



## Your Partners in the Field

For more information about wetland conservation and restoration programs that offer financial incentives:

[www.ducks.ca](http://www.ducks.ca) or 1-866-479-3825

For information about wetland stewardship, the Alberta Wetland Policy and related legislation:

[www.aep.alberta.ca](http://www.aep.alberta.ca)  
(search "Wetlands")

Or call: 310-3773

For more information about the On-Farm Stewardship grant and other programs, visit:

[www.growingforward.alberta.ca](http://www.growingforward.alberta.ca)

Partners in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan include Ducks Unlimited Canada, Government of Alberta, Environment Canada and the Nature Conservancy of Canada.

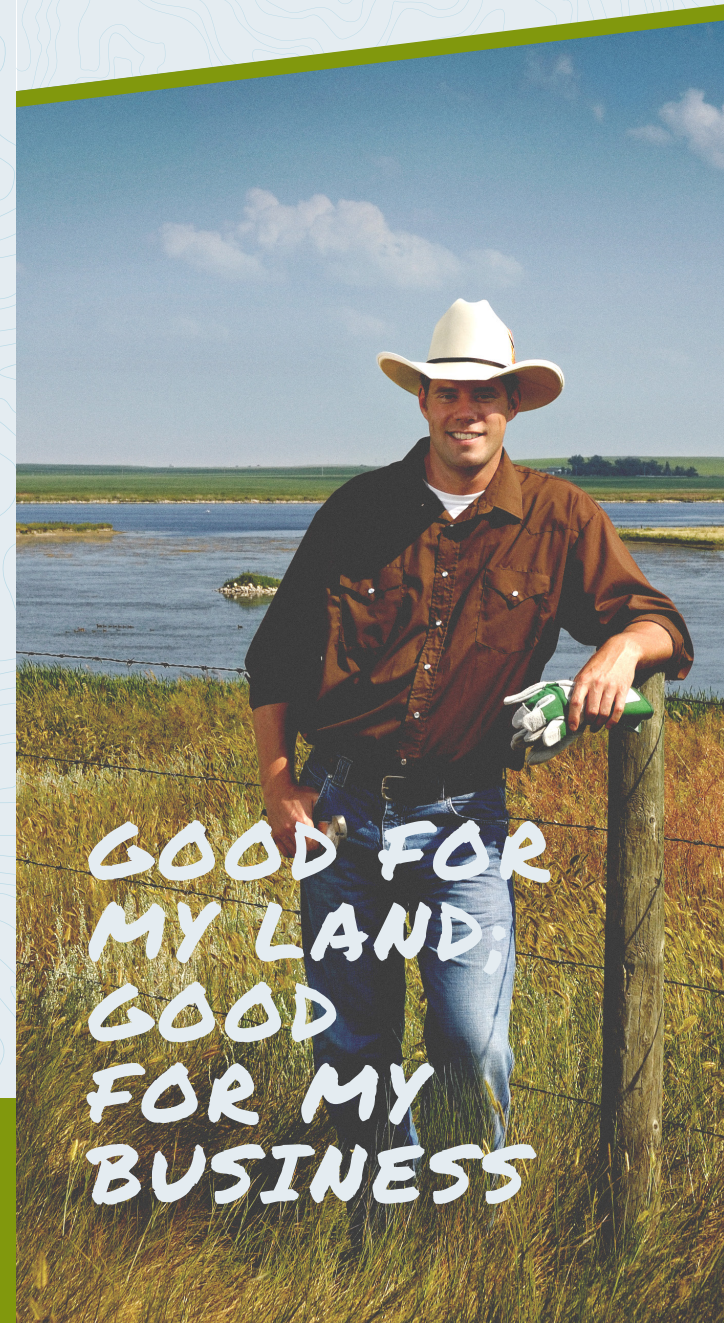
Go to [www.wetlandsalberta.ca](http://www.wetlandsalberta.ca) to learn more.

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# ALBERTA'S WETLANDS



GOOD FOR  
MY LAND,  
GOOD  
FOR MY  
BUSINESS



# WETLANDS WORKING FOR YOU

Smart business practices and sound land management go hand in hand. As a landowner, you know that better than anyone. Landowners that include wetland conservation and restoration methods in their land management know that these actions will help keep their land's productivity intact for current and future generations.

In the past, wetlands were often treated as wastelands. It is estimated that up to 70 per cent of Alberta's wetlands have been lost in the settled area due to drainage or development. We know now, however, that wetlands have an important role on landscapes and offer a variety of economic, social and ecological benefits. Wetlands are worth protecting, conserving and restoring. Everyone has a role to play.

## Wetlands Are More Than Sloughs

Sloughs, marshes, potholes, ponds, bogs, field water. Wetlands take several forms. Wetlands are low-lying areas of land covered by water long enough to support water-loving plants and animals. Climate, land features, surface and groundwater flow, vegetation and soils determine the type and the extent of wetlands.

There are many reasons why wetlands are important to Albertans. For residents, communities, municipalities and industries, wetlands:

- Filter harmful nutrients & contaminants from water bodies
- Reduce greenhouse gases by absorbing carbon emissions
- Mitigate flood & drought impacts
- Recharge groundwater & support overall watershed health
- Offer environments for outdoor activities, recreation & education
- Can provide forage and water sources for livestock in dry years
- Provide critical habitat for plant & animal species & support biodiversity

To sum it up, wetlands make a world of difference.

## Wetland Protection

All water in Alberta – including wetlands – is owned by the province, whether it occurs on public or private land. All activities impacting wetland areas are regulated under the *Water Act* and/or *Public Lands Act* and are subject to approval before they can proceed. Wetlands may also be protected locally when designated as environmental reserve lands through the *Municipal Government Act*.

To address the serious problem of wetland loss, the Government of Alberta introduced the new Alberta Wetland Policy in 2013. The policy aims to conserve, restore, protect and manage Alberta's wetlands to sustain the benefits they provide to the environment, society and economy.

**"BRINGING WETLANDS BACK TO WHERE THEY SHOULD BE WILL PRODUCE MORE FOR OUR OPERATION AND WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE OVERALL HEALTH OF THE LAND."**

Gary Meadows  
Agricultural Producer

Several partners in Alberta are working together to ensure that Alberta's new wetland policy is implemented effectively. In addition to policy and legislation, partners are working together to promote best land management practices to minimize further loss and degradation of wetlands across the province.

## Wetland Stewardship

Everyone has a role to play to conserve, restore and protect Alberta's wetlands. Here's what you can do.

- Keep natural wetland inflows and outflows intact. Maintain water levels on your land by not using drainage techniques.
- Maintain a healthy margin of native vegetation surrounding wetlands. Healthy riparian areas support healthy wetland function.
- Reduce or eliminate the amounts of nutrients and wastewater from domestic, industrial and livestock that enter wetlands.
- Consider a wetland restoration or enhancement project on your land. Incentive programs and grants are available for wetland stewardship activities.