

# West McLean SCD Newsletter

Summer 2021

## 2021 Tree Planting Season Recap

The 2021 planting season was my first year planting with the District and was certainly eventful with the lack of precipitation. Thank you to my tree crew Dan Buresh, Josephina Grames, and Richard Schultz for working hard during long days. Although the lack of rain has impacted our plantings this year, we really appreciated coming back to install fabric and seeing green trees despite the lack of rain.

### The planting season for 2021 ended with

**Total Fabric and Trees : 75,515 ft**  
**Handplants order trees : 3,628**  
**Tree Sale Handplants sold : 1,381**

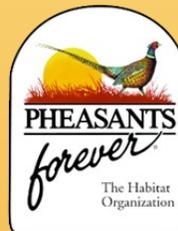
**We are currently working on trees plans for next year, let us know if you are interested!**

## 2022 Tree Cost-Share Programs

**Forest Service Windbreak Renovation**— North Dakota Forest Service Windbreak Renovation Initiative offers technical and financial assistance to private windbreak owners statewide to restore, protect and enhance their deteriorating windbreaks. Many of North Dakota's important forest resources are in need of maintenance, but not all of them are eligible for WRI. For WRI, we define a windbreak as a system of multiple rows of trees and shrubs primarily designed and engineered to modify the flow of wind.

**Outdoor Heritage Fund**—These tree plantings are meant to encourage conservation of erosion, water, farmstead and wildlife diversity. The landowner is eligible to receive 70% of the total project cost, leaving the landowner 30% of the cost to pay. The deadline for this program is August 23rd.

**Pheasants Forever**— Will provide funding to wildlife focused plantings that prioritize pheasant habitat. Will not fund planting that breaks up native prairie or is located in residential development. Contact the office for more details about wildlife planting details.



## **SCD Supervisors**

Jay Hansen—Chairman

Jeff Meyers—Vice Chairman

Richard White Bear

Mark Retterath

Ed Hauf

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## **Upcoming Meeting Dates**

August 12th 8:30 am  
September 9th 8:30 am  
October 14th 10:30 am  
November 11th 10:30 am  
December 9th 10:30 am

Meetings are held at the USDA Service Center and are open to the public.

Dates and times are subject to change.

If you wish to attend meetings and need assistance, please call to make arrangements.

All Programs and Services of West Mclean Soil Conservation District are offered on a non discriminatory basis without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, age or handicap.

USDA is an

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# Harmful Algal Blooms (HABs)

The North Dakota Department of Water Quality is asking for your help in locating harmful algal blooms in our state this year. With the drought this year there are a lot of water quality issues that the department is responding to, and your heads up is greatly appreciated.

## Know it.

Blue-green algae can look like a crust on the water, grass clippings, green cottage cheese, scum or like spilled green paint or green pea soup.



## Avoid it.

- Respect advisories and warnings announced by the NDDEQ. All water advisories and warnings are posted on this page.
- Do not swim, water ski, or boat in areas where the water is discolored or where you see foam, scum or mats of green or blue-green algae on the water; or let pets swim in or drink from affected waters.
  - If you or your pet accidentally swims in water that might have a cyanobacteria bloom, rinse off with fresh water as soon as possible.
- Do not irrigate lawns with pond or lake water that looks scummy or has an awful odor.

## Report it.

Report suspected blue-green algae blooms to the NDDEQ at 701-328-5210. Because it can take time to receive laboratory test results, we urge people to be cautious and avoid waters that look discolored, scummy, or have a foul odor.

# Top Three Tips for Saving Water in Your Yard

## **#1 You can water less**

How much water do lawns really need? It may be a surprise, but our lawns are well adapted to thrive with way less water than many realize. The majority of lawns rely on rainfall for all their water needs, especially in the moderate spring and fall months. During summer when irrigation begins, try comparing how your lawn responds to a few minutes less of watering and then keep adjusting your watering duration times down until you reach the balance of savings and healthy green grass.

## **#2 Mow high**

Did you know how you mow affects how much water your lawn needs? The easiest and best step you can take when mowing is to set your mower at the highest setting. Mowing high puts less stress on your grass and encourages more rooting. Thus, the higher you mow, the deeper your roots will grow and reach more water than a lawn that is mowed short. A thick, dense lawn helps capture water by slowing its runoff and channeling more into the soil and roots versus a thin, bare lawn. Studies show how feeding helps grass grow greener and do better with less water than an unfed but well-watered grass.

## **#3 Be smart about irrigation**

Whether you have simple above ground hoses or an advanced in-ground irrigation system, how you water makes all the difference for optimal grass health and water conservation. The single best time to water is early morning, as this helps hydrate your grass plants before high-noon heat and wind. Avoid evening watering, as this can make lawns more susceptible to certain diseases. Watering daily for 10-15 minutes per zone does a better job of matching where roots are in the top few inches of the soil. Deep watering often puddles, which can cause runoff and even go past the roots in soil. Periodically, check sprinkler head patterns, look for and repair any leaks, and think about upgrading to a smart irrigation controller, which watches the weather to estimate water needs automatically for you.

## **EQIP Application Deadline Coming Soon for North Dakota Farmers**

North Dakota farmers interested in applying for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) should submit an application by September 24, 2021. While USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) accepts applications throughout the year, you must apply by the date to be considered for 2022 funding.

EQIP is a voluntary conservation program that helps make conservation work for you. Together, NRCS will help you invest in solutions that conserve natural resources for the future while also improving your agricultural operation.

Through EQIP, NRCS provides you with financial resources and one-on-one help to plan and implement improvements, or what we call conservation practices.

Common practices include: Cover Crops, Grass Seedings, No-Till, Water Wells, Livestock Pipelines, Livestock Tanks, and Cross Fencing.

NRCS sets aside 10 percent of EQIP funding for historically underserved customers, which include beginning farmers, socially disadvantaged farmers, limited resource producers, Tribal farmers and veterans. These customers receive a higher EQIP payment rate on their conservation practices.

To apply, contact the McLean County NRCS field office at 463-2851 Ext. 3 for an appointment.

### **Farm Service Agency County Committee Member Election**

- This Election is for the Area 2 region that includes the towns;  
Turtle Lake, Max, Butte, Ruso
- Who Can Vote? : *Anyone that participates in any FSA program and resides in the Area 2 district*
  - Members serve three year terms
- Members meet monthly to discuss critical decisions impacting local producers
  - Deadline for nomination is August 2nd

Contact the FSA office if you have questions or would like to nominate someone

# Watering trees in a dry year

Trees are deeply affected during drought years. Have you ever seen the cut-down stump of a very old tree, and observed the appearance of the annual growth rings? Each ring represents one year of a tree's growth, and they vary in size.

Annual rings produced during years of plentiful moisture are wide, indicating generous growth. Rings produced during drought years are small, tight and narrow, showing the tree produced very little increase in trunk diameter during that dry year. On tree stumps dating back a century, you can clearly see the tight, narrow rings that were produced during the decadelong drought of the 1930s, when trees were greatly stressed.

Hopefully, the current drought will be short-lived. In the meantime, we can prevent our trees from becoming dangerously stressed by providing extra moisture.

How much water should we give a tree, and how often? The answer depends on the tree's age and whether the soil is heavy clay or light sand.

Old, established shade trees have extensive root systems that can weather dry spells more easily than a young tree whose root system isn't fully developed. Most large trees will persist through a dry year, but watering them can reduce stress. Stressed trees are more prone to attack by insects, disease and winter injury.

When watering a large tree, let the hose slowly trickle in the area under the tree's canopy, instead of next to the trunk. North Dakota Extension Forester Joe Zeleznik recommends this: "Water every 10 to 14 days, but only if there's been no rainfall in that time. A long and slow soaking at the outer edge of the drip line (the area shadowed by the tree crown) is better than multiple short doses of water. Water until the soil is moist, not saturated."

Younger trees planted within the past five years or so will greatly benefit from watering during dry years. As mentioned for older, mature trees, watering deeply every 10 to 14 days is more productive than frequent, light sprinklings.

To decide how much water to apply, we can follow an old rule that still has merit: trees need 10 gallons of water for every inch of trunk caliper, which is the diameter measured 6 inches above soil line, applied every seven to 14 days. When watering with a hand-held hose, it takes about 35 seconds to fill a 5-gallon pail, by counting "one thousand one, one thousand two," and so on. It's easy to become impatient, and not provide young trees with a thorough soaking.

Trees that are planted during the current growing season require greater attention. Immediately after planting, water the tree to remove air pockets from the soil and improve root-to-soil contact. Water twice a week during the first month after transplanting and once a week during the second month, and then cut back to once every 10 to 14 days.

Younger trees can be killed by overwatering. Don't keep the soil continually soggy with daily watering. If the soil looks dark-moist on the surface, don't water. If the surface appears dry, scrape aside the top inch of soil, and if the soil still looks moist below, delay watering for a day or two.

Watering frequency also depends on soil type. In areas where the soil is light and sandy, the recommended watering amounts can be divided in two, and applied twice as often. In areas having heavy clay soil, proper watering intervals should be observed to prevent waterlogged soil from killing the trees we were trying to help.

NDSU Extension Forester Zeleznik continues with recommendations: "Another approach to managing drought stress in trees is to reduce competition for water. Mulch around the trees using wood chips, tree bark or other organic mulch. Go as far as you are comfortable with — even as far as the drip line. Keep mulch 3 to 6 inches away from the base of the tree. Weed barrier fabric can be used as a non-organic mulch."

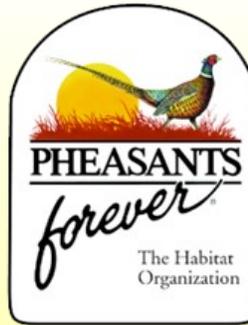
Mulches around young trees greatly enhance their health. Shredded wood products minimize competition from weeds and grass, retain soil moisture, prevent extreme soil temperatures and prevent lawn mower and trimmer damage.

An easy-to-remember rule is 5-5-5: mulch should be applied 5 inches thick in a circle 5 feet in diameter, and kept 5 inches away from the tree's trunk. As an underlayment to reduce weed and grass emergence, I often use flattened cardboard beneath the mulch.

## NDSU EXTENSION SERVICE

NDSU Extensions mission is to extend education from our land-grant university to residents of all ages and walks of life. Their education programs includes; livestock management, crop management, natural resources management, 4-H youth development, horticulture much more. If you would like to know more visit there website at

[www.ag.ndsu.edu/extension/#](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu/extension/#)  
For any other questions you can call your local agent Calla Edwards at 462-8541 or email [calandria.jarboe@ndsu.edu](mailto:calandria.jarboe@ndsu.edu)



Sakakawea Chapter of Pheasants Forever is a great resource for helping with habitat establishment for pheasants and other wildlife. Their local chapter has helped numerous landowners enhance our natural resources. To learn more visit [sakakaweapheasantsforever.org](http://sakakaweapheasantsforever.org)

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### Cedars & Junipers:

If you planted cedars or junipers, and they are brown or orange you might think they are dead. However, most times these trees go into shock after being planted. **PLEASE DON'T PULL THEM!!** Wait until next spring to see if your trees come out of shock before replacing them. Please call if you are concerned about your cedars and junipers.

# Livestock Water Testing



Miranda Meehan, NDSU Extension Livestock Environmental Stewardship Specialist  
Aaron Larsen, North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality Watershed Management Program Manager

## Sample Protocol

- 1** Collect sample in clean 1-quart or larger plastic (preferred) or glass container
  - a. Sample containers can be obtained from your county office of the NDSU Extension Service or the watershed coordinator with your local Soil Conservation District.
  - b. The Astro Chem Lab prefers you contact it to get a sample kit/container.
- 2** Collect sample from area where livestock are drinking. If collecting cyanobacteria (blue-green algae), take a sample in the bloom and wear gloves because it can be toxic to humans.
- 3** Rinse container several times using water to be sampled
- 4** Fill container completely. Being sure to collect water from deeper in the water and the surface.
- 5** Label the container with following information:
  - a. name of waterbody
  - b. name of sampler
  - c. date collected
  - d. time collected
- 6** Seal the container tightly and wrap the top with tape to prevent leaking. Place the water in a sealed plastic bag.
- 7** Complete laboratory sample custody form required to be submitted with the sample; contact the laboratory if needed
- 8** If submitting a cyanobacteria sample, **ship immediately** on an ice pack (**no wet ice please**) by next-day delivery. Do not freeze the sample or leave it on the dashboard of your vehicle (avoid temperature extremes). Fresh samples yield the best results. Many samples begin to degrade rapidly after collection; therefore, samples should be received by the laboratory within 24 hours whenever possible.  
\*We recommend collecting and shipping samples before Friday to avoid shipping delays.

## Testing Labs

### NDSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

701-231-7527 or 701-231-8307 • [www.vdl.ndsu.edu](http://www.vdl.ndsu.edu)

- Water screen: nitrates, pH, total dissolved solids (TDS), sulfates
  - Cost: \$25 for test and \$10 submission fee (submission paid once when submitting multiple samples)
- Cyanobacteria (blue-green algae)
  - Cost: \$20 for test and \$10 submission fee (submission paid once when submitting multiple samples)
- Turnaround: within one day of samples arriving at lab
- Shipping:

#### U.S. Postal Service

Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory  
NDSU Dept. 7691  
PO Box 6050  
Fargo, ND 58108-6050

#### FedEx/UPS

Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory  
4035 19th Ave. N.  
Fargo, ND 58102

### North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality - Chemistry Division

- Water Quality Screen: pH, sulfate, nitrate + nitrite, total dissolved solids (TDS)
  - Cost: \$62.22
- Arsenic (not included in the water screen)
  - Cost: \$42.38
- Turnaround: Seven to 10 business days
- Shipping:
  - Samples **must** be cooled with an ice pack.
  - Samples **must** arrive at the lab within 48 hours of collection.
- Shipping: Environmental Quality Chemistry Laboratory  
2635 East Main  
Bismarck, ND 58501

### Minnesota Valley Testing Laboratories Inc.

701-258-9720 • [www.mvttl.com](http://www.mvttl.com)

- Water screen: nitrates, conductivity, total dissolved solids (TDS), sulfates
  - Cost: \$52
- Turnaround: seven days
- Shipping: Minnesota Valley Testing Laboratories  
2616 East Broadway Ave.  
Bismarck, ND 58501

### Astro Chem Lab Inc.

701-572-7355 • <http://astrochemlab.com>

- Water screen: pH, conductivity, residual sodium carbonate, hardness, sodium adsorption ratio, total dissolved solids, sodium chloride, calcium, magnesium, sodium, iron, potassium, chloride, carbonate, bicarbonate, sulfate and nitrate-N
  - Cost: \$60
- Turnaround: seven days
- Shipping: Astro Chem Lab  
4102 2nd Ave. W.  
PO Box 972  
Williston, ND 58802