

# Grazing Treatment Considerations

It is the desire of many livestock operators to sustain a productive forage community along the riparian area for quality feed and livestock gain. The grazing treatment used should be designed to meet an operators needs while ensuring the riparian area is not compromised. Time of year, duration, and frequency in which a riparian area is to be grazed can benefit or hinder future use.

Successful grazing strategies along the riparian area provide sufficient opportunity to encourage plant vigor, regrowth, and re-seeding while minimizing soil compaction which reduces water infiltration. These strategies also ensure efficient vegetation during periods of high flow to protect streambank stability. A stable streambank reduces erosion providing for cleaner and cooler stream flow and better aquatic habitat.

There is no single grazing practice that will maintain or recover a riparian area, a combination of strategies can be used to customize an approach to each site.

## For More Information:

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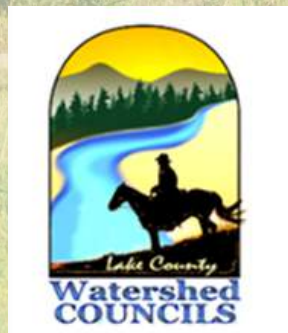
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# Grazing The Riparian

Sustaining the health of your  
land while maintaining the  
grazing enterprise

## What is a Riparian Area and Why is it Important ?

A riparian area is land that lies adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes, marshes, and wet meadows. While riparian areas make up a small part of the landscape, they are highly productive and valuable to the livestock industry - providing water, forage, and cover.



Riparian areas are also important for proper watershed functions and ecosystem health as they provide flood-plain and ground water storage, water transport, improved water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat.

The challenge that faces many land managers is getting the most out of their riparian while sustaining this valued area for years to come. Balance can be obtained with the right grazing strategy and implementing techniques that distribute grazing across the landscape and relieving the heavy livestock pressure on the riparian area.

## HOW TO PROMOTE DISTRIBUTION OF LIVESTOCK AND RELIEVE PRESSURE ON THE RIPARIAN AREA?

Livestock tend to selectively graze and congregate in the riparian area, where uplands may be underutilized and riparian areas may be overgrazed. There are several techniques that can attract livestock upland and away from riparian area for more efficient grazing and to extend grazing within pastures. These techniques include Offsite Water Development, Upland Seeding, Clearing Brush, and Placing Salt, Hay, Grain, and other Supplement in the Upland Area.

The degree in which livestock can be attracted upland depends on topography, season, and other vegetation. When pressure on the riparian remains heavy there are even more strategies that can be implemented: Riparian Fencing, Harden Crossings, Water Access Points and even Planting Vegetation to stabilize and restore streambanks.



**Hardened crossings and water access points** are coarse gravel pads that provide livestock secure footing for crossing a stream or for drinking.



**Offsite water** can be developed by installing solar, hydraulic ram or conventional pumps; developing springs, wells, or guzzlers; and piping water to troughs.



**Riparian Fencing** can include or exclude livestock use along riparian areas depending on operator's objectives.

**The LCUWC works with landowners to implement riparian area restoration strategies mentioned above. Contact the LCUWC to learn more.**