Forage Fact # 55

Date:
February, 2011

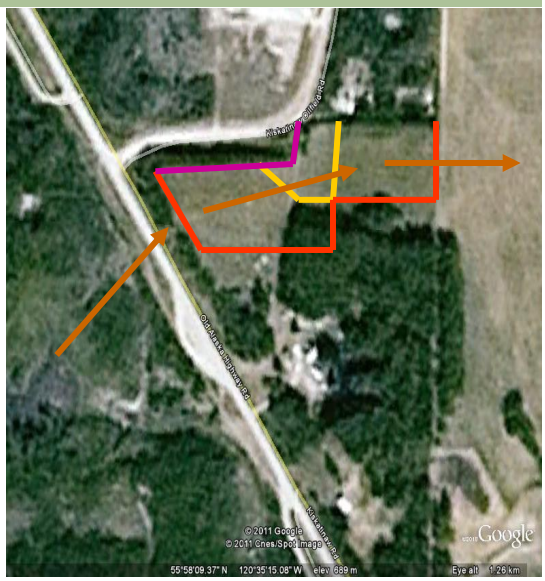
Winter Feeding with 3D Wildlife Fence

" After we set up the first 3D fence demo, I could picture putting these fences up around larger winter feeding areas."
Bill Wilson, Dawson Creek, BC

Objectives

A series of demos of 3 D (three dimensional) fencing were set up at the Burton Kabzems 20 acre pasture near the Kiskatinaw River wildlife corridor. The objectives of these demos were to:

1. Determine if a fence could be constructed mid winter in reaction to a wildlife problem in stored hay.
2. Expand the demo to keep wildlife out of winter feeding area.
3. Experiment with different fence construction systems to see which worked the best.
4. Keep urine, manure, nutrients and fiber in the field to improve the thin grey wooded soil.
5. Improve summer pasture productivity and resilience to drought.
6. Improving horse health by keeping them out of confined corral area longer.



Air photo illustrating location of 3D fencing demo in a 20 ac pasture near the Kiskatinaw River wildlife corridor.

- Historic wildlife traffic
- Demo around bales in Feb 2010
- Demo around winter feeding area
- Improvements for 2011

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Other Forage Facts in this series about 3 dimensional wildlife fencing:

FF# 52: 3D Wildlife Fencing Keeping Wildlife Away

FF# 53: Grain Bags with 3D Wildlife Fencing

FF# 54: Stackyards with 3D Wildlife Fencing

FF#55: Winter Feeding with 3D Wildlife Fencing

Future Forage Facts:
Swath Grazing with 3D Wildlife Fencing
Slant Fencing
Costs & Benefits of 3 D Wildlife Fencing

Field Days

The central location of this demo provides great opportunities for field days and sharing the successes & challenges of these fencing systems.

Rob Davidson & Julie Robinson demonstrate how to put up Powerflex posts & insulator system *(photo to right)*.

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Insulated powerflex posts & pin attachments for wire were a good option for mid winter fencing.

Fencing Description	Cost
Posts (20 ac pasture)	$470
Hardware: wire, gates, gate handles, bracing, insulators, tighteners	$430
Total Cash Costs *	**$900**

* labour, equipment & fencer not included in costs here.

Set up of 3D wildlife fence

In Feb, 2010 an inside line of fence was added 3' in from the existing electric fenceline. Power-flex posts (72") were used and holes were drilled for the pins to attach the electric wire.

Corners were braced by running wires back to existing wooden posts *(see photo to left)*.

Which gates worked?

Metal portable corral panels were used the 1st winter. This was a quick mid winter solution but the gates were the weakest part of the fence. In the 2nd winter, 3 different gates were tried. Overhead wire did not work well for horses and electrified bungee gates did not work well in colder temperatures. Of all the gates, the system of a gate handle with smaller gauge electric wire worked the best.

Two lines of Powerflex fencing installed in summer fall 2010 *(center of photo).*

Also pictured *(on left side of photo above)* are electrified bungee gates which worked extremely well for summer grazing but seem to sag and not hold their shape with snowfall and colder temperatures.

Did the 3D fences keep the wildlife out?

Diverting wildlife and changing historic habits is a learning process for both the animals and the fencer. From monitoring tracks, most deer and moose seem to be approaching the outside of the fence and diverting along it.

What next?

Despite a busy road, a few deer & moose seem to be jumping into the pasture over old barb wire fence on the north side, so 3D electric fence will be added in 2011. A 3rd inside wire will be added, and easier way to raise bottom wire when snow is deep.

Wildlife tracks diverted by 3D fence

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