

# Conservation News



October 2009, Issue 19

www.popeswcd.org

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## POPE SOIL AND WATER HOSTS EDUCATION DAYS

This fall has been busy with education days. The Pope and Stevens County Waterfest was held on September 11. Sixth grade students participate in activities about



water. They learn about the cycle, treatment, and monitoring of water and they also do some fun activities with water like bubbleology and the incredible journey.

Bubbleology is always a favorite with the students.

Conservation Education Day was held on September 24 at the

Scandia Woods Environmental Learning Lab (SWELL). Conservation day teaches 5th grade students about the environment around us. Students participate in activities related to wildlife, orienteering, raptors and more.



Above: Students Learn how a water treatment plant works at waterfest. Left: Students learn about Raptors at Conservation Day.

The Jr. Envirothon will be held on October 7th. Groups of students compete at 5 different learning stations related to Soils, Aquatics, Forestry, and Wildlife.

The kids have a great time at these events. The Pope & Stevens SWCD's would like to thank all those involved in making these events happen.



## Conservation Buffers: Help Fish & Wildlife

Conservation buffers are strips of grass, trees or shrubs, or a combination of them. As the name implies, a buffer provides a cushion, or buffer, between intensive farming operations and other lands or waterways.

There are a number of practices that are called buffers. Most common are grass filter strips or grass, shrub and tree riparian plantings along a stream. Contour grass strips in a crop field, farmstead and field windbreaks, and grass field borders are also considered buffers.

A primary reason many landowners establish buffers is to improve water quality. The grass

or other vegetation slows water runoff, allowing sediment and farm chemicals to settle out into the buffer rather than shoot full speed into streams, lakes or reservoirs. Because the buffer is between the water body and the farm field, farming operations are also kept at arms length from the water body, meaning chemical and other field applications take place away from the stream.

### Food and cover

The new vegetation established in a buffer is an opportunity for new sources of food and cover for wildlife. Native plants, forbs and legumes recommended by the Natural Resources Conservation Service provide the foods many wildlife

species want. The recommendations also consider the winter cover that can be provided. A buffer may be ideal as habitat, because it often borders a food source on one side-- the crop field-- and water on the other.

**Plant diversity.** As a rule, more plant diversity means more wildlife diversity. Researchers from Iowa State University found five times as many species of birds in a riparian buffer of grasses, shrubs and trees as had existed in a non-buffered pasture before buffer establishment. USDA/NRCS offers technical and financial help in establishing conservation buffers. For more information, call 634-5143.

## Plant Corner: Invasive Species Cost Billions Each Year



It's not something most people think about every day, if at all. But the problem of invasive species has a huge economic impact on the United States. One report cited in the national management plan for control of invasives estimates about \$140 billion in damages to U.S. crops, industry, the environment and public health.

### Did you know....

Not all alien invaders are from outer space. Each purple loosestrife plant produces more than a million seeds, and only a few summers after introduction, the "purple plague" can grow from a few acres to thousands.

Invasive plant or animal species are "alien" or non-native to a particular ecosystem; their introduction can cause serious environmental harm or harm to human health. And they're everywhere.

Some examples:

- 1) Zebra mussels invaded the Great Lakes through ship ballast water, and now clog water intake pipes to many industries.
- 2) The nutria, a large rodent native to South America originally imported for a private zoo, is now devastating large wetland areas in the wild.
- 3) Purple loosestrife has beautiful purple flowers, but

it's choking out native plants in wetlands and waterfowl habitats.

4) The West Nile virus, transmitted to humans by mosquitoes that fed on the blood of infected animals, is a growing health problem in the United States.

5) Imported red fire ants give painful and potentially deadly stings to humans, livestock and pets in the southern U.S.

6) Invading cheatgrass has increased the fire cycle in the West by 20-fold.

Invasive species often have few natural enemies in their new environment, and out-compete existing species. They have had a negative impact and contributed to the listing of a third to half of the native species on the Federal Endangered Species list. For example, the brown tree snake

arrived in Guam in the 1940's aboard military planes. An aggressive predator, it has driven nine of Guam's eleven native land bird species to extinction. A federal council now coordinates prevention and early control methods for invasives. For more information, check the web at <http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/>.

The NRCS Wildlife Habitat Management Institute has information on native wildlife species on the web at <http://www.whmi.nrcs.usda.gov/>.



Purple Loosestrife is deadly to America's wetlands because it crowds out the native plants that support birds and animals.



## NOTES FROM THE FEEDLOT OFFICE

The feedlot office has sent out, by mail, re-registration forms to producers. Every producer should have received one, or have been contacted by Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>. If you are an active feedlot operator and did not receive a re-registration form, give the feedlot office a call. It is important to keep your status up to date if you intend to

make changes, expand, build new facilities, etc.

Feedlots hold a reciprocal setback right in the Pope County Ordinance which is very important for operations that intend to grow and maintain status on into the future.

Homes also hold a reciprocal setback right which means that when homes or feedlots

(including feedlot expansions) are proposed, measurements are made at a rate of 1320 feet for the first 300 animal units and two feet per animal unit after that. Anyone living in an ag zone that has questions on this part of the ordinance can contact the feedlot office.

Producers that have long term plans should come in and go over these requirements. The intent of the ordinance is to keep

proper separation distances between homes and feedlots. Early planning on projects can help avoid road blocks later. The feedlot office has materials available upon request. Stop by when the harvest is over to discuss any potential plans you may have.

If you need to contact the feedlot office the phone number is (320) 634-5020



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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Order early for the best selection of trees.

You will be notified in April of pick-up dates for trees, tree products, and for grass seed orders.

Orders received before November 10th for 2010 planting will receive 10% off the tree order.

**Special orders available upon request, call now to secure your order! No project to big or small!**

ITEM	PRICE	#ORDERED	AMOUNT
<b>SHRUBS (All Bare Root) priced per bundle of 25 Trees</b>			
Buffaloberry	\$25.00		
Chokeberry, black	\$30.00		
Hazlenut	\$25.00		
Hi Bush Cranberry	\$30.00		
Juneberry	\$25.00		
Nanking Cherry	\$25.00		
Peking Cotoneaster	\$25.00		
Redosier Dogwood	\$25.00		
Sand Cherry	\$25.00		
Villosa Lilac	\$25.00		
Common Lilac	\$25.00		
<b>LARGE TREES (All Bare Root) priced per bundle of 25 Trees</b>			
Siouxland Cottonwood	\$25.00		
Hackberry	\$25.00		
Rooted Hybrid Poplar	\$25.00		
Bur Oak	\$25.00		
Silver Maple	\$25.00		
Sugar Maple	\$25.00		
American Linden Basswood	\$30.00		
<b>SMALL TREES (All Bare Root) priced per bundle of 25 Trees</b>			
American Plum	\$25.00		
Common Chokecherry	\$25.00		
Red Splendor Crab	\$25.00		
<b>EVERGREENS priced per bundle of 25 Trees</b>			
Black Hills Spruce	\$30.00		
Colorado Blue Spruce	\$30.00		
Ponderosa Pine	\$30.00		
American Arborvitae (White Cedar)	\$30.00		
<b>POTTED EVERGREENS (other varieties of evergreens available upon request)</b>			
Black Hills Spruce	\$10.00 each		
<b>HYBRID POPLARS</b>			
Hybrid Poplar Sticks	\$0.50 per stick		
<b>TREE CARE (Plant Skydd Repellent)</b>			
Plantskydd (deer/rabbit) Repellent (treats 200-300 1' seedlings) 1 lb powder	\$25.00		
Plantskydd (deer/rabbit) Repellent (treats 400-600 1' seedlings) 2.2 lb powder	\$37.00		
Plantskydd (deer/rabbit) Repellent (treats 100 1' seedlings) 1 liter premixed	\$20.00		

# Trees Ordered: \_\_\_\_\_

Page Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*Conservation Grade Trees Must Be Ordered in Minimum Quantities of 25 unless otherwise noted.

**See Reverse Side for Tax.**

**POPE SOIL & WATER**



Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

ITEM	PRICE	#ORDERED	AMOUNT
<b>TREE CARE</b>			
Tree Shelters 4' height (biodegradable tubes-no assembly required)	\$2.50		
Wood Stakes 4' height	\$0.90		
Weed Control Mats 3x3 w/ 8 staples (some 4x4 weed mats available)	\$2.00		
Bulk Roll of Weed Fabric 500'	\$150.00		
Staples/500 per box (Anchor Pins)	\$35.00		
Flags-100 per bundle \$0.10 each	\$10.00 per bundle		
<b>SERVICES -- All Services have a \$75.00 one time service charge</b>			
Custom Installed Weed Fabric	\$0.50 per foot		
Custom Tree Planting (\$100 minimum charge)	\$0.50 per tree		
Full-Service Weedbadger (1 season, no service charge)	\$190.00 per acre		
Custom Mowing	\$50.00 per hour		
Custom Cultivation	\$75.00 per hour		
Custom Grass Seeding ATV	\$50.00 per hour		
Custom Grass Seeding No-till Drill	\$20.00 per acre		
Custom Spraying ATV (plus required chemical)	\$50.00 per hour		
<b>EQUIPMENT RENTALS (Delivery charges do apply)</b>			
Tree Planter (minimum charge of \$50.00)	\$50.00 per day		
No-Till Drill (minimum charge of \$75.00)	\$8.00 per acre		
Packer	\$2.50 per acre		
<b>GRASS SEED MIXES priced per acre (Custom mixes available upon request)</b>			
<b>50% DOWN REQUIRED ON ALL GRASS SEED ORDERS TO SECURE PRICING.</b>			
<b>CP25</b> (15 specie mix) Dry & Wet Mixes Available	<i>Call for Pricing</i>		
<b>CP21 Basic</b> Switchgrass	<i>Call for Pricing</i>		
<b>CP21 Variety Mix</b> Switchgrass, Big Bluestem, Indiangrass, Sideoats grama, Purple Prairie clover	<i>Call for Pricing</i>		
<b>Tree Mix</b> Per. Ryegrass, Annual Ryegrass, Timothy, Tall Fescue, Kentucky Bluegrass	<i>Call for Pricing</i>		
<b>645 Standard Wet Mix</b> Indiangrass, Big Bluestem, Switchgrass, Canada Wildrye, Purple Prairie Clover, Yarrow	<i>Call for Pricing</i>		
<b>645 Standard Dry Mix</b> Big Bluestem, Sideoats grama, Indiangrass, Slender Wheatgrass, Western Wheatgrass, Purple Prairie Clover, Yarrow	<i>Call for Pricing</i>		
*Planning and Design service with on-site visit. (FREE) *Trees sold are for conservation purposes only. *SWCD cannot guarantee survival rate of trees. *SWCD reserves the right to substitute sizes or cancel species due to availability. *A <b>25% down payment</b> is required on all orders at the time of the order. All orders after March 1st 2010 must be paid in full at the time of the order. All balances due by April 1st, 2010. Orders Cancelled after February 1st, 2010 will be charged a 25% cancellation fee. *10% Off Tree Orders sent in by November 10th, 2009.		<b>Total This Side :</b> <b>Total Front Side :</b> <b>Subtotal :</b> <b>6.875% Sales Tax :</b> <b>Total Order Cost :</b> <b>Paid :</b> <b>Balance :</b>	

## GRAZING TOUR A SUCCESS

On August 19 and 20 the Pope County Work Lands Initiative hosted a grazing tour on the two year grazing project they have been working on. The focus of their project was to show how grazing on Public and Private Wildlife Land could be beneficial. They have set up several sites on Private, Nature Conservancy, MN DNR, and Fish and Wildlife lands throughout Pope County.

On these sites they were able to show side by side comparisons of leaving the land the way it is (idle land), burning, grazing, and mowing. On the DNR site the study showed the best comparison. The land that was left idle looked considerably different than the land that had been

burned, mowed, or grazed. These three options showed similar results that overall benefited the land and the wildlife on it.

One thing many commented on was the working relationship of the group. The working group consists of private land owners, Fish and Wildlife Service, MN DNR, The Nature Conservancy, Pope SWCD, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Farm Service Agency and more. This group has shown that a diverse work group can work together even though their ultimate goals could be quite different.



Those that attended the tour were treated to a steak lunch for a minimal charge, prepared by the Glacial Ridge Cattlemen's Association at Swift Falls Park. The overall consensus of the group was that this was a good project and that the working relationship of the group was something more organizations should strive for.

## POPE SOIL & WATER OPEN HOUSE & 60TH ANNIVERSARY

On November 6th Pope County Soil and Water Conservation District will be holding an open house from 9 am to 2 pm.



Stop by and order your trees before the 10% discount ends on November 10.

The SWCD will also be celebrating their 60th anniversary. Stop by and congratulate them on 60 years of conservation work!



Coffee and Doughnuts will be provided.

## STAFF CHANGES, GOODBYES & HELLOS

Some staff changes have been happening in the SWCD and NRCS office. In July, Mark Norton the DU Contract Biologist took a job in South Dakota. In August, Kyle Hanson the Farm Bill Technician took a job in Wisconsin. We wish both Mark and Kyle the best of luck in their endeavors.

In August, Fred Kollman joined our staff as the new DU Contract biologist. Fred was the DU Contract Biologist in Stevens County and is a retired NRCS employee. Fred just completed a 2200 mile bike trip starting in Idaho and crossing several states, ending in Virginia. What an achievement! Please help us in welcoming Fred to our office. Stop by and visit with him on the WRP program.



Above: Fred Kollman

On October 5, Matt Fischer will be starting as the new Farm Bill Technician. Matt's past experiences include working for the Wadena Soil and Water Conservation District, where he assisted with rain garden and shoreline restoration projects, irrigation water management, and noxious weed management.

Matt enjoys fishing, hunting, and camping. Please help us welcome Matt to the area!



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# POPE SOIL & WATER



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**"Autumn is a  
second spring  
when every  
leaf is a  
flower."**

- Albert Camus



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## IMPORTANT DATES

<b>October</b>	7 Jr. Envirothon
	13 Water Testing Clinic
	12 Columbus Day
<b>November</b>	6 SWCD Open House
	11 Veterans Day
	26 Happy Thanksgiving
<b>December</b>	25 Merry Christmas



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