

2 Destination of this Research

2.1 CFFO Policy Formation

The CFFO promotes the concept of direct environmental payments for the value of the wider public environmental benefits specified on-farm activities could provide. When public money is provided for such payments, programming would likely remain within the domain of government. At the same time, many delivery and implementation functions would likely be put in the hands of local stakeholders such as farm organizations, as they are now. As with existing arrangements, however, delivery agencies would ultimately remain accountable to the public through government and its agencies.

The research reported here is intended to inform decision-makers within the CFFO of barriers to participation in past and current agri-environmental programs in Ontario. As it advances its agenda, knowledge of these barriers will allow the CFFO to consider the adequacy of current practices and institutional frameworks for design and delivery of programs.

2.2 Other Users

Other major stakeholders in agri-environmental program design and delivery who may have an interest in these results are:

- Farmers and other rural landowners;
- Farm organizations and coalitions such as the Ontario Farm Environmental Coalition (OFEC);
- Federal governmental agencies involved in program funding, design or delivery, such as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and Environment Canada;
- Ontario governmental and municipal agencies and coalitions involved in program funding, design or delivery, such as Ontario Stewardship and Healthy Futures for Ontario Agriculture;
- Environmental and conservation organizations such as Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) or Carolinian Canada;
- Academics and practitioners;

- Concerned members of the public at large; and,
- Coalitions amongst these stakeholders.

The existing delivery agencies of public programs in Ontario are important stakeholders in policy-making. Many of them are farm organizations themselves, with multiple interests. For example, the Agricultural Adaptation Council is a coalition of farm interests which administers Ontario's share of federal funding from the Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD) fund and the Agricultural Environmental Stewardship Initiative (AESI). The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is mandated to deliver the well upgrading and decommissioning programs of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food (OMAF). The Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA) delivers the federally-funded Environmental Farm Plan (EFP). The Ontario Cattlemen's Association is also said to be involved in program delivery.

A number of Ontario's quasi-public Conservation Authorities (CAs) deliver agri-environmental programs relating to water quality and habitat conservation. They draw on various sources for these programs, notably from municipal budgets, but also from corporate or philanthropic sponsors. Private organizations doing the same include Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) and the Alternate Land Use Services (ALUS) group¹. This latter originated in Manitoba but hopes to achieve a national program. It has a federally-funded pilot project in the Haldimand-Norfolk regional municipality, in partnership with local members of the OFA.

It is evident that conservation and agri-environmental interests today operate in complex arrangements but generally within separate spheres, a fact which inhibits socially-integrated environmental sustainability. For those who would hope for closer interaction between these interests, this study may be found helpful in understanding some of the realities which widen the gap between the conservation interests and agri-environmental sustainability.

¹ ALUS is an initiative of Keystone Agricultural Producers and Delta Waterfowl, both of Manitoba.