



Delta Waterfowl Press Release



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ALUS in Alberta: A New Approach for Habitat Conservation

Lloydminster, ALBERTA—Alternative Land Use Services or “ALUS” was launched in Alberta during a ceremony at the Cattlemen’s Corral, a local event at which the first producers to join the project were signed up.

“We are excited to bring ALUS to Alberta,” said Jim Fisher, Director of Conservation Program for the Delta Waterfowl Foundation. “ALUS is a community- led, farmer-delivered approach to conservation that has tremendous potential to protect, restore and create fish and wildlife habitat on farms and ranches.

Fisher said that while Delta’s focus is on habitat for waterfowl, like pintails and mallards, there is a wide range of benefits to other wildlife (game, nongame and at-risk species) and the environment, including the working lands of farmers and ranchers.



“ALUS is an ecological services project that pays producers to provide public goods, such as clean air, water and wildlife from their land,” said Daryl Watt, chair of the local ALUS Partnership Advisory Committee. “Under ALUS, we will be working with producers directly to protect and restore wetlands, put in buffers along creeks and waterways to improve water quality and enhance fish habitat, plant native grasses around wetlands and in the uplands for bird-nesting habitat, re-introduce flowering plants for native pollinators, and improve habitat for grouse and other species along shelterbelts, and in restored, natural areas.”

Watt is also a county councilor and says that the ALUS project is enthusiastically supported by the County of Vermilion River, and has been welcomed by community leaders.



The Alberta Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) project was officially launched today at the Cattlemen's Corral in Lloydminster. Landowner and rancher Sean McGrath (sitting right) signs the first ALUS agreement with Howie Bjorge (standing) of the County of Vermilion River and ALUS Coordinator Joan Gabrielson (sitting left).

Fisher said ALUS was developed by farm organizations across Canada and Delta Waterfowl, in response to increasing public demands for ecological goods and services, such as wildlife habitat, clean air and water, habitat for at-risk wildlife species and other natural benefits. ALUS builds on current government programs like Environmental Farm Plans, and seeks the participation of governments, farming and ranching organizations, conservation groups and others. Fisher said ALUS is proposed as an alternative to increasing reliance on regulations to solve environmental problems and, he said, is a “win-win solution for farmers and ranchers, governments, hunters, anglers, naturalists and society.”

Under ALUS, Fisher said producers and their community provide leadership on long-standing environmental problems, like improving water quality and supply, flood prevention, carbon sequestration and creating fish and wildlife habitat.

Presently, producers must cultivate or utilize most of the land available to produce food, fibre and biofuels, because they are the only marketable commodities from private lands. Under ALUS, producers use their unique farming and ranching skills to provide ecological services in addition to food and fibre, and are rewarded by society for these benefits. ALUS positions producers as environmental solution providers,

and transforms many on-farm environmental risks into assets.

“ALUS offers new opportunities for conservationists and outdoor enthusiasts to pool their efforts with producers and the community to improve fish and wildlife habitat,” said Kerri O’Shaughnessy of the highly successful Alberta “Cows and Fish” program, and member of the new ALUS advisory group. “We will be helping evaluate the ALUS project to improve habitat management and ensure ALUS delivers benefits to fish, wildlife and the producer community.”

To date partner organizations that support ALUS either with funding or direction includes the Alberta Conservation Association, Alberta Sustainable Resource Development, County of Vermilion River, Cows and Fish, Delta Waterfowl, and Wildlife Habitat Canada.