

**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.

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

This practice does not apply to the regular maintenance on irrigated land or on land that has been modified using Conservation Practice Standards 462, Precision Land Forming, or 464, Irrigation Land Leveling.

**CRITERIA**

**General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes**

This practice shall conform to all federal, state, and local laws, rules, and regulations. Laws, rules, and regulations of particular concern include those involving water rights, land use, pollution control, property easements, wetlands, preservation of cultural resources, and endangered species.

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.

Construction operations shall be carried out in such a manner that erosion and air and water pollution are minimized.

Irregularities shall be smoothed to the degree required for the planned use.

The land to be smoothed shall be cleared of vegetative matter and trash.

Where possible, the ground surface should be plowed or disked prior to smoothing.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

The following should be considered:

Effects on the water budget--especially on volumes and rates of runoff, infiltration, and evaporation

Effect on erosion and the movement of sediment and soluble substances attached to sediment carried by runoff

Effects on downstream water quality

Potential for earth moving to uncover or redistribute toxic materials such as saline soils

Effects on wetland hydrology and/or wetland wildlife habitat

Potential impacts to existing utilities

Effects on soil loss due to increased wind erosion potential and subsequent deposition

**PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Plans and specifications for land smoothing shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirement for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose.

**OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

An operation and maintenance plan shall be developed and reviewed with the landowner or individual responsible for operation and

maintenance. The plan shall include performing maintenance when needed to ensure that the surfaces are maintained at the degree of smoothness required to function as intended.