payment for Conservation Tillage for Small Grain.
5. A five year maintenance period with accompanying BMP at established maintenance period. NOTE – If accompanying BMP is Conservation Tillage the practice must be maintained for five years.
6. If the practice is completed outside the recommended planting season of a field crop, or if a field crop is not to be planted, a seasonal cover crop is to be planted to prevent erosion.
7. BMP report the number of planted acreage and drainage area that is affected by this BMP.

Agriculture Cost Share Program

8. A stable outlet is required for all hoe-drains for the life of the practice.

Standards

NRCS Technical Guide Standard #466 (Land Smoothing)

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