Tree of the Quarter: Quaking Aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) are deciduous trees native to the cooler regions of North America. In fact, it is the most widely distributed tree in North America. The Quaking Aspen is a tall, fast growing tree, occasionally reaching heights of 80 feet at maturity. The tree features smooth bark, greenish white to grey, with nearly rounded leaves featuring small teeth. The leaves are attached to petioles, which grow out of the branches. Even a very light wind cause the leaves to flutter, or “quake”, hence the name. While aspen are quite common in some areas of Richland and Ransom counties, the District is planting more and more in Cass County. Bare root saplings are available through the Tree Store.

### 2016 Scholarship Winners

We are excited to announce we have awarded 2 scholarships for the 2016-2017 school year. Jarrett Lardy has been awarded the $1,000 scholarship, and Jacob Lardy has been awarded the $750 scholarship. Jarrett and Jacob both hail from Casselton and are attending North Dakota State University.

Jarrett, a freshman, is majoring in Range Science. His career aspirations include working at a University conducting research and teaching.

Jacob, a senior, is majoring in Range Science with minors in Soil Science and Animal Science. He is currently working as an intern at Kadrmas, Lee, and Jackson. He hopes to either work at KLJ after graduation or attend graduate school.

Cass County Soil Conservation Districts wishes the very best to our scholarship award winners in their future endeavors!

**Congratulations!**
2016 Achievement Award Winner

We are pleased to announce that the Northern Cass School District has been awarded the 2016 Achievement Award. The school, under the guidance of Dr. Cory Steiner and Ryan Lyson, have planted over 14,000 linear feet of trees and shrubs on the school’s property. The planting has a dual purpose, both to protect the school from the relentless North Dakota winds, and also to serve as an educational Nature Trail for the students. In addition, the school operates a greenhouse and a fabric garden, helping to educate students on the life cycle of plants, as well as the satisfaction of growing food. Every class, from K through 12 grades, has units of study on the environment and conservation. Teaching and learning about conservation and the environment at a young age helps develop a lifelong land ethic, and we applaud the Northern Cass School District for doing an outstanding job!

Conservation Quote of the Quarter:

“...only rarely have we stood back and celebrated our soils as something beautiful and perhaps even mysterious. For what other natural body, worldwide in its distribution, has so many interesting secrets to reveal to the patient observer”

Les Molloy

The 2017 Tree Order Form is out! Autumn is an excellent time of the year to take inventory on what trees you need to replace in the spring. The Online Tree Store will also be live soon, if you prefer to order in that fashion.

Urban Conservation

It was a busy summer for the Urban Conservation program. Many pollinator habitats and pocket prairies were installed. The highlight of the season was the partnership with the Red River Valley Zoo. The District teamed up with the zoo in creating a pocket prairie, rain garden, and a sensory garden within their new natural play area.

The District is seeing a lot of interest in the Pocket Prairie Initiative, and is currently accepting applications for 2017 projects. If you are interested in planning an urban project for next year, contact us soon while funding is still available.

EQIP Deadline

The deadline for signing up for consideration for an EQIP contract is October 21st. This year, the NRCS will require a clear path towards a conservation plan prior to entering into a financial contract. This will ensure the project can be ranked accurately. If you have questions or need assistance with your plan, stop by the office for help.
Happenings

Lucas Schmiesing has been hired as a Soil Conservationist for the Fargo Field Office. He recently worked as a Soil Conservationist for the Devil’s Lake Field Office, and also served as Acting DC in Fargo for a month last winter. We are excited to welcome Lucas to the office!

Grass Seeding Season

The District put the no-till drills to good use this season. Utilizing the 15’ Great Plains and 7’ Tye drill, the crew seeded a variety of projects. Between the spring and late summer seeding windows, nearly 950 acres of Cass County was seeded. A wide variety of projects were completed, including Conservation Reserve Program plantings, pasture plantings, multi-species cover crops, and grass between tree rows. Many long days on the tractors were required, but with perseverance and some help from Mother Nature, all of the contracted acres were completed. Timely rains after planting were a big help in allowing the grass to start strong, and for the cover crops to get a good start. The District would like to thank the producers that had us seed for them, and look forward to continuing to help landowners in Cass County put conservation on the ground in 2017.

Cover Crop Talk

With short growing seasons and late harvest row crops, finding a seeding window for cover crops to establish can be difficult. Many producers have found success planting cover crops following small grain harvest and have seen the benefits of nutrient cycling, ground cover, supplemental grazing, and soil heath building. But, how can we replicate these successes on corn and soybean acres? Inter-seeding cover crops into corn at the right time can be a good way to provide ground cover, supplemental grazing, and improve diversity into the rotation. Aerial applications, side-dress applications, and direct-drilling between rows can all be successful ways of incorporating a cover crop into corn. Cereal rye and brassicas continue to be the most popular seed for this application.

Cereal rye is also a good option for fall cover crop after soybean harvest in a bean-on-bean rotation. Allowing the cereal rye to overwinter and green up in the spring can help use excess soil moisture, improve field traffic-ability, and aid in weed suppression. Soybean can then be no-tilled into the cereal cover, after termination via herbicide. Whether you are interested in soil health, erosion control, weed suppression, or supplemental grazing, the sky is the limit with cover crops. The Cass County field office staff can assist with planning and implementation of cover-crop as well as present potential cost share opportunities.

Upcoming Events

October 10th—Columbus Day: Office Closed
October 18th—Board Meeting: Fargo Field Office
November 11th—Veterans Day: Office Closed
November 15th—Board Meeting: Fargo Field Office
November 20-22—NDASCD Annual Meeting: Bismarck
November 24th—Thanksgiving: Office Closed
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