

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE PLAN**

IA-412 GRASSED WATERWAY

Landowner/Operator: _____ Cost Share Program: _____

Location: Section ____ T ____ N R _____ Prepared By: _____ Date: _____

County: _____ Reviewed with Landowner/Operator: _____ Date: _____

A properly operated and maintained grassed waterway is an asset to your farm. The estimated life span of this installation is at least 10 years. The life of this waterway can be assured and usually increased by developing and carrying out a good operation and maintenance program. For grassed waterways it is important to maintain the capacity and vegetative cover and ensure that runoff reaches the waterway.

The following tasks are required to properly operate and maintain this practice to obtain good performance:

1. Inspect the waterway after heavy rains for damage. Inspect annually for damage due to normal use.
2. Protect waterway from damage by farm equipment and vehicles. Do not use the waterway as a road, and practice care when crossing to prevent tillage marks or wheel tracks. Maintain constructed width by lifting or disengaging tillage equipment before crossing the waterway.
3. Avoid planting end rows along the side of the waterway, as they often divert water from the waterway and contribute to gully development. Avoid other farming operations which would hinder water entry.
4. Perform grading operations adjacent to the waterway as needed to ensure that runoff enters the grassed waterway rather than being diverted parallel to the waterway causing gully formation.
5. Do not spray the waterway with herbicides intended for adjacent crops. Avoid crossing waterways during spray operations, and then cross only if the spray equipment is completely shut off.
6. Fertilize waterways the first spring after seeding and thereafter as necessary to maintain a vigorous stand of grass.
7. Mow waterways as needed to maintain a healthy, vigorous sod at a height of _____ inches. Remove excess top growth. For wildlife benefits, delay the first mowing until after nesting birds have hatched (about _____). Cost-share program rules place the following restrictions on mowing operations: _____.
8. Prevent trees and brush from growing in the waterway. Regular mowing will control woody vegetation.
9. Do not overgraze the waterway. Do not graze waterway during establishment of vegetation and when soil conditions are wet.
10. Remove sediment deposits to maintain capacity of grassed waterway and reseed as needed. Maintain effective erosion control on the contributing watershed to prevent sedimentation.
11. Fill and seed all rills or small gullies that occur in the waterway. Reestablish vegetative cover immediately where scour erosion has removed established seeding.
12. Where rock checks are installed, replace any dislodged rock and fill back to grade if displacement or settlement occurs.
13. Repair all broken subsurface drain lines adjacent to or in the waterway.