

SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

WEST VIRGINIA

WILDLIFE WATERING FACILITY (NO.)

Definition

Constructing, improving, or modifying watering facilities for wildlife.

Purpose

To provide drinking water for wildlife and to concentrate wildlife for recreational pursuits such as bird watching.

Conditions Where Practice Applies

In areas where new, additional, or improved watering places are needed to increase the range or improve the habitat of wildlife.

Planning Considerations

Watering facilities may be desirable if a permanent water source is more than one-half mile from the proposed development. (Intermittent streams having pools which hold water throughout the year constitute permanent water supplies.) Watering facilities are also useful to concentrate wildlife for recreational purposes even if located in relatively close proximity to other water sources. If escape cover does not exist, plan for the development of at least one escape route to and from the water.

Locate facilities near escape cover if possible. Utilize only clean unpolluted sources of water. Catch basins in dry woodland sites and improvements of small water supplies such as springs, seeps, and small brooklets will qualify under this practice.

DESIGN CRITERIA

No wildlife watering facility shall be constructed where domestic livestock have access. If necessary, permanent fences should be constructed at a minimum distance of 20 feet from the edge of the water. Fence type should not exclude wildlife.

Intermittent flowing spring pool improvements shall contain a minimum of 50 gallons of water. Seep dugouts and catch basins shall have a surface area of at least 100 square feet, a water depth of 18 inches or more over at least one-fifth of the area and provide at least 700 gallons of permanent drinking water. At least one slope must permit wildlife to enter or leave the water (4:1 slope or flatter.)

Riprapping the outlet with flat rocks is desirable where considerable flow of water is expected. The length should be at least twice as long as the width. If frequent overflow is expected an appropriate pipe, lined waterway, or other stable outlet shall be provided.

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Surface runoff catchments shall be designed according to SCS Standard 378, Pond.

The conservation plan map will show the location on the farm. Developments shall be planned and a sketch will show surface area, maximum depth, spoil disposal, water supply, or drainage area, water outlet, location in relation to escape cover, and areas where revegetation is needed.

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Operation and maintenance shall provide for inspection, operation, and maintenance of vegetation, spillways and other parts of the system. Protect watering facility from pesticide contamination. Facilities developed in woodlands will require the periodic removal of leaves.

SPECIFICATIONS

Plans for constructing wildlife watering facilities shall be in keeping with this standard and shall describe the requirements for applying the practice to achieve its intended purpose.

Wildlife watering facilities shall be constructed according to specifications from individual standards, NEH-20, or the West Virginia 700 series as appropriate.

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Planning considerations for water quantity and quality

Quantity

1. **Effects on the water budget, especially on volumes and rates of runoff, infiltration, evaporation, transpiration, deep percolation, and ground water recharge.**
2. **Effects on downstream flows or aquifers that could affect other water uses or users.**

Quality

1. **Effects on erosion and the movement of sediment and soluble and sediment-attached substances that would be carried by runoff.**
2. **Effects on the movement of dissolved substances to ground water.**
3. **Effects on wetlands or water-related wildlife habitats.**