



Stream Crossing

Small Scale Solutions for your Farm in Indiana

Do You Have Problems With:

- Livestock knee deep in mud
- Crossing a stream with equipment
- Eroded stream banks
- Livestock loafing in streams and polluting the water
- Equipment damaged by crossing streams

A Stream Crossing Can Help

A stream crossing provides a hard, stable area where livestock or equipment can cross a stream without damaging the streambed or banks.



Improper stream crossings can be a muddy mess

Benefits of a Stream Crossing:

- Provide easy, safe access to all your fields
- Improve livestock health by keeping them out of the mud
- Keep your farm water cleaner by keeping livestock out of stream
- You decide where the livestock cross the stream



Hog panel stream crossing

Costs for a Stream Crossing:

The costs for a stream crossing will be different depending on what you use to build it and how large the stream is. Some of the costs to think about are:

- Grading the stream banks and bottom
- Gravel and filter fabric
- Hog panels, stone or other material to go in the bed of the stream
- Fencing to lead the livestock to the crossing
- Permits

Stream Crossing

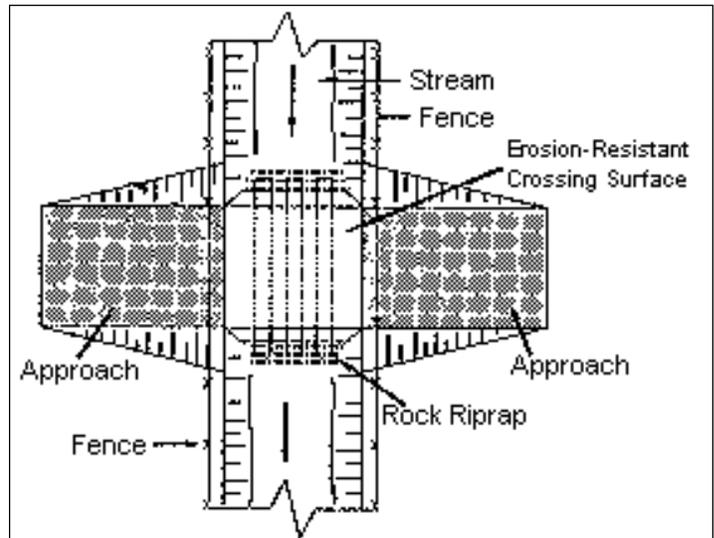
How do I build a stream crossing?

Always check with local authorities to obtain all necessary permits before working in streams. Permits may be required from Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and/or others.

Stream crossings can be built in several different ways using different materials. The primary tasks are to slope the banks of the stream on each side and provide a firm streambed.

- Make banks flat enough for livestock or equipment to move safely down the bank.
- Protect banks with gravel and filter fabric.
- Make the streambed firm enough so livestock or equipment will not cause ruts.
- For gravel or bedrock streams, additional streambed work may not be needed.

The simplest type of streambed protection is to lay rock over filter fabric. However, some livestock don't like to walk on large rock and smaller rock can wash out during high flows.



Typical stream crossing

Regardless of the material used in the streambed, it is very important to keep the material below the level of the streambed. This will help prevent the material from being washed out during high flows, and will keep the crossing from impeding the natural flow of the stream.



Stream crossing under construction

For mud bottom streams, there are several options. Hog slats (precast concrete units used in confined hog housing) laid over a bed of filter fabric and gravel makes a very good crossing.

A Geoweb® is a plastic web that can be filled with gravel. A Geoweb® filled with gravel, and laid over filter fabric makes a very good stream crossing.



Hog panel stream crossing



Geoweb®, Presto Products Co

Stream Crossing

Fencing

If the stream crossing will be used by livestock, it is important to fence the stream so that livestock use the crossing and stay out of the stream.

How to maintain the Stream Crossing

If the stream crossing is installed correctly, very little maintenance should be needed.

- Check the crossing after storms and make sure streambed and banks haven't eroded
- Repair eroded areas
- If livestock use the crossing make sure that fences are still in place



Fencing to protect the stream

You put in a stream crossing because you want to get to the other side, but

- The real benefit of a stream crossing is to keep the water in the stream clean
- Livestock will not tear up the stream banks
- Less livestock manure will get into the stream
- Equipment will not tear up the stream bed and banks when you cross
- Trees and grass will grow along the stream and keep the water cooler and cleaner

SMALL SCALE SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR FARM IN INDIANA

Technical Help Is Available

Your local Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) office has experienced conservationists that can assist you with planning and designing stream crossings on your operation. They can also help you develop a Conservation Plan to solve other concerns you have identified on your farm.

There is no charge for our assistance. Simply call your local office to set up an appointment and we will come to your farm. Requests for our assistance are numerous, but we will assist you as quickly as we can.

You may also be eligible to receive financial assistance through a state or federal program. Your NRCS office will explain any programs that are available so you can make the best decision for your operation. All NRCS programs and services are voluntary.



Helping People—Help the Land

For More Information Contact the:

Natural Resources Conservation Service at the USDA Service Center for your county

On the web at <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>

Or

Located in the phone book under 'United States Government, United States Department of Agriculture, USDA Service Centers'

Or the

Local Soil & Water Conservation District

(Typically co-located in the local USDA Service Center)

Office hours: M-F, 8:00 am to 4:30 pm (closed on federal holidays)

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