

**NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE
PRACTICE DOCUMENTATION GUIDE
GRAZING LAND MECHANICAL TREATMENT**

548

548 – STEP 1. INITIAL EVALUATIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to determine the landowner's desire for Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment in a predetermined location for the intended purpose(s). (See Natural Resources Conservation Service, Practice Standard and Specification 548). The landowner must be interviewed to determine the purpose and needs for Grazing Land Mechanical Treatment. Considerations will include the landowner goals and objectives, existing condition and effects of this practice on existing soil, water, air, plant, animal and human resources. A discussion of NRCS standards and specifications should also take place. The role of the landowner and the person assisting should also be discussed. Additional pertinent questions should be asked on a site-specific basis.

548 – STEP 2. INVESTIGATIONS, SURVEYS, AND INVENTORIES

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to identify the mandatory preliminary resource inventory and operations that are required before grazing land mechanical treatment can be planned and implemented. Resource inventories will include all data and information needed to make informed decisions in the planning and implementation of grazing land mechanical treatment and any follow-up management needs. Appropriate resource inventories could include soils, Ecological Sites, similarity index, climate, existing plant community, wildlife, pests, disease, water resources, harvesting resources, and all physical features such as fencing, water wells, ditches and irrigation systems etc that might have an influence on planning of grazing land mechanical treatment.

Adjacent land uses and resources that would be affected by grazing land mechanical treatment should also be considered. Resource inventories required for Prescribed Grazing (528) must be included if grazing lands are to be harvested by grazing. See Practice Standard and Specifications for Prescribed Grazing 528. Identify map resources needed such as the proper USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle sheet, soils, and road maps as well as aerial photography. Also include identifying all needed utility clearances, archeological clearances. Also see Natural Resources Conservation Service, Conservation Practice Job Sheet(s) 548, CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation Checklist).

548 – STEP 3. PRACTICE DESIGN

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to develop a grazing land mechanical treatment design. This practice will be designed in accordance with all federal, state and local laws and ordinances. Resource inventories, local conditions and the intended use will need to be assessed for the proposed grazing land mechanical treatment design. See Prescribed Grazing Standards and Specifications 528 for grazing lands to be harvested by domestic ungulate grazing. A grazing land mechanical treatment design will be developed with the client that meets the intended goals and objectives. All appropriate job sheets, maps and reports must be developed with landowners input, review and concurrence. See Practice Standard and Specification 548 and job Sheets for 548.

II. SITING

The purpose of this step is to insure that the client fully understands which fields are involved in the grazing land mechanical treatment. Care should be given to make sure the grazing land mechanical treatment fields are known by all involved.

Access locations for equipment, livestock and vehicles should also be known by all involved in implementing the plan.

III. MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT

The purpose of this item is to insure an understanding of the materials/equipment used for grazing land mechanical treatment. Further knowledge would include plant identification and assessment reference materials to include Ecological Site Descriptions (ESD), site preparation equipment and limitations, seeding equipment, weed management equipment and materials. Appropriate standards, job sheets and expectations that includes the types and number of each type of materials/equipment and/or system will need to be provided to the landowner and all those involved in the planning and implementation of grazing land mechanical treatment.

548 – STEP 4. PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to document and describe each component of the grazing land mechanical treatment plan, which includes step by step instructions to be used for site preparation, seeding, and follow-up maintenance and management.

This will include the documentation of all components described in Grazing land mechanical treatment Job Sheet 548. Additional reference material should be included as needed and appropriate.

The landowner must be provided with a complete grazing land mechanical treatment design and plan in the form of a Conservation Plan, Plan Map and NRCS Grazing land mechanical treatment Job Sheet 548 in order to document the design, location, and follow-up. Any items not described in Job Sheet 548 that are essential for location and planning of grazing land mechanical treatment will be added to the Job sheet.

548 - STEP 5. MANAGEMENT AND OPERATION, MAINTENANCE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to assure the proper management and maintenance is completed before, during and after grazingland mechanical treatment. (See Natural Resources Conservation Service, Practice Standard and Specification 548.

This requires a familiarity with soils, plant materials, range ecology, pests, harvest methods, climate, grazing animals, monitoring and grazing management in order to assure that the treatment continues to meet goals and objects and is maintained and/or improve over time. A monitoring program that assesses soil erosion, plant health and vigor should be implemented as per the NRCS National Range and Pasture Handbook. These measures should be discussed with and understood by the landowner.

548 – STEP 6. COMPLIANCE OR SPOT CHECKING

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this step is to determine that all work has been completed to the standards required by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

All completed NRCS forms should be collected from the landowner and submitted to the appropriate persons. (See Natural Resources Conservation Service Practice Standard and Specification 548, 528 and Job Sheet(s) 550 and 528, and NM-CPA-52 Environmental Evaluation Checklist if this is deemed a federal undertaking).

II. DOCUMENTS

Copies of all completed job sheets and associated work sheets should be submitted to the Natural Resources Conservation Service representative within 10 working days of completion of the seeding. This includes Grazing land mechanical treatment Practice Requirements as outlined in Job Sheet for 548 and any other job sheets that may be needed for this practice to meet the intended goals and objectives.