



IAF



FARMLAND
ADVANTAGE

September 28, 2021
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SCCP Conservation Connections



FARMLAND
ADVANTAGE

History



- Farmland Advantage was developed by **Dave Zehnder**, a rancher from the East Kootenays
- It is a **Payment for Ecosystems Services** program that contracts farmers and ranchers to protect and enhance the natural environment in which they operate.
- Part of a **nature-based solutions** approach to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- Modeled after other Payment for Ecosystem Services programs in Canada (**ALUS**)
- Pilot scale for several years, recently brought under Investment Agriculture Foundation to bring to a **provincial-scale** initiative.



Process



- The program **targets** farms in pre-identified **high-value ecosystem** areas using GIS.
- It is **complimentary** to the existing Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) and Beneficial Management Practices (BMP) programs.
- Currently focusing on two distinct ecosystems: **riparian and grassland**.
- Farmers are approached, **health assessments and restoration prescriptions** are produced.
- **Partners** are engaged to undertake the field work.
- Farmers are paid **modest financial incentives** to maintain the restored riparian and/or grasslands areas – intent is long term engagement.

Steering Committee

- BC Agriculture Council
- BC Cattleman's Association
- BC Dairy Association
- BC Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries
- University of British Columbia
- BC Ministry of Environment
- Ducks Unlimited
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Gathering Voices Society – Indigenous Non-Profit



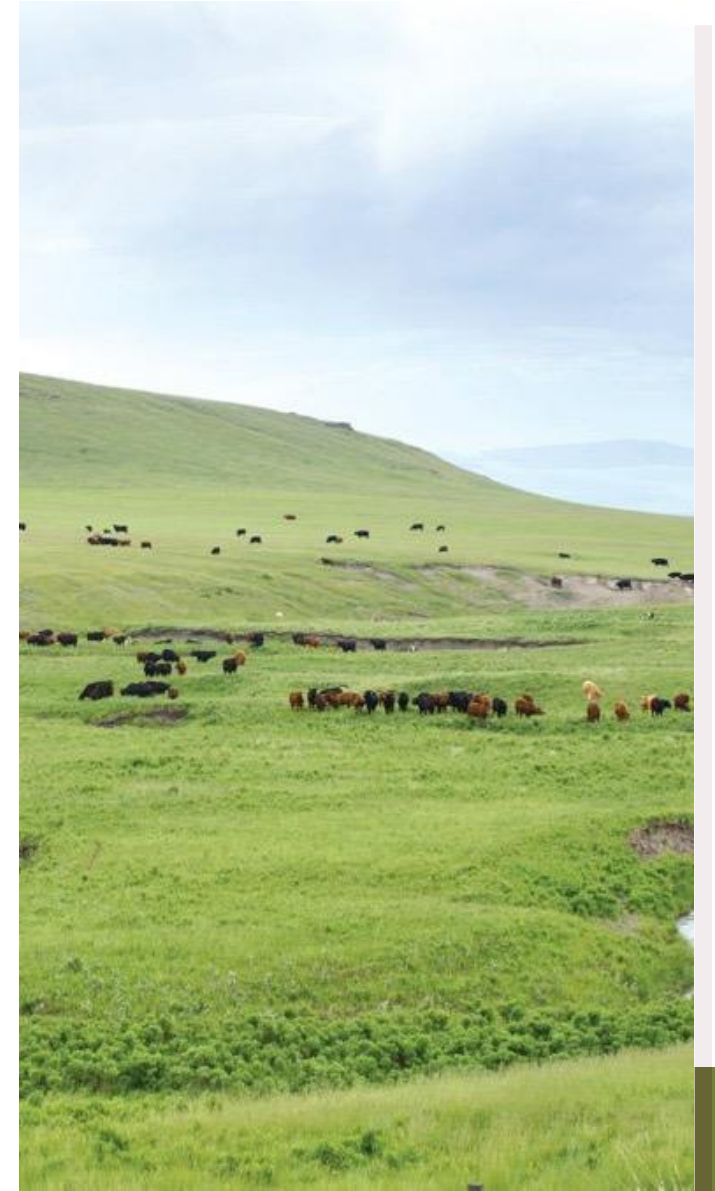
Key Concepts

FLA's Top Ecosystem Priorities

- Increase **on-farm habitat** for biodiversity
- Improve **water** quality and quantity
- Reduce threat of **wildfires**
- Maximize **soil** health and **carbon** retention & sequestration

Ecosystem Services and Co-Benefits

- Clean water and flood mitigation
- Wildlife and pollinator habitat
- Native grasslands protection
- Minimize in soil erosion and loss
- Carbon retention & sequestration



Riparian Ecosystems

- Much of BC's agricultural land is located on **valley bottoms** adjacent to rivers, lakes, streams, and wetlands.
- Riparian areas on agricultural lands contain some of the most **valuable salmon** and **species at risk** habitat in BC.



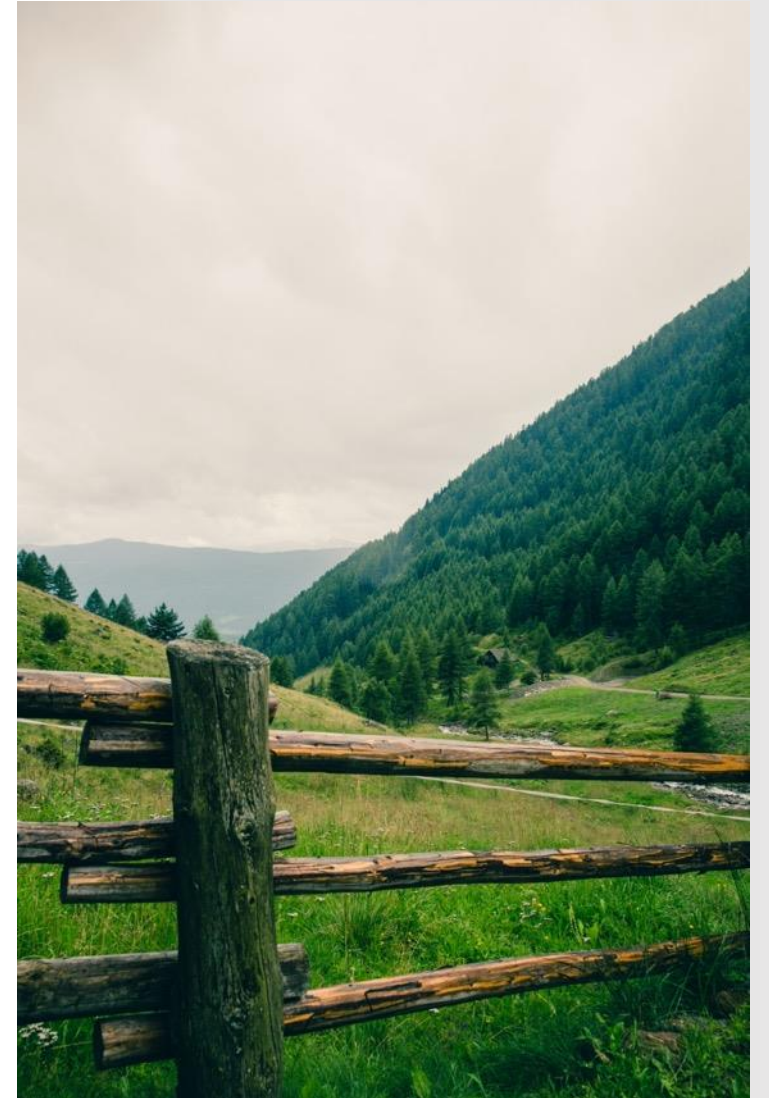
Riparian Prescriptions

- Fencing to reduce livestock access,
- Removing invasive species and replanting native species,
- Installation of beaver guards,
- Improvements to bank stabilization.



Riparian Target: 30 sites

Koksilah (Cowichan, Vancouver Island)	5-6 sites
Little Campbell River (Surrey)	5-6 sites
Bertrand Creek (Langley)	8-9 sites
Upper Columbia Headwaters (East Kootenays)	12-13 sites
Half dozen on waiting list for 2022	



Grasslands Ecosystems

- More than **30%** of BC's Species at Risk depend on grasslands for their survival.
- Grasslands occupy **less than 1%** of the province's total area (~698k ha).
- Impacted by **over-grazing** and crop practices.
- BC's existing grasslands store an estimated 74-222 million tonnes of carbon.



Grasslands Prescriptions

- Fencing to manage livestock grazing,
- Removing invasive species and replanting native species,
- Thinning forest in-growth and removal of lower limbs on trees.
- Result is healthy grasslands: diversity of plant species, habitat, soil nutrient and carbon retention.



Grasslands Target: 20 sites

South Okanagan - Similkameen

North Okanagan - Shuswap

Southern Interior – Cariboo

Sites have been identified and contact is underway

Timeline slightly delayed due to wildfires



Next Steps

- Restoration field work begins
- Data collection and analysis
- Payments issued to farmers
- Long term financing mechanism
- Diversification of the funding base



Funders

- Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries
- Healthy Watersheds Initiative
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Windermere Farmers Institute
- Shuswap Indian Band
- Township of Langley
- Ducks Unlimited



Thank-You

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