

# Corridor Fencing

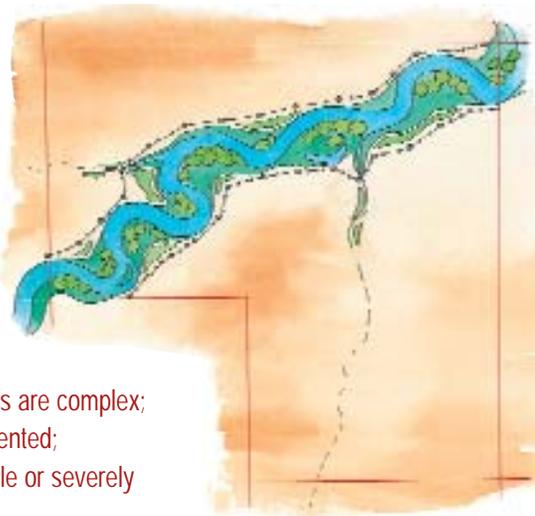
Corridor or exclusion fencing involves eliminating livestock grazing on a narrow fringe of the riparian area.



*Some riparian areas are too fragile and valuable for other reasons to be grazed by livestock. These areas are candidates for fencing, especially water sources like springs and seeps.*

Corridor fencing can be a valuable first step to raise awareness about riparian area management by demonstrating the effect of rest on riparian vegetation. It is probably best applied in the following situations where fencing can be a feasible option:

- ◆ where topography and vegetation patterns are complex;
- ◆ where land holdings are small and fragmented;
- ◆ for banks or shorelines that are very fragile or severely degraded;
- ◆ on low gradient streams, that are laterally stable and not subject to severe flooding; and
- ◆ where other resource values such as water quality or fish are of a higher priority.



Generally, corridor fencing is considered a measure of last resort when other management options have failed to restore riparian health. Fencing livestock out of the stream or lakeshore corridor may fail to deal with grazing problems (or other land use issues) on all of the landscape units which make up a ranch. Corridor fencing is expensive, requires proportionately more fencing for area protected than any other option and maintenance costs may, over the long term, out-weigh those of construction.

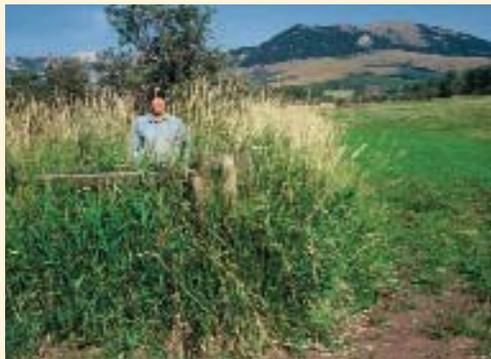


## The Elkhorn Ranch

Hilton and Alta Pharis from Lundbreck have co-operated with many of their neighbours in applying corridor fencing along Todd Creek to restore riparian condition. Corridor fencing has been a valuable tool in the community to demonstrate the value of management in restoring riparian vegetation and fish and wildlife habitat.

On the Pharis' Elkhorn Ranch, one field is used for the dual purpose of hay and pasture. Given the proximity of the site to the ranch headquarters and the fragile nature of the wooded drainage, corridor fencing was the favoured option. Access for livestock watering is provided through fenced access points.

After over ten years of recovery, there is some concern about the build up of vegetation in the riparian corridor. The Pharises are experimenting with some limited grazing using a few animals for a short period of time in the fall to reduce some of the buildup of old grass. This may have some additional beneficial effect on willow regeneration by reducing the competition between reed canary grass and willow shoots.



*Corridor fencing was very effective for rapid riparian recovery within five years.*



*Limited fall grazing removes some of the grass buildup and may spark some additional willow growth.*