



**Attn: Radio, print and agriculture editors – December 5, 2012**

## **Interview Opportunity - ALUS is in Norfolk County**

**Who:** Lindsay Bennett is the coordinator of the Norfolk County - Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) program. Many area farmers were featured in the recent ON Nature magazine article on the topic (<http://www.vdocshop.com/doc/on-nature-magazine/winter2012-13/2012112201/#18>) talking about a unique program that provides financial incentives for farmers who wish to undertake conservation work on their land.

**Lindsay can arrange interviews with Norfolk County farmers enrolled in ALUS and featured in the ON Nature article or answer questions on these topics and more:**

- Why is ALUS important?
- Describe some ALUS projects and how they have made environmental improvements.
- What are some of the impacts of projects on local wildlife?
- How does a farmer learn more or enroll in the ALUS program?
- As a farmer, what are my responsibilities once I enroll?
- What management practices that benefit the environment are eligible for the ALUS program?
- How big a farm do I need if I want to enroll in ALUS?
- Can only farmers participate?
- Does the ALUS program work on marginal land or prime land?
- Can I enroll in ALUS and other complementary programs at the same time?
- What is the value of the average cheque an ALUS farmer gets in Norfolk County?

### **Background**

The Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) program provides cheques to farmers who undertake land management that provides wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, pollinator habitat and other projects that improve water quality and reduce erosion.

In Ontario, the ALUS program was first established in Norfolk County in 2008. The program has already restored over 1,000 acres, with over 400 projects on 133 farms in Norfolk County. More applications are expected for the spring 2013 field season.

***For more information or to schedule an interview contact:***

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### **Overview**

*Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) is an incentive program that recognizes the role farmers and ranchers play in producing both food and a healthy environment. Supported by Ontario Nature and the local community, ALUS is a voluntary program that allows for community-led, farmer-delivered conservation initiatives.*

*Through ALUS, farmers receive payments to conserve and restore natural features such as wetlands, creeks, shorelines, native grasses and trees, and important ecosystems like tall grass prairie and oak savannah. In this way, parcels of farmland are converted into habitat for wildlife.*

*Through this program, we have an opportunity to respond to the dual crises of climate change and biodiversity loss by engaging those who own and manage most of the land in southern and eastern Ontario.*

*Lead sponsors are the W. Garfield Weston Foundation and the Ontario Trillium Foundation.*

*For more information about ALUS and sponsors visit [www.alus.ca](http://www.alus.ca).*