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An assessment of PEI's Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) Program

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The government of PEI is the first to implement a province-wide Alternative Land Use Services (ALUS) program in Canada. This voluntary program, which began in 2008, pays annual incentives to farmers to implement better management practices (BMPs) on their privately owned land designed to conserve and protect environmental assets. The goal of this research was to assess the program, and provide recommendations for further development. Surveys were mailed to all program participants (400) and a sample of non-participants (400). Data collected from respondents included information on the land they manage; their involvement in, and perspectives on, the ALUS program and other conservation programs; and their views on land and management issues. Findings indicated that program participants were more likely to be higher income, larger land holders. Participants were more likely to implement BMPs that were included the ALUS program than non-participants, which provides some indication of program effectiveness. Participants were satisfied with a majority of program characteristics; however, a number indicated several changes to program goals, payments, and administration that could improve the program. Non-participants provided a number of suggestions about what would induce their participation in the program.