



Installing a Grassed Waterway Practice? You will need a *Designated Work Area*!

Background: Grassed waterway projects average thousands to tens of thousands of dollars to install properly. It is common with today's conservation tillage systems for a grassed waterway to last up to 20 years with proper maintenance. When you look at the cost of the project and its life span, it becomes clear that it needs to be constructed correctly, and that means having a Designated Work Area during construction.

Timing is important: Work with your local NRCS district conservationist to determine the best time to construct your planned grassed waterway. After wheat harvest is a great time to construct waterways. You may not want to plant and spray the Designated Work Area to save money. If weeds or crops are present, the area must be mowed before NRCS will perform the layout survey for the practice.

What is a Designated Work Area?

It is a fallow, mowed or disked area on both sides of the designed top width of the planned waterway. Width will vary depending on the design, but will typically be a 50-foot area extending from both sides of the planned waterway.

Why do I need a Designated Work Area?

This will provide the contractor an area to spread out the spoil (extra dirt) from the excavated waterway site. This spoil needs to be spread out so that the water runoff will enter the constructed waterway practice without restriction. All spoil will be required to be temporarily seeded or planted to a crop.



Where can I find the design for my project?

The engineering plans for the grassed waterway practice will contain a diagram for the Designated Work Area. During the plan review process between the district conservationist and the landowner, the waterway dimensions and the Designated Work Area will be discussed.

What if the Designated Work Area is planted in crops or not mowed down?

The NRCS will not lay out the grassed waterway practice. After excavation, if the spoil has not been properly spread and seeded, NRCS will not approve the construction.

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