

Grassed Waterways

Definition/Purpose

A Grassed Waterway means a natural or constructed channel that is shaped or graded to required dimensions and established in suitable vegetation for the stable conveyance of runoff to improve water quality. Benefits may include reduced soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution from dissolved and sediment-attached substances. (DIP)

Policies

1. This is a sediment control practice and must not be used if the primary purpose is to drain wet areas in a field.
2. As a condition for cost sharing, the field or treatment unit draining into the waterway must have installed, or the farmer must agree to install as part of the agreement, erosion control measures necessary to prevent damage from washout or excessive sedimentation in the waterway.
3. Precision land forming and smoothing for grassed waterways is intended to be used only where existing terraces, diversions or other minor landscape features must be removed prior to initiating a grassed waterway system.
4. All NRCS standards and NC Agriculture Cost Share Program policies relative to vegetation must be followed.
5. Subsurface drains (NRCS Practice Code 606) may be incorporated into Grassed Waterway designs when necessary to address prolonged low flows, high water tables, or seepage conditions that hinder vegetation establishment or maintenance. The following conditions apply:
 - a. Subsurface drains must be designed and installed with applicable job approval authority and in accordance with NRCS standards outlined in the National Engineering Handbook (210-650-H).
 - b. Location of existing drain tile should be identified and assessed to determine the impact on field and ditch drainage.
 - c. Subsurface drainage systems may not be used to drain or convert wetlands. USDA program participants must comply with all applicable provisions of the Food Security Act (FSA) and non-USDA participants must comply with all other applicable wetland regulations, such as the Clean Water Act. It is the responsibility of the participant to ensure compliance with applicable regulations prior to beginning any subsurface drainage work.
 - d. Animal guards are required for all subsurface drain outlets.

Agriculture Cost Share Program

GRASSED WATERWAYS	
Maintenance Period	10 YEARS
BMP Units	ACRES
Required Effects	ACRES_AFFECTED – (planted acreage and drainage area) SOIL_SAVED NITROGEN_SAVED PHOSPHORUS_SAVED
JAA	SWCC – Grassed Waterway OR NRCS – ENG – 412 – Grassed Waterway NRCS – ENG – 606 – Subsurface Drains
NRCS Standard	NRCS – ENG – 412 – Grassed Waterway NRCS – ENG – 606 – Subsurface Drains National Engineering Handbook (210-650-H)
CS2 Reference Materials	NC-ACSP-11 Signature Page Map with BMP location, fields, and roads