



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: December 16, 2015

Reviewed Date: September 10, 2018

Supersedes Policy No.: Internal Policy 6300

Policy Statement: Mountain View County provides Riparian and Ecological Enhancement Program Funding to encourage the protection and preservation 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 serve the needs of the County's Agricultural population.

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 for the funding of the Riparian and Ecological Enhancement Program within the County.
3. Council receives grants for Riparian and Ecological Enhancements that the County is responsible for allocating.
4. Council delegates' allocation of funding within approved budget to the Agricultural Service Board for Riparian and Ecological Enhancement Projects.

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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Amended Date: November 28, 2018

Amended Date: May 7, 2020

Amended Date: December 14, 2020

Amended Date: April 21, 2022



Supersedes Procedure No.: Internal Procedure 6300-01

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 "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.
- 1.3 "Forbs" means herbaceous, broad-leaved plants with annual tops (flowers) and leaves with net-like veins (Alberta Agriculture and Forestry, 2016).

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 natural water bodies. 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.
- 3.2 If an application is received for a project such as a spring development or crossing, all permits (Alberta Environment and Parks, Fisheries and Oceans Canada etc) must be in place at the time of application.
- 3.3 The applications will be presented to the Agricultural Service Board (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, or native 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 ecobuffer plantings will be funded at 25% for projects scoring 25-50. The maximum cost per seedling eligible for funding is \$5.00. The maximum funding towards portable electric fencing is \$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 such as the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.
- 3.9 Applicants who are applying for funding for projects that have been registered as an Environmental Reserve Easement (ERE) or Restrictive Covenants (RC) as a condition of their subdivision or development permit are eligible to a maximum of \$3000.00/project. Only projects on lands that are zoned Agriculture are eligible for funding.
- 3.10 Notification of the funding approvals will be sent out to the applicant. All projects should be completed by end of the year. Funding may be held over into the following year if extenuating circumstance cause delay of the project completion. 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.
- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 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.
- 3.13 Signs are provided by Mountain View County to be posted at all project sites to recognize their completion and contributors to the project.