

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

**LAND SMOOTHING**

(Acre)  
Code 466



**DEFINITION**

Removing irregularities on the land surface.

**PURPOSE**

To improve surface drainage, provide for more uniform cultivation, and improve equipment operation and efficiency.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

This practice applies on areas where depressions, mounds, old terraces, turn rows, and other surface irregularities interfere with the application of needed soil and water conservation and management practices.

This practice is limited to areas having adequate soil depth or where topsoil can be salvaged and replaced.

This practice applies to operations classed as rough grading. Ordinarily, this does not require a complete grid survey. It does not apply to the "floating" performed as a regular maintenance practice on irrigated land or the "planning" performed described in NRCS conservation practice standard Precision Land Forming, Code 462 or in Irrigation Land Leveling, Code 464.

**CRITERIA**

The extent of rough grading required and tolerances of the finished smoothing job shall be in keeping with the requirements of the planned cropping system.

Impact to cultural resources, wetlands and Federal and state protected species shall be evaluated and avoided or minimized to the extent practicable during planning, design and implementation of this conservation practice in accordance with established National and Florida policy, General Manual (GM) Title 420-Part 401; Title 450-Part 401, Title 190-Parts 410.22 and 410.26, National Planning Procedures Handbook (NPPH) Florida Supplements to Parts 600.1 and 600.6, National Cultural Resources Procedures Handbook (NCRPH), National Food Security Act Manual (NFSAM), and the National Environmental Compliance Handbook (NECH).

**CONSIDERATIONS**

In planning this practice, consider the effects on the water budget, especially on volumes and rates of runoff, infiltration, and evaporation.

Consider the potential for changes in plant growth and transpiration because of changes in the volume of soil water.

Consider effects on erosion and the movement of sediment and soluble and sediment-attached substances carried by runoff.

Consider potential for earth moving to uncover or redistribute toxic materials, such as saline soils.

Consider plowing or disking the ground surface prior to smoothing.

Consider the effects on wetland hydrology and/or wetland wildlife habitat.

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically and updated if needed. To obtain the current version of this standard, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Consider the potential impacts to existing utilities.

Consider the effects on soil loss due to increased wind erosion potential and subsequent deposition.

### **PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

As a minimum, plans and specifications shall include:

- area where practice will be applied,
- extent of smoothing required for the planned use and tolerances,
- site preparation prior to land smoothing,
- disposal methods and location of obstructions, vegetative matter, etc.

### **OPERATION AND MAINTAINENCE**

Actions shall be carried out to ensure that this practice functions as intended. Such actions shall include performing maintenance when needed to insure that surface irregularities are maintained at the degree of smoothness required.

### **REFERENCES**

Florida NRCS Conservation Practice Standards:  
Irrigation Land Leveling, Code 464  
Precision Land Forming, Code 462  
General Manual  
Title 420-Part 401  
Title 450-Part 401  
Title 190-Parts 410.22 and 410.26  
National Cultural Resources Handbook  
National Environmental Compliance Handbook  
National Food Security Act Manual  
National Planning Procedures Handbook  
Florida Supplements to Parts 600.1 and 600.6