

Trailblazers

ALUS Canada's *Trailblazers* series showcases farmers and ranchers who are doing an outstanding job producing cleaner air, cleaner water, increased biodiversity and other valuable ecosystem services for their communities through their ALUS projects.

The full series is available on [ALUS.ca | Resources | Other Relevant Reports](https://al.us.ca/resources).

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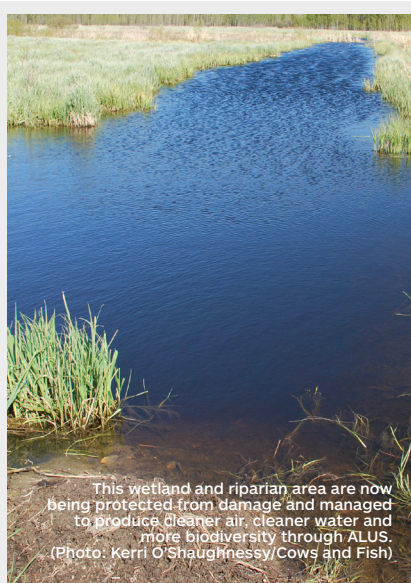
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ALUS Wetaskiwin-Leduc participants Alana and Justin Schamber

The Schambers manage Tin Forest Farm on 142 acres near Hillside, in the County of Wetaskiwin, Alberta, where they raise sheep and beef and grow hay and pasture. They specialize in farm-to-table local food events and hosting school field trips and various annual camps on the farm.

“We want to help connect people to the land and to their food,” says Alana.

The Schambers regularly host farm-to-table fundraisers for the Tin Forest Farm Kids Nature Camp. These events are community-wide celebrations of the land, featuring a home-grown supper prepared by an award-winning chef, live music and a tour of their ALUS riparian projects.



This wetland and riparian area are now being protected from damage and managed to produce cleaner air, cleaner water and more biodiversity through ALUS. (Photo: Kerri O'Shaughnessy/Cows and Fish)

to protect a large wetland that drains into Big Stone Creek. This project was also partly funded by Growing Forward 2.

As of 2020, more than 40 of their acres have been enrolled into the program for 13 ALUS projects. These ALUS projects produce many ecosystem services that benefit the community and the environment, as well as their own farm. For example, fencing the

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riparian areas helps protect the riverbank and water quality in the stream, producing cleaner water for communities downstream.

“ALUS is part of the long-range plan for our farm,” says Alana. “We wouldn’t consider grazing our sheep in that area until there was a riparian fence; the fence

had to come first.” It also allows native vegetation to return, enhancing biodiversity and providing habitat and food for birds and other wildlife.

“Increased biodiversity is already becoming apparent,” says Alana. “The birds are more abundant—we only had ravens before, but in the last two years, huge flocks of geese have been resting on the wetland during migration. We’ve spotted bald eagles also! This certainly did not happen before the ALUS project.”

Their wetland project also retains water to help combat drought in dry years, allowing the Schambers to enjoy good hay yields no matter what the weather holds.



ALUS Wetaskiwin-Leduc participants Alana and Justin Schamber and their family at Tin Forest Farm, in Alberta. (Photo: Sarah Cassie)

ALUS is not the only group to have noticed their commitment to sustainability and land stewardship: The Battle River Watershed Alliance awarded the Schambers an OTIS Award in 2018 for their outstanding environmental stewardship and awareness.

ALUS Canada is proud to count Alana and Justin Schamber among its Trailblazers in Alberta.

Become an ALUS Trailblazer!

ALUS recognizes the important role farmers and ranchers play as stewards of the land and helps them provide solutions to some of the most pressing conservation challenges of our time, including biodiversity loss, flooding, and water quality in lakes and rivers.

For more information on the ALUS program in Alberta, visit ALUS.ca and contact ALUS Canada's Western Hub Manager.

