



# Policy #6309

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**Policy Title:** Riparian and Ecological Enhancement Program Funding

**Policy No.:** 6309

**Approval:** County Council

**Effective Date:** December 16, 2015

**Approved Date:** June 19, 2024

**Last Review Date:** June 19, 2024

**Supersedes Policy No.:** Internal Policy 6300

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**Policy Statement:** Mountain View County provides Riparian and Ecological Enhancement Program Funding to encourage the protection and preservation of the Region's unique and precious natural environment through the agricultural community.

**Purpose:** To establish the criteria for Riparian and Ecological Enhancement Program Funding to support the implementation of beneficial management practices on agricultural lands in the county.

**Principles:**

1. Under the Agricultural Service Board Act the Mountain View County Agricultural Service Board promotes, enhances, and protects viable and sustainable agriculture.
2. Council provides annual funding to the Agricultural Service Board to allocate under the Riparian and Ecological Enhancement Program within the County.

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Procedure Title:                    **Riparian and Ecological Enhancement Program Funding**

Procedure No.:                    **#6309-01**


Approval:                         **Agricultural Service Board**

Effective Date:                    **December 16, 2015**

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Last Review Date:                **June 19, 2024**

Supersedes Procedure No.:     **Internal Procedure 6300-01**



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## 1. Definitions

- 1.1 **"Environmentally Significant Areas (ESA)"** means areas which are vital to the long-term maintenance of biological diversity, soil or water quality, or other natural process, both locally and in a regional context. (Jennings & Reganold, 1991). Guidelines for the identification of Environmentally Significant Areas are outlined in Policy 6012.
- 1.2 **"Forbs"** means herbaceous, broad-leaved plants with annual tops (flowers) and leaves with net-like veins (Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, 2016).
- 1.3 **"Riparian Areas"** means the green zones around lakes and wetlands, also known as a floodplain, shoreline, bottom lands or stream banks, whether groundwater or surface water influenced, these areas tend to be greener, lusher and more productive than the adjacent uplands.

## 2. Purpose

- 2.1 Funding for the implementation of beneficial management practices in riparian and sensitive upland areas for Mountain View County landowners.
- 2.2 Rate payers of Mountain View County with agricultural lands annexed within the towns encompassed by Mountain View County may be eligible for funding from external grants the County receives to implement beneficial management practices in riparian and sensitive upland areas. To be eligible the Urban municipality must confirm that the project lands are part of a long range environmental conservation or protection plan.
- 2.3 Funding may be approved for riparian and sensitive area fencing, off-site watering systems, creek crossings, native and non-invasive introduced species of trees, shrubs, grass, grass-like species, and forbs (all species subject to approval by Agricultural Services staff, no ornamental species are allowed). Dugout projects will only be considered as part of a larger management change and where there is a linkage to a natural water body. Funding is for new projects, repairs on existing projects are not eligible.
- 2.4 Materials for these projects are the only fundable items; labour and equipment are not eligible.

**3. Criteria**

- 3.1 Applicants complete the application form and submit it to Mountain View County Agricultural Services. Upon receipt of the application, staff will arrange a site visit with the applicant to obtain pictures of the project site and fill in any missing information required for the rating form and project presentation prepared for review by the Agricultural Service Board (ASB).
- 3.2 If an application is received for a project such as a spring development or crossing, all applicable permits (Provincial and Federal) must be in place at the time of application.
- 3.3 The applications will be presented to the ASB by Agricultural Services staff at an ASB meeting for funding approval.
- 3.4 Projects are rated out of 50, if the score is 36-50, up to 100% of the fencing, creek crossing, seed or seedling material costs may be covered, if the score is 25-35, up to 75% of the material costs are covered, scores less than 25 will not be considered for funding.
- 3.5 Permanent fencing material costs will be funded based on the amount requested to a maximum of \$5/m (\$1.50/ft) or actual costs, whichever is less. Wildlife Friendly Fencing variations must be installed.
- 3.6 Approved Offsite watering systems, portable electric fencing, fencing panels and seedlings for shelterbelts and eco buffer plantings will be funded at 50% for projects scoring 36-50 and at 25% if the score is 25-35. The maximum cost per seedling eligible for funding is \$5.00. The maximum funding towards portable electric fencing is \$2,500.
- 3.7 The maximum amount an applicant can receive per voluntary project is \$5000.00. Funding amount allocated will be prorated based on other funding received for the project.
- 3.8 Applicants are encouraged to apply for funding through other programs.
- 3.9 Applicants will be notified of funding approvals. All projects should be completed by end of the year. Funding may be held over into the following year if an extenuating circumstance delays completion of the project. Funding will be allocated to the applicant when the invoices for the project have been received and a site inspection has been completed by Agricultural Services staff.
- 3.10 Lease holder and landowner will need to sign off on the contract, stating the project as described will remain permanent for a minimum of five (5) years.
- 3.11 A Riparian Health Assessment is completed by Agricultural Services staff the year the project is funded and again five (5) years later, to measure the success of the project.
- 3.12 Signs are provided by Mountain View County to be posted at all project sites to recognize their completion and contributors to the project.