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CROW WING COUNTY

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NEWS

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CROW WING COUNTY TREE PLANTING UNDERWAY

Crow Wing County Land Services Supervisor, Kirk Titus announced that tree planting is underway this week on several sites located throughout the county. The county's tree planting program for 2011 will total over 70,000 pine and spruce pine seedlings. The planting sites are located on approximately 110 acres in Crow Wing, Mission, Fairfield, Pelican and Little Pine townships and the cities of Baxter and Crosslake.

Bryan Pike, County Natural Resource Manager said, "We rely heavily on the natural regeneration for many of our hardwood species like aspen, birch and oak, but we do plant the conifers to maintain and increase species diversity on the county managed lands."

The jack pine seedlings planted this spring came from seed gathered at the county's second generation jack pine seed orchard. The seed orchard is a joint venture with the Minnesota Tree Improvement Cooperative. Crow Wing County has been a member of the cooperative since the early 1980's. The purpose of the cooperative is to increase the quality of jack pine by making improvements to growth, form, branching and disease resistance. As a result of the work between the county and the Minnesota Tree Improvement Cooperative, the county has the best possible jack pine seed source available for future forest regeneration projects.

"Growing these trees is a long term commitment", Pike said "These sites will be closely monitored for growth and survival over the next five years. We will follow up with protection measures to minimize the effects of deer browse on these trees". Pike expects the first red pine thinning to happen in 25-30 years.

Over 3.6 million seedlings have been planted on county tax forfeited timber lands in the last 30 years. Funding for this spring's tree planting comes from a State of Minnesota Lessard Sams Outdoor Heritage Council grant and from the sale of timber stumpage and platted tax forfeited parcels.

The County manages 103,000 acres of forest land for timber production and diverse recreational opportunities for multiple users. "Trees are a renewable resource and the spring's tree planting is the start of a new generation of trees for our county. Over the next rotation of 50-100 years, these trees will provide habitat for wildlife, recreation opportunities for county residents and forest products for local loggers, paper mills and sawmills," said Titus.



Crow Wing County Natural Resource Manager, Ryan Simonson, inspects the planting of a white spruce seedling on county managed forest lands. The county's tree planting program for 2011 will total over 70,000 pine and spruce pine seedlings. Over 3.6 million seedlings have been planted on county tax forfeited timber lands in the last 30 years.

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