

NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE

VIRGINIA

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE REQUIREMENTS

GRASSED WATERWAY

CODE 412

Land Owner/Operator _____

County _____ SWCD _____ Farm/Tract No. _____

Prepared By _____ Date _____

OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE ITEMS

A properly operated and maintained grassed waterway is an asset to your farm. The grassed waterway is designed to stabilize an eroding area and safely convey runoff from the drainage area it serves. The estimated life span of the installation is at least _____ years. The life of the installation can be assured and usually increased by developing and carrying out a systematic operation and maintenance program.

This practice will require periodic maintenance and may also require operational items to maintain satisfactory performance. Your operation and maintenance program requirements include:

- Seeding shall be protected from concentrated flow and grazing until vegetation is established.
- Restrict heavy equipment access and exclude cattle when waterway is abnormally wet. Do not use the waterway as a travel lane.
- Inspect waterways regularly, especially after heavy rains. Damaged areas will be filled, compacted, and seeded immediately. Remove sediment deposits to maintain design capacity. Re-fertilize, re-seed, and re-mulch as needed until cover becomes well established.
- Evaluate the site within three to four months of seeding. If the stand is uniform but too thin (50 to 80% ground cover), apply additional seed during the next optimum seeding period with a no-till drill or grain drill as site conditions dictate. Areas with an establishment rate of less than fifty percent (50%) will be re-seeded in accordance with the original vegetation establishment plan.
- Once the grassed waterway is established, inspection shall become an on-going process. Any damage (structural and/or vegetative) caused by farm machinery, erosion, sedimentation, drought, cattle, herbicides, etc. will be repaired promptly. Noxious weeds shall be controlled. Caution will be used when spraying chemicals on adjacent lands and/or on grassed waterways to control weeds.
- Mow or periodically graze the waterway to maintain capacity and reduce sediment deposition. If the waterway is grazed or cut for hay, the remaining height of the vegetative cover should be no lower than what is required to meet the design retardance level for stability.

