NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

WILDLIFE WATERING FACILITY

(no.)

CODE 648

DEFINITION

Develop, improve, or modify watering places and systems for wildlife.

PURPOSE

- To provide adequate drinking water, during critical periods, for wildlife.
- To create or expand suitable habitat for wildlife.
- To improve water quality and accessibility for wildlife.

CONDITIONS WHERE THIS PRACTICE APPLIES

In areas where new, additional, or improved watering places are needed to increase the range, distribution, improve the habitat of, or attract wildlife by meeting their water requirements.

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable to All Purposes

- Because each facility is unique to species, habitat, topography, and climate, watering facilities must be planned and installed according to a plan and adapted to the specific site.
- Methods used will be designed to protect the soil resource from erosion and promote protection of surface and ground water quality.
- Design shall be sized to accommodate the expected and/or anticipated consumptive rates of target and non-target species.
- Facilities shall be protected from livestock damage. Fencing enclosures can be built large enough to include space for feeders. If feral hogs are a problem, fencing with hog panels can be used to exclude them.
- The facility should provide permanent, accessible, dependable, and suitable quality water for the critical period.
- The distribution and spacing of facilities shall be based on topography, required travel distance to water and the home range, territory size, and distribution of the target species.
- Ramps shall be installed in open water troughs and tanks when necessary for access and escape.
- Facilities along pipelines can be allowed to overflow to create damp areas that will grow succulent vegetation even during droughts. These wet areas will attract insects for young birds and provide some green forage for other wildlife.
- Cost-sharing will not be applicable for facilities which require the hauling of water to maintain a water supply.
- Facilities shall be designed and installed in compliance with all state and federal laws including water rights and permits if needed.
- Disturbed areas shall be vegetated according to a revegetation plan using native plant materials.

NRCS,TEXAS
August, 1999

CONSIDERATIONS

General Considerations

- Consider the effects on the target species and the ecosystem by concentrated grazing, predation, hunting etc.
- Consider the accessibility of the site for installation and maintenance.
- Consider any effects upon natural springs and associated unique flora and fauna.
- Consider the aesthetics of the installation.

Water Quantity Considerations

- Consider the effects on downstream flows or groundwater that could affect other water users or associated aquatic sites.

Water Quality Considerations

- Consider the effects on wetlands or other aquatic sites.
- Consider the existence and maintenance of suitable water quality for the target species.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Plans and specifications shall be prepared in accordance with the criteria of this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended use.

Facilities should be designed and installed according to appropriate standards and specifications.

Facilities should be installed according to an approved plan. Plans should have all needed forms, data sheets and construction drawings for proper installation of facilities.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Facilities shall be checked periodically to insure proper function. Repair and maintain as needed.

Inspect the area adjacent to the facility to make sure the area is well protected with desirable vegetation and not subject to erosion or deposition. Correct as needed.

Facilities not designed to withstand or operate during freezing weather shall be winterized prior to winter conditions.

Periodically monitor water quality to insure acceptable water quality. Maintain as needed.

REFERENCES

Ponds and Reservoirs, Chapter 11; Springs and Wells, Chapter 12; and Wetland Restoration, Chapter 13. National Engineering Field Handbook for Conservation Practices. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Ponds - Planning, Design, Construction. Agricultural Handbook Number 590. USDA Soil Conservation Service. 1988**.**

Water Development for Desert Mule Deer. Booklet 7000-32. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Austin.

Wildlife Watering Facilities, Designs and Drawings. Texas Biology Technical Note No. TX-19. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Temple. 1992.

APPROVAL:

/s Gary Valentine

State Wildlife Biologist

August 1, 1999

Date

STATEMENT OF NEED:

This practice is needed in the

_____ FOTG.

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Resource Team Leader/District Conservationist

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Date

CERTIFICATION:

Reviewed and determined adequate without need of revision:

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Zone Biologist

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Date

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Zone Biologist

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Date

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Zone Biologist

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Date

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Zone Biologist

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Date