



Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS)
C/O Joan Gabrielson, ALUS Project Coordinator
County of Vermilion River, Alberta
PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ALTERNATIVE LAND USE SERVICES (ALUS) PILOT PROJECT LAUNCHES IN THE COUNTY OF VERMILION RIVER

Lloydminster, ALBERTA: On January 20, 2010, the ALUS Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC), in cooperation with the County of Vermilion River (CVR) launched the Alternative Land Use Services Pilot Project in the Province of Alberta. The launch ceremonies occurred at the Cattlemen's Corral – Crop Visions in Lloydminster and the first ALUS agreements were signed by participating producers. Farmers and ranchers, officials from the County of Vermilion River, conservationists, and others from CVR and across the Province were in attendance for this ground-breaking, grassroots event.

ALUS is a concept pioneered by grassroots farm organizations across Canada to help meet the growing demand for environmental products, such as clean air and greenhouse gas reductions, clean water, fish and wildlife habitat, conservation of species at risk and development and maintenance of appealing agricultural landscapes. The Keystone Agricultural Producers and Delta Waterfowl originally started ALUS in Manitoba. “ALUS is a positive way of enlisting producer skills and rural communities to help satisfy the growing environmental demands of society,” says Daryl Watt, Chair of the PAC, “these next generation farm



The Alberta Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) project was officially launched January 20th 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).

‘products’ are referred to as “ecological goods and services,” and farmers are uniquely positioned to provide these benefits to society. The County of Vermilion River is pleased to be the first county to demonstrate ALUS in Alberta.”

“The purpose of the ALUS pilot project in CVR is to demonstrate the feasibility of a community- led, producer- delivered model for providing Canadians with environmental benefits from farm and ranchlands in Alberta,” said Sean McGrath, whose ranch serves as an ALUS demonstration site. McGrath says ALUS builds on current producer and conservation programs, but adds the new dimension of paying farmers for providing ongoing environmental services and benefits. “ALUS uses incentives to turn environmental risks and liabilities on the farm into assets, reducing the need for more regulations. I believe in ALUS because it recognizes and encourages those leading the way with an environmental bent.”

“Producers have always been good stewards of the land,” said Jim Fisher, Director of Conservation Policy for the Delta Waterfowl Foundation, “but ALUS allows producers to do much more to solve environmental problems like water supply, flood control and providing habitat for wildlife, by rewarding them for the ecological goods and services that deliver these benefits from their land.” Fisher says, “ALUS has grown in Prince Edward Island and Ontario, where it enjoys enthusiastic support from communities, producers, rural and urban Canadians. Once started, ALUS tends to gain rapid support in a community, because its such a common sense solution to environmental problems,” added Fisher, “We’re confident ALUS will meet the expectations of producers and the community here in the CVR and we look forward to expanding ALUS with a broad spectrum of partners interested in the environment and farming.”

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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. PAC producer members include Doug and Cheryl Livingstone, Sean McGrath, Trent Selte, Ed Parke and Ralph Chamberlain.

