2018 Tree Planting Program

The 2018 Tree Planting endeavor got off to a rocky start as winter-like conditions welcomed the Spring. Due to weather conditions, we weren’t able to begin planting until the second week in May. The tables quickly turned as Mother Nature began to cooperate which allowed the crews to double-time it to get the trees in the ground in a timely manner. Because of this hard work, we were successful in planting over 230,000 linear feet of trees in Cass County. Weed barrier fabric was applied to 85% of the plantings. Trees were planted under a mix of cost-share programs, including EQIP, CWPI and TCAP, as well as the producer paying the full cost of installation. We were fortunate to have a great crew of seasonal employees return this year: Dan Iwen and Barry Rupprecht returned for their 14th year, and Adam Breske for his third. If you were unable to get a tree planting done in 2018, and are interested in putting conservation on the ground, contact us to schedule an appointment to draw up an individualized conservation plan. Depending on the project, cost-share may be available. The Cass Windbreak Planting Initiative (CWPI) will again be available next year for field windbreaks, wildlife and riparian plantings.

Community Garden Grant Recipients

We awarded four Community Garden Grants in Cass County this year. Grant recipients include Lewis and Clark Elementary Community Garden, Folkways Community Garden, Faith+Journey Community Garden, and the Nativity Community Garden. Money allocated to each garden is to start or enhance infrastructure needs. The gardens help build community spirit while also providing fresh and healthy food. The SCD is excited to work with each group, and will again be offering the grant program in 2019.

Tree of the Quarter

Sandbar Willow (Salix interior) is a small to medium shrub. Fond of water, they are most often found along riparian corridors. By suckering profusely, the shrubs will colonize exposed soil rapidly. This makes the Sandbar Willow an excellent species to stabilize river and stream banks. The shrub grows as wide as tall, exploding wispy, slender steams from the ground. Because of the propensity to sucker, it is not recommended to plant Sandbar Willow in a landscape situation. Sandbar Willow really shines as an economical, natural solution to streambank erosion. The Sandbar Willow is available through the SCD online tree store and can also be included in machine plantings.
Cass County Cover Crop Project (4CP) Update

The Cass County SCD has funding available in 2018 to plant cover crops. This is the last year of the 2-year project. Funding is limited and will be awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. In 2017, 1,484 acres of cover crops were planted through the 4CP. Funded through an Outdoor Heritage Fund grant, it is intended for first-time users of cover crops. Cost-share will pay 60% of the seed cost. All other costs will be the responsibility of the participant. For producers looking to drill their cover crop, we offer a no-till drill service. We are also a dealer for quality cover crop seed. For more information or to sign up, please contact Eric Dahl at the Cass County Soil Conservation District office today.

Outdoor Heritage Fund Grant Award

The Cass Windbreak Planting Initiative (CWPI) has expanded for 2019, thanks to a grant from the Outdoor Heritage Fund. The program will financially assist landowners with the planting of trees by providing 75% cost-share towards the planting of trees, with the landowner being responsible for the remaining 25%. 2017 was the pilot year for the program, with 30,065 linear feet of trees planted. In 2018, over 74,000 linear feet of trees were planted using the CWPI funding. The OHF grant funding will ensure we can continue to assist landowners with providing and enhancing wildlife habitat and erosion-preventing field windbreaks. If you are interested in a CWPI, contact Tony Peterson at the office today!

County Weed Board News

Once again this year, the Cass County Weed Board is offering a Landowner Assistance Program (LAP) for spraying on land that is not CRP and not grazed. Cost-share is offered on 80% of approved herbicide, up to $1,500 total. In addition, up to $3.50 per acre application cost-share is available. For more information, contact Weed Control Director Stan Wolf at 701-298-2388.

Conservation Quote of the Quarter:

“To be poor and be without trees, is to be the most starved human being in the world. To be poor and have trees, is to be completely rich in ways that money can never buy.” Clarissa Pinkola Estés

Upcoming Events

July 17th- Board Meeting: Fargo Field Office
August 21st- Board Meeting: Field Office
September 11-13th– Big Iron: RRVF
September 20th– Eco Ed: Brewer Lake
Cass County Soil Conservation District has been awarded a grant for the **Maple River Watershed**. The Maple River Watershed Project is a continuation of the former Buffalo Creek Watershed Project in Cass County. The new Maple River Watershed Project will cover a much larger area for implementation of best management practices (BMP). The project will continue to have a strong emphasis on cropland and pastureland BMPs that focus on improving soil health. Soil health practices are proven to improve water infiltration, soil organic matter and soil fertility, while reducing sedimentation and nutrient runoff. These are all critical factors in improving surface water quality and sustainable agriculture. If you reside within the Maple River Watershed you may be eligible for cost-share used for Implementation of Best Management Practices. Cost-share assistance will be provided at a sixty percent (60%) Federal and forty percent (40%) landowner matching ratio. Cost-share opportunities include: no-till, cover crop, nutrient management, manure management, fencing, watering facilities for livestock, tree planting, grass seeding and more. Contact Eric Dahl at eric.dahl@nd.nacdnet.net or 701-282-2157 ext. 3 for more information today!
All programs and services of the Cass County Soil Conservation District are offered on a non-discriminatory basis, without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age or handicap. In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.