

## Trees and Grass Used to Cut Noise

By the Associated Press

Washington

Scientists are adapting an old-tree planting technique used by farmers to protect fields and buildings in hopes of solving some of the country's noise pollution.

The Agriculture Department says a three-year study near completion indicates unwanted noise can be cut by as much as 65 percent if trees and grass are used as barriers.

Shelterbelts or rows of trees have been used for decades as protection from wind and storms along farm fence lines or around home and livestock areas.

Huge shelterbelts dating back to the early 1930's and before still are common, particularly in the plains states were too often all that stood between a farm house and the north pole were barbed wire fences.

Prof. David I. Cook, University of Nebraska, is heading the noise-abatement project, assisted by Dr. David F. Van Haverbeke, a United States Forest Service expert.

The scientists say the most effective noise-reducing results came from wide belts of taller trees, preferably evergreens for year 'round effectiveness.

Closely spaced trees help spread out or diffuse sound waves, thus cutting down their noise effects, they said.

"Professor Cook pointed out that excessive noise is a form of environmental pollution that is drawing increasing public attention," the department said.

The scientists hope to complete their study late this year and plan to furnish information leading to design and placement of tree barriers. The study will be made available to landscape architects and others who design plantings in both urban and rural areas.

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