

# MD OF RANCHLAND

# AG BULLETIN

News, updates, and information for our community.



## SHELTERBELTS VS. ECO-BUFFERS

Shelterbelts are a linear planting of trees and shrubs used to reduce soil erosion and protect livestock and crops from wind and environmental conditions. In a shelterbelt, each row usually consists of a single plant species. An alternative to traditional shelterbelts is an eco-buffer. Designed by agroforestry specialists, eco-buffers are modeled after local plant communities with the intent to mimic natural buffers. Made up of a mixed arrangement of perennial native trees, shrubs and forbs, eco-buffers provide a much higher variety of woody plants. A well-established eco-buffer 100 meters in length can have over 5000 plants, where a shelterbelt of the same length may contain only 350 plants. Eco-buffers are designed to sustain themselves with minimal maintenance while shelterbelts often require weed maintenance every year. The forest system created by a diverse eco-buffer can provide long lasting benefits such as water quality protection, soil conservation, snow management, nutrient cycling, shelter for yards and livestock, and habitat for pollinators, insects, birds and wildlife.

The Resilient Agricultural Landscape Program is available to producers in Alberta and provides some funding for the establishment of eco-buffers or shelterbelts. If interested in discussing further, please contact Erika at [ag3@ranchland66.com](mailto:ag3@ranchland66.com) or 403-646-3131.

Source(s): 1) [https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2017/aac-aafc/A125-28-2017-eng.pdf](https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2017/aac-aafc/A125-28-2017-eng.pdf) 2) <https://www.awes-ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Eco-Buffer-Factsheet-Complete.pdf>

## GRANT TO APPLY FOR

<https://www.alberta.ca/on-farm-value-added-program>

### On-Farm Value-Added Program

The On-Farm Value-Added Program supports primary producers in adding value to their agricultural products to grow sales, expand production capacity, explore market opportunities and create jobs in Alberta.

For more information contact Erika at 403-646-3131 or [ag3@ranchland66.com](mailto:ag3@ranchland66.com).



## WEED TO WATCH

### Spotted Knapweed






*Centaurea stoebe L. ssp. Micranthos*  
 ID characteristics: A biennial plant, producing a rosette the first year and a flowering bolt the second. The flowers are pinkish-purple. Bracts on the flowers base have black tips that distinguish it from other knapweed species.



Source: <https://abinvasives.ca/factsheet/knapweed-spotted/>



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If you would like to contribute to this bulletin by writing an article, submitting a photo to be featured, recommending an organization, noxious weed, or grant, or any other suggestions, please send an email to [ag2@ranchland66.com](mailto:ag2@ranchland66.com) with the subject line "Bulletin". Thanks for reading and I look forward to your feedback!

## ORGANIZATION HIGHLIGHT

### Nature Conservancy of Canada

<https://natureconservancy.ca/en/>

The Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC) is Canada's leading national land conservation organization. Since 1962, NCC and its partners have helped to conserve 15 million hectares of land across Canada. Their mission is to protect natural areas that sustain Canada's plants and wildlife by partnering with various stakeholders and securing properties for the long term. For more information visit the website above.

