

# WARD SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT SUMMER 2016 NEWSLETTER



## Tree Planning Thoughts

Mark Koep, District Manager

Are you interested in a new tree planting? There are many things to consider before tree rows are put in. Cost-share, road set-backs, soils, spacing, site prep, neighboring trees, wildlife damage, potential diseases; the list goes on and on. Ward SCD takes care of most of those road blocks for you, but you need to contact us as soon as you think you might want trees planted, before any site prep begins. Maybe the spot you want trees doesn't have suitable soil for trees to grow, or maybe the area you worked up is too close to a road or under a grassland easement. If you're eligible for cost-share programs they have different specifications that must be followed, and each also has its own payment rate, minimum size, and deadline. It seems like a lot, but all of these steps are necessary to have good survival and help the trees provide the function(s) you desire for many years. Take the time to think about all these things, and remember that we are here to help with all of them.



### Fall tree maintenance



Fall is a busy time for everybody. Farmers harvesting, hunters enjoying the outdoors, fishermen trying to take advantage of the late season bite, homeowners getting things cleaned up and put away; and all before winter comes calling. As we go into fall and the leaves begin to drop, don't forget to go through your tree rows to check the fabric edges, check for girdling, count trees to see what replacements are needed, and consider watering your trees right before freeze up. Tree roots will remain active until soil temps are below 40 degrees, and evergreens will actually use some of that moisture during the winter months. Fall is also a time you can apply pre-emergent herbicides to your tree rows for weed control in the upcoming year. This year, as you're enjoying the cooler temperatures that come with fall, remember to go through this list so you can get the most out of your tree rows.

## Windbreak Renovation in Action!

As part of an ongoing project list of improvements at the district tree shed, we have renovated a lot of the trees around our building in the past 6 months. East of the building was a lot of dead and/or overgrown Caragana, Honeysuckle, Boxelder and Siberian Elm trees. The goal was to clean it up and allow lower growing shrubs and new seedlings to take over the area, as well as remove the trees on the north side of the property that could possibly fall on the building during high wind events. The work started in December, with a lot of chainsaw work and brush piling. By March, the larger chunks were split and piled so the area could be prepped for spring planting, and the Elm were burned on site because they had Dutch Elm Disease. Brush was piled behind the building, and deer, rabbits and turkeys have been hanging around ever since. Come May, we used our new tiller to prep the ground, and then planted a row of Rocky Mountain Juniper behind the building, and a row of Lilacs in front of the building.

Cost-share for *your* renovation work is available through the ND Forest Service Windbreak Renovation Initiative. Currently, 6 Ward County landowners have contracts in place, and another 6 are in the planning or contracting phase. If your windbreak or shelterbelt is in need of removal & replacement, thinning, has been flooded or burned, or for some reason is not functioning like it used to, give us a call and we can provide technical and financial assistance to get your windbreak back to the way it used to look.



2015

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Carpio, ND  
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## What's wrong with my tree? Hardwoods edition.



A common fungus with Cherry and Plum trees is Black knot. A lot of Plum and Chokecherry trees are planted in North Dakota, and many people are concerned with Black knot disease affecting the looks and survival of their tree planting. Black knot is caused by a fungus that lives in “knots” on twigs and branches. In the second year of its life cycle, it looks like a black fungus that swells around the branches of a tree, and can often be thicker than the diameter of the branch. If you have been around a row of aging Chokecherry trees, you have almost certainly seen it. While the disease is very common, it rarely results in the death of a tree. Generally, it only becomes a problem when we don't contain it. However, if it is on the main stem of the tree, it's time to consider cutting the tree down completely. To combat the knots, annually inspect and prune the branches several inches below the black knots. Be sure to disinfect your pruner with rubbing alcohol between each cut so you don't spread the disease from branch to branch. Do this in fall or winter and burn the infected branches if possible. A couple shrubs we offer that are not susceptible to Black knot disease are Black Chokeberry and Nanking Cherry. You can learn more about Black knot disease and management options from the NDSU Extension Service.

### **Ward SCD is now providing tilling service!**

Ward SCD has recently purchased a heavy duty Woods Tiller to take care of site prep and weed control for interested landowners. This is the perfect option for new homeowners without the equipment or time to rent one, or the farmer that's just too busy to keep his trees clean. Contact the SCD now to have us manage weeds and prepare sites for you.. Cost is \$75/hour with \$150 minimum charge, we provide equipment and operator.

### **DID YOU SAY GRASS SEEDING?**

Why yes we can. We have also purchased a compact tractor that enables us to pull the grass seeder which means we can now plant grass in-between the tree rows for you! Cost is \$75 an hour with \$100 minimum charge.

**WSCD DOES NOT RENT OUT ITS EQUIPMENT**

### NRCS Staff

Jerry Wingenbach  
Jared Andrist  
Harold Pettigrew III  
Dan Owens  
Darrick Ystaas

### Supervisors

Gail Yuly  
Greg Simonson  
Harlan Lee  
Patrick Zeltinger  
John Pietsch

### Ward SCD Staff

WSCD's Board Meetings are open to the public and are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Please call the office for the time and location.  
701-852-5438 ext. 3

Mark Koep  
Beth Brandt

You can also email us tree orders @ [wardsoil@srt.com](mailto:wardsoil@srt.com)

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*All programs and services are offered on a non-discriminatory basis.*

## **USDA Announces Changes to CRP Haying/Grazing Frequencies**

CRP participants now have the opportunity to hay or graze their CRP at more frequent intervals. The 2014 Farm Bill allowed Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Committees to review the haying and/or grazing frequency of Conservation Reserve Program under managed or routine provisions. The North Dakota State Technical Committee conducted a review of possible changes and the FSA State Committee adopted those recommendations.

**Managed Haying**, once every three years – for CRP contracts currently restricted to managed haying only once every five years, the CRP participant may modify the Conservation Plan of Operations to allow for managed haying once every three years. The participant must contact their local Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) office to complete the modification.

**Managed Grazing**, once every three years - for CRP contracts currently restricted to managed grazing only every five years, the CRP participant may modify the Conservation Plan of Operations to allow for managed grazing once every three years. The participant must contact their local NRCS office to complete the modification.

**Routine Grazing** – for CRP contract approved on or after July 28, 2010, the CRP participant may modify the Conservation Plan of Operations to allow routine grazing every other year. The participant must contact their local NRCS office to complete the modification.

However, no CRP management can be conducted during the Primary Nesting Season, which is April 15 through August 1. CRP participants must complete paperwork at their local FSA office prior to doing any managed haying/grazing or routine grazing and receive written approval prior to starting the operation. Please contact your local FSA office to determine eligibility for these activities.