

Main Outlet Drainage

Main outlet drainage is generally referred to as a system that involves a large ditch or brook that drains a relatively large area of land and a number of property owners are involved. The drainage work constructed under this policy is generally beyond the scope of an individual or group of individuals to carry out. A Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture Policy for constructing or repairing this type of ditch is in existence. This is a jointly cost shared policy between the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Agriculture Canada.

The ditches constructed are generally relatively deep, 1-2 metres or more with side slopes of 2 units horizontal to 1 unit vertical and on very unstable soils flatter slopes are used. The construction of these ditches is carried out under the supervision of the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture.

On some dykelands, the main outlet ditches have to be constructed before any other developmental work can be carried out. Individual land owners can then drain into these main ditches and then carry out the land forming.

To reduce erosion and sedimentation, it is preferable to do ditching in late spring and early summer so that the ditch banks have time to revegetate and stabilize. This type of ditching not only benefits agriculture land but is also beneficial in providing proper drainage for roads. This type of drainage can involve areas that are of concern to other people. Before work is started, permits are obtained from the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans who deal with fisheries resource. The provincial Department of Environment are also contacted to discuss ways of minimizing siltation and to see if other agencies have concerns about the proposed work.

To reduce the erosion of upland drainage ditches, rock is required to stabilize sharp turns and at intervals in the bottom of the ditch to reduce gradient. The number of areas where rock is required in the bottom of the ditch depends on the gradient of the ditch and the amount of water flowing in the ditch after a large rainfall.