

MANAGING STOCK ACCESS TO THE STREAM BANK ZONE

Why should stock access be managed ?

Unmanaged access of stock to the stream bank zone can destroy vegetation, compact the soil, push soil into the watercourse, create small gullies into the watercourse and endanger the stock themselves. This can lead to erosion of the stream bank and a decrease in water quality.

Stock should also be kept out of the watercourse. If allowed access, they damage water vegetation, add excess nutrients to the water, destroy native fish habitat and risk injuring themselves.

How can stock access the water without damaging the stream bank ?

Watercourses provide an important source of water for stock for many agricultural enterprises, and access to that water can be maintained without causing damage to the stream bank.

The best option is to fence off the stream bank zone and control stock access to that area. Options for managing access include installing a paved ramp down to the water, using a bore and tank in the paddock or a pump and a trough. Recommendations about the best places to set fences, access points and crossings are available (see Further References).

Before you install infrastructure to extract water from a stream or river, contact the Department of Land and Water Conservation for advice and to ensure you do not breach any legislation.

Can stock still access the vegetation for fodder?

Once the vegetation is established, stock can graze in the stream bank zone for short periods to eat the grass, but should be moved before they start to eat shrubs and trees.

How will I control weeds in the fenced area ?

Weed control should be undertaken. You should seek advice from the local Department of Land and Water Conservation as the *Clean Water Act* contains provisions regulating the use of chemicals near watercourses.

Further References

Livestock Control near Rivers: Ways of Keeping Livestock out of River Beds and Off the Banks, Riverwise Advisory Notes for Rural Landholders, DLWC, 1995.

Who can help ?

Department Land and Water Conservation, Yass.

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