WHAT IS A GRASSED WATERWAY?
A grassed waterway is a natural or constructed channel that is shaped or graded to required dimensions and established with suitable vegetation.

Grassed waterways are used to convey runoff from concentrated flow without causing soil erosion, to control gully erosion, and/or to protect and improve water quality. Depending on the type of vegetation established, grassed waterways may also provide wildlife habitat for a variety of “farmland” wildlife such as quail, pheasants, and rabbits.

WHERE THE PRACTICE APPLIES
On fields that meet eligibility requirements for the Conservation Reserve program (CRP) as determined by the Farm Service Agency (FSA).

CRP POLICY
Grassed waterways will be designed and installed according to the Grassed Waterway Standard (412) in the local Field Office Technical Guide (FOTG).

The width of the grassed waterway depends upon several factors including the slope of the field, the soil type, the drainage area, and the conservation practices used in the field.

For the Conservation Reserve Program, grassed waterways will be installed to meet the minimum design criteria needed to convey water from a field, according to the FOTG, regardless of the purpose of the grassed waterway. If requested by the producer, the enrolled width may be up to 2 times the minimum design standard, not to exceed a maximum width of 100 feet. CRP grassed waterways will not exceed a maximum width of 100 feet for any purpose.

Each CRP grassed waterway must have a stable outlet.

Only the portion of CRP grassed waterways located on eligible cropland are eligible for cost-share and rental payments, except the stable outlet can be immediately adjacent to the grassed waterway and eligible cropland.

Depending on the site, the best technical location for the stable outlet may be located on land that is not eligible for CRP. In these cases, CRP financial payments are not eligible on the stable outlet nor on the portions of the CRP grassed waterway not on eligible cropland.

See the design for specific construction specifications.

PLANTING
Plant the vegetation according to the attached plans/specifications. Any changes to these specifications must be approved by NRCS.

All construction and seeding must be completed within 12 months of contract approval to remain in compliance. If circumstances beyond the landowner’s control prohibit completion within the first 12 months, the local FSA County Committee may approve an extension to the next construction and planting season.

Vegetation selected for the grassed waterway will be adapted to the site conditions and meet the standards in the local FOTG. Only viable, high quality seed will be used.
Planting Methods:

No-Till seeding: Use a no-till drill with seven (7) inch or less row spacing. Ensure the drill is designed to handle the type of seed being planted (especially important for native grasses). Set the no-till drill to provide good seed-to-soil contact and a planting depth preferred for the desired species (see table below). Soils that are too wet or too dry can also cause improper seed placement.

Conventional Seeding: Prepare a fine firm seedbed to a depth of three (3) to four (4) inches. Use a drill with seven (7) inch or less row spacing, or a culti-pack seeder designed for the seed to be planted. Seed should be drilled uniformly at a proper seeding depth for the desired species.

Broadcast Seeding: Seed may be broadcast if completed in a uniform manner. Pre-mix the seed with 200 pounds per acre of pelletized lime if using an airflow applicator. Seedbeds should be worked to a minimum depth of three (3) inches and firmed before seeding. The seedbed should be culti-packed before and after seeding. It is acceptable to see up to one-third (⅓) of the seed on the soil surface. Wind speed should be 15 miles per hour or less when broadcasting.

Weed Control During Establishment Period: Mow, burn, or apply herbicides as needed to control unwanted vegetation until a Final Status Review is issued, or for a maximum of 3 years after planting. Mow when competing weeds are taller than the planted vegetation, and at a height above the planted vegetation. **Apply all herbicides according to the label.**

**HAYING AND GRAZING**

Exclude all acres from haying and grazing year-round, unless authorized by the Farm Service Agency beforehand and all CRP policies and standards are met. Fences may need to be constructed and maintained to exclude livestock throughout the entire year. See the attached **CRP Implementation Requirements - Grazing & Haying plan addendum** for more details.

**OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE**

The plan should contain the practices necessary for maintenance of a vigorous sod and brush control. At a minimum, maintenance should occur at least every other year to maintain a vigorous sod and to control brush.

**After** the Final Status Review or three (3) years (whichever comes first), maintain the planting according to your CRP conservation plan. Maintenance activities are allowed only on a spot basis and only if necessary, to maintain stand health, maintain stand diversity, or control pests that will damage the CRP cover or adjacent lands. Burning must be in accordance with a prescribed burn plan. **MOWING and other maintenance activities are not authorized between April 1 to August 1** to protect ground-nesting wildlife (i.e. - the Primary Nesting and Brood-Rearing season). If maintenance activities are needed (allowed on a spot basis only) during these times, the FSA County Committee must approve the maintenance activity prior to the activity occurring. Native grasses will not be mowed lower than 12 inches. **Mowing for generic weed control or for cosmetic purposes is prohibited.**

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The grassed waterway should be inspected on a seasonal basis and following major storm and runoff events. Any damages or sediment accumulation that would adversely impair the function of the waterway must be corrected immediately.

The drainage area above the grassed waterway must be protected against erosion to the extent that expected sedimentation will not shorten the planned effective life of the grassed waterway. Consider such practices as Cover Crops, No-Till/Strip Till, Conservation Crop Rotation, Contour Farming, etc.

For CRP, do not use grassed waterways as a travel way, cropland headland, or a lane.

The grassed waterway will not be harvested for hay or grazed by domestic livestock for the life of the CRP contract, unless authorized. Cost-share is not authorized for fencing.

**MANAGEMENT ACTIVITY**

**CP8A** no longer requires management activities in Indiana (effective with Fiscal Year 2020 signups). If voluntary management is needed, contact NRCS.
### GRASSED WATERWAY DESIGN WORKSHEET  CRP CP-8A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Farm:</th>
<th>Tract:</th>
<th>Field:</th>
<th>Date:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Width of all Reaches:</th>
<th>Total Length:</th>
<th>TOTAL ACRES:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

#### Design and Planting Considerations:

- Shaping (see attached Engineering Designs)
- Seeding (see attached Specifications)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soil Type(s):</th>
<th>Average Slope:</th>
</tr>
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</table>

#### Post-Planting Maintenance

**Mowing:**
- [ ] BEFORE final Status Review, or up to three (3) years after planting, mow to a minimum height of six (6) to eight (8) inches high when the weeds are 12 inches taller than the planted grasses as needed
- [ ] *AFTER final Status Review, mow to a minimum height of six (6) to eight (8) inches

- [ ] Herbicide* (per label):

- [ ] Other:

*NOTE: After the final Status Review has been issued, weed control and other maintenance activities will not occur between April 1 and August 1, and will occur on a “spot” basis only, unless prior approval is granted by the FSA County Committee.*