

Hunter Rainwater

Subject: FW: IAF Local Government Partnership Project Program

From: Bess Legault <bess@neat.ca>

Sent: Friday, April 9, 2021 2:38 PM

To: Director Karen Goodings; Chair Brad Sperling

Subject: IAF Local Government Partnership Project Program

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization.

Hi Brad and Karen

I am writing today to share information about a new funding opportunity that came out yesterday. It is for the Local Government Partnership Program administered through IAF.

<https://iafbc.ca/local-government-partnership-program/>

As a director with the Peace River Forage Association, we have been engaging with Agriculture and Agri Foods Canada (AAFC) around the recent announcement for funding increases made to their existing Living Labs program. This program is designed to be farmer led research partnered with publicly funded agrologists to achieve data collection and understanding around innovation in carbon storage and sequestration as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation.

My role with the Northern Co-hort has allowed me to bridge conversations about climate solutions in agriculture with a diversity of producers of various scales in our region and it excites me that our Federal government is funding research and extension to support farmers through a transition to climate adaptive and mitigative agriculture.

As the Women's President of the National Farmers Union, I have been able to share research around the farm crisis and the climate crisis in our local area having a cross section of curious producers who agree that achieving economic sustainability in our current model of farming and market access is quite difficult and they are looking for support to seek out solutions.

Furthermore, I have been engaging with Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU) and Northern Co-hort will be co-applying to the BC MOA for a province wide organic and regenerative extension service to ensure that the average BC farmer has access to information and support as they explore transitions towards soil health focused agriculture. If approved, Northern Co-hort will be part of the overall program management committee and host several Peace Region extension staff to work directly with farmers in our area.

I believe that there is a tremendous opportunity for the Peace Region to be a key player in supporting research in carbon sequestration and climate adaptation. Between the foundational work conducted by the Peace River Forage Association, creating benchmarks and baseline soil health data as well as experienced producer members who have been practicing regenerative agriculture and other innovations around soil health development and the federal and provincial funding pools we are collaboratively planning to apply into, there is a great opportunity for the Peace.

However, there are a lot of questions about how to bring together cross commodity producers in the Peace in order to make the most use of this research funding and to ensure it has the greatest overall impact on the health of our soils, production, farmers and communities.

I am writing to see if there is interest from the PRRD Rural directors to co-fund an agrologist position for the region to explore how best to unite Peace Region producers here and to build relationships to create a plan for connecting our landowners and producers to take advantage of this funding and bring climate resilience to our food production systems and economic resilience to farmers here in the Peace.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration, I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Bess Legault
Northern Co-Hort Coordinator
Northern Environmental Action Team
10421-100 St. Fort St John V1J 3Z3 (new address)
Phone: 250-785-6328
Cell: 778-256-3353
Email: Bess@neat.ca

The Northern Co-Hort is a NEAT program designed to support local producers flourish.
For more information, please visit www.neat.ca

Northern Environmental Action Team
10421-100 St. Fort St John V1J 3Z3
250-785-6328