
Executive Summary

Final Report

2018 NSFC Tree Planting and Fencing Program for Private Landowners



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Objective of Program: Provide low-cost fencing to private landowners along the north shore. Landowners will plant and fence from 10 to 15 trees per acre to help restore conifers and other trees to the north shore landscape.

Funding: The 2018 tree fencing program was funded by a \$45,500 grant from the Weekes Family Foundation and \$9535 in funding from Sugarloaf: The North Shore Stewardship Association.

Project Results:

In Summary: The 2018 NSFC planting and fencing program was once again very successful. Demand for the program continued, more participants. Over 2900 trees were planted and fenced with the materials supplied, and another 15,140 trees were planted (but not fenced) by program participants. Participants were nearly unanimous in their appreciation and positive comments on the program. (See Appendix of full report for participants comments to the Weekes Family Foundation). There were two new aspects to the program in 2018. Signs noting a participant's participation in North Shore Forest Restoration were made and distribution is underway. Additionally, we were thrilled to be able to collaborate with Castle Danger Brewery in Two Harbors in the distribution of 2000 white pine seedlings to participants and other interested brewery visitors. They have already agreed to distribute 2500 seedlings in 2019. We hope to continue the program in future years and will continue seeking additional partner organizations to expand the program.

Total no. of participants: 115

Total no. of fence rolls provided: 512

Total no. of trees fenced: 2,952 (103 respondents) (A 14% increase from 2017)

Total no. of additional trees planted: 15,140 (103 respondents) (A 30% increase from 2017)

Total trees planted: 18,092 (A 28% increase from 2017)

Species planted: Species composition changed slightly in 2018. White Pine and White Cedar were the most planted and fenced. Other species planted and reported were White Spruce (generally not caged) Tamarack, Red Oak, and other species. This year no one reported planting red pine. This is most likely due to the lack of selecting this species as an option in the survey. It is probably included in the "other" category that some participants selected.

Exclosure type: The vast majority used only single tree exclosures (102 reported). Eleven participants used both individual tree and small area exclosures. One participant used a combination of single tree and large area exclosures, and three used only large area exclosures. Two used a combination of large and small exclosures.

Participants requesting/receiving planting assistance: Six people requested and received assistance. Our contractor spent 40 hours assisting these participants.

Participants wanting to participate next year: An amazing 89% (90 of 101 respondents) of participants responded that they wished to participate in a 2019 planting/fencing program (if it is available).

Participants that did not plant this spring: Two participants responded that they did not plant and fence trees due to personal matters such as illness. We estimate that this equates to approximately 60 total trees (12 rolls of fencing) will be planted and fenced by these participants.

Survival success from 2017 fenced trees: Of those participants who also participated in the 2017 program, 35 people reported a 1st year survival success of greater than 80% - and increase from 18 in 2016, and 3 reported a survival rate of 50 to 79%.

Participant Info:

- **Owners having a management plan:** Slightly over one third of participants had a forest plan for their lands (stewardship, NRCS, consulting forester's plan) or had participated in Sugarloaf's Lost Forest program.
- **Landownership size:** Average size was 37 acres, but this average was skewed by a few ownerships that had hundreds of acres. 41 participants owned 1-5.9 acres; 37 participants owned 6-19 acres; 29 participants owned 20-80 acres, 91 participants had ownership greater than 80 acres. The largest ownership was 909 acres.
- **Proximity to Highway 61:** Similar to 2017, participants were equally divided as to their proximity to Highway 61, with roughly one-third stating their lands are immediately adjacent to the highway, another third stating their lands were "in view" from the highway, and the last third stating their lands were "more distant" from the highway.
- **Amount of fence purchased:** The lowest number of rolls purchased by a participant was 1 and the highest number was 16 (several people requested a higher amount, but we capped the maximum at 16.)

Comments and suggestions received from participants and changes for future programs:

- Overall, respondents were very complimentary about the program, and thanked the Weekes Family Foundation for their generosity in funding the program. There were fewer suggestions/complaints this year, with most of them having to do with items we cannot control such as the quantity and quality of seedlings distributed by other sources, or the necessity of the pick-up location and rebar size selection being on a first-come, first-served basis.
- Many responses said that the program was "good, just as it is."
- Most frequent suggestions for improvement were:
 - **Rebar:** A couple of respondents who received shorter rebar requested longer rebar in the future. *As the rebar was on a first-come, first-served basis, we had limited control over this issue.*
 - **Seedlings:** The most common concern noted by participants was the lack of seedlings or the health of the seedlings they received from various sources. *The NSFC continues to explore partnerships with local greenhouses who could provide larger and more seedlings throughout the summer.*
 - **Pick-up location:** One participant was not happy with his designated pick-up location. He was the last person to register and receive fencing and thereby all fence had already been picked-up at the location of this choice. *All efforts were*

made to accommodate earlier participants who requested pick-up location changes, but there were not options left for this participant.

Fencing Procurement: Through Isak Hansen Hardware in Lutsen, MN, Sugarloaf/NSFC purchased of 256 rolls of 2"x4" mesh fence that is 6 feet tall along with 1280 pieces of 4 foot rebar and 1280 pieces of 7 foot rebar to anchor the fencing, and 7680 zip ties. Cost per package averaged \$82.65.

We also purchased 256 rolls of fencing, 1350 pieces of 7 foot rebar, 1500 pieces of 4 foot rebar, and 10,000 zip ties from Two Harbors Lumber. Cost per package averaged \$77.

All packages were sold to landowners for \$25.00 per package.

Fencing Disbursement: This year, there were again two fencing pick-up locations. We were relieved to have Two Harbors Lumber agree to be a pick-up location in addition to Isak Hansen Hardware in Lutsen. Using Two Harbors Lumber was much more convenient for both the participants and as participants could pick up their fencing during normal business hours as opposed to the specific dates and times that were required during 2017 at Gooseberry. Approximately 1/2 of participants received their fencing from each site.

Advertisement of Fencing Program: Promotion of the program was similar to 2017's promotional efforts. A news release to area newspapers, periodicals, and radio and television stations on February 15, a half month sooner than last year's program kick-off. An email announcing the program was sent to NSFC's mailing list of 357 individuals on February 23. 40% of the recipients opened the email. A reminder email was sent on March 9 and had a 33% open rate. Sugarloaf sent an email blast to approximately 670 individuals February 26 followed by a reminder on March 13. These emails were opened by approximately 30% of the recipients. Additionally, advertisements were purchased and ran in two North Shore newspapers and Northern Wilds magazine.

Enrollment Period: The enrollment period ran from February 23 until March 16, 2018.

Selection Notification: Individuals selected for the program were notified on March 20, 2018. Instructions were customized for those participants picking up at Hansen's Hardware and those picking up at Two Harbors Lumber.

Payment for Fencing: Payment for fencing was managed through the NSFC website, with a PayPal link to Sugarloaf. Cost to landowners was \$25 for each fence roll package. Vouchers to be redeemed at Isak Hansen's Hardware or Two Harbors Lumber were emailed to landowners once payment had been received, usually that day or the next. Landowners were required to present the voucher when picking up their fencing. Participants were required to pick up their fencing by June 15. (A few exceptions were made due to family emergencies and hardships). All landowners did pick up their fencing.

Verification of Planting: As part of the initial agreement, landowners agreed to provide photos or have a site visit to verify their planting and use of fencing. On July 10, an email requesting

two photos of the erected fencing, and participation in a survey on number and species of trees planted, and other information was sent to all participants, with an RSVP deadline of August 30. On July 20 a reminder was sent and on August 22 reminders were sent to those persons who had not yet responded. A final reminder was sent on September 18 to the 10 people who had not yet responded. Nine people have not responded as of the writing of this report and 3 were not able to plant trees this year due to special circumstances.

NEW in 2018

Signs for participants

This year we purchased special signs for all participants from 2016 to 2018. These signs are for the participants to post on their properties in a location visible to their neighbors. The signs advertise their participation as a *North Shore Forest Restoration Partner*. The signs include the NSFC website and acknowledge the Weekes Family Foundation. Distribution of these signs is ongoing.



Castle Danger Brewery partnership

In February, one of our NSFC partners from Gooseberry State Park contacted Duane and Molly about Castle Danger Brewery's White Pine Project -

<https://www.castledangerbrewery.com/beer/white-pine-project-ipa/>. They note,

“Proceeds from this beer will go directly to planting targeted areas along the North Shore that will stand for future generations to enjoy.” Duane and Molly contacted the brewery owners and were pleased to be invited to meet with the owners to discuss partnering with them on a white pine seedling give away on Arbor Day. Eventually we settled on offering seedling and information to anyone who dropped by on April 27 – 29. We advertised this opportunity to fencing program participants. On those days, members of the NSFC volunteered to talk with people who received a seedling. One thousand seedlings were given away. The Jack Rajala Foundation donated the seedlings to the brewery.

Castle Danger Brewery was able to acquire 1000 more white pine seedlings from the Rajala Foundation and offered additional seedlings to our fencing participants from May 29 to June 11. All seedlings were given away.

On October 1, 2018, we received an email from one of the Castle Danger owners noting that they will once again have white pine seedlings to give away and would like to partner with the NSFC again in 2019. They have secured 2500 seedlings and have tentatively set the giveaway dates for April 26-27.