

# Manitoba's Alternative Land Use Services Pilot Project

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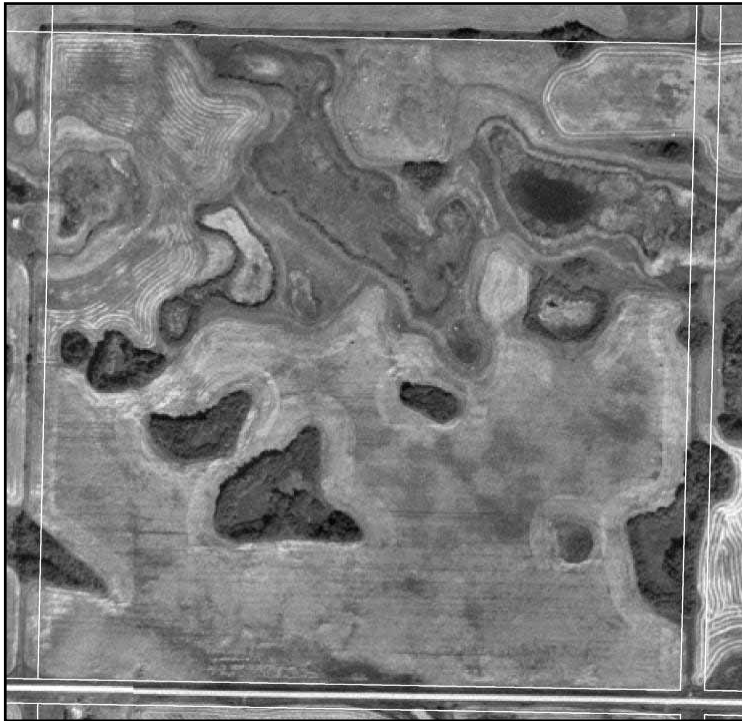
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## Summary

- Why are we considering this approach?
- Background
- ALUS Misconceptions
- Process
  - ALUS Delivery





Why  
ALUS?

Aerial  
Photo in  
1995



Aerial  
Photo of  
the same  
land in  
2005

## So what can we do?

- In Manitoba, we are looking at a variety of options
  - Extension, awareness and education
  - Changes in practices
    - BMP programs
    - Cost shared programs to accelerate adoption of changes
  - Payments for ecosystem services
    - If the problem is that the market does not provide signals to conserve, provide new signals

## Who can participate in ALUS and What is ALUS?

- All landowners in Blanshard Municipality
- ALUS is a voluntary, incentive-based environmental program that recognizes and rewards the positive contributions that farmers make to clean air and water and biodiversity through their land management practices.
- ALUS pays producers for land use practices which provide EGS to society.
  - Public benefits provided on private land at private cost



## Timeline of Manitoba ALUS

- 1999 the Keystone Agricultural Producers (KAP) released a paper titled “Alternate Land Use Services” (ALUS)
- Delta Waterfowl Foundation became involved.
- 2000 Little Saskatchewan River Conservation River (LSRCD) became involved in investigating a pilot project.
- April 2004 Blanshard pilot project proposal distributed
- August 2004 RM of Blanshard (local municipality) pledged support
- November 2005 Pilot launched
- Currently in the third year of a three year pilot
  - Third year sign-up about to begin.

## Common Misconceptions

- ALUS pays for doing nothing.
- ALUS is an investment. ALUS pays for maintenance.
- Producers would have done it anyway.

As we  
have seen,  
not always.

Producers  
respond to  
market  
signals.



## Process

- Organizing Structure
  - Organizations and Roles
  - Committees
- ALUS Delivery
  - From Advertising to the Cheque

## Roles of Organizations Involved

- MASC (Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation, formerly Crop Insurance) – Administration, Delivery, Audit expertise
- LSRCD (Little Saskatchewan River Conservation District) – Local Management, Delivery
- MAFRI (Manitoba Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives) - Management Committee Chair, Logistics, Technical expertise
- KAP (Keystone Agriculture Producers) – Communications, Financial
- MHHC, PFRA, DWF – Technical expertise
- University of Manitoba - Evaluation

## ALUS Committees

- Management Committee
  - MAFRI, AAFC/PFRA, KAP, Delta, MASC, LSRCD/ RM of Blanshard
- Technical Committee
  - MAFRI, AAFC/PFRA, MASC, LSRCD, MHHC
- Local Advisory Committee
  - Local farmers, town resident
  - Provided input on program design, serve as a “reality check”
  - Doubles as the Appeals Committee

## Program Delivery Steps

1. Landowner finds out about ALUS
2. Landowner contacts LSRCD or MASC to express interest in ALUS, informs agency of locations of owned land
3. Eligible acres determined by LSRCD or MASC.
4. Application form reviewed, landowner signs application.
5. Monitor/audit/inspection for compliance with application conditions.
6. Landowner receives payment in December.

## Step 1 and 2

1. Landowner finds out about ALUS
  1. Public Meetings
  2. Media
  3. Promotion of word of mouth
    - Small geographic area
2. Landowner contacts LSRCD or MASC to express interest in ALUS, informs agency of locations of owned land

## Step 3

3. Eligible acres determined by LSRCD or MASC.
  1. Preliminary indications of eligible areas are determined and mapped with GIS.
  2. Landowner visits office to verify areas, acre counts, and indicate type of agricultural activity (no use, haying, or grazing).
  3. Once consensus is reached concerning eligible areas, landowner completes MASC application form.
  4. If consensus cannot be reached, an appeal process is available.

## Step 3

Land types eligible under ALUS

1. Wetland Services
2. Riparian Buffer Services
3. Natural Area Services
4. Ecologically Sensitive Land Services

### 1. Wetland Services



Wetlands refer to land areas on farms that hold spring-season, semi-permanent or permanent water. These include bogs, marshes and swamps.

## ALUS Criteria for Wetland Services

Under the ALUS program, all isolated wetlands and wetland complexes including associated uplands are eligible under wetland services. Areas eligible for wetland services will be delineated along the field boundary (crop edge).

1. An isolated wetland is a single wetland that is entirely surrounded by land with agricultural use.
2. A wetland complex is a series or group of wetlands interconnected contiguously by associated permanent cover upland areas.

## ALUS Criteria for Wetland Services

3. Wetlands could include margins or uplands sown down with permanent cover to interconnect wetlands.

The ratio of permanent cover upland areas to wetlands may not exceed 5 to 1.

- 3 wetlands in a cultivated field
- 2 acres per wetland
- 6 acres total
- The established upland area around these 3 wetlands may not exceed 30 ac (6 acres \* 5)
- Total wetland complex may not exceed 36 acres

4. Restored wetlands by plugging an existing drain would be included.

### Payment Structure for Eligible Practices

- a) Maintenance of wetlands with no agricultural use \$15.00/acre/year  
- Leave in natural state (No burning, draining, filling or clearing)
- b) Maintenance/enhancement of wetlands, haying permitted \$7.50/acre/year  
- No burning, draining, filling or clearing  
- Haying permitted between July 15th and August 31st inclusive.
- c) Maintenance/enhancement of wetlands, grazing permitted \$5.00/acre/year
- Minimum 75% ground cover surrounding wetland areas
  - Continuous season long grazing not permitted (no grazing before July 1st)
  - Less than 15% of the total shoreline has evidence of pugging\*, rutting\* and or hummocking\*
  - Maintain average minimum height for grasses 10-15 centimetres
  - Adequate off-site watering system required at a minimum 15 metres setback from water source

## 2. Riparian Buffer Services



A riparian buffer includes the riparian area plus areas of perennial cover that extend beyond the riparian area. A riparian buffer is an area of land developed or conserved to reduce erosion, intercept contaminants and provide wildlife habitat along the side of a watercourse or water body.

### **3. Natural Areas Services**



Natural areas are lands that have not been cultivated for 20 years or more excluding wetlands and riparian areas. These areas have grass or bush, or any combination of these two.

### **4. Ecologically Sensitive Land Services**



Ecologically sensitive lands are areas that are currently cultivated or have been cultivated in the previous 20 years and are subject to severe water erosion, wind erosion, flooding, salinity, runoff or leaching. Includes land classes 4, 5, and 6.

Questions

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