

Stark and Billings **SOIL CONSERVATION** *District*

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Non-profit
Organization
Permit #12
Dickinson, ND

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Return Service Requested

“Assisting Residents of Stark and Billings Counties”

Annual Report 2021

Assistance is available without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, marital status or handicap.



ABOUT VISION WEST ND

Vision West ND sets the stage for both economic sustainability and a prosperous quality of life across western North Dakota. Through planning sessions, workshops, and meetings, members come together with stakeholders and citizens to formulate regional plans and strategies for implementation.

PRIMARY GOALS

- Address immediate, short-term needs to meet growth management challenges
- Establish a diversified economy in the future through the development of local and regional strategic plans



The Stark and Billings Soil Conservation District is a sponsor to Vision West ND which one of their major priorities is Natural Resource Stewardship.



Farm Rescue's mission is to help farmers and ranchers who have experienced a major illness, injury or natural disaster by providing the necessary equipment and volunteer workforce to plant, hay or harvest their crop. Livestock feeding assistance is also available to ranchers. Farm Rescue helps farm and ranch families in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas.

**The Stark and Billings Soil Conservation District
have been sponsoring Farm Rescue since 2007.
-15 years-**

Diede Ranch

was selected for the

Overall Achievement Award

by the
Stark and Billings
Soil Conservation District



The property was originally Homesteaded by Alfred's Grandfather in 1900 and currently 4 generations live and work there. In the mid 1970's the farming and ranching operation was transformed entirely to a ranching operation. The cropland was seeded back to either grass for grazing or grass and legume mixtures for forage production. Over the years they have planted numerous windbreaks for livestock protection. They have also installed numerous water developments including spring developments, wells, pipelines, tanks, along with fencing to facilitate their grazing operation and provide better grazing management opportunities.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program - Conservation Incentive Contract (EQIP-CIC)

Announcing a new funding opportunity through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program - Conservation Incentive Contract (EQIP-CIC).

The purpose and focus of EQIP-CIC is Climate Smart Agriculture, Forestry, and drought mitigation. EQIP-CIC provides payments for incentive practices on grazing land and can be a steppingstone for producers between EQIP and the Conservation Stewardship program.

The entire state of North Dakota is considered a High Priority Area, with Grasslands (Range and Pasture) and Associated Ag Lands being the land uses eligible for EQIP-CIC. In Fiscal Year 2022, applicants must address one or more of the following priority resource concerns to be eligible for EQIP-CIC: Degraded Plant Condition, Terrestrial Habitat or Livestock Production Limitation.

A key feature to EQIP-CIC is that the contracts will be for a minimum of five years, and must have a management practice (Normally Prescribed Grazing) planned on the contracted acreage. Supporting conservation practices may be contracted if needed to facilitate the management practice. (Examples of facilitating practices are Water wells, Livestock Pipelines, Water Tanks and Cross Fencing.) Payments for EQIP-CIC will follow existing EQIP payment schedules.



The sign-up date for EQIP-CIC is March 4, 2022. For further information please contact your local NRCS office.

EQIP Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Project – Sign Up Period –

The Joint Chiefs restoration project focuses on managing Rocky Mountain Juniper stands with mechanical or chemical treatments in the badlands area of Billings County. The purpose of the project is to reduce wildfire threat and maintain native rangelands that have been invaded with Rocky Mountain Junipers.



The sign-up date for the Joint Chief's project is April 1, 2022.

Natural Resources Public Meeting

March 7th - Stanley
- South Complex
March 8th - Killdeer
- Community Center

Please Pre-Register @
VisionWest@dlnconsulting.com

Agenda:

- 10:00 Welcome & Overview
- 10:15 Jesse Beckers - Natural Resource Trust & Bakken Working Lands
- 11:00 Cody Vanderbusch - ND Department of Mineral Resources Reclamation
- North Dakota Reclamation Program Information
- 12:00 Lunch - Sponsored by Badlands Advisory Group
- 12:30 Kevin Sedivec - NDSU Rangeland Specialist/Professor/Central Grasslands Director
"Reclaiming lands disturbed from energy development - what lessons have we learned from the past?"
- 1:15 Doug Goehring - ND Ag Commissioner
- Pipeline, Wind reclamation and mediation programs
- Ag Mediation Program
- 2:00 Questions & Follow-up

Sponsored By:



Vision
WEST ND

& Badlands Advisory Group

2021 TREE PROGRAM

Tree Planting crews machine planted 190,329 linear feet of trees in Stark & Billings Counties.

Weed Barrier crew applied 307,787 feet of black fabric in Stark, Billings, Dunn & Adams Counties.

Sold 19,695 Handplants



Trees planted by South Heart School in memory of Marvin Haugland.



Tree planting in 2021 got an early start with our first tree planting coming on April 23rd. With the dry spring we were able to get all the trees in by the 14th of May. With the unusual dry spring we went ahead and used a grant from the Forest Service to purchase 3 water tanks on trailers that producers were able to use at no cost to help water their trees between rains. Our weed barrier crew showed up on May 26th and finished up June 5th. With planting conditions being as dry as they were we emphasized the importance of finding ways to water the trees to the producers. With the producers buying in we were able to get an 86 percent survival for the year which was a pleasant surprise this fall when we finished tree counts. We'd like to thank everyone who helped us get through another tree season, we really couldn't do it with all the great help we are able to get year after year.



Cost Share funding available for tree removal and replanting



***Windbreak
Renovation
Initiative***

Cost Share and technical assistance is available through the North Dakota Forest Service for renovating a deteriorating windbreak. Often times this means complete or partial removal of an existing windbreak and replanting the trees. Sign up for cost share is ongoing. For more information, contact Liz Smith at 701-537-3584 or go to the website and fill out the assessment.

WINTER REALLY BLOWS...

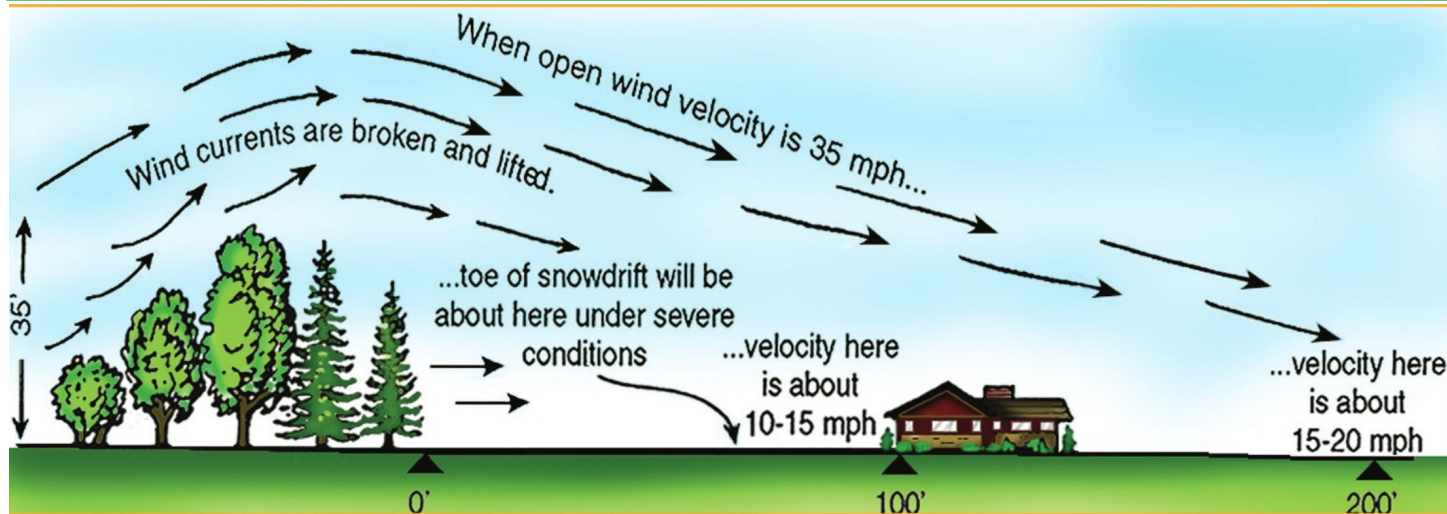
HOW TO LESSEN THE IMPACT WITH PROPER TREE PLANTING DESIGN

Windbreak Benefits

Tree and shrub windbreaks are valuable conservation tools with many functions. Their benefits include:

- *Reduced soil erosion* — Windbreaks prevent wind erosion for 10 to 20 times their height downwind. They also filter wind-blown soil particles from the air.
- *Crop protection* — Windbreaks can increase crop yields up to 44%. Wind protection reduces crop water use, increases a plant's ability to make food, and may increase pollination. Quality of fruit and other high value crops can be increased due to reduced sand and soil abrasion.
- *Energy conservation* — Windbreaks can reduce winter heating costs 20 to 40% by reducing cold air infiltration into buildings. In summer water evaporation from leaves directly cools the air. Windbreaks can be designed to provide energy savings for a small residential lot, a farmstead, or an entire housing development.
- *Snow control* — Windbreaks can serve as "living snowfences", controlling drifts near roads, buildings, or livestock or distributing snow evenly over large areas like crop fields. Money and energy are saved by reduced need for snow plowing and artificial snowfences.
- *Livestock protection* — Windbreaks can be used as "outdoor barns," sheltered areas for feeding, calving, and other livestock-related activities.
- *Wildlife habitat* — In open areas where windbreaks are needed for wind reduction, they may also provide the only woody cover and food necessary for some wildlife species.
- *Beauty* — Trees provide visual screening and permanence in the landscape that other types of plants can not.

Tree products — Windbreaks can supply firewood or other products while maintaining conservation functions.



SOIL TESTING/SAMPLES for LOW pH

The pH of a soil influences **nutrient availability, toxicity, microbial populations, and activity of certain pesticides**. Soils with a pH less than 7 referred to as acidic and pH levels greater than 7 are considered basic or alkaline.

Franzen's (1999) extension bulletin *North Dakota survey of soil Copper, pH, Zinc and Boron levels* describes the variability of pH across the state. Overall **pH levels are >7.0 for much of the state**, with lower value following the Missouri river and further west.

There is **typically variability in pH across the county, state, and within a single field** this is due to differences in parent material (the material soil was formed from) and cropping practices.

Although much of the state is fortunate to have alkali soils, there are areas of acidity. Approximately 17% of the state has pH levels lower than 6.5 that could potentially benefit from lime application (Franzen, 1999).

Soil samples should be taken prior to liming. If pH levels are greater than 6.5 lime application is not necessary for most agronomic practices.

