



Memo

To: Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group

From: Holly Shipclark, Credit Valley Conservation
Patrick Esson, Toronto, and Region Conservation Authority

Date: January 19, 2023

Re: Peel Rural Water Quality Program and ALUS Peel–2022 Status Report

2022 was the eighteenth complete program year for the Peel Rural Water Quality Program (PRWQP), and the launch of the three-year pilot delivery of ALUS Peel. The ALUS Peel Pilot will help us to determine whether ALUS increases the capacity of the PRWQP to build close connections to Peel’s farming community, and complete agri-environmental projects.

This status report summarizes the PRWQP accomplishments over the past eighteen years, with an emphasis on the 2022 program year. It also provides highlights from the first year of the ALUS Peel pilot.

PRWQP Annual program activity

In 2022, the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group approved seventeen projects. Farmers have completed twelve of these projects to date.

Table 1 Types and Number of PRWQP projects approved in 2022

Cover Crop	4
Livestock Access Restriction	1
Tree Planting	6
Natural Area Creation and Enhancement	4
Nutrient Management Plan	1
Nutrient Management Strategy	1
TOTAL PROJECTS APPROVED	17

The PRWQP grant total for 2022 (paid and pending payments) is \$102,461.49. This financial support has leveraged an additional \$192,566 from project proponents and other funders to assist with the completion of these seventeen projects.

ALUS Peel Pilot annual activity

In 2022, the Peel Agricultural Advisory Working Group approved ten projects for ALUS annual payment grants. These included 9 of the 17 PRWQP projects outlined above, as well as one PRWQP project from 2021. Farmers have completed 7 of these projects to date.

Table 2 Types and Number of projects approved for annual payments in 2022

Tree Planting	6
Natural Area Creation and Enhancement	4
TOTAL PROJECTS APPROVED FOR ANNUAL PAYMENTS	10

The total value of ALUS annual payment grants allocated in 2022 (paid and expected payments) is \$21,957.

Program Performance

The graph below illustrates the program's performance for each year since 2004.

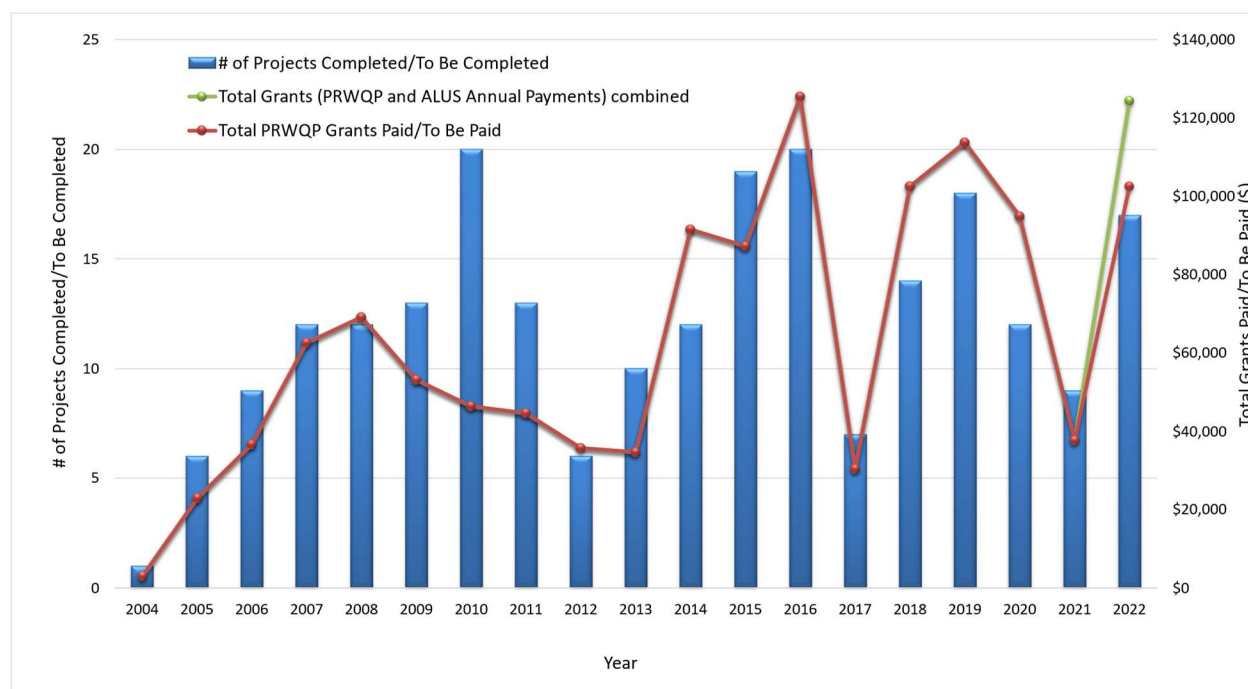


Figure 1 – Total projects approved and associated grant allocation 2004-2022. Note that 2004 was not a complete program year. Also note that there are discrepancies between annual status report. This is a result of approved projects not proceeding with construction (applications withdrawn) and lower than estimated project costs (partial grant payments).

Seventeen 2022 projects have been or will be completed. This is higher than the long-term average of 12 projects per year. The 2022 total establishment grant amount (\$102,461.16) was also significantly higher than the long-term average of \$62,856.77. With the addition of annual payments through ALUS Peel, the total value of grants allocated in 2022 is \$124,418.49 which is just slightly lower than the grant allocation in 2016 (\$125,479.48).

Several factors may have influenced this upswing in program activity. One potential factor is the removal of restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. This may have reduced extra operational and financial burden on farm businesses, making it easier for farmers to advance agri-environmental projects. Additionally, PRWQP partners hosted in-person meetings, workshops, plowing matches, farm tours and other in-person events for the first time since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, making it easier to connect and communicate with farmers.

Another potential influencing factor in 2022 is the launch of the ALUS Peel pilot, which provided an additional incentive for farmers to advance agri-environmental projects by providing annual payments to farmers for five years following project establishment.

Long-term program accomplishments:

Between 2004 and 2022, the PRWQP and now ALUS has engaged 88 individual farm businesses and has paid/allocated a total of \$1,216,235.96 in funding towards 230 agri-environmental projects. These funds have leveraged an additional \$3,866,873.51 to contribute to the completion of projects valued at \$5,071,152.47.

Some of the environmental benefits achieved by the program are highlighted in the infographic on the following page.

Environmental Benefits of BMPs

Over the past eighteen years, agri-environmental projects completed with technical and financial assistance from the PRWQP and ALUS Peel have helped to:



Safely store 402,643m³ of livestock manure to reduce the risk of nutrient, pathogen and bacteria contaminating drinking water, streams, and wetlands.

This equates to 50,330 dump trucks of manure!

Install 22.47 km of livestock fencing to improve the habitat quality of our streams, wetlands, and woodlots and to reduce water quality impacts caused by sediment, nutrient, and pathogens/ bacteria.



Plant 74,865 trees & shrubs to restore degraded habitats, reduce erosion, and to sequester carbon dioxide.

Restore, protect and/or manage 432 ha of land to improve water, air, soil, and habitat quality.



Program promotion:

In 2022, program promotion included:

- program displays and/or presentations at 6 in person events, including the ALUS launch event,
- a newspaper advertisement placed in the Caledon Enterprise newspaper,
- four articles in digital newsletters,
- greater than 20 social media posts, which resulted in greater than 23,000 impressions and 300 engagements,
- two media releases that were picked up by greater than 10 outlets, and
- two mobile roadsides promoting the program.

To ensure its continued success, staff encourage Peel Agriculture Advisory Working Group members to continue promoting the program to friends, neighbours, and peers. Peer-to-peer promotion of the program is the best form of advertisement, and we depend on you to help spread the word. This is especially important given the arrival of the ALUS Peel Pilot. This Pilot has set ambitious acreage targets and staff need your help with promoting this limited opportunity.

If you have any questions regarding the 2022 program year, please contact program staff.

Sincerely,



Holly Shipclark

Credit Valley Conservation



Patrick Esson

Toronto and Region Conservation