



BRITISH COLUMBIA CATTLEMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Representing the Beef Cattle Industry of British Columbia

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Amended: October 2009

Adopted: June 12, 2008

Position Statement: Ecological Goods and Services

The BC Cattlemen's Association Board of Directors adopted the following statement as our official position on Ecological Goods & Services.

Statement:

Continuous with its mission "to maintain and strengthen the sustainability of the BC beef cattle industry," the BC Cattlemen's Association (BCCA) supports and encourages further study of possible models and applications of Ecological Goods and Services (EG&S) to the values that ranchers provide BC.

The BCCA maintains the position that ranchers should not have to carry the burden of EG&S and that British Columbian's need to recognize the importance of ranchers to society as a whole.

In our opinion, EG&S compensation/support should be paid to ranchers as income in addition to the income received from the production of agricultural products.

We will continue to research other ways that EG&S can be applied to working ranches to the benefit of the ranching industry.

Supporting Points:

The BC Cattlemen's Association believes that ranching provides society with the following environmental, economic and social values:

- Environmental values:
 - land conservation,
 - fish & wildlife habitat conservation,
 - biodiversity conservation, and
 - carbon sequestration.
- Economic values:
 - food production,
 - direct and indirect employment opportunities,
 - clean air,
 - rainwater management;
 - temperature moderation, and
 - health values.
- Social values:
 - visual aesthetics,
 - recreation ,
 - cultural heritage, and
 - food security through a locally available and efficiently produced food supply.

Preliminary Recommendations:

There are many possible applications for EG&S as it relates to ranching. The cattle industry aims to look at possible models and applications of EG&S in BC. A thorough evaluation of possibilities is a high priority for the BC Cattlemen's Association in the near future.

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ECOLOGICAL GOODS & SERVICES (EGS) MODELS

There are many possible applications for EGS in relation to ranching. A thorough evaluation of possible EGS models and applications is a high priority for the BC Cattlemen's Association in the near future, and we are looking to other jurisdictions, such as Alberta, Manitoba, the US, Australia and Europe to see how their programs function.

- Manitoba is currently developing an EGS program between the Manitoba Cattle Producers and the Manitoba government.
- Alberta is enabling agricultural producers to participate in its carbon credits trading system.
- The Alternate Land Use Services (ALUS) program has also been long-standing in these two provinces - ALUS is an environmental goods and services delivery program that uses a "fee-for service" concept to provide environmental benefits to all Canadians. ALUS is designed to provide these benefits at a fair market value, and will not provide environmental subsidies that artificially increase farm incomes.
- The US provides farmers and ranchers with many forms of agricultural subsidies, for example the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) provides federal matching funds for purchasing development rights to keep farms and ranches up and running. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) joins with state, tribal or local governments (and sometimes non-governmental efforts) to prevent agricultural land from being converted to non-agricultural uses.
- Europe is miles ahead of North America in recognizing EGS. An example is the Rural Stewardship Scheme in the UK.
- Australia provides "bush tenders" to its producers.

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