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1005 High Avenue NE
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Phone: 320.235.3906
Fax: 320.235.8751
www.kandiyohiswcd.org



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Important Dates

Board Meetings:	
January	20
February	17
March	17
April	21
May	19
July	16
West Central Ag Show.....	March 10-11
Soil Health Day.....	March - April
Earth Day.....	April 22 at PWELC
Tree Pick-Up	April 22-24
Stewardship Week.....	April 26 - May 3
Walleye Opener.....	May 9
Envirothon	April 23 at PWELC
CRP General Sign-up.....	May - June
Memorial Day	May 25

*" There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot. I am one who cannot."
-Aldo Leopold.*

SWCD SUPERVISORS

- Doug Hanson,
Chairman

- Brandon Smith,
V. Chairman

- Terry Schaeffer,
Treasurer

- Kevin Clough,
Secretary

- Ron Dilley,
Public Information

SWCD STAFF

- Rick Reimer,
District Manager

- Ryan Peterson,
RIM Coordinator

- Sandy Laumer,
Office Coordinator

NRCS STAFF

- Melanie Dickman,
District Conservationist

- Kyle Slifka,
Soil Conservation
Technician

- Shannon Ernst,
Soil Conservationist

**SWCD/PF. FARM BILL
TECHNICIAN**
Alex Nelson

FSA
Wes Nelson,
County Executive Director

KANDIYOHI COUNTY
Jeff Bredberg,
County Environmental
Director

*Conservation Farmers Of The Year
Bill and Nancy Hoeft Of Hawick, Minnesota*



From the Kandiyohi District (photo1) we have Bill and Nancy Hoeft (Heft) and their family, Patrick, Kari, Katelyn, Jacquelyn, Jason and Milo the dog.

The Hoefts live on the North Fork of the Crow River by Hawick, MN and farm over 200 tillable acres with a corn, bean, oats/alfalfa rotation. The Hoefts through the years have installed many conservation practices starting with a Manure Pit that eliminated any manure runoff to the Crow River. They have installed several Field Windbreaks and a Wildlife Planting. The Hoeft's have installed 35 acres of CRP and CRP Buffers that are seeded with Native grasses and Forbs. These Buffers are along the river and provide tremendous water quality benefits downstream. The Hoefts have installed cattle exclusionary areas from the river. (Photo2) They recently completed the second phase of a three phase stream bank stabilization project on the Crow River. The project will stabilize the eroding bank using Rock vanes, Rock Rip Rap, and Reseeding into Native grasses. Phase three will be next year. The Hoeft family is a great example of good conservation stewards of land and water.

Feedlot Bio-security Update

Lately bio-security has become a hot issue especially at feedlots that have swine. As the County Feedlot Officer I take bio-security very seriously. I wear clean, washed clothes and disposable boot covers or if I wear my tall boots I will clean and disinfect them after each visit. Also, I do not go inside barns where livestock is kept. Recently, as recommended by the MPCA, I have been calling ahead before I schedule an inspection of a swine feedlot to ask if the owner has any additional bio-security protocol they would like me to follow. Many times a feedlot owner will have other bio-security protocol or what is called a line of separation they don't want anyone that doesn't work at the feedlot to cross and by calling ahead they have the opportunity to let me know where that is or any other protocol they may have in order for me to inspect the feedlot. This line of separation is just another measure of safety to ensure nothing is transferred to the livestock from the person visiting the feedlot. Even if you have a different type of livestock besides swine or poultry at your feedlot, you may be concerned about bio-security as well. Don't hesitate to give me a call ahead of the scheduled inspection to let me know if there is any additional bio-security protocol you would like me to follow. The last thing I want is to be responsible for the spread of disease to your feedlot or anyone else's. For more information contact the Kandiyohi County Feedlot Officer, Russ Hilbert at 320-231-6229 ext. 5251.

ReInvest In Minnesota Wetlands

The Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) has announced a new sign up for the Reinvest in Minnesota Program (RIM) beginning January 5th and running until January 20th 2015. RIM is voluntary conservation easement program funded by the Clean Water and Outdoor Heritage Fund. The goal of the program is to restore wetlands and associated buffers to enhance water quality, reduce soil erosion, and create wildlife habitat. The RIM program has been a very popular and successful program in Kandiyohi County.

Through the RIM Wetlands program, the state purchases perpetual easements on restorable wetland basins. As a land-owner you still retain the ownership rights of the land. Easement payment rates are based off of the assessed tillable value of land within townships. Cropland rates for Kandiyohi County range from \$2,498 up to \$7,457 per acre, and non-cropland rates range from \$1,665.84 per acre to \$4,971 per acre.

Landowners have the freedom to establish easement boundaries as they wish to fit their operation within the requirements of the program. If interested please feel free to contact the Kandiyohi County SWCD with questions or to receive site specific estimates for RIM.



The "Buzz" on Prairie and Pollinators

By Ryan Peterson, Kandiyohi SWCD

Native prairie and pollinators have been in the spotlight a lot recently. You may be asking yourself what is all the "buzz" about some seemingly benign plants and insects? Well, prior to European settlement, more than 18 million acres of prairie covered Minnesota. Our prairie lands were part of the largest ecosystem in North America, stretching from Canada to Mexico and from the Rockies to Indiana. A wealth of diverse species, habitats and cultures thrived here. With its fertile soil and nutritious grasses, prairie became the basis for an agricultural empire. Today, less than two percent of Minnesota's native prairie remains, making it North America's

most endangered habitat. This near elimination of native prairie has inspired many efforts to protect remaining parcels and to restore vanished prairie to the extent possible. Prairie habitat and pollinator benefits for agriculture are tremendous. One third of our food production requires pollinators. A few insects can be pests. However, most insects are harmless and beneficial, acting as pollinators, predators, and recyclers. Pollinating insects in Minnesota include butterflies, moths, flower flies, and importantly bees (both non-native honey bees and hundreds of native bee species) Several conservation programs

and practices are available to help landowners preserve and protect as well as restore native prairie grasses and flowers. Restoring prairie habitat will make our landscape more pollinator friendly, provide wildlife habitat, improve water quality and ground water recharge, and help farmers produce the foods we all rely on. For more information on native prairie and pollinator best management practices including: reducing negative impacts to pollinators, improving existing habitat and creating new pollinator habitat, contact the Kandiyohi SWCD. 320) 235-3906 ext 3

Soil Health



What is soil health? Soil health utilizes the living components of the soil to conserve and improve the soil. This means you are using the microorganisms (bacteria, fungi, earthworms, mites, nematodes and protozoa) in the soil to

improve you net crop profit. There are more than 8 billion microorganisms in one teaspoon of Minnesota topsoil. The symbiotic relationship between the microorganisms and plant roots allows the exchange of sugars and nutrients. A management system for a Soil Health System includes practices such as no-till, cover crops, crop rotation, nutrient

management and pest management. There is EQIP money available for any producer interested in participating in one or more of these practices.

THE FOUR MAIN PRINCIPLES OF SOIL HEALTH ARE:

- 1) Keep the soil covered as much as possible.
- 2) Disturb the soil as little as possible.
- 3) Keep plants growing throughout the year to feed the soil.
- 4) Diversify as much as possible using crop rotation and cover crops.

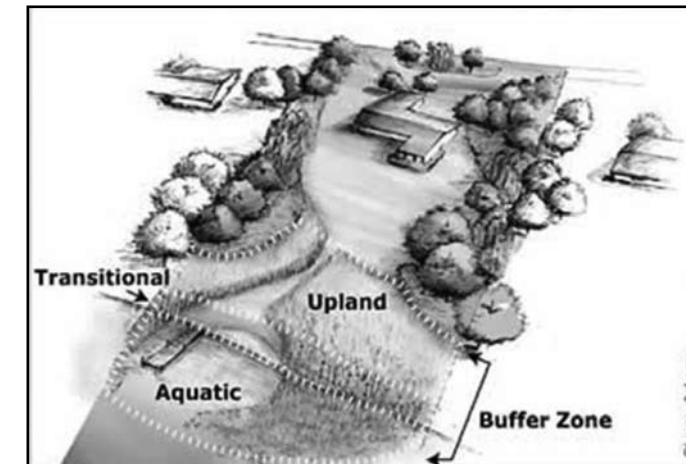
Contact the NRCS office to set up a plan to improve your soil health today.

Shoreland Buffers and Erosion Control Projects

Your shoreline is part of a large community which can have impacts far and wide. Maintaining or restoring your shoreline is essential for our waters health and to providing fish and wildlife habitat. This concept, often referred to as shoreland buffers or lakescaping, extends both lakeward and landward from the water's edge. Generally, a natural buffer strip of at least 25 feet landward is preferred, but any unmowed or undisturbed area provides benefits.

Lakescaping Benefits:

1. Controls shoreline erosion with deep rooted plants
2. Protects water quality by filtering runoff
3. Reduces flooding
4. Creates fish and wildlife habitat
5. Discourages nuisance geese
6. Low maintenance
7. Provides privacy



ReInvest in Minnesota Buffers

Reinvest in Minnesota Buffers (RIM Buffers) is a conservation easement funded by the Clean Water and Outdoor Heritage Fund. The program restores wetlands or establishes a native vegetation buffer adjacent to ditches, lakes, and streams. The buffer allows runoff to be absorbed and filtered before it enters our public waters. RIM Buffers are required to be between 50 ft. and 200 ft. in width. Drained wetlands are also eligible for the program. Landowners can determine easement boundaries to fit their operation within the requirements of the program.

Through the RIM Buffer program, the state purchases perpetual easements on your property. As a land-owner you still retain the ownership rights of the land. Easement

payment rates are based off of the assessed tillable value of the land. Crop land rates for Kandiyohi County range from \$2,498 up to \$7,301 per acre, and non-cropland rates range from \$1,665.84 per acre to \$4,867.50 per acre. RIM Buffers can be "piggy-backed" with other conservation programs to create competitive compensation for protecting public waters. The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is eligible to be used along with the RIM Buffers on the same acres. A landowner, if eligible, can receive 15 years of CRP payments along with a RIM lump sum payment.

Payment rates have increased so feel free contact the Kandiyohi County SWCD with questions or to receive site specific estimates for CRP and RIM.



Farm your best, but conserve the rest!

In recent years, grain farmers have enjoyed profit margins that may have seemed as big as the Montana sky. But suddenly, they're starting to appear more like the eye of a needle. And according to USDA's latest long-term projections, the smaller profit margins of today could become the "new norm."

So how can farmers confront the challenges presented by smaller profit margins? Well, one obvious way is to reduce input costs. However, reducing input costs (seed, fertilizer, weed control, etc.) can sometimes end up costing more if the loss of income resulting from any yield reduction is greater than the expense savings.

Perhaps another way to address the problem of small profit margins is to consider the profitability of each acre that you farm. And then do just what dairy producers do by "culling" those acres that are not generating a decent return on your investment.

Every farm, and almost every field, has some acres that are typically less productive and profitable than the other acres. So why not consider "culling" some of those marginal or less productive acres by enrolling them in a conservation program that will at least provide you with a guaranteed, long-term

income? That way you can focus both your attention and input costs on the most productive acres, which have a much greater chance of returning a profit at the end of the year.

Take a moment and think of those acres that are most likely to cost you more than they'll earn, or return less than the other acres. Then sit down with Alex Nelson and see if those acres qualify for one of the continuous practices under CRP. If they do, he'll show you what those "cull acres" can return for you.

Farm your best, and conserve the rest! It might be a concept worth considering, especially during times of smaller profit margins.

Best wishes in 2015,
Wes Nelson, Farm Service Agency

Weed Management Assistance Available



Kandiyohi Soil and Water Conservation District is providing cost share assistance to landowners, townships and cities to eradicate priority noxious weeds. Six species have been selected to prioritize for increased public awareness and eradication.

These species include Wild Parsnip, Leafy Spurge, Purple Loosestrife, Spotted Knapweed, Common Tansy and Common and European Buckthorn. Each of these species has the potential to displace or remove our beautiful native habitat.

The Kandiyohi SWCD feels that we have the opportunity to act now and eradicate these plants before they can sustain a presence. One of these species, Wild Parsnip, is found along side roads or abandoned fields or lots. Use extreme caution when examining these plants or better yet don't touch them at all! The plant's sap and bristles can cause severe blistering and swelling when combined with sunlight. Infestations occur in a variety of habitats and sites. Control measures should focus on eliminating seed production and exhausting the seed bed.

For more information and how to sign up for cost share assistance of 75% , contact the Kandiyohi SWCD 320-235-3906.

What is a Rain Barrel?

A rain barrel is a system that collects and stores rainwater from your roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains and streams. Usually a rain barrel is composed of a 55 gallon drum, a vinyl hose, PVC couplings, a screen grate to keep debris and insects out, and other off the shelf items, A rain barrel is relatively simple and inexpensive to construct and can sit conveniently under any residential gutter down spout.

A rain barrel collects water and stores it for when you need it the most, to water plants or wash your car. A rain barrel will save most homeowners about 1,300 gallons of water during the peak summer months. Saving water not only helps protect the environment, it saves money and energy.

Readymade rain barrels can be purchased from the Kandiyohi SWCD for \$55.00. Give us a call at 320-235-3906.

Conservation Stewardship Program Acres Mounting in Kandiyohi County

The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is quickly becoming THE conservation program to enroll your operation in. In Kandiyohi County alone we have over 65,000 acres enrolled. CSP is an incentive program that not only pays you to implement conservation practices on your crop and pasture land it also rewards you financially for the conservation already in place. CSP is a five year program with annual payments made in the fall of each year.

CSP is a voluntary conservation program designed to address resource concerns across your whole operation. It all begins with filling out an application that can be found on the MN NRCS website or your local NRCS office.

After submitting an application you will be interviewed regarding the way your crop and pasture land is managed. The interview will cover a wide array of questions concerning resources such as; soil erosion, soil quality, water quality, water quantity, air quality, plants, animals and energy. A field visit will be completed to verify the answers given during the interview. Answers to the interview questions are converted to a score and are used to determine if your practices meet the stewardship level required to be enrolled in the program. Once the stewardship threshold is met the interview score is used to calculate the payment that you will receive on the conservation you are already doing.

CSP enhancements are chosen for each land use. When picking the enhancements you must be interested in implementing them on your operation for the next five years, so choose carefully. Some examples of enhancements on Cropland are:

- Use drift reducing nozzles to reduce pesticide drift
- GPS spray application of chemicals (Smart Sprayer)
- Establish pollinator habitat
- Use deep rooted crops to breakup soil compaction
- Plant tissue testing
- Applying nutrients no more than 30 days prior to planned planting dates
- Precision application technology to apply nutrients

Examples of Pastureland enhancements are:

- Wildlife friendly fencing
- Stockpiling of forages to extend the grazing season
- Non-chemical pest control for livestock
- Manage calving to coincide with forage availability
- Incorporate native grasses and/or legumes into 15% or more of the forage base
- Intensive rotational grazing

There are also enhancements created for non-industrial private forest land. The full list of enhancements, by land use, can be found at www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov

Every enhancement pays a different amount based on; the cost of implementation, the amount of productive land lost, risk management and level of resource concern reduced. The enhancements are converted into points and the yearly payment is a direct result of the points. To increase your payment it is suggested that you sign up for as many enhancements that you feel comfortable implementing for the five year period.

Implementing more enhancements will result in a greater chance of your application being funded. CSP applications are ranked, just as many of you are familiar with the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) applications are ranked. Ranking is based on a score that is derived from your interview score and your enhancement points. Applications are ranked against other CSP applications throughout the state and are funded from the highest priority first. Some applications are not funded.

Conservation Stewardship Program has a yearly payment limit of \$40,000 for individuals and \$80,000 for joint ventures. Beginning farmer/rancher and other historically underserved producers are encouraged to apply. If you fall into the historically underserved producer category there is a minimum amount that applies on the yearly payment.

Conservation Stewardship Program applications are taken on a continual basis and can be found on-line at www.mn.nrcs.usda.gov or your local NRCS service center. The Willmar NRCS Service Center can be contacted at 320-235-3906. An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer

Shannon Gegner
Soil Conservationist
NRCS

Low Interest Loan Available:

The Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) has 3% loan money available to land owners in Kandiyohi County for septic systems, manure storage and handling equipment, and conservation tillage equipment. The first step would be to stop by the Farm Service Center and visit the SWCD'S office, fill out an application and take it to the Heritage State Bank of Pennock. They will assist you with your bank application. For more information stop by or give us a call 320-235-3906

Windbreaks of All Kinds:

It's not too early to make plans for next spring's tree plantings. The SWCD offers a broad based tree program that includes planning assistance, cost share, tree stock and planting services plus disease identification. Some possible cost share assistance may involve receiving State or CRP assistance on tree planting. Tree matting is also offered by the SWCD to control vegetation within the tree rows, reduce competition and retain moisture to the trees

Living Snow Fences:

What are living snow fences and what do they do? Living snow fences are designed plantings of trees and shrubs located along roads or ditches, or around communities and farmsteads. These plantings create a vegetative barrier which traps and controls blowing and drifting snow.

Currently there is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Minnesota Department of Transportation and the Farm Service Agency, Natural Resource Conservation Service and Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts to provide technical assistance and provide cost-share incentives for the establishment of Living Snow Fences adjacent to state highways, county roads, and township roads.

Strategically placed, these barriers trap snow piling it up before it reaches places it shouldn't be. A 10 foot tall living snow fence can trap up to 20-30 tons of snow per linear foot of living snow fence, saving \$3/ton for plowing and removal (or \$79,000 to \$119,000 for a ¼ mile of living snow fence). Besides trapping snow and reducing costs, living snow fences provide other benefits such as improved wildlife habitat, more open and better functioning drainage systems, livestock production, energy conservation, visual screens, reduced soil loss and rural landscape beautification.

Contact the SWCD at your local Farm Service Center and see what we can do for you.

Walk In Access



bottoms, wetlands, and other high quality habitat will also be considered for WIA.

Landowners are paid by the acre to allow hunting access, with bonuses if more than 140 contiguous acres are enrolled, if the land is within ½ mile of existing state or federal hunting land, or if a multi-year contract is signed. The WIA agreement can be canceled by the landowner at any time if they are no longer comfortable allowing public access. Cancellation of the agreement will affect the payment to the landowner. WIA land is for hunting only and is open to the public from September 1st to May 31st. Target practice, trapping, dog training, camping, horseback riding or fires are not allowed on WIA land. The program only allows foot traffic, all motorized vehicles are prohibited. Unlike private hunting leases, recreational use laws provide liability protection for WIA acres under MN state statute 604A.20 to 604A.27. All enforcement of hunting regulations is the responsibility of local game wardens.

The WIA program requires that there be a 500 foot buffer from any structure, feedlot, or active pasture unless it belongs to the landowner enrolling the WIA area. Signs are placed by the state at no cost of the landowner to clearly mark the boundaries of the WIA.

Please feel free to contact the Kandiyohi County SWCD for payment rates and further details on the program.

Local landowners can earn money by allowing public hunting on their private land through the Walk-In Access (WIA) program. The program is a cooperative effort by the Minnesota DNR and Soil and Water Conservation Districts across 35 counties in the SW portion of the state. Lack of public hunting land is the main reason for the declining number of hunters in MN. WIA is one way to address this while rewarding landowners for keeping their land in high quality habitat. Currently, Kandiyohi County has more than 1,300 acres enrolled in WIA.

The program targets privately owned parcels of 40 acres or more that are already enrolled in conservation programs such as Reinvest In Minnesota (RIM), Wetland Reserve Program (WRP), and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). River

KANDIYOHI SWCD TREE ORDER FORM 2015 PLANTING YEAR

Revised 08-29-14

(Note: Minimum order for bareroot is 25 of same species)

SPECIES	SIZE	PRICE	QUANTITY	TOTAL
TREES:				
Apricot, Hardy	2- 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Birch, Paper	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Birch, River	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Butter Nut	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Black Walnut	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Cottonwood, Common	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Green Ash	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Hackberry	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Hazelnut	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Linden, American	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Maple, Norway	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Maple, Red	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Maple, Silver	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Maple, Sugar	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Oak, Burr	18-24'	1.75	_____	_____
Oak, Red	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Oak, Swamp Wht.	18- 24"	1.75	_____	_____
Poplar, Sioux land	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Quaking Aspen	12-18"	1.75	_____	_____
Red Splendor (Crabapple)	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
SHRUBS				
Am. Elderberry	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Amer. Cranberry	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Amer. Plum	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Amur Maple	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Arrowood	18-24'	1.75	_____	_____
Black Chokeberry	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Buffaloberry	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Caragana	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Crabapple, Midwest	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Crabapple, Siberian	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Crabapple, T Babies	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Chokecherry, Common	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Common, Ninebark	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Dogwood, Red Osier	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
False Indigo	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Golden Current	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Hawthorn, Washington	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Honeysuckle, Arnold's Red	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
June Berry	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Lilac, Common Purple	2 - 3'	1.75	_____	_____
Lilac, Villosa	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Nannyberry	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Russian Almond	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Willow, Flame	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Willow, Diamond	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Sumac, Smooth	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (W) _____ (H) _____

SEEDLINGS & TRANSPLANTS – CONIFERS

Black Hills Spruce, Tr.	18-24"	1.75	_____	_____
Balsam Fir Tr.	10-15"	1.75	_____	_____
Colorado, Blue Spruce Tr.	12-18"	1.75	_____	_____
Eastern Red Cedar Tr.	15-18"	1.75	_____	_____
Norway, Pine Tr.	8-15"	1.75	_____	_____
Norway, Spruce, Tr.	10-18"	1.75	_____	_____
Ponderosa, Pine Tr.	8-15"	1.75	_____	_____
White, Cedar, Tr.	12-18"	1.75	_____	_____
CONTAINER STOCK:				
Black Hills, Spruce 2 gal.	24-30"	12.00	_____	_____
Black Hills Spruce 6 yrs.	15-18"	6.00	_____	_____
Colorado blue spruce	15-18"	5.50	_____	_____
Eastern Red Cedar	15-18"	5.50	_____	_____
Norway, Spruce	15-18"	5.50	_____	_____
Ponderosa Pine	15-18"	5.50	_____	_____
Scotch pine	15-18"	5.50	_____	_____
White Pine	18-24"	12.00	_____	_____
White Cedar	15-18"	5.50	_____	_____

Subtotal _____

Sales Tax 6.875% _____

Grand Total _____

Down Payment, Receipt # _____ Amt. _____

Down Payment Date _____

Balance Due _____

Balance: Receipt # _____ Date _____

**YOUR DOWN PAYMENT WILL BE FORFEITED IF
THE TREES ARE NOT PICKED UP.
PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE**

TREE PLANTING BY SWCD

Tree planting costs are a separate charge. Minimum charge of \$220.00 for planting up to 300 trees.

After minimum planting charge, a 0.40 per plant charge.

Total planted _____ Total cost _____

Township _____ Section _____

Down Payment Letter _____ Tree Pick-up Letter _____