



The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation

A LAND *and* WATER PARTNERSHIP

FACT SHEET

Conservation Agreements for Native Grasslands, Riparian Areas & Species at Risk - Habitat Stewardship Program -

Background

Conservation Agreements (CAs) are a way for landowners to ensure long-term conservation of the habitat on their land. Landowners can donate or sell a “conservation interest” on portions of their land to a recognized conservation organization, but still retain ownership of the entire property. With a CA, a caveat is registered on the land title for as long as the CA is in force. It outlines which areas of the property are affected by the agreement and how those areas may be used. CAs are regulated by Manitoba’s *Conservation Agreements Act*.

The Habitat Stewardship Program is a partnership initiative between Environment Canada (Canadian Wildlife Service) and the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC).

Criteria

Eligible Habitats:

A) Mixed-Grass Prairie and Aspen Parkland Habitats:

1. Native mixed-grass prairie (including rangeland)
2. Sandhill prairies
3. Habitats where species of concern are known to inhabit the site or similar habitats nearby
4. Habitats that promote aquifer recharge

B) Riparian Habitat (Stream Banks):

1. Native woodland, shrub and grassland vegetation in the Whitemouth River basin or Birch River basin.
2. Located along a watercourse
3. Linked to the Carmine shiner, which is an aquatic species of concern in Manitoba

A Conservation Agreement should cover a minimum of 40 acres of habitat. Exceptions may be made for unique areas with species of concern, or stretches of riparian habitat.

Term of Agreement:

All CAs are signed in perpetuity.

Payment and Agricultural Use:

Current payment rates and corresponding restrictions are as follows:

A. Mixed-grass prairie habitats:

Higher quality prairie habitats are eligible for CA payment of \$75.00 per acre with the following restrictions:

- no breaking, annual burning, draining or filling
- no herbicide or fertilizer applications

Grazing or haying is allowed.

Lower grade prairie habitats (e.g. go-back land) that are associated with a threatened or endangered species are eligible for a CA payment of \$50.00 per acre and carry no restrictions on the use of fertilizer.

B. Riparian/aquatic habitats:

Payment rate is \$125.00 per acre. Restrictions include:

- no breaking, annual burning, draining or filling
- no haying and no grazing

C. Habitats for species of concern:

Habitats known to be important to species of concern are also eligible under this program. Payment can range from \$50.00 to \$200.00 per acre, depending on the type of habitat.

If the habitat is donated, a tax receipt will be issued, and will be based upon a certified appraisal of the value of the "conservation interest" being donated.

Property Taxes:

Landowners continue to pay property taxes as they continue to own the land.

Access:

Landowners continue to control access to the land.

Weed & Pest Control:

Landowners retain the responsibility for controlling weeds and pests on their property.

Need More Information?

If you would like more information, please drop by, call or email one of our offices:

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