



Farmers growing a better environment.

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For immediate release

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ALUS Sign-up Still Open to Eligible Landowners *Program Deadline Set for October 13*

Oak River, MB – Farmers and landowners in the Rural Municipality of Blanshard have until Friday, October 13 to enroll in a new agricultural conservation pilot project and receive payments for the environmental services they provide on farmland.

“ALUS: An Ecological Goods and Services Research Project - Manitoba” is the first program of this kind in Canada, and will pay eligible landowners for maintaining or enhancing their land in four areas: wetlands, riparian areas, natural areas like woods or grasslands, and ecologically sensitive lands that are prone to erosion, salinity, or other types of degradation.

“This Ecological Goods and Services pilot project provides financial motivation and encouragement to Manitoba’s agriculture producers as conscientious stewards of the land,” said Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Initiatives Minister Rosann Wowchuk. “It is encouraging to Manitoba’s future that producers take their role in preserving the environment for future generations so seriously.”

Steve Hamm, local project manager, says that interest in the project has been strong so far. “Nearly 70% of all landowners have already expressed their interest in participating in ALUS, and now we’re working in partnership with everyone in the RM to identify eligible acres and complete the sign-up process.”

Interested landowners can contact Hamm at the Little Saskatchewan River Conservation District (LSRCD) office in Oak River or the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) office in Hamiota to get more information or enroll in the program. The information gathered in this research project will help to direct the development of pilot projects in other regions across Canada and provide direction as governments consider developing a national ALUS program.

The project in the RM of Blanshard has confirmed funding for two years, with plans to continue landowner payments in a third year.

The ALUS research project receives its funding from the Advancing Canadian Agriculture & Agri-Food (ACAAF) program, the Delta Waterfowl Foundation, the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council, Manitoba Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives



(MAFRI), and the RM of Blanshard, with technical expertise provided by Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation, LSRCD, MAFRI, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada - Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA). The ALUS concept was initially developed by Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP). The project is being administered by the Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation.

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Backgrounders: ALUS fact sheets on eligible services are available online at
www.kap.mb.ca/alus.htm