

**Water Quality Enhancement Activity – WQL23 – Protection of sensitive areas on winter grazing land**



**Enhancement Description**

This enhancement is for the protection of riparian and other identified sensitive areas that are susceptible to degradation when used for wind protection by livestock.

**Land Use Applicability**

Pastureland and rangeland

**Benefits**

Properly placing a wind shelter (away from riparian and sensitive areas) protects livestock

from the weather, while protecting water resources from degradation that results when livestock concentrate in an area. Alternative wind shelters minimize adverse impacts around riparian areas that offer natural protection by reducing the potential to concentrate nutrients around water sources, and reducing bank disturbance, soil compaction and excessive trampling of riparian or sensitive area vegetation. The proper placement of these alternative shelters results in improvements to water quality and animal health.

**Criteria**

1. Producers are required to use one type of alternative shelter to provide livestock with protection from wind
2. Alternative shelter design criteria and placement must follow state Land Grant University guidelines or NRCS design criteria
3. Fabricated shelter designs will meet the need of the entire herd
4. Supplemental feeding or mineral supplements will not be permitted within ¼ mile (1,320 ft) of riparian areas, water courses or water bodies

**Documentation Requirements**

1. A map showing the planned location(s) of fabricated shelter(s) in each pasture
2. An approved fabricated shelter design
3. Photographs showing shelters in the field

## **Michigan Supplement**

### **Water Quality Enhancement Activity – WQL23 – Protection of Sensitive Areas on Winter Grazing Land**

Every wintering site is unique and management practices should be selected specific to that site. A wintering site is the area where livestock are fed stockpiled forage and/or hay or other feeds during the winter months. Sensitive areas on wintering sites or winter grazing lands must be protected from degradation when used as wind shelter.

Sensitive areas on winter grazing land include:

- Drainage runs, concentrated flow paths, creek, stream or river channels;
- Natural wetlands, constructed wetlands, wetland restoration sites;
- Organic or hydric soils during periods of saturation due to groundwater or snow melt;
- Riparian forest buffers;
- Sites with a flooding hazard;
- Sloped sites with direct drainage to a water course;
- Woodlots managed for quality timber;
- Woodlots on organic soils, on floodplains, or with a high water table;
- Woodlots in known bovine TB risk areas.

Alternative wind shelters on winter grazing lands include:

- Round or large square bales, single row or stacked;
- Woodlots not managed for quality timber with controlled area of use;
- South facing slopes less than 10 percent slope;
- South facing slopes, sloped away from water course;
- Constructed run-in open front shelters that can be moved as designed in Midwest;
- Plan Services books or provided by MSU Extension Educators.