



GROW

Growing Outcomes in Watersheds

A Made-in-Manitoba
Climate and
Green Plan



Identified under the Water Pillar in Manitoba's Climate and Green Plan, Growing Outcomes in Watersheds (GROW) is a way of encouraging and supporting the delivery of ecological goods and services (EG&S). GROW promotes the conservation of natural areas or changes to land uses by helping agricultural producers implement projects that maintain or improve local watershed health and work for their operations. GROW is a made-in-Manitoba initiative on working lands that focuses on "farming the best, conserving the rest."

Objectives, Outcomes, and Co-Benefits

With a focus on watershed health, management and resiliency, GROW will help reduce flooding and drought vulnerability and improve water quality and nutrient management in Manitoba. GROW will also deliver significant co-benefits.

Priority Outcomes

- improved watershed resilience to the impacts of a changing climate (e.g., extreme weather events, drought, flooding)
- improved water quality (e.g., improved nutrient management)

Co-Benefits

- improved on-farm water management
- enhanced sustainable agricultural production
- improved biodiversity and habitat
- carbon sequestration and storage

GROW delivery agents must report on outcomes achieved through the implementation of GROW. The Manitoba government will report on overall provincial GROW results.

Ecological goods and services

are the environmental benefits derived from healthy ecosystems. Examples of ecological goods and services include clean water, wildlife habitat, the ability of a natural system to withstand flooding or drought, and carbon storage or sequestration. Natural areas that provide ecological goods and services include wetlands, riparian areas, grasslands, woodlots and water storage areas.



What is GROW?

A targeted, watershed-based approach to delivery

Projects will be implemented on a watershed basis, according to the principles, objectives and outcomes of GROW. Eligible projects will be limited to working lands within Agro-Manitoba. Each project will address provincial outcomes and target prioritized actions in watershed management plans.

Locally-delivered and producer-focused

In the early stages, GROW will be delivered by Manitoba's Conservation Districts (soon to be Watershed Districts). Each district delivering GROW will establish a Local GROW Committee (LGC). Local GROW Committees will include representation from agricultural producers, watershed district members, as well as partners and technical experts, where necessary. GROW is aligned

with the principles of the Environmental Farm Plan (EFP) Program and participating producers should have an Environmental Farm Plan.

Sustainable

Projects must demonstrate that ecological goods and services will continue beyond the life of the project, either through the use of term contracts with landowners or through the use of annual payments for those services, where required.

Measurable

GROW will demonstrate evidence-based environmental improvements. Project monitoring and reporting on GROW metrics will be required.

Partnership-focused

Collaboration with landowners, municipal governments, Indigenous communities, and other organizations will enhance positive outcomes for watershed health, and may also bring in additional funding.

GROW is Locally Driven, Locally Delivered

- ✓ a group of local people passionate about improving watershed health
- ✓ local people entrusted to make decisions on projects based on local priorities
- ✓ farmers leading farmers in local committees through peer-to-peer learning and influence
- ✓ local champions and leaders focused on long-term change guided by science, and integrated decision-making
- ✓ a locally targeted approach to improving watershed health



What does GROW look like on-farm?

GROW will support projects in working landscapes that meet priority outcomes and enhance co-benefits outlined above. Types of projects may include:

- water retention
- wetland conservation, restoration or enhancements
- riparian area management
- buffer establishment (e.g., shelterbelts, multi-species buffer strips)
- upland area conservation, restoration, or enhancement (e.g., woodlot management, grassland conservation, soil health improvements)

Other projects that propose or develop innovative ideas to conserve or enhance ecological goods and services in Manitoba will also be considered.

How does GROW differ from other incentive programs in Manitoba?

Building on the success of Manitoba's Conservation Districts Program and other historical models for delivering watershed-based incentive programming in Manitoba, projects developed under GROW will be subject to provincial parameters and guidelines. This may include an agreement or contract with an eligible producer for a specified term that could be supported with a one-time payment, ongoing annual incentive payments, or a combination of both. GROW delivery will also reflect provincial priorities outlined in Manitoba's Climate and Green Plan.



The Local GROW Committee will...

- establish local priorities and target areas within the watershed to implement GROW activities
- establish local payment rates for eligible activities and cost-shares based on GROW criteria
- explore incentive payment rates where necessary factoring in land rental rates or other available data
- develop contracts and determine term lengths where required, based on GROW criteria
- identify landowners in the target areas and collaboratively work towards enhancing ecological goods and services and improving watershed health.

Is funding available to support GROW and the implementation of ecological goods and services programming?

Funding is available for GROW delivery through the Conservation and GROW Trusts. Additional funding programs are also already in place to support the establishment and delivery of programming, including the Manitoba Conservation Districts Program, Ag Action Manitoba – Assurance: Watershed Ecological Goods and Services, as well as other provincial, federal, municipal, and local funding sources where priorities align with the local GROW framework.

Where can I get more information about GROW?

Staff in Manitoba Sustainable Development are available to assist with GROW applications and delivery by Conservation (Watershed) Districts. For more information about starting GROW in your area, please contact your local watershed district or Manitoba Sustainable Development at 204-945-0002. More information about GROW, conservation districts, and watershed management planning can be found at www.manitobawatersheds.ca.

For more information on the Environmental Farm Plan program, please contact Manitoba Agriculture at 1-844-769-6224.

