

## Kitz Farm Agriculture Conservation Improvement Project

**Location:** Mount Pleasant Township

**Date of Installation:** Fall 2023

**Design Features:** Stabilized Animal Heavy Use Area, Stabilized Stream Crossing, Subdivision Fencing, Riparian Forest Buffer, Livestock Access Watering Ramp, Spring Development with a Watering Trough, Grassed Waterway, and Subsurface Drainage

**Cost:** \$107,600.00 of Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program funds with \$50,000.00 of match contributions for a total project cost of \$157,600.00.

**Client:** John D. Kitz

**Project Partners:** Westmoreland Conservation District, State Conservation Commission, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

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*Spring development with watering trough between stabilized animal heavy use area and pasture.*

### Project Specifications

The Kitz Farm Project was Westmoreland County's first Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) project. This project consisted of installing streambank fencing along 2,400 feet of stream and planting 385 trees/shrubs to create a riparian forest buffer. A stabilized animal heavy use area (AHUA) was installed to improve an animal concentration area (ACA) which was discharging nutrients and sediment directly to the stream. The stabilized stream crossing was installed for cattle to access additional paddocks and supplemental water access. Subdivision fencing was installed to create an additional paddock for rotational grazing, which will allow the paddocks more time to recover from the grazing pressure. Within the newly created paddock, a livestock access watering ramp was installed. The spring development with a watering trough provides water located within the stabilized AHUA or the adjacent paddock. A grassed waterway was installed along the edge of the stabilized AHUA to keep clean water directed around it. Subsurface drainage was also installed to help direct surface runoff and underground drainage around the AHUA.

## Benefits

Approximately 2,400 feet of stream were improved with the additions of Agriculture Best Management Practices (BMPs). BMPs were imperative to reduce the accelerated erosion and sedimentation occurring at this farm. Additionally, limiting cattle access to the stream and installing a riparian forest buffer reduces nutrient loads to the stream. This project is located within the Jacob's Creek Watershed which is classified as a Cold Water Fishery by the Department of Environmental Protection, therefore improvements to the stream were important for maintaining this status and meeting goals within the watershed's implementation and restoration plan. In addition to reducing erosion and sedimentation, this project also improved the health of the cattle with more drinking water options, improved pasture quality, and decreased mud.



**Before:** Muddy animal concentration area with runoff leading directly to the stream.



**After:** Stabilized animal heavy use area, watering trough, and stream crossing installed.