

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD

**WILDLIFE WATERING FACILITY**

(No.)

**CODE 648**

**DEFINITION**

Constructing, improving or modifying watering places for wildlife.

**PURPOSE**

To provide drinking water for wildlife.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

In areas where new, additional or improved watering places are needed to increase the range or improve the habitat of wildlife.

**CRITERIA**

**A. Pond-type Structure**

The structure must be designed and constructed in accordance with the Pond (378) conservation practice standard except as follows:

1. The minimum water surface area shall be 750 ft<sup>2</sup> and the maximum surface area shall be 0.25 acre.
2. The pond should maintain a depth of at least 2 feet during the driest part of the year; the maximum depth shall be 5 feet.
3. Side slopes shall be approximately 3:1 on at least 2/3 of the pond edge, to allow easy access to the water for wildlife.

**B. Spring-fed Structure**

1. The structure must be designed and constructed in accordance with the Spring Development (574) conservation practice standard.
2. A small collector basin shall be constructed with its top at ground level. As a minimum, it shall be at least 8 ft<sup>2</sup> and 1 foot deep; as a maximum, it should be no larger than 0.25 acre or deeper than 5 feet. Side slopes shall be approximately 3:1 on at least 2/3 of the pond edge.

**C. Protection**

The absence of drinking water is rarely a limiting factor for wildlife in Ohio and spacing greater than 1 per 40 acres generally does not increase habitat value. Therefore, the site proposed for the watering facility should be carefully evaluated so that a more valuable habitat component is not destroyed in order to develop a marginally beneficial watering facility.

Vegetation that provides shade and protective cover over or near the watering facility should be maintained or planted. Other cover (e.g. brushpiles, logs) may be placed near the watering facility to increase its habitat value.

### **PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Plans and specifications are to be prepared for the specific site and wildlife habitat needs in mind. Plans and specifications may include job sheets, standard drawings, the kind, amount or quality of materials to be used or the timing or sequence of management activities.

### **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

The operation and maintenance of the watering facility are the responsibility of the land owner or manager. An O&M plan shall be prepared for each site and furnished to the landowner or manager. The O&M plan, as a minimum shall contain the following items:

1. Check for and repair damage.
2. Check for water storage integrity.
3. Check for pollutants or contaminants.