FERRY POINT RIPARIAN RESTORATION PROGRAM

RIPARIAN FENCING MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

What is Riparian Fencing?

Riparian Fencing involves installing a fence along the edge of a water body such as a lake or river. The fence creates a buffer- a riparian area which is excluded from any upland uses. The fence can be used to ensure permanent exclusion from the area, or allow for short term access.

New fence installation; *Credit: Midge Lambert*

How does it work?

In the case of cattle ranching, the fence prevents direct access of livestock to the water's edge. Excluding the cattle from the riparian area provides the area with the space and time needed to naturally build up its vegetation and establish woody species of trees and shrubs. Alternative watering methods would have to be introduced if the cattle where watering from the river. The fence should be installed outside of the floodplain area to limit damage during spring runoff or years of high water. Alternatively the fence could be temporary and taken down in the winter and reinstalled in the spring.

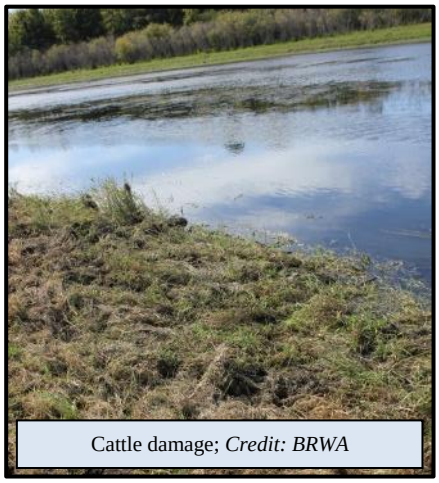
How does fencing help the Riparian Area?

Heavy, continual grazing alongside bodies of water has many negative effects. These include bank erosion, soil compaction, and removal of desirable vegetation from the riparian zone. Riparian areas with little vegetative cover are less able to filter nutrients and sediment out of runoff water, which leads to decreased water quality. Fencing allows native riparian plants to thrive and function normally because they are not being disturbed

What's the Cost?

Fencing is an expensive riparian management option, due to the amount of labour and maintenance required. However, it is also one of the most guaranteed techniques for improving riparian health when livestock are present.

There are many different kinds of fences that can be installed. It can be temporary or permanent; it can be constructed of barbed wire, high tensile wire, or woven wire; it may be electrified or not. The most common permanent fence for cattle is barbed wire fence construction. According to Alberta Agriculture and Rural Development's annual survey, barbed wire fence costs between $2700-$3500/mile (including labour and equipment).



Cattle damage; *Credit: BRWA*

BATTLE RIVER WATERSHED ALLIANCE

CASE STUDY: THE LAMBERT FARM

BUILDING A BUFFER

Some fences take a long time to build. This fence in particular was 14 years in the making.

July 2012

May 2013

August 2013

Credit: Midge Lambert

Midge's new fence has helped her and her tenant with their grazing management, while preserving the riparian area. Midge has loved seeing the plants growing back to their full glory

Midge Lambert moved back to the Prairies from Calgary after seeing an advertisement in the Western Producer for land overlooking the Battle River. She fell in love with the lands hills and coulees, and the beautiful view. She enjoys walking down to the river, picking the native chokecherries and Saskatoon berries, and has tried to limit her footprint on the land.

As she rents the land to a neighbour for cattle pasture, her project has been an example of cooperation. Midge wanted to protect the riparian area and installed a new fence along the upper ridge of a high water mark. Because long term riparian management was the goal of this project, permanent, barbed fencing was deemed the best option. It requires less maintenance and has a much longer life than temporary fencing. The fence was installed using a Drill System which has less of an impact on the landscape and does not trees to be cut down. The fence has already helped the riparian area grow back thicker and stronger than ever, while still allowing the pasture to be grazed.

Fencing Project Expenses

Description	Cost	Total
450 meters of Class "G" fence. Supply and install.	$7/meter	$3150
2x 24' Barb wire gates Supply and install	$175/gate	$350
Old fence removal (500m)	$500	$500
Brushing, deadfall clean-up	$300	$300
	Fencing Total	**$4515**