



# Stream Crossing Fact Sheet

## What is a Low-Water Ford Crossing?

A Low-Water Ford Crossing provides safe travel over low flow, perennial streams during normal and low conditions. These crossings are designed to be stable enough to allow vehicles or livestock to pass and reduce erosion, but also provide enough water for aquatic life to travel up and down stream. They work well in areas with low traffic and that do not require access at all times. During high flow events, these crossings are not passable.



### Ford Crossing Versus Culvert

The advantage to a culvert crossings is that it allows travel during all flow periods. However, culverts also require maintenance, cost more and have a shorter life span. They can also cause problems for aquatic life passage. For low traffic areas, ford type crossings can be a good option.

### Where Ford Crossings Don't work

Carlton County has an abundance of trout streams, and the stream bed is important for fish spawning. Other crossing options should be used in trout streams or tributaries where fish spawn. Also, Ford Crossings do not work for large streams or where steep side slopes are present.

### Additional Considerations

If your crossing is to be used for livestock, it is important to keep animals from loafing in the stream. Livestock will severely erode the banks and can cause *E. coli* contamination downstream.



### Interested in Learning More?

Contact the Carlton SWCD at 218-384-3891.