

FENCELINE TRACKING:

Why do horses do it?

What you can do to prevent it

Fenceline tracking is where a horse walks up and down the fenceline and wears a channel.

This causes problems such as mud, dust and water erosion (and all the associated problems that come with these conditions).

The soil becomes bare – to the point of creating a deep channel beside the fence. You may also see an increase in fence injuries (because the horse is so often in close proximity to the fence) and weight loss (as the horse spends less time eating and more time walking).

Horses that are kept alone are more likely to walk the fenceline as they attempt to get closer to other horses. Separation anxiety is a term used to describe why this behaviour is occurring. Horses are herd animals and they thrive better when not alone.

Some of the things that you can do to reduce this behaviour and its effects are to keep horses in pairs or herds and double-fence between paddocks and plant the corridor with trees to reduce visibility (and at the same time create habitat for wildlife).

Management of eroded areas may include filling the channel with crushed and rolled rubble to prevent further erosion.

Visit www.horseslandwater.com for a link to the HorsesLandWater publications *Action Planner for Horse Properties* and *Management Guidelines*, which include sections on fenceline tracking and land management.



Fence line tracking widened through feeding of horses on the fence line.

BOOK REVIEW:

Equine Behaviour for Veterinarians and Equine Scientists

by Paul McGreevy
Elsevier Limited,
369 pages.



For anyone – discerning horse owners, equine science students or practicing veterinarians – who is interested in finding out the reasons behind a range of horse behaviours, this is the book for you.

Using more than 500 photographs and illustrations, the book outlines the latest research and findings related to horse behaviour, including the common traits of crib biting, **fenceline tracking** and shying.

Can you help?

We are keen to hear any ideas you may have for research, information resources or other support which will help horse property managers.

You can win!

We would like to hear how you solved your fenceline tracking problems. Send in your 'before and after' photos of fenceline tracking – the best will win a \$50 fuel voucher.



Did you know you can contact the Greening Australia Exchange Program to receive free advice about land, flora and fauna?

HorsesLandWater Peri-Urban Project

Sharing the good news about sustainable land management and horsekeeping practices

This exciting new initiative brings together (for the first time with a national focus) horse owners, natural resources management advisers and researchers, all with a common goal – to improve the environment in which horses are kept and at the same time improve the health of our horses.

With responsible management of horse properties come many benefits, not just to horses and their owners, but also to the wider community and, perhaps even more significantly, to the wider environment.

A well-managed property has many benefits to the health of the horses that live there ... and the health of the owner's hip pocket.

Many common equine ailments such as greasy heel, rain scald, respiratory problems, eye problems and sand colic can be significantly reduced by good land management practices. By employing sound land management practices, horse owners can reduce feed and vet bills and increase the environmental sustainability of their properties. A reduction in dust, flies and run-off which causes erosion will also keep their neighbours happy.

A well-managed horse property has minimal erosion and minimises nutrient-rich water entering the waterways. This new project will lead to a very real win/win situation for all concerned.

The project will establish networking teams in the urban fringe around many of the major population centres in the country. Utilising the HorsesLandWater publications *Action Planner for Horse Properties* and *Management Guidelines* – combined with local knowledge and insight – the foundations will be provided for the development of standards and guidelines for the responsible management of land on which horses are kept.

Horse owners, clubs, organisations, groups with an interest in natural resources management, Councils and other land managers are all invited to participate in this project through registering at:

www.horseslandwater.com

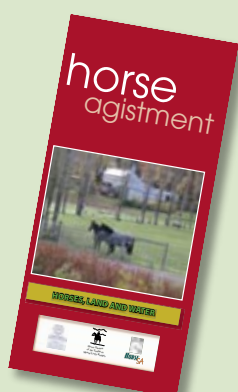
Project Partners:– Harness Racing Board (AHRB), Australian Pony Club Council (APCC), Melbourne Water, Environmental Protection Authority SA (Watershed Protection Office), Greening Australia Exchange Program, Tasmania South Natural Resources Management Board, Adelaide and Mt Lofty Ranges Natural Resources Management Board ... with more joining in!

A healthy environment = healthy horses, land and water

Please promote this project through your club or horse-related business website, noticeboard or newsletter.

New resources ... You can download the HorsesLandWater publication *Horse Agistment* from www.horsesa.asn.au

It contains information on 'What's wrong with bare ground?', 'Let's keep the soil', 'What are your horsekeeping options?' and a checklist of what to look for when inspecting agistment properties.



What's coming up?

Visit www.horseslandwater.com for more information on upcoming workshops and field days:

Managing horses on small properties – March 21 and 28, Tamborine Village Hall, QLD.

Pasture Bare Areas, Fenceline Tracking and Weeds – Free field day. 10.30 am, Friday April 14, Gawler, SA.

Practical Farming & Land Management Expo – Free community event, Saturday April 21, Whittlesea Agricultural Showgrounds. VIC.

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