

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
CONSERVATION PRACTICE STANDARD
SOUTH DAKOTA SUPPLEMENTS ITALICIZED**

ANIMAL TRAILS AND WALKWAYS

(ft.)

CODE 575

DEFINITION

A travel facility for livestock and/or wildlife to provide movement through difficult or ecologically sensitive terrain.

PURPOSES

This practice may be applied as part of a conservation management system to accomplish one or more of the following purposes:

Provide or improve access to forage, water, and/or shelter.

Improve grazing efficiency and distribution.

Divert travel away from ecologically sensitive and/or erosive sites.

CONDITIONS WHERE THIS PRACTICE APPLIES

On grazing lands where animal movement is impeded or restricted such as, steep rough terrain, across rock outcrops, across streams, through dense timber or brush, over lava beds, on marsh rangelands, and grazing lands susceptible to overflow by water.

This standard does not apply where full size vehicles will travel (use standard 560 Access Road instead).

CRITERIA

General Criteria Applicable For All The Purposes Stated Above.

Trails or walkways shall be constructed wide enough to accommodate movement of livestock and access by operator (*dirt bike, ATV, saddle horse, foot traffic, etc.*).

Trails or walkways shall be constructed in such a manner that accelerated erosion will not occur. Where necessary, diversions with a safe outlet will be provided.

Trails or walkways seeded or planted to vegetative cover will be protected from grazing until planting material is fully established and capable of withstanding grazing and/or trampling.

Criteria Applicable For Walkways

Walkways will be constructed to meet minimum height requirements above normal high water *except low water crossings may be used on gullies and intermittent streams.*

During the construction process of walkways, borrow pits will be staggered so that access to grazing areas and back to walkway will be available from either side.

When necessary structures will be installed to prevent interference with natural water movement.

Criteria Applicable to Gully or Intermittent Stream Crossings

Location. *Stream crossings shall be located in areas where the streambed is stable. It should not be located where stream grade or alignment changes abruptly, downstream overfalls exist, or large tributaries enter the stream. Crossings must not impact wetland areas unless applicable permits have been obtained.*

Grade. *The surface of the crossing in the stream shall be the same (or slightly lower) elevation as the stream grade, except where site specific designs are prepared by an engineer.*

Stability. *Design the crossing to be stable (prevent erosion, sliding, floating, undermining, etc.,) during passing of the 10-year (or higher) frequency, 24-hour duration flood.*

Conservation practice standards are reviewed periodically and updated if needed. The current version of this standard is posted on our website at www.sd.nrcs.usda.gov or may be obtained at your local Natural Resources Conservation Service.

To resist floating, concrete or grouted rock structures must have a minimum thickness of:

$$T = 0.2 V^2$$

Where:

T = Thickness in inches

V = Water flow velocity in feet/second for design flow

Structural Design. Design the structure to support the expected loadings and to transfer the load to the foundation soils without sinking, breaking, deforming, or pumping.

Slopes and Barriers. Entrance and exit slopes must be 5:1 or flatter.

Where needed, livestock barriers must be included to direct traffic to and through the crossing.

CONSIDERATIONS

Other practices that facilitate grazing distribution and proper intensity such as prescribed grazing should be implemented along with this practice.

PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

Each trail or walkway shall have a site-specific design, based on the criteria in this standard and as supplemented by additional criteria developed by each individual state using this practice.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Operation will consist of periodic *repairs* to maintain designed dimensions. Maintenance will consist of repair that may be needed following major storm events such as high runoff events, high tides, or other occurrences that cause damage and interfere in the normal operation of this practice.