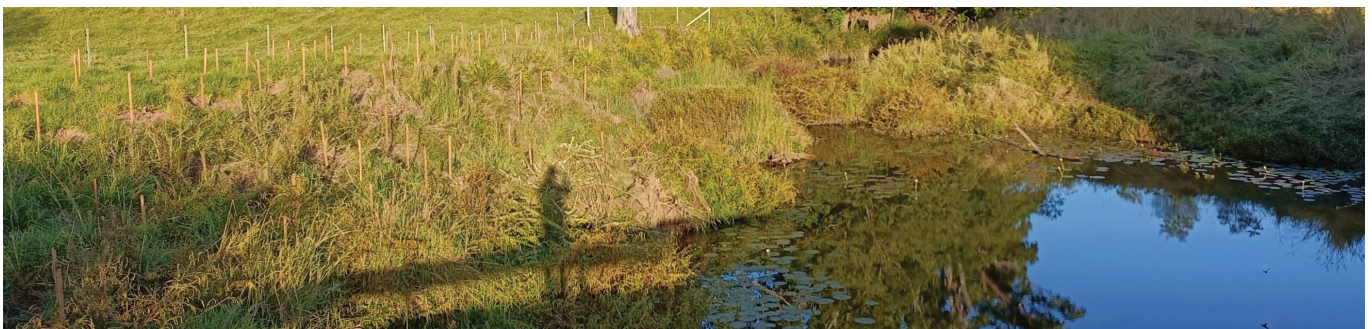


FENCING WATERWAYS

FACT SHEET



Bellinger
Landcare
Inc.



Fencing riparian zones is an effective way to reduce erosion, simplify stock management, and improve water quality and river health.

Recovery can begin quickly, as seen in the above photos of fencing and planting work undertaken as part of Bellinger Landcare's Regenerative Farming Project, with a grant from the Australian Government's Future Drought Funding.

What is a riparian zone?

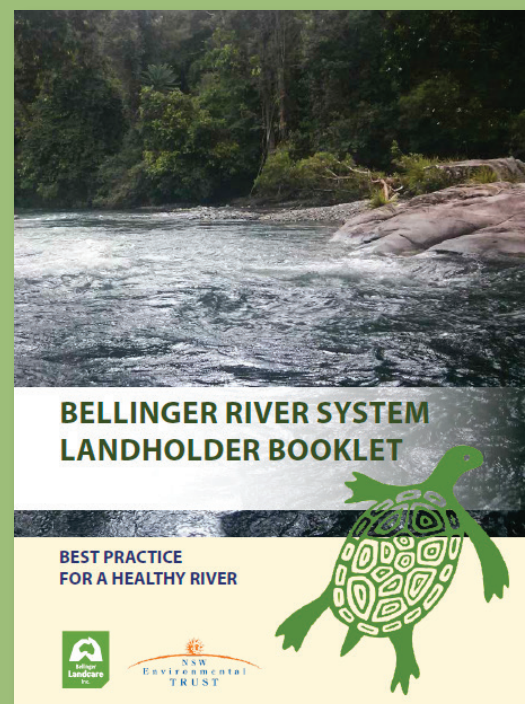
A riparian zone is the land that runs along rivers, creeks, estuaries, lakes and wetlands, and can be anything from a narrow strip to a wide corridor. Riparian zones provide habitat and support diverse communities of plants and animals.

Impacts of stock

Livestock can quickly degrade our riverbanks and waterways in a number of ways:

- Removing vegetation and suppressing natural regeneration
- Compacting and destabilising riverbanks
- Contributing to water pollution
- Increasing the impact of droughts and floods

An effective alternative to river access is the use of troughs to water stock. Sometimes electric fencing can be used to limit access to small areas on rotation, or permanent fencing for a small, erosion resistant area.



For more detailed info on fencing and Riparian areas, consult the Bellinger River System Landholder Booklet for examples of best practice stock management, fencing, stock watering and formed access points.

bellingerlandcare.org.au

FENCING WATERWAYS

FACT SHEET



Benefits of fencing riparian zones

Fencing, combined with good management within the fence-line makes it possible to:

- Retain nutrients and reduce erosion
- Produce cleaner water
- Reduce pests and diseases
- Increase biodiversity and pollination services
- Increase river health by regulating temperature (shading), supplying nutrients and nutrient loads
- Provide habitat and create wildlife corridors

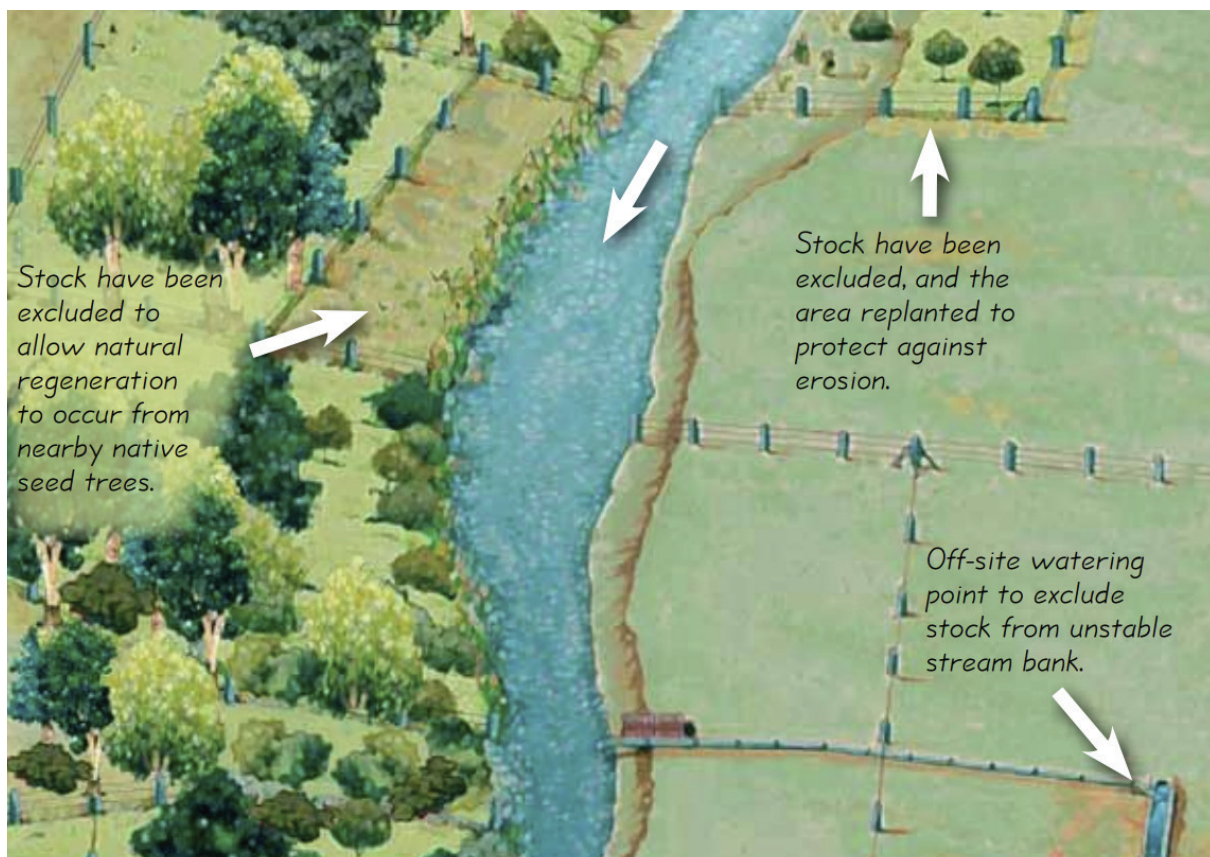
Helping riparian zones transition

Once a fence excludes stock from a riparian area, any invasive plants they have been grazing will grow happily.

- To encourage the growth of native vegetation will require some active management especially until

the native canopy begins to provide heavy shade. Because it will often make sense to fence an area larger than a landholder can regenerate, at least initially, professional contractors are extremely useful to get the fenced area into a state that the landholder can manage without too much difficulty. This need will diminish over time as the native vegetation recovers.

- A healthy riparian zone will have a variety of vegetation layers – groundcover, understory, canopy and emergent layer. Strategic planting of locally appropriate plants in the correct part of the riparian zone may accelerate this diversity in heavily degraded or cleared areas.



**BELLINGEN
SHIRE COUNCIL**

This fact sheet was produced as part of Landcare's *Building the Bellinger Shire Regenerative Farming Network* project, with support from the Bellinger Shire Bushfire Recovery and Resilience Program. The above figure appears in the [Bellinger River System Landholder Booklet](#), with thanks for the original to the Orara River Rehabilitation Project.

The booklet is available from bellingerlandcare.org.au.