



Association of Manitoba Community Pastures Inc.

Media Release

The Ecological Goods & Services of AMCP Community Pastures worth over \$13 million a year

Report confirms Community Pasture program delivers wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits throughout Manitoba

March 15, 2018

The Association of Manitoba Community Pastures is pleased to release a new report detailing the \$13 million in annual economic, environmental and social benefits of the Community Pasture program. *The Social and Environmental Benefits of AMCP Community Pastures Report* was led by the Winnipeg-based International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) and overseen by an expert Steering Committee.

“As a livestock producer, and Chair of the Association of Manitoba Community Pastures Board, this report confirms what I have always known – that the Community Pastures are a valuable program integral to rural communities and they improve the environment through managed livestock grazing,” said Barry Lowes. “AMCP Community Pastures support the livestock industry and rural economies, and are well used by the public – the benefits of this program for Manitoba are numerous.”

As detailed by the report, AMCP Community Pastures provide direct benefits throughout the Province via livestock grazing services, scientific research, recreation, heritage, employment and economic development as well as environmental benefits such as carbon sequestration, soil formation/conservation, and biodiversity. AMCP management practices, such as rotational grazing and prescribe burns, serve to improve the lands and maintain the ecological goods and services delivered by the Community Pastures.

“Sustainable grazing methods championed by AMCP provide benefits to livestock producers and society at large. Our study shows that these lands store more carbon in the soil, provide better habitat for prairie species, clean our water all while providing grazing for livestock” – Geoff Gunn, report author, International Institute for Sustainable Development.

Funding for the study and final report was provided by the Canada and Manitoba governments through Growing Forward 2, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Background

The Association of Manitoba Community Pastures (AMCP) is a non-profit producer-led organization dedicated to enhancing the livestock industry and sustainable management of the Community Pastures under its oversight: Alonsa, Bield, Birch River, Cote San Clara, Ellice-Archie, Ethelbert-Dauphin, Ethelbert-Duck Mountain, Spy Hill-Ellice, Gardenton, Langford, Lenswood, Libau, McCreary, Mulvihill, Narcisse, Pansy, Pasquia, Sylvan Dale, Turtle Mountain and Wallace.

Backgrounder

Social and Environmental Benefits of AMCP Community Pastures

The Community Pastures under AMCP management provide a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits, as confirmed in a report with authors from the International Institute of Sustainable Development (IISD) and University of Saskatchewan in March 2018 “The Social and Environmental Benefits of AMCP Community Pastures”.

The ecological goods and services of AMCP Community Pastures are valued at over \$13 million a year:

Grazing/forage supply is worth \$5.67 million. This is a direct benefit supporting the livestock industry – over 350 pasture patrons with a total 40,000 head of livestock use the Community Pastures every year.

Carbon sequestration: over \$4.7 million. The AMCP Community Pasture grasslands hold considerable amounts of carbon supporting provincial and federal climate change initiatives.

Soil formation/conservation and biodiversity: over \$825,000. AMCP land use practices, such as grazing, prescribed burns, and maintenance of native grasslands, support healthy soils and plant and animal habitats. The community pastures host significant plant diversity and meet the habitat requirements of numerous species-at-risk.

Recreation, heritage and scientific research: over \$1.2 million. Across Manitoba, AMCP community pastures are used to support the scientific community for research, and by Manitobans for cultural practices, recreation, wildlife viewing, and hunting.

Local economic development: over \$860,000 through job creation and local purchasing, which supports rural economies. Commercial uses also take place on AMCP Community Pastures, including gravel extraction and timber harvesting, which is conservatively estimated at over \$90,000 per year.

Findings

The Report was developed in conjunction with an expert steering committee composed of representatives from Manitoba Agriculture and an independent forage expert, and found the following:

- The sustainable management practices of the Community Pastures, such as the use of rotational grazing, enhance the ecological goods and services of the lands.
- Over and above the important grazing services for livestock producers, the Community Pasture program is taking on greater importance in response to climate change, biodiversity losses, the need for water retention and soil organic carbon management. The Community Pastures support agriculture, rural areas and contribute to productivity and resilience.

Valuation Methodology

The purpose of valuing the ecological goods and services of the AMCP Community Pastures is to demonstrate the numerous benefits the community pasture program offers to Manitoba by quantifying each of the above services or benefits. IISD and the University of Saskatchewan employed a total economic valuation (TEV) approach which includes both direct monetary and non-monetary values of the Community Pastures. They found the total value of AMCP Community Pastures to be between \$10.57–\$18.88 million per year with an average of \$13.35 million per year.