

## SETTING UP A HEAVY USE AREA

A Heavy Use Area (HUA) is where your sheep and goat intensively use the area during the winter time. Setting up an HUA protection helps to stabilize the ground surface and protect your animals.

### SITE SELECTION

Select the highest and driest level ground available, with access to barn or cover.

### SIZE

Approximately 1000 square feet for 6 sheep or goats depending on budget, number of animals and space.

### REDIRECT ROOF RUNOFF

Install gutters with downspouts for shelter or barn. Protect downspouts from damage by livestock or equipment. Outlet water into pastures away from livestock housing and working facilities.

### GRADING

Grade the area to a 1 to 2% slope away from your barn or shelter. Either dig down 6 inches removing soil or grade existing surface. Soil must slope 1.25-2.5 inches every 10 feet.

### FOOTING CHOICES

Hog fuel or road cloth & washed coarse sand.

## WSU SKAGIT COUNTY PASTURE MANAGEMENT OUTREACH & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM



[extension.wsu.edu/skagit/  
pasture-management/](https://extension.wsu.edu/skagit/pasture-management/)

This project has been funded wholly or in part by the United States Environmental Protection Agency under assistance agreement PC-01J18001 to the Washington State Department of Health. The contents of this document do not necessarily reflect the views and policies of the Environmental Protection Agency, nor does mention of trade names or commercial products constitute endorsement or recommendation for use. WSU Extension programs and employment are available to all without discrimination. Evidence on noncompliance may be reported through your local WSU Extension Office.

# SHEEP & GOAT WINTERING

DRY HOOVES PROMOTE  
HEALTHY ANIMALS



# THE PROCESS

**NOTE: HUA SHOULD BE COMPLETED WHEN GROUND IS DRY**



Install non-woven geotextile fabric to keep footing material from mixing with native soil (Material Specification MS-209). Using filter fabric is especially important on clay or silt loam soils. Lay the fabric down like the shingles on your house roof, keeping in mind how the water will flow. If you need to overlap fabric, overlap at least 2 feet to allow for shifting. Coarse, washed sand is the best choice for sheep and other livestock with small manure pellets. This will allow you to rake manure from the surface easily. Rake manure daily for best footing lifespan. Coarse, washed sand will provide better drainage than a fine sand.



Install a retention perimeter (kick-board) of some kind – pressure treated lumber for example. Anchor fabric with garden staples or rebar along sides, or allow the fabric to run up sides and be wrapped in wood to retain the footing. Otherwise, your gravel will disappear into the Skagit mud.



Spread the footing at least 6 inches deep, compacting after the first 4 inches and again at 6 inches. Use a water hose to wet the area and compact it until the surface is firm. It is best to have a grass filter strip with no livestock access on downslope. Grass will filter the water as it runs off your heavy use area. This filter strip should be at least 20 feet wide on the downslope side of the confinement area and be maintained in dense, healthy grass.

**Or:** With hog fuel, lay down at least 12 inches of product covering the area, possibly mounding in the middle depending on delivery method. Plan to remove and replace 100% of hog fuel material every 1-2 years to prevent build-up of pathogens.



All photos contributed by Jeannie Allen