Forestry comes to the city

HARRISON, Neb.—A statewide pilot project aimed at bringing forestry conservation practices to town in order to enhance the quality of Nebraska communities is under way here.

"Today, rural forestry is heading to town—literally," says state forester Gary L. Hergenrader at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

The project, called Conservation Forestry in Communities (CFC), is being implemented here through a cooperative effort of the Center for Semi-Arid Agroforestry and the Nebraska Forestry Service.

Hergenrader says conservation trees in a community performs a host of functions:
- protect schools, hospitals, shopping and recreation areas;
- improve water quality;
- stabilize stream and lake banks;
- act as living snow fences;
- screen unsightly areas;
- improve wildlife habitat;
- aid in noise abatement; and
- provide aesthetics.

Thirteen CFC demonstrations have begun, including an 11-row living snow fence of trees in Harrison, Neb. It will consist of many species, but will emphasize shrubs and conifers because of their snow-catching capabilities. Additional benefits, Hergenrader contends, might include reduction in city utility bills and energy consumption, and a decrease in the cost of snow removal.

Another long-term project involves planting a green belt around the town for both added protection and landscape beautification.

"By applying what we have known for decades about the value of conservation trees in protecting farms and ranches, communities can reap the benefits of cleaner, quieter and healthier surroundings," Hergenrader says.

INFO CENTER

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