



Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy: Farming & Environment – Finding a Balance

Appalachian.org

What differences do you see in the two sides of the stream bank pictured below?

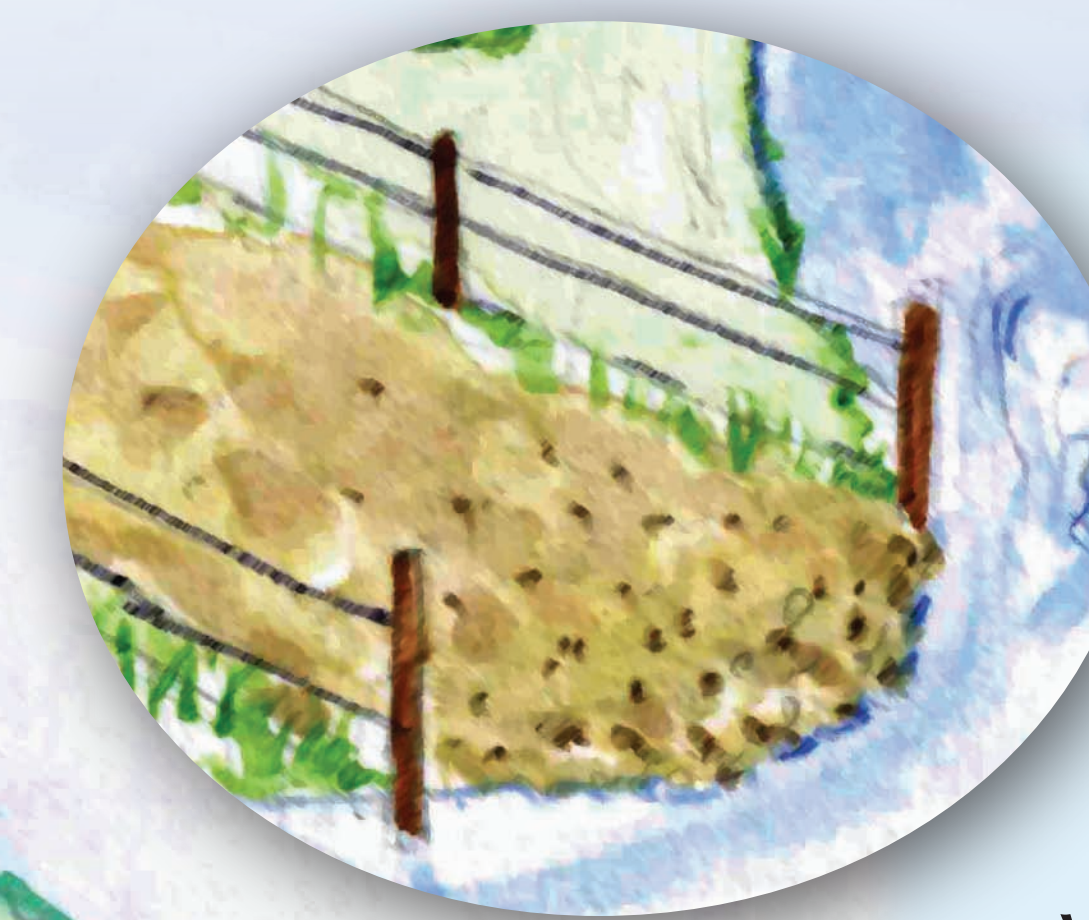
On SAHC's Community Farm, we are using Agricultural Best Management Practices to create a working farm that balances productive farming with improved water quality and wildlife management. Improvements illustrated below can be found throughout the farm. As you walk along the trail, see how many of these you can spot.



Off-stream water tanks provide healthy drinking water to livestock away from the creeks. This water is pumped from a well, so it is always clean, cold, and easy to access.



Fencing that keeps livestock in pastures and out of creek buffers prevents erosion of creek banks caused by livestock and allows vegetation to grow. This also limits time livestock spend in the creek, thus improving water quality.



A fenced, hardened crossing channels livestock into a specific area where they can safely cross the creek bed. The crossing is stabilized with erosion control fabric and gravel, which decreases the risk of erosion and livestock injury as they cross the stream.



The buffer area between streams and pasture land absorbs water runoff from pastures, stabilizes stream banks, and reduces damage caused by flooding. We planted over 25,000 native shrubs and trees in this 150 foot buffer. However, even a 10 foot buffer can make a big difference.



Over the long term, these practices can save the farmer money in both property maintenance costs and the increased health of the livestock herd. In this way, conservation and efficiency go hand in hand.

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