

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE  
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD**

**FISHPOND MANAGEMENT**

(Acre)

**CODE 399**

**DEFINITION**

Managing impounded water for the production of fish or other aquatic organisms (non-commercial use).

**PURPOSE**

- To provide favorable habitat for fish and other aquatic organisms.
- To develop and maintain a desired species composition and ratio.
- To develop and maintain a desired level of production.

**CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES**

In warm and cold water ponds, lakes, and reservoirs.

**CRITERIA**

**General Criteria Applicable To All Purposes**

Structures will meet or exceed the requirements of the appropriate National Standard; i.e. a constructed pond will meet or exceed the requirement in Pond (378).

All Federal, State and local regulations will be followed and necessary permits obtained prior to stocking, etc.

Do not recommend species that are considered invasive or may become invasive in surrounding waters.

**Additional Criteria To Provide Favorable Habitat For Fish And Other Aquatic Organisms**

The site will be protected from flooding, sedimentation, and contamination.

Aquatic vegetation shall be controlled.

**Additional Criteria To Develop And Maintain A Desired Species Composition And Ratio**

Species for stocking will be limited to those that are adapted for use in ponds, lakes or reservoirs in your state or area.

Species selection(s) and stocking rates shall follow the appropriate State agency policy and guidelines.

Stocking rates and species selection and combinations shall depend upon the size, depth, water temperature, and water quality of the area to be stocked.

To maintain the desired species composition and species ratios a plan will be developed with the client to evaluate future species composition and species ratios through observations, seining and catch records.

**Additional Criteria To Develop And Maintain A Desired Level Of Production**

The desired level of production shall be maintained through liming, fertilization or supplemental feeding.

**CONSIDERATIONS**

Consider the use of native species.

Consider liming acidic soils in the watershed to achieve a neutral pH for best production.

Consider alternatives to the use of pesticides in the drainage area above the site, which may have negative impacts to water quality.

Consider the use of filter strips or other practices to ensure that discharges from ponds, lakes, and reservoirs will meet state water quality standards.

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 methods to prevent the fish in the pond, lake, and reservoir from escaping into adjoining waters.

Consider methods to prevent introduction of non-native species into adjoining waters where native species might be adversely affected or non-compatible species from entering the pond, lake or reservoir.

Consider using only species of fish or aquatic organisms that are specifically adapted to impounded waters.

Consider providing additional fish and wildlife habitat within or around the impoundment for cover and breeding purposes that will not compromise the integrity of the structure or the purpose of this practice.

### **PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

Plans and specifications for fish and other aquatic organism management will be in keeping with this standard and will describe the requirements for applying this practice to achieve its intended purpose. Specifications for this practice will be prepared for each site. Specifications will be recorded using approved specifications sheets, job sheets, narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other documentation.

Requirements for the operation and maintenance of this practice shall be incorporated into site specifications.

### **OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

The client will receive a plan or specifications describing the following management and corrective actions that are required for the successful management of the pond, lake or reservoir.

1. Managing fish or other aquatic organism populations.
2. Supplemental feeding.
3. Removing undesirable and overpopulated organisms.
4. Aquatic plant control.
5. Fertilizing.

### **REFERENCES**

State fish and wildlife agencies and land grant universities may provide publications on fishpond management. Also, consider the state laws and regulations that govern this practice in your state.