

# Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership

Competitive. Innovative. Resilient.

## Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program (RALP) Overview Extension Training



Alberta

Classification: Protected A

Canada

# Topics

- RALP Objective
- Important Dates
- Eligibility
- Funding
- Cost Determination
- Funding Categories
- BMP Activities
- Applications
- Stacking Options
- Program Resources



## RALP Objective



- Increase environmental resiliency of agricultural landscapes by accelerating adoption of BMPs that maximize EG&S, including:
  - Carbon sequestration\*
  - Water quality
  - Biodiversity enhancement
- Funding is offered through a per-acre payment for a 3-year term to provide better support for long-term establishment of BMPs

\*Note: carbon sequestered under RALP will be ineligible for carbon credits/GHG offsets for the duration of the 3-year land use agreement

# Important Dates



## **Intake Cycle Schedule (retroactive to start of current intake year)**

Year 1: April 3, 2023 – November 30, 2023

Year 2: February 1, 2024 – November 30, 2024

Year 3: February 1, 2025 – November 30, 2025

## **Wetland Intake Cycle Schedule (retroactive to start of current intake year)**

Year 1: April 3, 2023 – January 31, 2024

Year 2: February 1, 2024 – January 31, 2025

Year 3: February 1, 2025 – January 31, 2026

Note: Applicants must implement BMP activities within the first year

## Eligibility – Applicant Type



- Primary producer responsible for the day-to-day management of an agricultural operation (annual crop, bee, or livestock) in Alberta that produces at least \$25,000 worth of farm commodities annually
- Groups such as Grazing Reserve Associations and/or Community Pastures
- Indigenous (First Nation, Métis Nation, Inuit): A First Nation, Métis Nation or Inuit single person or a First Nation, Métis Nation or Inuit organization managing agricultural land.

## Eligibility - EFP



- Must have a current EFP Certificate or letter of completion or is currently working on an EFP and is in a position to receive an EFP certificate or letter of completion before the end of the project term.
- The EFP must have been completed within 10 years from the date the proposal is received, or it will not be considered valid.
- To get started on your EFP visit: [www.albertaefp.com](http://www.albertaefp.com)

# Funding



- Projects are for a 3-year term
- Funding maximums:
  - ❑ **\$150,000** for active primary producers
  - ❑ **\$300,000** for Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, Metis) and groups including Grazing Reserve Associations/Community Pastures
- Minimum payment under the program is **\$2,000**
- 50% of the funding amount will be paid following application approval and remaining 50% is paid at the end of the project term

# Cost Determination



- Per-acre fee calculated\* as:

**Implementation Costs** + **Opportunity Cost** (if applicable) + **Impact Adjustment**

- **Implementation Costs:** project costs that are **eligible for funding**. Some items/activities have a set cost maximum.
  - Minimum Requirements:** items/activities that a BMP project must include in order to be eligible for funding.
  - Allowable Enhancements:** optional elements that are eligible for funding if the applicant chooses to include them.
  - Strongly encourage quotes/invoices be submitted to substantiate eligible expenses to streamline application review and approval process. Invoices and receipts **will be required** for all incurred expenses.

\*Exception: Wetland category has a flat fee per acre.



# Cost Determination

Implementation Costs + **Opportunity Cost** (if applicable) + Impact Adjustment

- **Opportunity Costs:** means the Program's estimate of the profit that an Applicant foregoes by implementing a practice change.



# Cost Determination



Implementation Costs + Opportunity Cost (if applicable) + **Impact Adjustment**

- **Impact Adjustment:** per acre payment adjusted up based on carbon sequestration capacity, number of livestock, number of acres, improvement of water quality and biodiversity (if applicable) and degree of practice change over the 3-year land use agreement.

<b>Funding Category</b>	<b>Eligible BMP Activity</b>
<b>Pasture Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Riparian area management</li> <li>• Rotational grazing</li> <li>• Adding legumes to existing forage stands</li> <li>• Targeted grazing for invasive plant bio-control</li> </ul>
<b>Cropland Conversion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual cropland conversion to native forages</li> <li>• Annual cropland conversion to tame forages</li> <li>• Strips/ Grass waterways/ Salinity</li> <li>• Intercropping</li> </ul>
<b>Tree Establishment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shelterbelts</li> <li>• Eco-buffers</li> <li>• Establishment of pollinator strips</li> </ul>
<b>Wetland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wetland restoration and construction of new wetlands</li> </ul>

# Pasture Management

## Riparian area management

Managing livestock around riparian areas provides protection for aquatic life, riparian vegetation, wildlife habitat and water quality.

- Riparian area management plan must show incremental improvement over current management

New water developments will not be covered.

**Minimum Requirement** – your project must include any one of the following:

- Fencing for controlled access or exclusion
- Purchase and planting of native trees and shrubs and/or non-invasive introduced species of grass and legumes
- Seed and seeding operation
- Off-site watering system
- Accredited technical support (P. Ag or CCA)
- Watercourse crossing

## Allowable Enhancements

Any items listed above

***Cost determination: Implementation Costs + Impact Adjustment***



# Pasture Management

## Rotational grazing of tame pasture or native rangeland

Emphasis on the four rotational grazing principles as well as:

- Must show incremental improvement over current management
- Pasture must be divided into paddocks for managed grazing
- Include protection of riparian areas/water sources, and
- Include monitoring of forage health.

New water developments will not be covered.

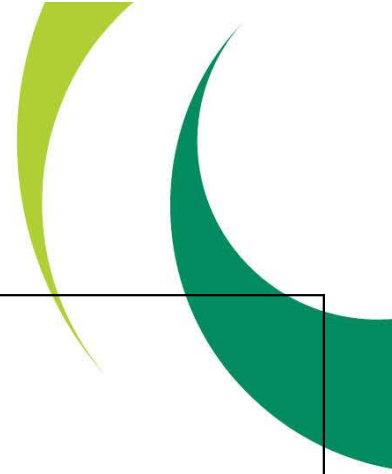
## Minimum requirement

- Cross-fencing for controlled access

## Allowable Enhancements

- Off-site watering systems
- Accredited technical support (P. Ag or CCA)
- Watercourse Crossing

***Cost determination: Implementation Costs + Impact Adjustment***



# Pasture Management



## **Adding legumes to existing forage stands**

Addition of alfalfa or other perennial legumes into established pasture and hay fields.

## **Minimum requirement**

- Legume seed
- Inoculant
- Seeding costs if rejuvenating a pasture

## **Allowable Enhancements**

- Accredited technical support(P. Ag or CCA)

***Cost determination: Implementation Costs + Impact Adjustment***

# Pasture Management

## Targeted grazing for invasive plant bio-control

Controlling invasive weeds, shrubs, and trees with livestock grazing.

Grazing plans should include:

- Detailed map of the site.
- Prescription for grazing that includes stocking rate, grazing frequency and animal movement
- Information about access to water.
- Show incremental improvement over current management

**Minimum Requirement** – your project must include any one of the following:

- Grazing service fees for contracting a targeted grazier
- Fencing may include cross fencing and permanent fencing
- Bio-control for weeds
- Off-site watering systems
- Accredited technical support (P. Ag or CCA)

*Please note: if you own your own livestock for targeted grazing you cannot apply for grazing fees.*

## Allowable Enhancements

Any items listed above

**Cost determination: Implementation Costs + Impact Adjustment**

# Cropland Conversion



## Annual cropland conversion to native forages

## Annual cropland conversion to tame forages

Additional support if converting to native forages, to allow for the increased cost and risk associated with establishment.

## Minimum requirement

- Forage seed (tame or native)
- Seeding costs

## Allowable Enhancements

- Perimeter fencing
- Ag Lime or equivalent
- Soil testing (**required** if requesting funding for Ag Lime)
- Off-site watering systems
- Accredited technical support(P. Ag or CCA)

## Annual cropland conversion to native forages:

**Cost determination: Implementation Costs + \$200 Opportunity Cost + Impact Adjustment**

## Annual cropland conversion to tame forages:

**Cost determination: Implementation Costs + Impact Adjustment**



# Cropland Conversion



## **Strips/ Grass waterways/ Salinity**

Establishment of perennial forages in water runs, saline areas, or saline recharge zones.

## **Minimum Requirement**

- Forage Seed (tame or native)
- Seeding costs

## **Allowable Enhancements**

- Ag Lime or equivalent
- Soil testing (**required** if requesting funding for Ag Lime)
- Accredited technical support (P. Ag or CCA)

***Cost determination: Implementation Costs + \$200 Opportunity Cost + Impact Adjustment***

# Cropland Conversion

## Intercropping

Includes increasing new soil-building crops into rotations and increasing legumes in rotations for a minimum of 3 years.

**Scenario 1 Intercropping:** interplanting 2 annual crops at the same time (must include one pulse). Both crops **must be taken to harvest** (seed, grazed, silage).

**Scenario 2 Cover Crop Cocktail:** 3 or more annual crops planted together (must include one legume or pulse)

## Minimum Requirements

### Intercropping:

- Pulse seed (purchased or owned) – must be an amount that results in a reasonable seeding rate for the acres claimed
- Seeding costs

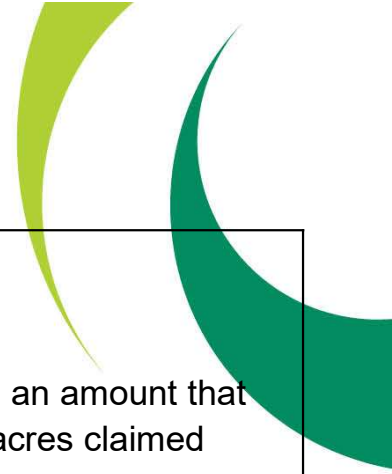
### Cover crop cocktail:

- Pulse, legume, and other annual crop seed (cereal or oilseed crops are ineligible expenses)
- Seeding costs

### Allowable Enhancements

- Off-site watering systems.
- Perimeter fencing
- Accredited technical support (P. Ag or CCA)

***Cost determination: Implementation Costs + Impact Adjustment***



# Tree Establishment

## Shelterbelts

Establishment of permanent shelterbelts.

## Eco-buffers

Creation or widening of buffers in fields adjacent to surface water sources.

A well-designed project should be able to provide:

- Bank stabilization and erosion control
- Water temperature cooling/evaporation reduction
- Water quality enhancement
- Flood risk reduction and groundwater recharge
- Wildlife habitat

## Minimum Requirements

- First-year establishment costs, such as site preparation and planting.
- Purchase of trees and shrubs

## Allowable Enhancements

- Wood and plastic mulch
- Irrigation system components
- Soil and water testing
- First year fencing expenses for the purpose of excluding livestock from the shelterbelt.
- Accredited technical support (P. Ag or CCA)

## Shelterbelt & Eco-buffers if converting cropland:

**Cost determination: Implementation Costs + \$200 Opportunity Costs + Impact Adjustment**

## Shelterbelt & Eco-buffers if converting forages:

**Cost determination: Implementation Costs + \$100 Opportunity Costs + Impact Adjustment**

# Tree Establishment

## Establishment of pollinator strips

Recommend planting a diversity of plants with different blooming periods across the growing season. Native plant species or non-invasive plant species.

- Planting must include more than one species.
- Annual flowering commodity crops not eligible.
- Eligible on acres of existing cropland and margins, not eligible in pasture or rotational grazing land.
- Include management schedule for maintenance

## Minimum Requirements

- First-year establishment costs, such as site preparation and planting.
- Purchase of trees, shrubs, grass or wildflower seed.

## Allowable Enhancements

- Wood and plastic mulch
- Irrigation system components
- Soil and water testing
- Accredited technical support (P. Ag or CCA)

## Establishment of pollinator strips if converting cropland:

**Cost determination: Implementation Costs + \$200 Opportunity Costs + Impact Adjustment**

## Establishment of pollinator strips if converting forages:

**Cost determination: Implementation Costs + \$100 Opportunity Costs + Impact Adjustment**

# Wetland

## Wetland Restoration & Construction of New Wetlands

Wetland restoration and/or construction of a new wetland\*

Funding is available to agricultural landowners participating in Alberta Environment and Protected Areas Wetland Replacement Program (WRP). All grants are subject to WRP terms and conditions.

Completion report is required showing the number of acres & date of completion.

**\*Not applicable on Crown Land.** Can apply on municipal or county land leased for agricultural production with a valid lease agreement.

<https://www.alberta.ca/wetland-replacement-program.aspx>

**Cost determination:** Flat rate payment of \$1000 per acre

## BMP Activities – Cost Maximums

<b>Accredited technical support (P. Ag or CCA)</b>	Up to \$2,000.00	Cost per new BMP	
<b>Ag lime or equivalent</b>	Up to \$200	\$/ac	Includes product, equipment and labor. One time payment.
<b>Fencing - Barbed/page wire</b>	\$10	\$/m	Includes materials and installation
<b>Fencing - Electric</b>	\$5	\$/m	Includes materials and installation
<b>Grazing service fees</b>	\$6,000	Cost per new BMP	For contracted grazier only, not applicable if using own livestock. Cost is a maximum amount
<b>Seeding operations</b>	\$30	\$/ac	Includes equipment and labor
<b>Soil testing</b>	\$200	\$/quarter section	Includes sampling and analysis. Required if requesting funding for Ag lime or equivalent
<b>Trees</b>	\$5	\$/tree or shrub	Includes seedlings and labor
<b>Pollinator strips - grass or wildflower seed</b>	\$60	\$/ac	Includes seed and labor
<b>Impact adjustment</b>	Payment per acre may be adjusted up to 15 % if the impact adjustment is included on the application. This will be based on the carbon sequestration capacity of the BMP activity, number of livestock, number of acres, improvement of water quality and biodiversity (if applicable) and degree of practice change over the three year land use agreement.		

## BMP Activities – Material on Hand

- Funding is provided for some materials on hand:
  - Fencing materials (materials only, cannot be existing fence)
  - Seed (encouraged to have receipts where possible)
- Materials on hand that **do not qualify** for funding:
  - Ag lime or equivalent material
  - Off-site watering systems
- **Note:** a claim for materials on hand may trigger an initial inspection to confirm materials prior to application approval.



## Applications






- Multiple BMPs can be applied for in the same application but you cannot apply for the same item or same acres multiple times if being used for multiple BMPs.
- All expenses and activities need to be implemented by the end of the application year
- Important to plan your budget to cover expenses for the full 3-year term
- Critical to have an accurate acre estimate for each BMP project. Can use tools such as [GeoDiscover Alberta](#) or [Google Earth](#) to map out acres. Acres must be clearly labelled on the map for **each** BMP.



## Riparian Area Management Project

- 280 acres.
- Cross fencing with temporary electric to be determined as we herd across the first time. Will end up with 6 pastures.
- Putting in electric fencing to add to the existing fence already in place, as well as 4 off site watering systems. To manage herd movement through sensitive riparian areas.

### Legend

-  Blue line would be temporary electric fence
-  Fence with page wire and temporary electric fence
-  Shelter and processing areas, and solar waterers



# Applications

- Funding is not guaranteed until application has been approved. If the application is missing information, the applicant will be notified to submit the missing information. Approval will not proceed until all information is received.
- If your project takes place on public land (partially or fully) you need approval from a Provincial Rangeland Agrologist
- Wetland category has a separate application form



# Applications



- Part of the application review will include identifying projects for site inspections
- Project verification may involve virtual verification or on-site visits to confirm activity has been implemented as described
- Project verifications may occur at any time within the 3-year project term and may involve more than one inspection
- **Note:** the Final Report will require confirmation the project has been maintained for the 3-year term. If a year-end inspection shows a project has not been maintained through to the 3-year end date, the final 50% of funding will not be paid.

## Stacking Options



- RALP funding cannot be stacked with any other government programs (federal, provincial, municipal)
- Cannot stack projects with ALUS – their agreements include the rights to carbon credits from the project, which makes the project ineligible for RALP
- Exception: Wetland projects completed under WRP that have received landowner payments are still eligible for RALP funding (projects completed under WRP must have been completed within the same intake cycle year as the RALP application)

# Program Resources



**Sustainable CAP Website:** [www.alberta.ca/sustainable-cap.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/sustainable-cap.aspx)

**RALP Website:** [www.alberta.ca/resilient-agricultural-landscape-program.aspx](http://www.alberta.ca/resilient-agricultural-landscape-program.aspx)

**Email:** [RALP@gov.ab.ca](mailto:RALP@gov.ab.ca)

**Phone:** 310-FARM (3276)

# Thank You!

## Questions or Comments

Agriculture and Irrigation

