

Spring tree planting to reach near record levels

Forest cover in the South Nation watershed will increase by 160,000 trees this spring, thanks to partnerships between South Nation Conservation and over 90 area landowners.

Tree orders for planting this spring, which are now complete, have increased by about 10,000 over last year's figures. The increase can be attributed to the availability of funding for tree planting, an increased awareness of the importance of trees and the fact that spring and warm weather arrived early this year.

"There are a number of excellent tree funding programs that landowners can take advantage of," says Ed Kupczyk, Senior Forestry Specialist at South Nation Conservation. "SNC is the local delivery agent for Trees Ontario, which provides subsidies for sites of five acres or more. The City of Ottawa Green Acres Program contributes a per-tree subsidy for planting, purchasing and tending trees." SNC assists landowners in apply-

ing for funding and in some cases, can arrange for contractors to plant the trees.

The benefits of tree planting to the environment are well-known. Trees improve wildlife habitats, provide protection from wind for crops, livestock and barns, control snow loading on farms and establish profitable forest cover crops on idle land. In addition, they provide shelter for fish and wildlife in riparian shelter areas and improve stream bank stabilization to improve water quality. The increase in tree planting is especially welcome in the South Nation Watershed, where forestry cover is slightly below the recommended level of 30%.

While trees for 2010 planting are no longer available, orders for seedlings for the 2011 season will begin in July. Landowners are advised to order early to guarantee receiving trees and to take advantage of available funding. When trees are available, order forms can be downloaded from the South Nation Conservation website at

www.nation.on.ca.

For more information on tree planting and funding, contact Ed Kupczyk at 1-877-984-2948 ext. 249 or by e-mail at ekupczyk@nation.on.ca.