

Crossing & Culvert Maintenance



TOOLS

- Shovel
- Saw
- Wheel Barrel

* **Permits and heavy equipment may be required:** Depending on the size and/or detail of the project.

Crossing & culvert maintenance includes ensuring the structural integrity and capacity of the structure is intact, and that it functions well under average daily flows, as well as during large storm events. Lasting benefits can include:

- Protection from potential crossing failure
- Providing fish and wildlife passage
- Protection for upstream & downstream property flooding



Clogged culverts can cause flood damage to upstream and downstream properties.

Maintaining crossings and/or culverts located on your property ensures that they will function correctly both on a **daily basis** and **during flood events**. This includes large bridge crossings, as well as smaller culverts.

87

A failed crossing can cause damages to structures or property upstream or downstream of the structure. Ensuring that your crossing doesn't fail during a flood also ensures that there is emergency access to your property. Aquatic habitat connectivity and fish passage is another benefit of a property maintained crossing or culvert.

When investigating a crossing to determine if maintenance is necessary, there are four general areas that need to be evaluated:

1st

Investigate the crossing itself to make sure that the road, abutments and embankments are all structurally sound and in good condition.

2nd

Regularly inspect the area directly upstream of the crossing to check for any loose large woody debris that could potentially clog the culvert.

3rd

The **structural integrity** of the actual culvert underneath the road crossing is important in your evaluation. Inspect for abrasion or rust on the metal and ensure the bottom of the pipe is in good condition, without holes in it. This includes checking that flows stay in the culvert as opposed to flowing around the culvert.

4th

Inspect the inside of the culvert for debris and clean out as needed.

Many culverts are designed to have a soft bottom, meaning that there will be streambed material in the culvert as opposed to the metal being exposed. This allows for better fish passage and aquatic habitat connectivity.

Do's & Don'ts of Crossing & Culvert Maintenance

Do's

- Familiarize yourself with the original intent / design (when is it clogged, when is it not)
- Consider wildlife/fish passage accessibility
- If unsure when inspecting, reach out to an engineer or your watershed coalition to help evaluate the capacity/size of the culvert

Don'ts

- **Don't** alter the structure of the culvert, abutments or embankment
- **Don't** release sediment into the stream
- **Don't** disturb wildlife homes