

The Modeste Natural Infrastructure Project



Photo credit Brazeau Tourism

The **Modeste Natural Infrastructure Project** examines the nexus between environmental restoration and conservation, local and downstream impacts, and the environmental and economic benefits of natural infrastructure.

The Government of Alberta identified the Modeste subwatershed as high priority for flood mitigation and water quality improvement, and moderate-high priority for drought mitigation.

The project has two main objectives: Mitigate flood and drought and improve water quality in the Modeste subwatershed through on the ground wetland restoration and riparian enhancement; and quantify the impacts and economic benefits of “natural infrastructure”.

Partners

The project started as a pilot project with ALUS Canada, ALUS Leduc-Wetaskiwin, ALUS Parkland, ALUS Brazeau, Parkland County, North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance (NSWA), and the Headwaters Alliance. ALUS Canada is a federally-registered charity that partners with communities and farmers to deliver restoration and enhancement of natural ecosystems on agricultural lands. The project received more than \$700,000 as a new grant from Alberta Environment and Parks’ Watershed Resiliency and Restoration Program (WRRP), \$180,000 from Natural Resources Canada’s Climate Change Impacts and Adaptation Program, as well as financial support from the City of Edmonton, EPCOR, and the McConnell Foundation.

Outcomes

- Establish and maintain 650 acres of new natural infrastructure through ALUS projects for wetland restoration and riparian enhancement, on the land of participating ALUS farmers and ranchers.
- Quantify the effects of wetland restoration and riparian enhancement on flood mitigation, water quality, and drought resilience
- Quantify the costs and benefits of natural infrastructure;
- Provide guidance for municipal decision-makers to incorporate natural infrastructure into their immediate and long-term infrastructure needs.
- Provide transparent and credible platform for evaluating of on-the-ground benefits of wetland restoration and riparian enhancement projects in the watershed.

Delivery

The on-the-ground component of the project will be delivered by the ALUS program in the Modeste watershed: ALUS Leduc-Wetaskiwin, ALUS Parkland, and ALUS Brazeau. The research, modelling and analysis portion of the project will be delivered by ALUS Canada, University of Guelph and InnoTech Alberta. The project was developed with the assistance of Parkland County, the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance, and the Headwaters Alliance and builds on previously WRRP-funded work of the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance to identify high value areas for restoration and conservation.

For more information please contact:

Mary-Ellen Shain, Watershed Planning and Management Coordinator, NSWA. Tel: 587-525-6828; maryellen.shain@nswa.ab.ca

Lara Ellis, Director of Strategic Initiatives, ALUS Canada. Tel: 416-303-7492; lellis@alus.ca

