



**CONSERVATION ENHANCEMENT ACTIVITY**

**E578139X**

**CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM**

Stream crossing elimination

**Conservation Practice 578: Stream Crossing**

**APPLICABLE LAND USE: Crop (Annual & Mixed); Crop (Perennial); Range; Forest; Farmstead; Associated Ag Land**

**RESOURCE CONCERN ADDRESSED: Fish & Wildlife – Inadequate Habitat**

**PRACTICE LIFE SPAN: 10 years**

**Enhancement Description**

Existing stream crossings on an operation are consolidated into fewer crossings in order to reduce impacts to stream habitat.

**Criteria**

- Minimize the number of stream crossings through evaluation of alternative trail or travel-way locations. Assess land user operations to consolidate and reduce the number of crossings in order to minimize habitat fragmentation and to minimize barriers to aquatic organism movement.
- Evaluate proposed crossing removal sites for variations in stage and discharge, tidal influence, hydraulics, fluvial geomorphic impacts, sediment transport and flow continuity, groundwater conditions, and movement of woody and organic material. Assess the effects of removal upon the channel with respect to local site conditions and stream geomorphology, to the extent possible.
- Road crossing removal can affect wetlands, flooding potential, existing infrastructure, and social and cultural practices and resources. Evaluate and address the full range of impacts when planning or designing removal projects.



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- Replacing or removing an existing instream structure may trigger channel adjustments upstream and/or downstream of the crossing. Mitigate undesirable channel plan or profile shifts resulting from the removal of crossing.
- Return the stream to a condition to provide passage for as many different aquatic species and age classes as possible.
- Incorporate natural streambed substrates throughout the removed crossing length. Natural streambeds provide numerous passage and habitat benefits to many life stage requirements for fish and other aquatic organisms.
- Retain as much riparian and streambank vegetation as possible during crossing removal to maintain shade, riparian continuity, and sources of nutrient and structural inputs for aquatic ecosystems. Plant all areas to be revegetated as soon as practical after crossing structure removal.
- Where appropriate, consider removing associated access roads or trails and restoring native vegetation representative of the site.

### **Documentation Requirements**

- Specifications for this practice shall be prepared for each site. Specification shall be recorded using approved specifications sheets, job sheets, narrative statements in the conservation plan, or other acceptable documentation.