

# Cass County Soil Conservation District

## Winter Conservation News

### In This Issue

Page 1

COVID and Conservation  
Tree of the Quarter

Page 2

2021 Annual Report

Page 3

Red River Basin Project

Page 4

Get Outside!

Page 5

Winter Wildlife Habitat

Page 6

Sponsors



### Tree of the Quarter: Black Hills Spruce

(*Picea glauca* var. *densata*) is a large white spruce tree native to western South Dakota. The Black Hills Spruce is less susceptible to needle cast disease than the Colorado Blue Spruce. The needles are variably green and glaucous, possessing none of the blue tint of

the Colorado Blue. Black Hills Spruce initially grows at a slow pace as it puts down roots. After that, the growth is at a medium rate until it reaches maturity at 30 to 60 feet. Black Hills Spruce do not grow well in wet areas and is only marginally drought tolerant. The cones are much smaller than the Colorado Blue Spruce, less than 2" long. Many species of birds and small mammals enjoy the seeds. Black Hills Spruce are available through the Tree Store in conservation grade stock and can also be in machine plantings as well.

**Check us out at  
cassscd.org or on  
Facebook!**

### District Staff

Jeffrey Miller—Director

Amy Cole—Office Manager

Eric Dahl—Soil and Water Resources Mgr

Tony Peterson—Programs Manager

### NRCS Staff

Josh Monson—District Conservationist

Matt Shappell—Soil Conservationist

Matt Waclawik—Wetlands Specialist

Blake Johnson—Agriculture Engineer

Paul Flahave—Designated Conservationist

Tim Cogger—Program Assistant

### District Supervisors

Terry Hoffmann—Wheatland

Brad Kellerman—West Fargo

Kelli Bowen—Cassellton

Jodi Meisch—Mapleton

Warren Solberg—Horace

### *Ladies' Ag 2022*

Plan on attending our annual Ladies' Ag event, being held on March 24th, 2022 at the Fargo Air Museum. Doors open at 4:30 pm. This year we are excited to have **Sabrina Hornung** as our featured speaker. She is the editor of the High Plains Reader and reporter for the Wishek Star and Ashley Tribune. She will be discussing art and rural communities. Ladies' Ag brings together multiple generations of women involved in rural and urban agriculture production and land management. Attendees enjoy a social hour and supper, entertainment,

and raffle items. The proceeds from the raffle go directly back into the Ladies' Ag Night fund. This event is **FREE** to ladies who are invested in rural and urban conservation. Participants may register for this event by calling the District at (701) 282-2157 x 3 or emailing Amy at amy.cole@nd.nacdn.net.





- ✓ The District worked closely with our partners NRCS and FSA in setting up EQIP and CSP contracts that involved either tree plantings or grass plantings. In addition, the **Cass County Windbreak Planting Initiative (CWPI)** continue to be very popular. We would like to thank all the cooperators in the county for giving the District the opportunity to apply conservation to their land. The District assisted these cooperators in planting over **220,000 LF** of trees and installed over **190,000 LF** of weed barrier. Almost **70,000 trees and shrubs** were planted in Cass County in 2021.
- ✓ Both no-till drills saw use and we planted over **3,500 acres** of perennial grasses and forbs, cover crops and alfalfa in Cass County in 2021.
- ✓ Our **Eco-Ed** outdoor educational program was held at Brewer Lake and reached over 100 7th grade students from Central Cass.
- ✓ The **Maple River Watershed Project** is open for sign-up and we are continuously accepting cost-share applications for management practices in the Maple River Watershed. This is the third year of the Project so if you are interested in cost-share, be sure to sign up for the 2022 growing season. Practices include livestock management, cover crop, grass and tree establishment, septic system renovations, and more.
- ✓ The **Urban Conservation** program continues to expand. We took on many great projects throughout our community and held several community educational workshops including the construction of rain barrels and compost tumblers. The Pocket Prairie Initiative, Community Garden Grant, and Pollinator plantings continue to be popular. We are continuously accepting applications, so contact us today!
- ✓ The District's annual **Ladies Ag Night** was a casualty of COVID and not held in 2021.
- ✓ The **Living Ag Classroom** program was a casualty of COVID and not held in 2021.
- ✓ The **Home and Garden Show** was a casualty of COVID and not held in 2021.
- ✓ The District had a booth at the **Big Iron Farm Show**. Big Iron gives us a great opportunity to discuss soil conservation with the producers that stop by the booth. During the show we displayed our tree planting equipment at our shop at the fairgrounds.
- ✓ The District planted **Little Free Garden #226** at the office entrance.
- ✓ The District partnered with Fargo Parks and Riverkeepers for ReForest the Red.
- ✓ The District presented at Fargo Vocational Training Center (VTC) on a variety of topics.
- ✓ The "Animal Adaptations" presentation continues to be popular with area students.
- ✓ The District's Eric Dahl and Jeffrey Miller were interviewed for articles that appeared in the Cass County Reporter newspaper.

***Quote of the Quarter:***

*"I wonder if the snow loves  
the trees and fields, that it kiss-  
es them so gently? And then it  
covers them up snug, you  
know, with a white quilt; and  
perhaps it says, "Go to sleep,  
darlings, till the summer  
comes again."*

***Lewis Carroll***

***All in all, it was a very productive and busy year. We look forward to working with producers and organizations to help Cass County continue to make strides in conservation!***



## *Red River Basin Wildlife and Water Quality Enhancement Pilot Program*



New for 2021, seven Soil Conservation Districts (SCDs) in the Red River Basin are coordinating with the ND Game and Fish Department and ND Department of Environmental Quality to initiate the Red River Basin Wildlife and Water Quality Enhancement Pilot Program (Program). Counties include Cass, Grand Forks, Griggs, Ransom, Richland, Sargent and Walsh. The program will be active from 2021-2025.

The primary objectives of the Program are to increase wildlife habitat and improve water quality in the Red River Valley. Marginally productive croplands (e.g., saline areas, flood prone sites, etc.) in the uplands and along riparian corridors are the primary focus of the Program. Eligible practices include: Conservation Cover, Critical Area Planting, Filter Strip, Grassed Waterway, Pollinator Habitat, Range Planting, Forage and Biomass Planting, Riparian Forest Buffer and Riparian Herbaceous Buffer.

Sixty percent (60%) of eligible practice costs will be supported with Outdoor Heritage funds and the balance of costs (i.e., 40%) will be the responsibility of the producer. In addition to the practice cost-share, producers are also eligible to receive payments for the management and maintenance of select practices, including Conservation Cover, Pollinator Habitat, Riparian Forest Buffer and Riparian Herbaceous Cover. These payments will be issued through management agreements established between the participating producer and SCD.

Management agreements can be up to 5 years in length and the payments will be based on local county rental rates. Payments to the producers can be provided as an annual or lump-sum payment and cannot exceed 50% of the county rental rate.



If you are interested or would like to get more information, contact us today!



### Upcoming Events

December 24th— **Christmas Eve:** Office Closed  
 December 31st— **New Year's Eve:** Office Closed  
 January 18th— **Board Meeting:** Fargo Field Office  
 January 17th— **MLK Day:** Office Closed

February 21st— **Presidents' Day:** Office Closed  
 February 15th— **Board Meeting:** Fargo Field Office



## *Get Outside!*

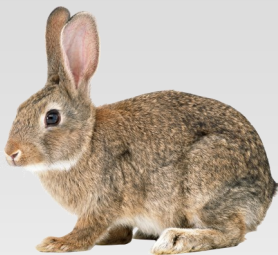
When it comes to outdoor activity, the winter season is generally dead last in terms of enjoyment. Besides ice fishing and snowmobiling, most folks spend the season by the fireplace, not wanting to experience the cold. This is a shame, as the winter world has endless possibilities.



The most efficient way to get around in the snow is a pair of snowshoes. While the old-fashioned wooden and rawhide models still work great, the majority of snowshoes used today are modern types with aluminum frames and synthetic webbing. Regardless of the model, they accomplish the same purpose, allowing the user to “float” over deep snow.

Once the user is comfortable with walking in snowshoes, it's time to explore! Gone are the noises of humanity in the countryside, and a soft, quiet hush sits in its place. Animal tracks in the snow allow a previously unseen look into their daily lives. The trees, stark without their leaves, lend an entirely different feeling to the world.

After some time spent outdoors in the brisk winter cold, the fire will feel good.



Whip up a batch of stew and relax by the fireplace, happily worn out by a winter's hike.



## **Spring 2022**

It's not too late to plan your Spring tree planting! Depending on the practice, there may even be cost-share available! Just looking for hand-plants for your property? The Tree Store is now **OPEN!** Winter is the perfect time to plan a Pollinator Plot or Pocket Prairie as well. Call or email us today and let's get a plan together!







## *Winter Wildlife Habitat*



When it comes to wildlife habitat, the limiting factor is winter cover. The easy living days of summer, with verdant crops, grass and trees are over. The cold winter's wind bites deep, whipping over the barren fields. In order for the birds and animals to make it through the season, they need cover.

The ideal habitat offers thermal cover, food and escape cover. The common non-native grass, brome, may look to offer great cover in the summer when it is standing tall. But winter wind and snow knocks it flat, and offers habitat for little more than a field mouse.

Diverse stands of grasses and forbs, consisting of native plants, provide the best of all worlds. Native plants have adapted for the wind and snow, offering stem structure that stands up and doesn't fall flat. Forbs provide high energy food for wildlife and cover from the relentless wind.

Trees and shrubs also provide winter cover. Conifers, especially cedars and juniper, block wind with dense branches. Large trees such as cottonwood and boxelder deflect wind and allow for warmer microclimates. Whitetail deer browse on the high energy twigs and branches, consuming both woody material and the buds of leaves.



Little changes on the landscape can provide huge returns for wildlife. Planting some perennial native grass or native trees and shrubs can allow your property to provide a better environment for all kinds of different critters that call it home.



## *Pay My Bill*

You can now pay your bill online! Click **PAY MY BILL** on the homepage and enjoy the convenience!

# Cass County Soil Conservation District

1665 43rd St S, Suite 103

Fargo ND 58103-3319

## STEWARDSHIP FOR TODAY & TOMORROW

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. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, or marital or family status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.


### *This Newsletter Has Been Sponsored By:*



**BRIAN TEBERG**  
Owner

Phone: 701.277.3255  
3201 39th St SW  
Fargo, ND 58103  
eliteautomotivecenter@gmail.com

Find us on Facebook



**AGASSIZ**  
SEED & SUPPLY

Chris (Chrispy) Prochnow  
Sales

445 7th Street NW • West Fargo, ND 58078  
Office 701-282-8118 • Fax 701-282-9119  
chrisp@agassizseed.com • Cell 701-388-6323  
www.agassizseed.com

**4e winery**

Tasting room open  
May through October

3766 156th Ave SE  
Mapleton, ND 58059  
701-936-9693  
4ewinery.com



**Prairie Brand**

Brooks Whitmore  
Prairie Brand Dealer

13498 12th St SE  
Hope, ND 58046

c: 701-730-0301

**COUNTY LINE SEED LLC.**  
COLGATE, ND

countylineseedllc@gmail.com

**GROW your PROMISE.**



**701-282-7476**  
3104 164th Ave SE • Harwood, ND 58042  
PetersonFarmsSeed.com



A Division of Swanson Equipment



Portable Power

**Mason Persons**  
Sales Specialist

3450 W. Main Ave. • Fargo, ND 58103  
T 701-293-7325  
C 701-566-3266  
F 701-293-9468  
mpersons@swanston.com

**Bobcat of Fargo**  
AUTHORIZED BOBCAT DEALER

www.swanston.com



**EMBDEN**  
GRAIN COMPANY  
QUALITY • SERVICE • INTEGRITY

**701-633-5438**  
embdengrain@ictc.com

WWW.EMBDENGRAIN.COM



**COTTONWOOD BEND FARM**  
facebook.com/cottonwoodbendfarm

Jeffrey Miller and Melanie Kraker  
Owners

5447 E River Road  
Kindred, ND 58051  
701-371-1060  
jeffreymiller@hotmail.com