Avoid Crossings
Stream crossings can be a primary location for non-point source pollution and runoff from a logging job.

Because of that, stream crossings should not be installed unless no other way is available to access the land and resources on the other side of the stream.

FPG Summary on Stream Crossings
There are rules in place that specify minimum standards that you must meet if stream crossings are installed or used. These rules fall under Section .0203 of the FPGs. A summary includes:

- If the situation allows, stream crossings should be avoided.
- Stream flow must not be obstructed
- Do not use streams as skid trails or access roads
- Protect the stream banks and channel from damage and erosion
- Divert sediment and runoff from the crossing location
- Provide ground cover within 10 working days of the initial soil disturbance.

The Bridgemat Concept & Bridgemat Examples
If a stream crossing is needed, one option is to use “bridgemats”.
These are portable heavy steel or wooden panels that can be laid across the stream or ditch.

Bridgemat Crossing Locations
When selecting a location to make a bridgemat stream crossing, look for a spot that has:
1. A right-angle crossing over the channel
2. A place where the channel is narrow
3. Solid footing on either side to support bridgemats & equipment
4. High ground on both sides at the crossing location

Other Uses (DOT ditches, soft spots)
Bridgemats can also be used for crossing over DOT roadside ditches, and for use at logging decks, or in soft soil spots on a skid trail.

Installing Bridgemats
When setting the bridgemats in place, keep your equipment out of the stream channel - place the mats across the channel first, then adjust them as needed to insure a firm, stable crossing. In some cases, brush and small vegetation may not have to be removed since the weight of the mat will hold it down.

X Do not leave a center gap between the travel lanes of the bridgemats

Close this center gap between panels with another mat, strong boards, metal panels, delimbed logs, or something to keep dirt and debris from getting into the water.
Trees can be left standing as ‘bumper trees’ to guide the dragged logs straight-across the bridgemats. These guide trees help keep the tops of the skidded logs or trees from dragging debris into the stream channel.

**Using & Inspecting Bridgemats**

**Water Quality**
- Occasionally inspect the mats while in use and clean off excess mud, soil, or debris.

**Safety**
- The position of the mats may need re-adjusting as they are being used, if slippage occurs.

**Bridgemat Removal & BMPs**
- Remove the mats carefully to minimize damage to the stream bank and channels.
- Use BMP water diversions such as waterbars, sediment pits, turnouts, or other methods to control runoff from getting into the stream.
- Establish ground cover to prevent accelerated erosion into the water.

**Where to Get Bridgemats?**

*The N.C. Forest Service has wood & steel bridgemats statewide for temporary loan-out. We also maintain a list of known builders / sellers of bridgemats & road mats.*

This list is available in the “Water Quality” section of NCDFR web site [www.dfr.state.nc.us](http://www.dfr.state.nc.us)

Or call the nearest NCDFR office, listed below:

- Sylva District (828) 586-4007
- Asheville District (828) 667-5211
- Lenoir District (828) 757-5611
- Mount Holly District (704) 827-7576
- Lexington District (336) 956-2111
- Hillsborough District (919) 732-8105
- Rockingham District (910) 997-9220
- Fayetteville District (910) 437-2620
- Rocky Mount District (252) 442-1626
- Whiteville District (910) 642-5093
- New Bern District (252) 514-4764
- Elizabeth City District (252) 331-4781
- Bertie County Headquarters (252) 794-3725