



*A Weston Family Initiative*

**ALUS CANADA  
Final Report to**

**Ontario Wildlife Foundation**

**January 2020**

# Habitat Stewardship Education Events through ALUS in Eastern Ontario

## Final Report

ALUS has a simple goal to create a healthy landscape that sustains agriculture, wildlife and natural spaces. ALUS focuses on the working landscape where there are important opportunities to engage farmers in meaningful conservation efforts. Through ALUS Canada, farmers and ranchers are empowered to use their skills and intimate knowledge of their working lands to enhance and restore selected acres of marginal or environmentally-sensitive agricultural land back to high-quality, functioning ecosystems, resulting in significant benefits for wildlife, the environment, the local community, and society as a whole.

The goal of this project was to conduct outreach activities in ALUS communities in Eastern Ontario, where wetland loss, fragmentation from agriculture, and invasive species are threatening existing wildlife habitat and biodiversity.

With support from the Ontario Wildlife Foundation (OWF), landowners and community members in Peterborough County, The City of Kawartha Lakes, and the watersheds of the Raisin Region and South Nations Conservation Authorities were engaged through outreach activities such as tours and information sessions. These Habitat Stewardship Education Events provided an opportunity for community members to share and learn about opportunities to implement habitat restoration, as well as resources and techniques that would increase successful project uptake. Community members, including current and prospective ALUS program participants, learned about habitat stewardship opportunities available in their communities. Activities also provided an opportunity for community partners to collaborate and engage community members in meaningful ways.

Funding from OWF allowed ALUS communities in Eastern Ontario to carry out important outreach and education activities that would otherwise be lacking in the community. Through this project, three habitat stewardship education events were held in collaboration with eight community partners. 75 community members were engaged.

ALUS remains grateful for the support received from OWF and hopes to continue partnering on support of ALUS communities throughout Ontario.

## **Highlights**

ALUS has two community programs in Eastern Ontario; each received funding through this grant.

Highlights of the activities supported through the Habitat Stewardship Education Events project are provided below:

### **ALUS Ontario East**

ALUS Ontario East operates within the watersheds of the Raisin Region and South Nation Conservation Authorities. The ALUS Ontario East program was launched in 2012. Today, over 30 participants and over 300 acres are enrolled in the ALUS Ontario East program.

ALUS Ontario East leveraged funding from OWF to host an Agri-Action Environmental Stewardship Tour which showcased ALUS projects in the United County of Prescott-Russell and the Township of North Glengarry. Initially, ALUS Ontario East was planning on hosting a four-stop tour; however, as project planning proceeded, it was decided that a five-stop tour would have a greater impact and better meet the needs of the target audience and collaboration partners.

The stewardship tour was held in October 2019. It visited five demonstration projects, provided an opportunity to view projects pre- and post-completion and discussed management and maintenance of existing projects.

The tour was a great success and received enthusiastic support from attendees and collaboration partners. Nearly 50 people attended the tour which was organized in collaboration with Raisin Region Conservation Authority (RRCA), South Nation Conservation (Eastern Ontario Water Resource Program), Boisé Est, the provincial Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) and the Ontario Woodlot Association (Figure 1).



Figure 1: Community members visit Kirkview Farms, one of five stops at ALUS Ontario East Agri-Action Environmental Stewardship Tour. (Photo credit: Richard Pilon, RRCA)

## **ALUS Peterborough**

ALUS Peterborough was launched in 2017 as a partnership between ALUS Canada and the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH). Programming targets the communities of Peterborough County and The City of Kawartha Lakes. In just two years, more than 10 participants and nearly 135 acres have been enrolled in the ALUS Peterborough program.

ALUS Peterborough leveraged funding from OWF to hold two habitat stewardship events.

Event 1 - On April 25, ALUS Peterborough held a controlled tile drainage information session. Guest speakers at the event were industry experts Matt Williams of Williams Drainage Inc., and Peter Johnson of the Land Improvement Contractors of Ontario. The event also featured an introduction to ALUS Peterborough.

The event went very well - both speakers presented a depth of details, attendees were very engaged and a detailed technical discussion followed the presentations. Attendees included farmers and agri-service professionals. Unfortunately, the event was not heavily attended, primarily due to the day providing a sunny break in the un-seasonally wet weather, which had many of the anticipated farmer attendees needing to be out working their fields.

Event 2 – On December 12<sup>th</sup>, ALUS Peterborough hosted an Open House at the OFAH Heritage Centre. The event was attended by approximately 20 guests and two new potential participants and projects were identified. The program of guest speakers and topics featured at this event is provided below:

### **Program of Speakers:**

- ALUS Peterborough – Update and Overview (Kate Powell, Program Coordinator, ALUS Peterborough)
- The Economic Value of Goods and Services Provided by Green Infrastructure (Douglas Kennedy, ALUS Peterborough PAC Chair)
- Hunting Access and Healthy Wildlife (Dr. Keith Munro, OFAH)
- Importance of Overlooked Habitats and Waste Places (Dr. David Beresford, Trent University)
- Speaker Q&A panel

## **Financials:**

Funding from OWF was leveraged with cash and in-kind contributions from a range of sources to deliver the activities of this project. Refer to Appendix 1: Financial Report for more details.

## **Recognition**

OWF was verbally recognized at each event. The OWF logo was also featured on the flyer invitations for the ALUS Peterborough Open House. These flyers were distributed on ALUS Peterborough social media networks and within the OFAH agricultural and land use committees. (Figure 2)

**THE ALUS PETERBOROUGH PROGRAM**

You are invited to join us for an open house!

**WHEN:** Thursday December 12, 6:00 pm–8:00 pm

**WHERE:** Mario Cortellucci Hunting and Fishing Heritage Centre at OFAH headquarters (2017 McNamara Rd, Peterborough)

Please RSVP by Monday, December 9 to: [Kate\\_powell@ofah.org](mailto:Kate_powell@ofah.org)

*Meet and Greet | 6:00 pm-6:30 pm*

Coffee and refreshments

*Presentations | 6:30 pm-7:30 pm*

Introducing ALUS; Kate Powell

∞

The Economic Value of Goods and Services Provided by Green Infrastructure; Douglas Kennedy

∞

Hunting Access and Healthy Wildlife; Keith Munro

∞

Importance of Overlooked Habitats and Waste Places; Dave Beresford



Thank you to our sponsors:



**What is ALUS?**

ALUS is a farmer-driven, non-government program designed to recognize and compensate farmers and farmland owners for the implementation and maintenance of stewardship projects that benefit the ecosystem.

A Partnership Advisory Committee (PAC) made up of local farmers and other community stakeholders provides direction for the program and makes all implementation decisions in each of its active regions. This committee must consist primarily of farmers. One purpose of this meeting is to inform and identify members of the community who may be interested in serving on the PAC and/or participating in establishing projects in 2020.

**About the Speakers**

Kate Powell coordinates the ALUS Peterborough program out of the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters (OFAH) where she also works as Terrestrial Specialist for the Invading Species Awareness Program.

Douglas Kennedy is the ALUS Peterborough PAC Chair, and owner of Green Side Up Environmental Services where he has gained extensive restoration ecology expertise.

Keith Munro (PhD) is the Wildlife Biologist with the OFAH. Keith's body of work includes over a decade of research on white-tailed deer, as well as small mammals, canids and turtles.

Dave Beresford (PhD) teaches entomology at Trent University. His research includes integrated pest management studies of biting flies on beef and dairy farms.



Thank you to our sponsors:



Figure 2: Invitation to ALUS Peterborough's Open House, featuring recognition of OWF as an event sponsor.