

## **PLAN NOW FOR 2011 TREE PLANTING SEASON**

The Yellow Medicine Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is currently taking tree orders and drawing up tree plans for the 2011 spring planting season. It is possible for landowners to receive cost share for tree plantings. Federal and/or State Cost Share can provide up to 75% cost share. Cost share dollars must be requested and awarded prior to the actual tree planting. Cost Share could be available for field windbreaks, farmstead shelterbelts, shelterbelt renovations, living snowfences, riparian buffers, and wildlife plantings.

**Field windbreaks** are one to three rows of trees planted in a cropped field. Windbreaks help protect soil from wind erosion. Wildlife also benefit from the establishment of a windbreak using them as travel lanes, as well as a source of food and cover.

**Farmstead shelterbelts** are three to ten row tree plantings, providing wind protection for homes, farm buildings, feedlots, and livestock enclosures. A good shelterbelt will help reduce heating and cooling costs. It will also help trap snow before it fills in the yard and driveway. When working with existing groves that are not functioning properly and need replacement, several options are available. These projects can be accomplished in 2 or 3 steps over a number of years allowing the farm site some protection from existing trees, while the new shelterbelt is being established. Two to five row shelterbelt additions can also be added to the south and east of the farm site to protect from troublesome winter winds coming from this direction.

**Living snowfences** are one to three rows of trees or shrubs planted to keep roads clear of drifting snow. Snowfences increase visibility and driving safety in the winter and reduce the cost of snow removal in critical drifting areas.

**Riparian buffers** are tree plantings on cropped and noncropped land along intermittent streams and rivers. Buffers are planted for the purpose of streambank stabilization and erosion control. They are also very beneficial for wildlife.

**Wildlife habitat plantings** provide food sources and nesting areas on winter cover for a variety of wildlife including pheasants and deer. A good wildlife planting should be at least two hundred and fifty feet long and ten to fifteen rows wide. Rows should be spaced 12-15 feet apart. At least four of these rows, generally on the leeward side, should be varieties of confers. The remaining rows should consist of small tree or shrub varieties. Properly located and designed these plantings can protect wildlife through the most severe winters.

Landowners interested in tree planting projects for the spring of 2011 are encouraged to contact Kurt Johnson at the SWCD to begin the planning process. Kurt evaluates each proposed tree planting site to guarantee that the final plan is suitable for the particular landscape and surrounding land uses.

Since funding for some programs are limited, those who make their cost share requests well in advance will have a greater chance to receive funding. In addition to design and cost share, timely project planning helps to ensure availability of the chosen tree species. Give Kurt a call at 320-669-4442 Ext 3 to order your trees for 2011.