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CROW WING COUNTY

BRAINERD, MINNESOTA 56401

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 2010 will total 25,000 norway pine, 17,000 jack pine and 25,000 white spruce seedlings. The planting sites are located on approximately 140 acres in Crosslake, Mission, Fairfield and Little Pine townships.

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 tax forfeited lands."

The jack pine seedlings planted this week 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 sites". Pike expects the first red pine thinning to happen in 25-30 years.

Over 3.5 million seedlings have been planted on county tax forfeited timber lands in the last 30 years. Funding for this spring's tree planting and other forest and wildlife habitat development work are provided from the sale of timber stumpage and platted tax forfeited parcels.

The County manages 103,000 acres of forest land for timber production and recreation opportunities. "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, Bryan Pike plants a white spruce seedling on county tax-forfeited property. Pike has supervised the county tree planting program over the last 20 years.

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