



CONSERVATION TODAY

Sibley Soil and Water Conservation District & USDA

Winter 2021



A New Movement is Happening

Looking around the landscape this fall there is one thing that stands out, more and more fields looking brilliantly green, shortly after harvest. This is no coincidence, since more education and outreach efforts have been directed at the use and benefits of cover crops. Here enters the role of the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition. Centered around a farmer led and driven organization dedicated to providing education, farmer to farmer mentoring, and most importantly networking. The Coalition was formed to provide the producer's perspective and logical information delivery. "Farmers talking with farmers provides in-depth information to help each other out," said Brian Pfarr. Membership is open to everyone, but only producers are provided voting rights and seats on the board. This provides them a voice and opportunity to develop and provide information, education, and networking geared toward Minnesota producers. "I started out doing soil health on my own, when I met the other board members we started talking and learning from each other. Now I have others to discuss options and don't feel like I'm the only one using soil health practices," said Jamie Labat.

What Sets the Minnesota Soil Health Coalition Apart from Other Organizations

- Farmer run, farmer led statewide soil health group
- Collection, analyzing, and disseminating field scale data on soil health, management, and economics annually
- A ready group of experienced farmers to provide farmers, agencies, and organizations with technical information
- Farmer led education and logistics
- Free Farmer to farmer mentor program
- The only MN focused Podcast (Bi-Monthly)
- Unite farmers, conservation agencies, and industry
- Leadership development, education, and training opportunities
- Organize and collaborate on events, trainings, field days, and meetings

Find out more at www.mnsoilhealth.org

Check us out on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/mnsoilhealth/>

Find newsletters, events, videos, technical information, podcasts, and more!

For more information, contact Jennifer Hahn coordinator@mnsoilhealth.org



Sibley SWCD

Joel Wurscher,
District Manager

Jeremy Buckentin,
District Technician

Jack Bushman,
Conservation Technician

Eric Miller,
Farm Bill Technician

SWCD Board

Kathleen Thies - District 1

Paul Wiemann - District 2

Loren Evenson - District 3

Wayne Grams - District 4

Robert Nielsen - District 5

Board Meetings

Second Tuesday of
Each Month
4 p.m., SWCD Office

USDA - NRCS

April Sullivan,
District Conservationist

Katelyn Mattila,
Soil Conservationist



Office Hours

By Appointment
Monday - Friday
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



Wetlands on Ag. Land in Minnesota

By Jack Bushman, Conservation Technician

U.S. and Minnesota laws were enacted decades ago to address the draining and filling of wetland areas. Both sets of laws rely on the knowledge and actions of landowners to assure compliance with their requirements. It is important for agricultural producers to be aware of these regulations to limit their risk. Landowners need to know that just because you are in compliance with the one program doesn't always mean you're in compliance with others.

What are federal requirements (i.e. Swampbuster)?

Since 1985, the Wetland Conservation provision of the federal farm bills (Swampbuster) requires all agricultural producers to protect the wetlands on the farms they own or operate to be eligible for USDA farm program benefits. Producers will not be eligible if they plant an agricultural commodity on a converted wetland that was converted by drainage, leveling, or any other means after December 23, 1985. Converting a wetland for the purpose of making agricultural commodity production possible after November 28, 1990 is also ineligible.



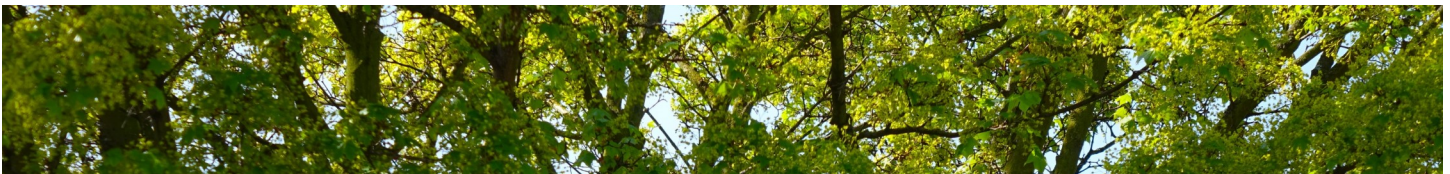
What is the state law (i.e. Wetland Conservation Act)?

The Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act (WCA) is a state law that regulates activities that result in the draining, filling or excavating of wetlands in Minnesota, including those on agricultural land. It is administered by local government units (LGU); in rural areas this is usually the County or Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). SWCDs also provide technical assistance to landowners.

What should agricultural landowners do before starting a project, including drainage and maintenance that may impact a wetland?

1. Complete an "AD1026" form at your local USDA office (FSA and NRCS staff will be involved in this first step).
2. Bring a copy to the SWCD and explain what you plan to do. The SWCD can advise you if your project is allowed under the state law, WCA, or if you need to submit an application to your local government unit. Involving your local SWCD is the easiest and best way to avoid problems.
3. Request a field visit by the local government unit that administers WCA. This can help identify regulated wetlands on your property and regulations that could affect your project. Many wetlands do not contain standing water, or are only saturated for part of the year, and can be difficult for landowners to identify.
4. Tell your contractor to submit a Contractor Liability Form. Contractors who conduct projects that will impact a wetland are required to notify the local government unit. The Contractor Responsibility and Landowner Statement Form is available at www.bwsr.state.mn.us/wetlands/forms (see "Replacement Plan Forms"), and must be mailed to the local government unit prior to starting work.
5. Communication is key! Compliance with USDA does not mean compliance with other wetland laws. A quick call or stop at your SWCD, NRCS, or local government office prior to beginning your project will help you comply with the laws and save a project from potential added costs and delays.

Continued on pg. 3



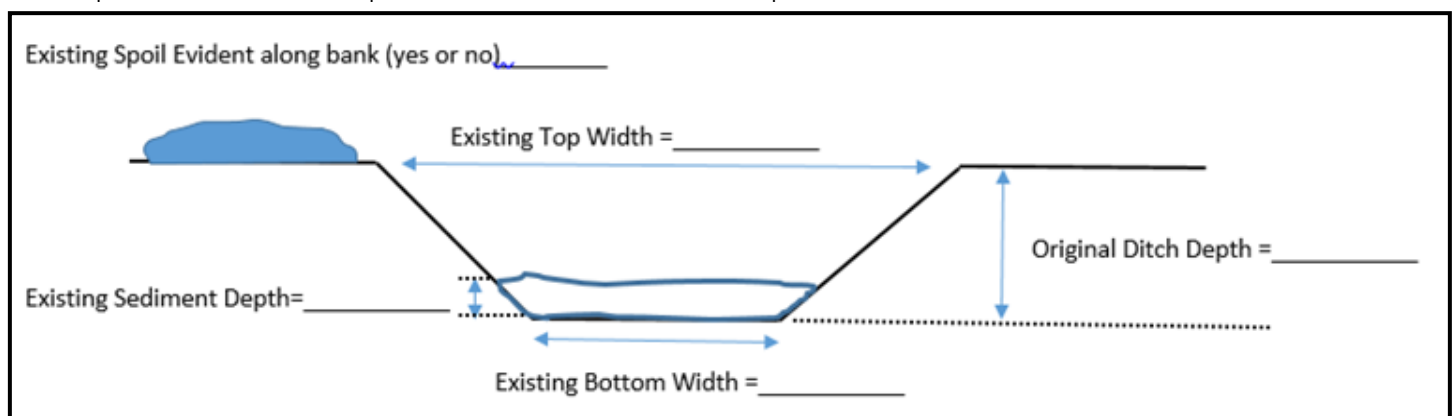
Continued from pg. 2

Does the Wetland Conservation Act apply to private ditch maintenance projects?

While the maintenance of existing drainage systems is typically allowed under the "no-loss" provision of WCA, improving these systems beyond its original or subsequent legally improved capacity requires a different type of approval. It should also be noted that material excavated during maintenance projects, typically referred to as "spoils", cannot be placed in wetlands as it would be considered fill. In order to ensure that a project complies with WCA, landowners who wish to conduct maintenance on a private ditch are encouraged to bring the following information about the existing condition of the drainage system to the SWCD office before starting a project:



- Watershed/drainage area of the system
- All known sources of hydrologic input
- Maintenance records from the drainage system
- Location of drainage system features (pumps, culverts, etc.)
- Elevation, depth, and width of ditch
- Approximate depth of sediment in any ditches proposed for clean-out/excavation
- Size, type, and condition of any tile
- Elevation, size, and type of culverts, dams, levees, and any other features that affect flow in the drainage systems
- Proposed location that spoils from the clean-out will be placed



Example of a ditch profile survey

Who should I contact regarding the Wetland Conservation Act in Sibley County?

In Sibley County, the Sibley Soil and Water Conservation District acts as LGU. Questions and WCA applications can be directed to:

Jack Bushman
 Conservation Technician, Sibley SWCD
 507-702-7077; Jack.Bushman@sibleyswcd.org



Emerald Ash Borer Found in Sibley County



Photo Credit: MDA

In October 2020, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA) confirmed for the first time in Sibley/Carver Counties, the presence of Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). A tree care professional contacted the MDA after spotting several trees with EAB like symptoms near the county lines north of the city of Belle Plaine. MDA staff were able to find live EAB larvae in infested trees and collect samples. These larvae were later confirmed by Federal identification. Because this is the first discovery of EAB in those counties, state agricultural officials enacted an emergency quarantine to limit the movement of firewood and ash material around and outside of the counties. This means that it is now illegal to take untreated firewood out of both counties.

EAB adults are small, metallic green wood boring beetles. They are about 3/8 - 1/2 inch long and 1/8 inch wide, which will fit on a penny. It is a little larger and much more brightly colored than bronze birch borers and two-lined chestnut borers. Emerald ash borer larvae are cream-colored, with bell shaped body segments. The larvae have two spine like projections at the end of their body called urogomphi that are a defining characteristic. Full grown larvae will reach about 1.5 inches long.

EAB was first discovered in Minnesota in 2009 and is now found in 35 U.S. States. The spread of EAB will have a major impact on Minnesota since the state has approximately one billion ash trees, the most of any state in the nation. Emerald ash borer larvae kill ash trees by tunneling under the bark and feeding on the part of the tree that moves nutrients up and down the trunk.

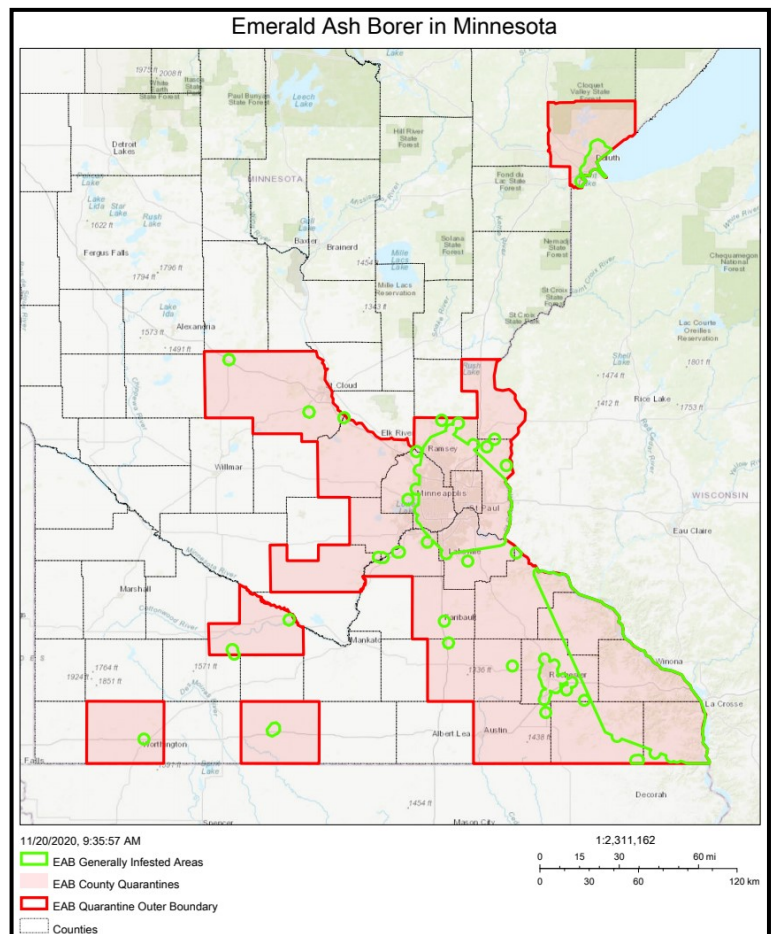
Residents can help in the fight against EAB by watching for suspicious symptoms in ash trees.

- Look for woodpecker damage. Woodpeckers love EAB larvae and woodpecker holes may indicate the presence of EAB. Woodpecker activity is easier to see after the leaves have fallen.
- Check for bark cracks. When EAB larvae tunnel under the bark, they can cause the bark to split open; you can see S-shaped tunnels caused by the EAB larvae underneath.

There are four treatment options that have been examined by the University of Minnesota including; trunk injection, soil drench, bark sprays, as well as ash tree removal and replacement. If you feel your ash tree may be infested with EAB, contact a tree care professional or MDA at arrest.the.pest@state.mn.us or 1-888-545-6684

For more information on EAB check out the following websites:

<https://www.mda.state.mn.us/eab>
<https://extension.umn.edu/tree-and-shrub-insects/emerald-ash-borers>





2021 TREE PROGRAM - ORDER FORM

ORDER #

Mail with payment to: Sibley SWCD, 112 5th St., PO BOX 161 Gaylord, MN 55334

office use
only

Name:

Address:

City:

Zip:

Phone:

Email:

TREE ORDER DEADLINE: MARCH 30TH, 2021 ~ PLANT KIT ORDER DEADLINE APRIL 20TH, 2021

Conifer / Evergreen - Individually Potted

Type	Species	Size	Type	Price	Quantity	Total (\$)
1 QUART CONIFERS	Black Hills Spruce	1 Quart- 8" to 12"	Single Pot	\$4.50		\$
	White Spruce *NEW*	1 Quart- 8" to 18"	Single Pot	\$4.50		\$
	Norway Spruce	1 Quart- 8" to 18"	Single Pot	\$4.50		\$
	Red Pine	1 Quart- 5" to 10"	Single Pot	\$4.50		\$
	White Pine	1 Quart- 5" to 8"	Single Pot	\$4.50		\$
2 GALLON CONIFERS	Black Hills Spruce	2 Gal.- 18" to 24"	Single Pot	\$14.50		\$
	Colorado Spruce	2 Gal.- 18" to 24"	Single Pot	\$14.50		\$
	American Arborvitae	2 Gal.- 18" to 24"	Single Pot	\$14.50		\$

Deciduous / Broad Leaf - Bundles of 25 Seedlings

LARGE TREES	Black Walnut	12" to 18"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$
	Norway Poplar	18" to 24"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$
	Sugar Maple	18" to 24"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$
	Red Maple	18" to 24"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$
	Swamp White Oak	18" to 24"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$
	Red Oak	18" to 24"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$
SMALL TREES & SHRUBS	American Hazelnut	12" to 18"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$
	Nanking Cherry	12" to 18"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$
	Common Lilac	18" to 24"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$
	Red Osier Dogwood	18" to 24"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$
	Flame Willow	12" to 18"	Bundle of 25	\$34.00		\$

Native Prairie Plant Kits - Tray of 36 Live Plants

Pollinator Kit	6 each of the following: Grasses: Sideoats Grama Forbs: Butterfly Milkweed, Showy Goldenrod, Purple Prairie Clover, Meadow Blazingstar, and Narrow Leaf Coneflower.	\$60.00		\$
Raingarden/Lakeshore Kit	6 each of the following: Rushes: Common Rush Forbs: Marsh Milkweed, New England Aster, Great Blue Lobelia, Stiff Goldenrod, and Blue Vervain.	\$60.00		\$

Order Totals

Notice Payment is due in full at time of order, no refunds for orders cancelled after February 26, 2021. Plant availability and sizes are subject to change. Tree's will be available near the end of April 2021. Plant Kits will be available in mid-May 2021; You will be notified of your pickup day and time for your order as selected under "Terms and Agreement". Please send payment to Sibley SWCD 112 5th Street, PO Box 161, Gaylord, MN 55334

Terms and Agreement:

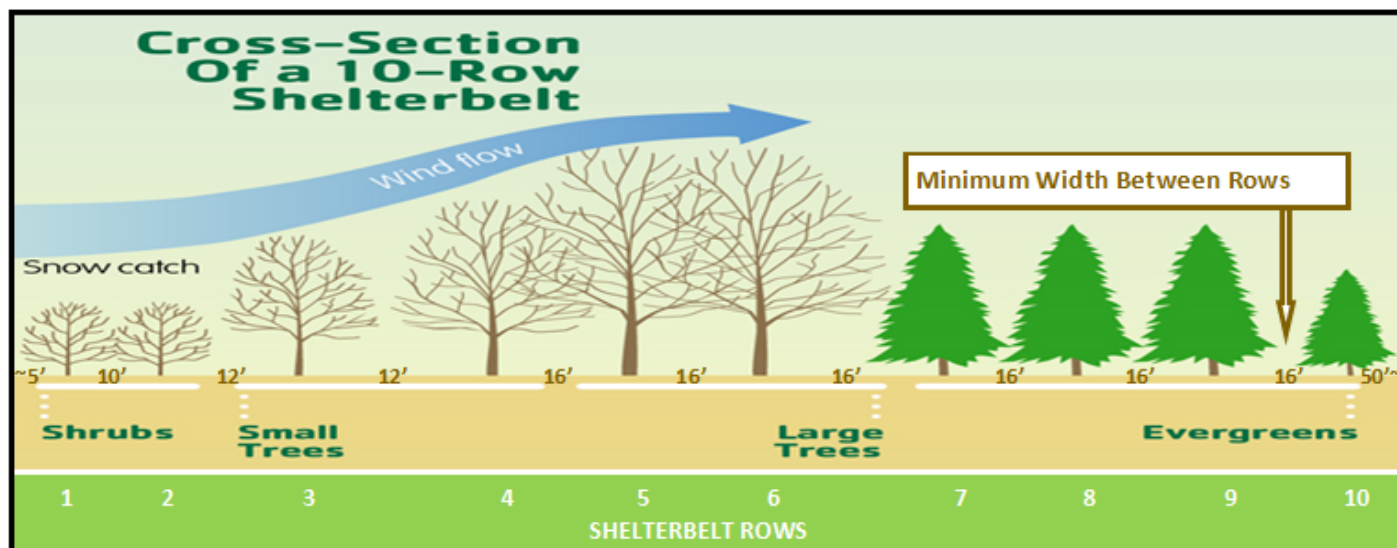
I acknowledge that the Sibley SWCD cannot be responsible for the condition in which the nursery stock arrives, the stock's condition beyond my scheduled pickup date(s) and that the SWCD reserves the rights to substitute different stock for damaged, unsuitable or lack of sufficient quantities received from the nursery.

I would like to be notified by Mail _____ Email _____ of my scheduled pickup dates.

Signature

Date: / /

SUB TOTAL	\$
SALES TAX (Sub total x 0.06875)	\$
TOTAL DUE (Sub total + sales tax)	\$



Shelterbelt Layout Strategy

Rows 1-2—Shrubs: Plants in these first rows are planted 3 to 6 feet apart within the row and 10 to 15 feet between the rows. (Lilac, Dogwood, Flame Willow)

Rows 3-4—Tall Shrub/Small Tree: Seedlings are planted 5-16 feet apart (Tall Shrubs)/8-16 feet apart (Small Trees) in the row and 12 to 16 feet from the shrub row. Row four should be 12 to 16 feet from row three. (Flame Willow, Cherry, Hazelnut, Poplar)

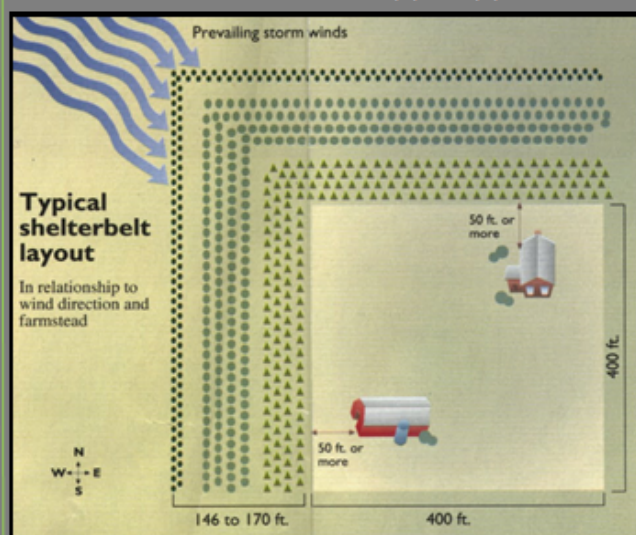
Rows 5-6—Tall Deciduous Tree: Row five should be spaced 16-20 feet behind row four. Row six should be spaced 16 to 20 feet behind row five. Trees should be planted 10 to 20 feet apart within the row. (Walnut, Maple, Oak)

Rows 7-8—Tall Conifer: Row seven should be spaced 16 to 20 feet behind row six, and row eight, 16 to 20 feet from row seven. Trees should be planted 10 to 20 feet apart within the row (Norway Spruce, White Pine)

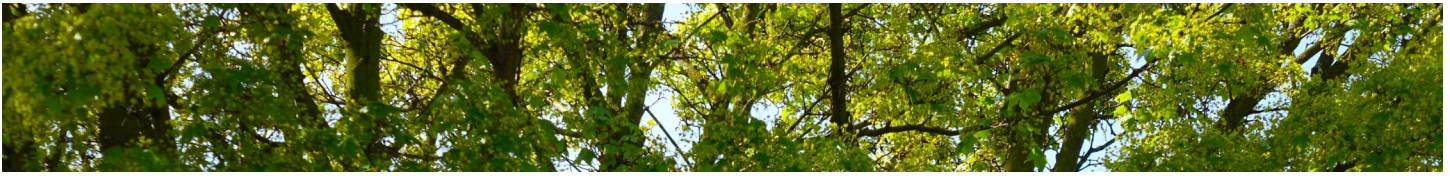
Rows 9-10—Medium Conifer: These last rows are both located 16 to 20 feet from the previous row and trees are planted 10 to 20 feet apart within the row. (Black Hills/Colorado Spruce, Scotch Pine, Arborvitae)

Recommended Windbreak Designs by Width:

# of Rows	Min. Width	Rec'd Combination:
10 Rows	185 feet	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10
9 Rows	169 feet	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,10
8 Rows	153 feet	1,2,3,4,5,7,9,10
7 Rows	137 feet	1,2,3,4,7,8,9 or 1,2,3,5,7,8,9
6 Rows	121 feet	1,2,3,7,8,9 or 1,3,5,7,8,9
5 Rows	109-111 feet	1,2,4,7,8 or 1,3,7,8,9
4 Rows	93-99 feet	1,2,7,8 or 1,4,7,8
3 Rows	83-90 feet	1,7,8 or 7,8,9



Species	Type	Height	Width	Preferences	Species	Type	Height	Width	Preferences
Black Hills Spruce	Conifer	30-60'	15-25'	Variety of soils	Red Maple	Broadleaf	40-60'	30-40'	Variety of soils
White Spruce	Conifer	40-60'	10-20'	Well drained soils	Sugar Maple	Broadleaf	60-75'	40-50'	Loamy soils
Colorado Spruce	Conifer	50-75'	10-20'	Well drained soils	Sw. White Oak	Broadleaf	50-80'	50-80'	Variety of soils
Norway Spruce	Conifer	60-90'	20-30'	Variety of soils	Red Oak	Broadleaf	60-75'	35-45'	Variety of soils
White Pine	Conifer	80-130'	20-40'	Well drained soils	Am. Hazelnut	Broadleaf	15-18'	10-12'	Loamy soils
Scotch Pine	Conifer	30-60'	30-40'	Loamy soils	Common Lilac	Broadleaf	8-15'	6-12'	Variety of soils
Arborvitae	Conifer	15-35'	6-20'	Variety of soils	Nanking Cherry	Broadleaf	6-10'	12-15'	Loamy soils
Black Walnut	Broadleaf	50-75'	50-70'	Variety of soils	Redosier Dogwood	Broadleaf	7-9'	8-12'	Variety of soils
Norway Poplar	Broadleaf	40-60'	20-35'	Variety of soils	Flame Willow	Broadleaf	15-20'	5-15'	Variety of soils



AIS Spotlight: *Disposal of Unwanted Pets*

Did you know that it is illegal to release non-native animals and plants into a free-living state in Minnesota? This is commonly overlooked among pet and aquarium owners. One of the most common pets owned and transported are goldfish. Like many aquarium pets, goldfish are not native to Minnesota. Goldfish are related to and share many of the same bad habits as common carp: stirring up sediments, uprooting plants while feeding, and competing with native fish for food and shelter. As invasive species, goldfish can reproduce rapidly and are hardy, surviving low oxygen conditions in winter. They can live to be 25 years old, and once established, no easy solution exists to remove them. In order to dispose of your unwanted pet, please do not release them into the environment and try one of the following alternatives instead:

- Dispose of prohibited invasive plants, noxious weeds or other unwanted plants or bait in the trash, sealed in a plastic bag.
- Alternatives to disposal for unwanted non-native plants and animals that are not prohibited invasive species include:
 - Contacting a retailer for possible returns.
 - Giving them away or trading with other hobbyists or anglers.
 - Donating them to a local hobbyist society, school or Habitattitude surrender event.
- Contact a veterinarian for guidance on how to humanely euthanize prohibited invasive animals.



Goldfish found in Big Woods Lake near Chaska

Use Sidewalk Salt Sparingly to Protect Local Waters

Where does sidewalk salt go after it melts the ice and snow on our driveways and sidewalks? This salty water flows into our storm ponds, wetlands, rivers, and lakes. High concentrations of sidewalk salt (sodium chloride) in our water can negatively affect wildlife habitat and water quality, including the water we drink.

This winter, we can protect our water resources by trying these snow season tips:

- Use shovels, snow blowers and ice scrapers to remove snow and ice.
- Use de-icers like sidewalk salt sparingly and clean up any extra. If you still see crystals on the pavement, then you've over-applied the salt. Most sidewalk salts work only when the temperatures are 15 degrees Fahrenheit and higher.
- One mugful of sidewalk salt can adequately cover 250 square feet of driveway or sidewalk. Use a hand-held spreader rather than a scoop, and save any left-over sidewalk salt to use again after another snowfall.
- Buy environmentally friendly de-icers, which are better for our water, pets and landscapes.
- Treat the pavement before a snowfall with a liquid salt brine if possible (23 percent salt mixed with water). This reduces the bond between the pavement and the snow, and makes it easier to remove the snow. You'll also use less salt when using a brine.
- If you notice excess salt on a parking lot or sidewalk near you, visit with the property owner about safer alternatives.

Our lakes and rivers may freeze over this winter, but remember that what we put on our driveways and sidewalks will eventually end up in our county waters and beyond.



Sibley SWCD
112 5th St
PO Box 161
Gaylord MN 55334

PRESORTED STANDARD
U. S. POSTAGE PAID
GAYLORD MN 55334
PERMIT NO. 61



SIBLEY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Upcoming Dates:

December 24, 2020.....Christmas Eve Day (Office Closed)
December 25, 2020.....Christmas Day (Office Closed)
January 1, 2021.....New Years Day (Office Closed)
January 12, 2021.....Sibley SWCD Board Meeting
January 18, 2021.....MLK Day (Office Closed)
February 9, 2021.....Sibley SWCD Board Meeting

Conservation Today is published by the Sibley Soil and Water Conservation District and USDA—NRCS
112 5th St, Gaylord MN 55334. For more information regarding this newsletter, contact (507) 702-7077.

Policy: The USDA prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origins, 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 of communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's Office of Communications, (202) 720-2791. To file a complaint of discrimination, write to: USDA Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue SW, Washington DC 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal employment opportunity employer.