

# Spring 2009 Pierce County Soil Conservation District

## District Supervisors

Chairman Deb Hauser  
Supervisors Jim Teigen, Curtis Roerick,  
Jason Marchus, Daniel Brossart

## District Staff

Bev Blekeberg District Clerk  
Randy Myers SCD Technician

## NRCS Staff

Russ Jordre District Conservationist  
Holly Pritschet Soil Cons. Technician  
Elizabeth Blessum Soil Conservationist



## Roerick's Receive Pierce County SCD 2008 Conservation Achievement Award

Curt and Arlene Roerick, whose farm is located in Dewey Township, North of Berwick, ND were selected as the 2008 Conservation Achievement Award winners by the Pierce County Soil Conservation District.

The Roerick's were guests of the Pierce County SCD at the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual ND Association of Soil Conservation District Convention held in Bismarck in November, 2008. They, along with winners from 51 other ND SCD's were recognized at a banquet held in their honor.

The Pierce County SCD held an awards banquet on November 24, 2008, honoring the Roerick's. They were presented an aerial photo of their farmstead from the Pierce County SCD, and a plaque from Merchants Bank and Bremer Bank, who helped sponsor the banquet.

The Pierce County Soil Conservation District **congratulates** Curt and Arlene for their conservation accomplishments and their contribution to the conservation effort!!

## Tom and Lorie Sieg Receive 2008 Tree Maintenance Award

Tom and Lorie Sieg were presented a plaque by the Pierce County Soil Conservation District for the 2008 Tree Maintenance Award.

The Sieg's received the award for their excellent work in keeping their approximately 54,000 linear feet of tree plantings clean and free of weeds, and replacing any dead trees.

**Congratulations** Tom and Lorie for a job well done!!



## TREES Program

Natural Resource Conservation Education comes alive as Tom Gibson presents his interactive and lively programs for students all across the state of North Dakota. The TREES Program is in its 19<sup>th</sup> year of programming, with Tom sharing his talents, both as an educator and entertainer.

The Pierce County SCD sponsors these programs at the area school. This spring Mr. Gibson will present his programs to the students at Ely Elementary School and Little Flower School of Rugby.



## Thank you Duane Hawk

The Pierce County Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors and District Staff, along with the NRCS Staff, would like to thank Duane for his 28 years of dedicated service while he served on the SCD board.

We will miss you, Duane!!

## New member of the SCD Board of Supervisors

Curtis Roerick, Rugby, was appointed to the Pierce County Soil Conservation District Board of Supervisors for a one (1) year term, beginning January, 2009. He is filling the position held by Duane Hawk.

Curtis grew up in the Rugby area and after high school and 2 ½ years of college started operating his small grain and livestock farm in 1980. He is married to Arlene, who works as a nurse. You probably already noticed that the Roerick's were the SCD's 2008 Conservation Achievement Award winners.

The Pierce County SCD is confident Curtis will be an asset to the District. Welcome aboard, Curtis!!

## Renovation or Not

Many windbreaks in Pierce County are aging and landowners are faced with the decision of renovating or hopefully getting a few more good years out of their trees.

The following is a guide taken from a South Dakota Department of Agriculture publication that may prove useful in your decision.

### Windbreak Renovation Guide

1. Is windbreak over thirty years of age?
  - a. Yes ...go to 2.
  - B. No ...go to 3
2. Do the tree crowns appear healthy, vigorous, full, and straight; few or no dead branches; tips of branches in crown not significantly touching, overlapping, or interlaced with adjacent trees; no insect / disease problems?
  - a. Yes ...go to 6
  - b. No ...(within row) remove individual suppressed trees or trees with poor form; (between row) if tree row is overtopped or shaded, remove complete row; go to 3
3. Is windbreak composed of only one species of tree, for example all Siberian Elm or all Cedar?
  - a. Yes ...need to increase tree diversity; go to 4
  - b. No ...go to 5
4. Are there more or less than four rows of trees in the windbreak (if not a farmstead windbreak, go to 5)?
  - a. Four rows or less ...add rows of trees. If all deciduous, add minimum of two rows of conifer, for example cedar, to windward side of windbreak. If all conifer, add minimum of two rows deciduous trees or shrub on leeward side of windbreak. Go to 5

- b. Five or more rows ...if all deciduous, either add a row of conifer to windward side of windbreak or remove first and second windward rows and plant new rows of conifer. If all conifer, add one or two rows deciduous trees or shrubs on leeward side, or remove last leeward row or two and plant deciduous trees. Go to 5

5. What is spacing distance between trees within row and between tree rows?
  - a. Less than 10 feet (trees in one row overtop adjacent trees, either within row or between row) ... remove either individual trees or entire rows to reduce overcrowding.
  - b. Greater than 10 feet ...go to 6
6. Does snow drift in protected area, like livestock feeding/calving area, work area, or living area?
  - a. Yes ...add tree rows to windward side of existing windbreak or extend length of existing windbreak. Optimum is to have open area of 40-80 feet between existing windbreak and newly planted windbreak.
  - b. No ...go to 7
7. Does windbreak attract a variety of wildlife?
  - a. Yes ...go to 8
  - b. No ...add one to two mixed shrub rows to leeward or windward side of existing windbreak.
8. Windbreak does not need renovation. Continue maintenance.



## 2008 District Data

- Conservation Plans	102
- Prescribed Grazing	2,460 acres
- Brush Management	60 acres
- Water Tanks	6
- Dugouts	3
- Wells	2
- Well Decommissioning	3
- Livestock Pipeline	16,112 Ft.
- Fencing	70,880 Ft.
- Pasture and Hayland Planting	208 acres
- Residue Management Mulch-till	13,908 acres
- Residue Management No-till	10,045 acres
- Conservation Cover	2,137 acres
- Conservation Crop Rotation	5,576 acres
- Pest Management	8,799 acres
- Nutrient Management	10,896 acres
- Windbreak / Shelterbelts	84,460 LF
- Weed Barrier Fabric installation	65,996 LF

# 2008 Annual Report

## FIRST QUARTER

Appointed Daniel B. Brossart and Duane Hawk as SCD Supervisors for a 1 year term

SCD Board reorganization  
Duane Hawk, Chairman

Appointed Randy L. Myers as representative to Upper Dakota RC&D and Souris Basin Planning Council

Staff completed Computer Security and Privacy Act training

NACD and NDASCD 2008 dues paid

Upper Dakota RC&D and Souris Basin Planning Council

2008 mileage assessment paid

Supervisor and NDASCD Board member James Teigen attended the 2008 National NACD Convention in Reno

Myers attended Grazing / Cover Crop Workshop

Sponsored the TREES Program with Tom Gibson at Wolford School

Myers attended a Pesticide Training and renewed permit

Attended a joint Board and Staff meeting with Rolette County SCD

Myers and Blekeberg attended the annual Tree Promotional meeting

Published the 2007 Annual Report and 2008 Spring Newsletter



## SECOND QUARTER

Maria Blessum, student at Little Flower School, placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1<sup>st</sup> grade category of the State Keep North Dakota Clean poster contest

Began moving trees with tree spade and staking tree rows for plantings

Held ordered and surplus hand plant tree sale days

Presented a tree to each local winner of the KNDC poster contest and to all 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in the Rugby and Wolford Schools

Brian Gysbers, Soil Conservationist student trainee joined NRCS staff

Myers attended NDPERS meeting in Grand Forks

Curtis & Arlene Roerick selected as 2008 Achievement Award winners

Myers attended a Tree Workshop at Devils Lake

Completed the 2008 tree machine plantings

Held a Local Work Group meeting

Sponsored 1 youth to the Youth Range Camp

Completed the Weed Barrier fabric laying on tree plantings

Supervisors & Staff attended the Area III SCD meeting at Powers Lake

Myers attended a Carbon Credit Training



## THIRD QUARTER

Held annual Soil Stewardship / staff picnic

Supervisors / staff attended a Salinity Workshop

Myers attended a Pasture and Range training

Helped sponsor the Upper & Middle Sheyenne River Watershed Assessment Project

Held annual Eco Ed Camp at Balta Dam for area 7<sup>th</sup> grade students

Selected Tom & Lori Sieg as 2008 Tree Maintenance Award winners

Gysbers, Soil Conservationist trainee returned to school

Myers & Fjellanger attended Tree planting / Care Workshop at Lincoln Oakes Nurseries and at Towner Nursery

Published our Fall Newsletter





## FOURTH QUARTER

Myers helped with Rugby City Arbor Day Program

Betsy Hernandez, NRCS Soil Conservationist transferred out of Rugby Field office

Held the SCD 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Women's Ag Night

Jim Teigen re-elected as SCD Supervisor for 6 year term beginning Jan. 2009

Supervisors & Staff attended the 70<sup>th</sup> Annual NDASCD Convention in Bismarck, and presented an "Innovative Showcase" on tree spade

Myers & Blekeberg attended NDCDEA meetings during Convention

Myers elected State NDCDEA President

Held annual Pierce County SCD Awards Banquet

Helped sponsor North Central Grass & Livestock Day

Elizabeth Blessum, Soil Conservationist joined Rugby's NRCS staff

Duane Hawk retires as Pierce County SCD Supervisor after 28 years



### *2008 SCD Accomplishments*

- Planted 44,690 LF (16.9 acres) of Farmstead/Feedlot Windbreaks for 22 producers.
- Planted 17,610 LF (8.8 acres) of Field Windbreaks for 6 producers.
- Planted 22,160 LF (7.5 acres) of Wildlife tree plantings for 7 producers.
- Installed 65,996 LF of Synthetic Weed Barrier on 29 tree plantings.
- Planted approximately 10,457 trees and shrubs for Farmstead and Field Windbreaks, and Wildlife Tree Plantings.
- Sold approximately 3,574 hand plant trees
- Transplanted (tree mover spade) 324 trees for 33 customers

## *DIG IT!*

### *The Secrets of Soil*

The Pierce County SCD encourages you to think about your personal responsibility to be a good steward of all natural resources, including soil, during its annual Stewardship Week celebration. The National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) has proclaimed April 26 – May 3, 2009 as Stewardship Week.

2009 Stewardship Week is themed "DIG IT! The Secrets of Soil". Soil supports forests, wetlands, grasslands, tundra, and aquatic ecosystems. Soil makes up the outer layer of the earth's surface, it nourishes the plants we eat, the animals we use for food and fiber and the thriving underground kingdom of bacteria, fungi, protozoa, earthworms and other microbes that are critical to the planet's food web. Soil directly and indirectly effects agricultural production, water quality and climate. Thanks to the earth's soils, most of the rainfall hitting the planet is trapped and absorbed, watering plants and replenishing aquifers, rivers, lakes and streams.

"Since the Dust Bowl of the 1930's, the protection of soil from erosion and degradation has greatly increased through the work of conservation districts and our partners. These conservation groups assist landowners and the general public through education and technical assistance as to the importance of the soil and how to properly manage it." said NACD President Steve Robinson. "Soil is one of our precious natural resources that we must conserve for the next generation. All communities benefit when they have a better appreciation of soil and its connections to our every day life. Conservation districts are working with local communities to instill the appreciation for our natural resources across America."

### *Sales Tax*

Soil Conservation Districts across North Dakota have been notified that we are to begin charging **sales tax** on our products. What does this mean for our customers?

Products such as trees the customers order, that are not planted by our SCD, will be charged sales tax. There will also be sales tax on Plantskydd, tree protectors, tree mats or fabric, or any other products we sell.

In addition, trees purchased by **farmers** for replacements in windbreaks are tax exempt. Our 2009 order forms will have a check box for farmers purchasing replacements. When that box is checked **yes**, we will not charge sales tax on your handplant tree order.

Services that we provide, however, are **NOT** subject to sales tax. This includes: tree planting, weed barrier installation, mower rental, tree moving, or any other activities we do for you.

The State Tax Department may audit our records and check eligibility.

## Taming Winter Winds

By Jim Teigen

The winter of 2008-2009 will probably be long remembered for a variety of reasons, including several periods of heavy snow and blowing winds which filled yards and blocked roads. Those conditions stretched snow removal budgets thin, tested our good humor, and often made travel difficult, if not impossible.

While we may not be able to do much more about the weather than talk about it, we do have options available to relieve some of its effects. Soil conservation districts across the state are ready to assist with that effort, including the Pierce County Soil Conservation District, which shares an office in Hartley's Mall with the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

When driving this winter, one could readily notice the beneficial effects of a row or two of strategically placed trees. Those trees do an effective job of reducing drifting and distributing snow across the fields. As the warmer weather of spring approaches, the reduction in drifting snow will be just as apparent. We are familiar with the effects of highways warmed by the sun, and snow sticking on wet surfaces during the day, only to freeze and cause slippery roads overnight. Besides the daily nuisance effect of slowed and hazardous travel conditions, the added difficulty for school bus drivers, rural mail carriers, and emergency vehicles had quite an impact on our quality of life this winter.

Now is the ideal time to determine where living snow fences should be placed to have the best effect to protect roads. One or two rows of trees can make a noticeable difference, and there are a variety of species, both evergreen and deciduous, which are effective. Species can be selected which will adapt to nearly every soil and moisture condition, and most are still available for planting this spring.

Placement of the trees can vary, but often the most effective placement is several hundred feet away from the road, which makes working around the trees with modern machinery easier and insures that snow is not deposited on the roadway. Tree rows as much as one-half or three-quarters of a mile from the road can be very effective in managing snow, and have the additional benefit of keeping wildlife a safe distance from the road.

Living snow fences usually qualify for financial reimbursement under the continuous CRP, and additional incentives are often available which cover nearly all of the costs of establishment, plus the yearly CRP rental payment. Efforts are being made to obtain other funding for living snow fence establishment through the recent economic stimulus package, since this project will provide jobs across the state, and ultimately reduce snow removal costs for government entities, as well as create safer winter driving conditions.

For further information, call or see Randy Myers at the local soil conservation office.

## Plantskydd Repellent

### Having trouble with deer eating your trees? Are rabbits bothering your flower and garden plants?

The SCD office has a product that is proven successful in keeping deer and rabbits from eating trees, flowers and garden plants. **PLANTSKYDD** is an all natural product that is sprayed on trees, flowers and garden plants with results lasting approximately six months. Stop by the office for more information or to purchase this product.

#### Deer – Rabbit Repellent

1 lb. granular . . . . .	\$ 14.95
1 Qt. spray bottle . . . . .	\$ 21.95
1 Lb. powder box . . . . .	\$ 24.95
5 Qt. liquid jug . . . . .	\$ 54.95



### Supervisor Comments

By Dan Brossart

After a long, cold winter, listening to the wind blow and pushing snow nearly every day, I'm sure everyone is excited to get outdoors once again and enjoy some sun and warmth. With all the snow we've had this winter, we may see some challenges this spring, but also some opportunities as well. This last winter was a good example of how trees can provide us with excellent protection for our livestock, farmsteads and roads. So with the good moisture this spring, this would be a great time to think about planting some trees, especially for our future generations.

If you are interested in moving trees, this spring would be an excellent time to consider doing this. Our tree spade has been working very well and has had great results.

Also remember to start planning ahead and get your handplants that you may need on order. This spring will be a great time to get those a good start as well. Please call the SCD office early so they can get your handplants ordered.

Remember your SCD continues to provide you with other services for your newly planted trees. And also, the Woods rotary mower has been working very well and is available throughout the year as well.

If you ever have questions, concerns, or any new ideas, feel free to give the SCD office or any of the SCD supervisors a call.

Have a safe and productive year!

## *Wetland Reserve Program*

A sign up is now underway for the New Farm Bill Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP). WRP is a voluntary program that offers landowners the opportunity to protect, restore and enhance wetlands on their property. WRP offers payment, based on agricultural land value, for wetlands and associated uplands that have been degraded or converted to agricultural use, pays up to 75% for restoration costs, and provides cost share for mowing or spraying of enrolled land. The landowner maintains ownership and retains control of access to the land. North Dakota offers 2 options for WRP: A 10 year restoration-only cost share agreement, or a 30 year easement. The benefits of WRP include improved water quality, enhanced wildlife habitat, reduced soil erosion, reduced flooding and improved water supply as well as providing an additional source of income on marginal agricultural land. For more information contact the Rugby NRCS office, # 701-776-2207 Ext.3.

## *Supervisors, Staff appreciate Patron Support*

**Thank You!!** The District Supervisors and Staff would like to thank all patrons of the District for their many efforts in conservation work.

We would like to thank NRCS, FSA, Extension Service, ND Forest Service, County Commissioners, area businesses and organizations, and all the people involved in carrying out conservation practices. We are very grateful for all you have done.

The Supervisors would like to express their appreciation to all area businesses who have so generously donated toward our Women's Ag Night and other conservation programs.

The Supervisors would like to extend their **appreciation** to Chuck and Jan Repnow of Strand Studio, for all the years they have donated their time and services to the SCD by taking and furnishing photos of our annual Award Winners.

A special **thank you to** Merchants Bank and Bremer Bank for helping sponsor our annual awards banquet, and for presenting a plaque to our Conservation Achievement Award winners each year.

*Pierce County Soil Conservation District  
126 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, SW, Suite #104  
Rugby, ND 58368*

NON-PROFIT  
U.S. POSTAGE

**PAID**

Permit #35  
RUGBY, ND  
58368

*\*The Pierce County SCD Board of Supervisors meets the first Monday of each month at the USDA Service Center at: 126 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, SW, Rugby, ND. All meetings are open to the public.\**