

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE PLAN FOR
AQUACULTURE PONDS**

CODE 397

Name _____
Legal Desc. _____

Ident. No. _____
County _____

A properly operated and maintained aquaculture pond is an asset to your farm. This structure was designed and installed to store water for commercial aquaculture purposes. The estimated life span of this installation is at least 10 years. The life of this installation can be ensured and usually increased by developing and carrying out a good operation and maintenance program.

This practice will require you to perform periodic operation and maintenance for satisfactory performance. The following are some recommendations to help you develop a good operation and maintenance program.

General Recommendations

- Annually inspect the pond for damage from normal use. Inspect the spillways, inlets, outlets, and control gates for proper functioning and their ability to maintain the water level to design elevations. At no more than 3- to 6-month intervals, open and close the gates and valves to ensure proper function.
- Immediately remove any blockage or obstructions and repair any damage.
- After heavy rains, inspect inlets, embankments, and spillways for possible damage. Promptly repair any damage.
- Annually inspect the downstream toe of the embankment. If there are wet areas or seeps, contact the local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office for additional assistance.

- Maintain vigorous growth of the vegetation. This includes reseeding, fertilizing, and applying herbicides when necessary. Periodically mow as needed to control height.
- Fill rills and gullies that occur on the embankments and/or spillway and re-seed.
- Maintain a grass filter strip around the perimeter of the pond to trap sediment.
- Check the downstream floodplain at least once every 5 years to ensure that life or property will not be threatened in the case of failure of the pond's embankment.
- If fences are installed, maintain them to prevent unauthorized human access or entry of livestock.
- Immediately repair any damage due to vandalism, vehicles, or livestock that has been done to any earthfills, spillways, outlets, or other appurtenances.
- Remove any debris that may accumulate at the pond and immediately upstream or downstream from the basin.
- Make sure all structure drains are functional and soil is not being transported through the drainage system. Keep the screens and/or rodent guards in place.
- Repair spalls, cracks, and weathered areas in concrete surfaces.
- Repair or replace rusted or damaged metal and paint it.

- Inspect for damage by rodents or burrowing animals. Immediately repair any damage, and take appropriate corrective actions to avoid further damage.
- Remove woody vegetation from embankments.
- Avoid excessive travel on any portion of the system that will harm or destroy the vegetative cover.

Specific Recommendations

If you need additional technical assistance to implement the operation and maintenance plan for this structure, contact the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) at your local USDA Service Center (listed in the telephone book under United States Government).