



MFGA REGISTERS NATURAL HAT TRICK OF MANITOBA CONSERVATION TRUST PROJECTS 2020

Soil Health, Regenerative Agriculture, Producer Profitability and Riparian Areas hit producer group's scoresheet with huge assists from Manitoba Government, project partners and Manitoba producers

Winnipeg, MB (May 28, 2020)— [Manitoba Forage & Grassland Association \(MFGA\)](#) received fantastic news from Manitoba Agriculture and Resource Development Minister Blaine Pedersen and the [Province of Manitoba's Conservation Trust](#) announcement today with official notice that three MFGA-led projects had received approval.

“We are ecstatic with this news becoming official and we want to thank the Province of Manitoba, Premier Brian Pallister and Manitoba Agriculture Resource Development Minister Blaine Pedersen for giving the opportunity for groups like MFGA to deliver on agriculture-conservation-based projects that are designed to benefit wildlife and producers via the environmental and economic pillars of each Conservation Trust project,” said Larry Wegner, MFGA Chair. “The Manitoba Conservation Trust is truly a made-in-Manitoba gem and we salute the work of the Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation, the Conservation Trust team and the Winnipeg Foundation for their important roles in the ongoing development and success of this excellent program.”

According to Wegner, today’s great news from the Manitoba Conservation Trust is a valuable reinforcement that MFGA’s collaborative producer-based approach is working and gaining traction with partners.

“The ultimate goal for MFGA is producer profitability resulting from healthy agricultural lands being managed with wise land-use practices that vastly improve soil, water and air quality,” says Wegner. “When combined with our increasing supporter and producer networks, our growing leadership profile on Regenerative Agriculture and the projects we have successfully delivered on our resume, MFGA’s constant focus on the win-win-win for our organization goals and the interests of producers and project partners really is a winning formula for all. The Conservation Trust funding today is a really nice feather in our cap and we relish the opportunity to successfully deliver all three of these excellent projects.”

The 2020 announcement marks the second year that a MFGA project has been approved by the Manitoba Conservation Trust. In 2019, MFGA was the successful proponent on the Kirkella Community Pasture Enhancement Project which is now entering Year 2 with project activities ramping up this year after a pasture assessment was completed and reviewed in Year 1.

MFGA-Led Conservation Trust Projects 2020:

- 1. *Conservation Trust Category: Soil Health: Soil Health and Cover Crops: Strength from the Soil: Building on the Biological foundation for Producers and Wildlife.*** MFGA will lead a one-year project to work with interested producers from the Central Assiniboine, Assiniboine West and Souris River Watershed Districts to target 2000 acres over the one year project to improve the ecological health of the soil, increase profit at the farm gate and advance continued improvement in ecological services being delivered from the farming landscape. The Conservation Trust, will provide \$90,000 for the project with the remaining approximately \$180,000 of the project funding made up in-kind and by matching funding by the project partners. With a key focus on cover crops, the project will support landowners' Regenerative Agriculture practices that benefit their farms and the soils of their operations by keeping living roots in the ground for as many days of annual sunlight as possible.
- 2. *Conservation Trust Category: Wildlife and Habitat: A new approach to restoring profitability, wildlife habitat and soil health on a watershed basis.*** MFGA will work closely with Ducks Unlimited Canada to deliver an incentive-based forage program that restores grasslands and protects the adjacent wetlands. Two distinct forage programs that sign long-term agreements with private landowners will be delivered that targets both grain and cattle producers. The goal is to restore 2,600 acres of grasslands and protect 400 acres of wetlands within two watersheds that overlap DUC's high wetland density target areas. The \$340,000 project will benefit from \$113,000 Conservation Trust funding while DUC will contribute the bulk of the in-kind and matching funds through monies for producer incentives. MFGA, Assiniboine West and Souris River Watershed Districts and Redfern Farm Services will provide the balance.
- 3. *Conservation Trust Category: Wildlife and Habitat: Expansion of natural riparian zones for wildlife and watersheds.*** This two-year MFGA project backdrops onto the lands owned by Borderland Agriculture near Pierson, MB to provide grassland habitat to wildlife while at the same time providing flood mitigation to the Souris River. The two-year project will benefit from approximately \$28,000 in Conservation Trust funding with nearly \$57,000 in matching funds provided from partners Borderland Agriculture, DUC, Souris River Watershed District and MFGA.

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