



## Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS)

The Farmer's Conservation Program for Canada

**Clean water, healthy soils, natural areas, and biodiversity.  
All Canadians want these resources, but who provides them and who pays for them?**

Across Canada, the vast majority of environmental management is done by individual farmers, ranchers, and landowners. Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) is a proposal for an agricultural conservation program that taps into this opportunity to partner with local people and their communities to create environmental change.

This proposal, the first of its kind in Canada, recognizes the value of conserving and restoring Canada's natural capital, while also respecting and rewarding the important role that rural landowners play in environmental management.

ALUS is also unique because it is incentive-based. Farmers have always acted as land stewards, and have provided ecological goods and services (EG&S) to Canadians – even though this often comes at a cost to the individual. This program proposes a “fee for service” concept, where the landowner is paid a fair price for the environmental benefits that he or she creates and maintains through a variety of land management tools, like natural or ecologically sensitive lands, riparian areas or wetlands.

This program would build local capacity for agricultural conservation. It's a national program with a local focus, and proposes integration with existing agricultural institutions to minimize costs to taxpayers and maximize measurable environmental results. ALUS complements the current suite of agricultural and environmental programs already on the landscape that are managed by government and the private sector.

Most importantly, farmers are on-side with ALUS as the conservation program that offers practical, long-term solutions. ALUS will mobilize farmers, ranchers, and landowners as conservationists and provide a national opportunity to talk about the environmental contributions of agriculture and the ecological service that farmers provide.

ALUS enjoys support from a wide range of agricultural, non-governmental, conservation, and governmental organizations – including the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. It was developed by farmers as a practical solution to environmental issues, and is also trade-neutral and not production or price distorting for traditional agricultural products.

Groups of ALUS supporters in several provinces across the country are currently working on pilot project proposals to test ALUS as a national agri-environmental initiative. The first pilot was launched in Manitoba in November 2005.