



Poaching and Erosion by Livestock - Know the Rules

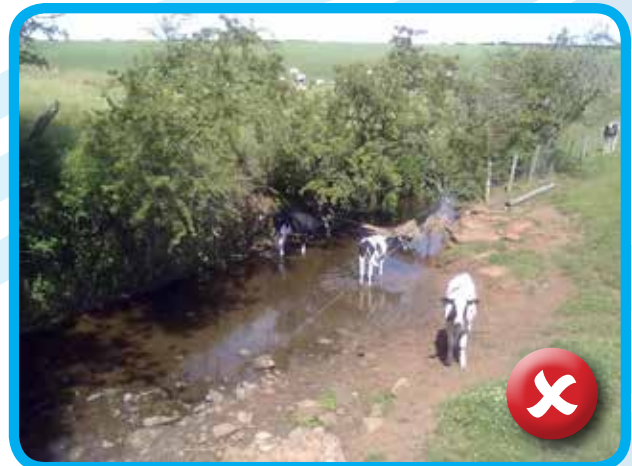
Significant poaching and erosion of land by livestock must be prevented within 5m of any ditch, burn, river, loch, wetland or coastal water.

Keep livestock at least 5m away from springs supplying drinking water for human consumption and from any wells and boreholes (unless capped to prevent contamination).

Prevent erosion from overgrazing or heavy poaching by livestock on land bordering a ditch, burn, river, loch, wetland or coastal water and at watering points and feeding areas.

Don't position livestock feeders any closer than 10m from any ditch, burn, river, loch, wetland or coastal waters or allow runoff from the feeding area to enter such waters.

Manage grazing; avoid overgrazing with livestock (except in cases where land is to be cultivated immediately after livestock removal).



Before: Unchecked livestock access has led to erosion and water pollution.



After: excluding livestock has reduced poaching and soil erosion.



Poaching and Erosion by Livestock

Poaching by livestock can remove grass and vegetation cover. This can make your land more susceptible to runoff, erosion and in severe instances may lead to bank collapse, especially during periods of wet weather. Increased field runoff can take soil particles, nutrients, pesticides and faecal bacteria (harmful to human and livestock health) into watercourses.

Good practice to protect water quality

Consider if livestock are causing significant poaching or erosion on your farm. Prioritise the worst cases for action. Ideas to reduce poaching risks may include:

- Make sure runoff from poached areas isn't tracking over land and into the water environment; either obviously over the field or out of sight through drains.
- Provide alternative in-field drinking water supplies. This could reduce the frequency of livestock regularly accessing the watercourse and so reduce poaching damage.
- Consider stocking levels in relation to poaching risk; reducing stock numbers or temporary exclusion may help reduce poaching risk in problem areas.
- Investigate funding opportunities in your area. For example, funding may be available for fencing and river crossings.

How can you benefit from these rules?

Reducing poaching can:

- Keep you on the right side of the regulations and help to protect your farm payments.
- Reduce the risk of losing land through bankside erosion.
- Conserve farm soils and nutrients.
- Protect water margins, benefitting livestock health.
- Contribute to protecting and enhancing local water quality for fish, wildlife and amenity use.

Need more information?

For additional information about reducing pollution risks and benefitting the farm business, see www.farmingandwaterscotland.org Alternatively speak to your local agricultural consultant.



This fact sheet is intended to act as a reminder of the rules. To see the rules in more detail, see www.farmingandwaterscotland.org