



INCENTIVE PROJECT GUIDELINES

FRAGILE LAND RETIREMENT

Cost-Share Rate: 50%

Maximum Payment: \$2,000

Purpose:

- To improve water quality by retiring fragile agricultural land and creating vegetative buffers along watercourses and wetlands.

Eligibility:

- Must complete an Environmental Farm Plan to be eligible

Eligible Projects:

- Permanent retirement of flood plains
- Retirement of steeply sloped and erosion-prone lands
- Buffer strips on pasture land and cropped fields
- Tree windbreaks to prevent wind erosion
- Retirement of up to 250' around locally or provincially designated wetland boundaries
- Retirement of sensitive groundwater areas
- Establishment of woody fence rows to create wildlife corridors and linkages from wooded areas
- Underplanting existing woodlots (e.g., disease impacted or conifer plantations) with seedling stock

General Comments:

- To be eligible for the grant, trees, shrubs or native grasses and wildflowers must be planted on the retired acres.
- A plan is required specifying species, planting density, location, site preparation and maintenance. To promote approval, the plan should be developed in conjunction with Conservation Authority forestry staff or a private consultant.
- Land must have been cropped or pastured agricultural land within 2 years of the application to be eligible for land retirement incentive.
- Proper site preparation is required for tree planting.
- The participant is responsible for the care and maintenance of tree plantings.
- Livestock must be excluded from the site.
- All trees, shrubs, grasses and wildflowers must be native unless strong reasoning can be provided for alternate stock.
- Applicants will be required to sign a 15 year management agreement.

Project Details:

Fragile land retirement:

- Fragile lands are tilled or pastured lands subject to either severe water erosion or flooding.

Buffer strips:

- Buffer strips may be established along watercourses adjacent to either pasture or cropped land.
- Minimum buffer width is 10 feet. Wider buffers are encouraged.
- To be eligible, appropriate tree or shrub species must be planted in the buffer strip.
- May require municipal approval for tree planting along municipal drains.

Windbreaks and Shelterbelts:

- The purpose of the funds is to protect and improve water quality; windbreak eligibility will be decided on these strengths.

Eligible Costs:

- Trees, shrubs, grasses, wildflowers and planting costs.
- Seedling planting is preferred; however, where need is strong and when recommended by forestry staff, large stock trees may be eligible for cost-share with \$5 maximum per tree (includes planting).
- Design, engineering, minor excavation, material and labour costs of buffer strips.
- Tree protection systems and maintenance agreement costs obtained through the CA or planting contractor.
- Establishment of cover crops on tilled land (in conjunction with tree planting).

Ineligible Costs:

- Commercial stock, fruit trees or Christmas tree species that are commercially marketable in less than 5 years are not eligible.
- Labour and machinery use of applicant, family dependents and the applicant's business.
- Trees and shrubs planted as shelterbelts around buildings.

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