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Department of
Agriculture

Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service

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SUBJECT: SSC - Cultural Resources Review Process for Practices Associated with
Grassed Waterways

File Code: 420-0

TO: All Field Offices

This memorandum provides further clarification of the cultural resources review process for grassed waterways and associated practices. The memorandum sent out on February 6, 2002 (ENG – Waterway Cultural Resource Review Process) applies only to grassed waterways, Practice 412. If additional practices will be installed along with the waterway, then each practice must be reviewed to determine if it is an undertaking as defined in the National Historic Preservation Act. If the project is an undertaking then it is necessary to complete the “Request for Cultural Resources Review” form and submit it to the Cultural Resources Specialist in the Indiana State Office. The attached information paper provides guidance on determining when it is necessary to submit the “Request for Cultural Resources Review” form to the State Office.

All waterways and associated practices must be inspected for cultural resources at the time of the initial field check. If the field check is not completed by qualified personnel (that is, individuals who have completed Cultural Resources Module 8 training) then the project must be submitted to the State Office for review.

Questions regarding this notice should be directed to Steve Chomko, Cultural Resources Specialist at 317-290-3200, extension 381, or Phil McLoud, ASTC Planning and Technology at 317-290-3200, extension 348.

/s/

JANE E. HARDISTY
State Conservationist

Enclosure(s)

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Guidance on Cultural Resources Review Requirements for Grassed Waterways and Associated Practices

The memorandum sent out on February 6, 2002 (ENG – Waterway Cultural Resource Review Process) applies only to grassed waterways, practice 412. This memorandum provides guidance on cultural resources requirements for practices (such as subsurface drains, 606, grade stabilization structures, 410, WASC0B, 638, etc.) that may be installed along with a grassed waterway. Each practice must be reviewed to determine if it is an undertaking as defined in the National Historic Preservation Act. If the project is an undertaking then it is necessary to complete the “Request for Cultural Resources Review” form and submit it to the Cultural Resources Specialist in the Indiana State Office. All waterways and associated practices must be inspected for cultural resources at the time of the initial field check. If the field check is not completed by qualified personnel (that is, individuals who have completed Cultural Resources Module 8 training) then the project must be submitted for review.

No State Office Cultural Resources Review Required

If the waterway does not qualify as an undertaking then it is not necessary to submit the project for review to the NRCS State Office. The following guidance will help in determining if the waterway does not qualify as an undertaking.

Waterway: Waterways are not undertakings if they are confined to a natural drainage channel and no cultural resources are found during the field inspection. A rule of thumb here would be if the land modification only involves grading, shaping and normal excavation within the bottom of the drainage then it is likely confined to the natural drainage channel (see Figure 1). If the waterway meets these criteria then you should document your finding and place a record of it in the case file. No further consideration for cultural resources will be required.

State Office Cultural Resources Review Required

If a waterway and/or associated practice qualifies as an undertaking it will be necessary to complete the “Request for Cultural Resources Review” form and send it to the Cultural Resources Specialist, Indiana State Office.

Waterway: If the waterway extends beyond the limits of the natural drainage channel or if cultural resources are found during the site inspection then the entire project should be submitted for cultural resources review. A rule of thumb here would be if the land modification involves excavating side slopes into undisturbed deposits in a natural rise or hill slope then it extends outside of the natural drainage channel (see Figure 2). You should complete the “Request for Cultural Resources Review” form and submit it to the Cultural Resources Specialist.

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Associated Practices: If the waterway is confined to the natural drainage channel but an associated practice extends beyond the natural drainage channel, then the entire project must be submitted for cultural resources review. As a rule of thumb, if the practice extends horizontally beyond or vertically below the area that would be affected by the grassed waterway, then it should be submitted for cultural resources review. You should complete the “Request for Cultural Resources Review” form and state that the project extends beyond the limits of the natural drainage channel.

The following guidance will help in determining if practices commonly associated with grassed waterways are undertakings. In all cases, if cultural resources are found during the field inspection then the project must be submitted for cultural resources review.

- ◆ Practice 410: Generally, grade stabilization structures are within the natural drainage channel - as long as the outlet structure does not involve excavating laterally into undisturbed alluvial (stream bank) deposits it should not require further consideration.
- ◆ Practice 468: A lined waterway or outlet should be evaluated just as you would a grassed waterway.
- ◆ Practice 574: All spring developments will require cultural resources review.
- ◆ Practice 580: Stream bank and shoreline protection structures will always require cultural resources review.
- ◆ Practice 606: Subsurface drains are generally confined to the natural waterway and should not require further cultural resources review.
 - ◆ Tile that is being replaced does not require cultural resources review because the ground has already been disturbed.
 - ◆ New tile that is being installed with a trencher and is in the bottom of a natural drainage channel does not require cultural resources review.
 - ◆ If installation requires excavation with a back hoe, then the practice must be submitted for cultural resources review.
 - ◆ If installation extends outside of the natural drainage (laterals and collection lines) then the project must be submitted for cultural resources review.
- ◆ Practice 620: Underground outlets will require cultural resources review if they involve installation using a back hoe and or if installation involves cutting laterally into undisturbed alluvial (stream bank) deposits.
- ◆ Practice 638: Water and sediment control basins generally involve tying into or cutting laterally into hill slopes (this is considered outside of the drainage channel). All WASCOS will need to be submitted for cultural resources review. The request for review must also identify all barrow locations – that is, areas where fill will be collected and/or excavated.

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SUMMARY

If the waterway is an undertaking, all associated practices need to be identified and submitted along with the waterway to the State Office for cultural resources review. If the waterway is not an undertaking, then each associated practice must be considered to determine if it is an undertaking. If any associated practice is an undertaking then the entire project should be submitted for cultural resources review. If you are unsure whether a waterway or an associated practice qualifies as an undertaking per the National Historic Preservation Act, complete the "Request for Cultural Resources Review" form and send it to the Cultural Resources Specialist (CRS) in the Indiana State Office. The CRS will recommend the appropriate determination and complete the cultural resources review if necessary.

If you have any questions or require additional information please contact Steve Chomko, Cultural Resources Specialist, at (317) 290-3200 extension 381 or by email at steve.chomko@in.usda.gov.

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Grassed Waterway: Not an Undertaking

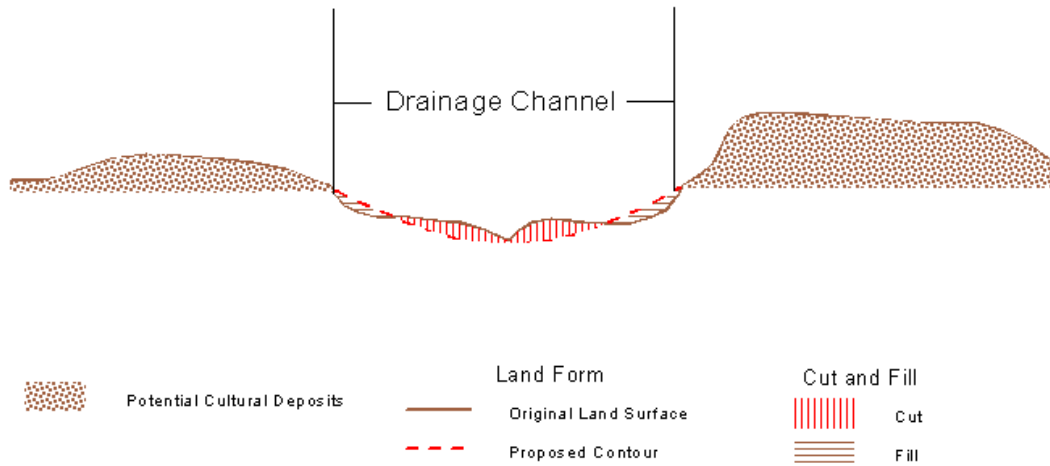


Figure 1. Grading, contouring and excavation is confined to the drainage channel. There is little potential to affect cultural deposits.

Grassed Waterway: An Undertaking

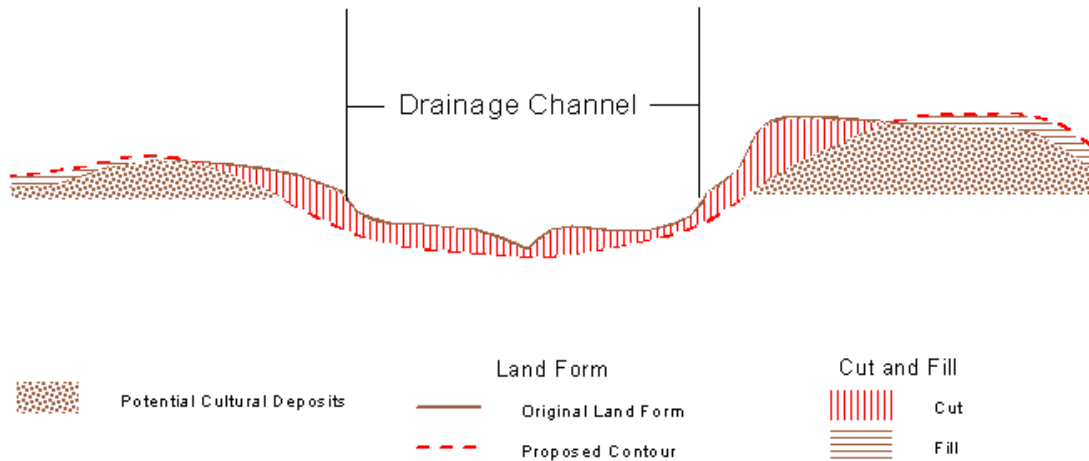


Figure 2. Excavation of the side slope cuts into adjacent hill slopes. There is a high potential to affect cultural deposits where the cut has truncated the potential cultural deposits.