



JANUARY 2024

# CONSERVATION CONNECTION

Annual Tree Sale Newsletter

## Annual Tree (Plant & Seed) Sale!

TRISTAN NELSON- DISTRICT FORESTER

In 2024, we will once again be offering a variety of trees and shrubs, as well as native plant kits and seed mixes. Trees and shrubs consist of a variety of deciduous, conifer, and fruiting shrub species and are bareroot seedlings sold in bundles of 20-25 trees depending on the species. Native plant kits are also available for pollinator gardens, shoreline vegetation, rain garden plantings, woodland understory, and buckthorn replacement. The plant kits contain 6 each of 6 plant species. Native seed mixes include mixes for shorelines, and septic mounds.

Inventory is limited, so order now! Order online at [www.nslswcd.org](http://www.nslswcd.org) or call our office to place an order over the phone. Mail-in ordering is also available, but some items may be sold out before we receive your order form.

Order plants and seeds by April 23rd, and trees by May 6th.

Orders may be picked up at the Eveleth DNR office on Thursday, May 9th from 9am-3pm, or Friday, May 10th from 9am-6pm. We anticipate once again offering drive-up delivery service.

For questions about the tree sale please call the District Forester, Tristan Nelson at 218-288-6146 or the office number at 218-749-2000. Please do not call the Eveleth DNR office about the tree sale.



District Supervisor Charles Bainter carrying a bundle of tree saplings.



218-749-2000

505 3RD ST. N, STE A  
VIRGINIA, MN 55792  
[WWW.NSLSWCD.ORG](http://WWW.NSLSWCD.ORG)

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DISTRICT 4, TREASURER

Mark Peterson, Eveleth  
DISTRICT 5, SECRETARY





## Forestry Program TRISTAN NELSON- DISTRICT FORESTER

Did you know approximately 40% of Minnesota's woodlands are privately owned? Forested lands provide many services to you, and to surrounding communities at the county, state, national, and global scale. By providing habitat for wildlife, clean water, timber and wood products, carbon sequestration, and good air quality, everyone benefits from well managed forests.

Our Foresters Zach, John, and Tristan have all been very busy this past year meeting with landowners all over St. Louis County regarding their forestry questions and concerns. The spruce budworm outbreak across the Arrowhead region continues and has been a big focus of their work along with other activities such as tree/shrub planting, invasive species management, and writing Woodland Stewardship Plans. We are here to help woodland owners by answering any forestry related questions that they may have, along with helping them gain a better understanding of their forest, and access cost share funds for forestry projects that they would like to complete on their property. Read below to find out more and contact us with any questions or to get started!

Woodland owners have several options available to them, from cost-sharing programs such as the [Environmental Quality Incentives Program \(EQIP\)](#) and [DNR Cost-Share](#) for projects ranging from spruce budworm damaged balsam fir removal, wildlife habitat enhancement, tree planting, and more. There are also several incentive programs such as the [Sustainable Forest Incentive Act \(SFIA\)](#) or [Class 2C Managed Forest Land](#) available to landowners that can provide financial incentives or property tax relief for keeping forested land forested. EQIP and DNR Cost-Share have no minimum project size and can be completed by the landowner or a contractor. If applying for EQIP and getting Woodland Stewardship Plan, the plan fee may be waived if eligible.

Woodland Stewardship Plans are detailed, custom plans for your property that include optional management recommendations for the forested portions of your property. A minimum of 20 acres of forested land is required for a Woodland Stewardship Plan. A Woodland Stewardship Plan registered with the MN-DNR qualifies you for several state programs that could provide financial incentives. Stewardship plans must be written by DNR approved plan writer (DNR, SWCD, or private) and are valid for ten years.

If you have any questions about your trees or property or would like to learn more about programs such as EQIP, DNR Cost-Share, SFIA, or Class 2C Managed Forest Land, please contact us and we would be happy to meet with you!



Tristan offers free site visits and resources to get you going on creating a woodland you will be proud of.

He can walk your land and find out what you want from/for it.

Contact him at  
[tristan@nslswcd.org](mailto:tristan@nslswcd.org)  
or 218-288-6146



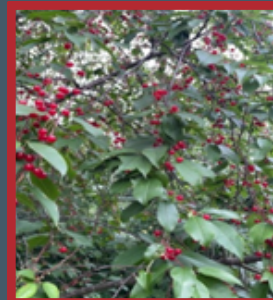
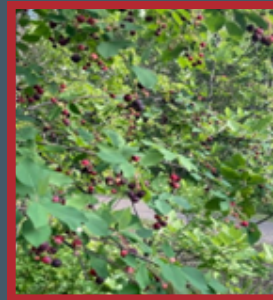




## Fantastic Fruiting Shrubs

TRISTAN NELSON- DISTRICT FORESTER

While you are reading this article, summer may be the last thing on your mind as snow and ice blankets Northern Minnesota. However, it is never a bad time to recognize some of the great, but often overlooked, native fruiting trees and shrubs that grow in our great state. Most of the time our wild blueberries and raspberries steal the spotlight, but summer and early fall are wonderful times to go looking for the often-abundant wild fruits such as juneberry (serviceberry), which makes outstanding muffins and pies, followed by pin cherries and chokecherries, both of which make incredible jelly. After the cherries come the wild plums, which excel in a variety of uses, from jelly and jam to wine and juice. All these fruits can also be enjoyed fresh, as long as you avoid eating the pits found in wild plums and both cherry varieties. Humans aren't the only creatures that enjoy foraging for these wild fruits, as a wide variety of wildlife seek out the leaves, buds, and fruit of these plants such as deer, moose, bear, grouse, turkeys, and many more. So, when we emerge from our winter slumber, and get busy with summer fun, remember that there are many species of often underappreciated native fruiting trees and shrubs out there to enjoy and create new memories with.



Top Left: Juneberry (Serviceberry), Top Right: Choke Cherry,  
Middle Row: Pin Cherry,  
Bottom Row: Wild Plum

## Rainy-Headwaters Vermilion Watershed Plan Almost Complete

BECCA REISS- COMMUNITY CONSERVATIONIST



The Rainy Headwaters-Vermilion River One Watershed, One Plan is in draft review through Jan 6, 2024. This document lays out a local strategy to protect, enhance, and in some cases restore water resources within the planning area over the next 10 years using Clean Water Land and Legacy Amendment Funds.

After the public comment period closes, there will be a public hearing on the plan on January 26th 2024. More information on the plan can be found at [www.nslswcd.org/rrhwvr](http://www.nslswcd.org/rrhwvr)





# Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Program Update

JON UTECHT  
AIS PROGRAM COORDINATOR

In 2023, 33 watercraft inspectors completed 24,145 inspections at 38 private and public water accesses. Additionally, a total of 323 decontaminations across 6 different lakes were performed. Funding was provided by St. Louis and Lake Counties. Our partners in this prevention effort include five lake associations, Fayal Township, Koochiching County & SWCD, Lake County SWCD, and Voyageurs National Park. We are grateful to the 9 resorts on Pelican and Vermilion Lakes, who inspected 807 watercrafts at their private accesses. Additional outreach materials were provided to resorts around the region for distribution to their guests, expanding the AIS prevention message.



New bait disposal bins added to 2 locations (Fall - South & Birch - West)

Two additional bait disposal bins were added at accesses around Fall Lake and Birch Lake, bringing the total to 8. Live bait transport bags with proper disposal practices were again provided to local bait retailers.

AIS early detection teams completed surveys on 16 lakes, looking for new infestations. Newly identified Chinese Mystery Snails were found on 7 lakes.

SWCD staff initiated a new informational booth to teach people how to properly perform watercraft inspections with participants receiving an aqua weed stick or water bottle as a participation prize. Locations included parking lots, the Take a Kid fishing event on Lake Vermilion, and the Side Lake Celebration event.

We look forward to continuing our work with local partners and the public to protect our waters against aquatic invasive species in 2024.



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