

Name of Practice: VOLUNTARY EXTENSION OF WATERING SYSTEMS  
VACS Program Specifications for No. VSL-7

This document specifies terms and conditions for the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-Share Program's Voluntary Extension of Watering Systems best management practice, which are applicable to all contracts entered into with respect to that practice.

A. Description and Purpose

This practice provides a management system to ensure adequate surface cover protection to minimize soil erosion. The system will reduce sediment, nutrients, and pathogen loads in runoff.

This practice will improve the quantity, quality, and utilization of forage for livestock and will reduce the risk of surface and groundwater contamination from non-point source pollution from pastures by assuring that an adequate stand of forage is available to absorb runoff and reduce pollutants.

B. Policies and Specifications

1. All fields under this practice must have had all livestock previously excluded or concurrently being excluded from all live streams or live water. Any field that is part of a rotational grazing system is eligible. Rotational grazing systems without live water previously or concurrently excluded do not qualify for this practice.
2. This practice extends watering systems into upland fields in order to implement rotational grazing on those fields and increase forage cover through the proper grazing and forage management techniques that will allow the pasture to rest and re-grow its cover.
3. A written Grazing Management Plan and Operation and Maintenance Plan that includes all acres in the grazing system must be prepared, implemented, and followed in accordance with NRCS Standard 528 Prescribed Grazing. Factors to be addressed should include water sources, environmental impact, soil fertility maintenance, access lanes, fencing needs, wetlands, minimum cover or grazing heights, carrying capacity of the land, and rotational schedules. Districts will monitor for compliance.
4. Grazing (including flash grazing) and haying are not allowed in the protected riparian area during the lifespan of this practice.

5. Portable or temporary system components (fencing, etc.) cannot be utilized in other areas or moved from fields utilized in the system plan. A portable water supply system is any system or component (i.e. trough, pipe, etc.) that is:
  - i. Commercially available or farmer constructed;
  - ii. Large enough to provide a timely and sufficient volume of water for the livestock to be contained in a specific area for which the system is designed;
  - iii. Capable of being maintained in a stable position and protected from any damage while the system or component is in use;
  - iv. Capable of being moved in a timely manner from one location to another within the acreage for which the system is designed.
  
6. This practice is subject to NRCS Standards 382 Fence, 472 Access Control, 516 Livestock Pipeline, 528 Prescribed Grazing, 533 Pumping Plant, 561 Heavy Use Area Protection, 575 Trails and Walkways, 578 Stream Crossing, and 614 Watering Facility.
  
7. All practice components implemented must be maintained for a minimum of 5 years following the calendar year in installation. The lifespan begins on Jan. 1 of the calendar year following the year of certification of completion. By accepting payment for this practice, the recipient agrees to maintain the practice and the associated exclusion fencing for the specified lifespan. This practice is subject to verifications by the District throughout the lifespan of the practice.

D. Technical Responsibility

Technical and administrative responsibility is assigned to qualified technical DCR and District staff in consultation, where appropriate and based on the controlling standard, with DCR, Virginia Certified Nutrient Management Planner(s), NRCS, DOF, and VCE. Individuals certifying technical need and technical practice installation shall have appropriate certifications as identified above and/or Engineering Job Approval Authority (EJAA) for the designed and installed component(s). All practices are subject to spot check procedures and any other quality control measures.

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