

2002 Soil and Water Stewardship Week

To maintain our quality of life, each individual must begin to understand and fully appreciate the gift of trees, according to the organizers of the 2002 Soil and Water Stewardship Week observance, set for April 20 to May 5. The objective of this year's national observance is to urge citizens to support improved management and conservation of trees and forests from the nearest city street to the most remote mountain top.

"In most situations, this knowledge for conserving and managing trees and forests is available. What is needed is the willingness of people to do what is necessary to conserve our forest resources," said Tommy H. Mink, Chairperson of the Rockcastle County Conservation District, local sponsor of this year's Soil and Water Stewardship Week. "Our conservation district wants to take the leadership to

bring all interested groups and individuals together to discuss how to improve the health of the forest resources in our area," he added.

Urban forests, from the street trees in front of a store to the large trees in many parks, are extremely important for both ecological and economic reasons. Besides making our cities look nicer, trees help reduce the ill effects of heat islands, they filter pollutants out of urban air, they help reduce runoff from rainstorms, and they buffer "wind tunnels" created by buildings and streets. City planners and individuals who nurture the right mix of trees can do much to reverse the current decline of forest cover in our cities.

Trees have long been an important conservation tool on farms and ranches. Trees and shrubs are planted as windbreaks and shelterbelts around farm-

stead, livestock facilities and crop fields. Conservation districts are currently promoting the establishment of buffer strips along rivers and streams to improve water quality and wildlife habitat.

The variety of products we get from trees would surprise most of us. Tree products can include chemicals and dyes, food and spices, clothing and medicines. Researchers are even studying how to produce electricity and liquid fuels from wood and other crops that can lead to renewable energy sources.

"While you may not be a farmer or forester, there are opportunities to exercise a positive forest stewardship role. We can do this by planting the right tree in the right place in the right way. Our actions will affect many generations to come," said Mink.



They call him Rambo and he may be a smaller version, but he is actually a work release prisoner from the Rockcastle County Jail, who helps the local road department. He was busy Monday helping the local road department clean up debris from Hwy. 70.

Storm causes damage



Kentucky Department of Transportation employees were busy Monday working to clear debris from the right-of-way on Hwy. 70 after a Sunday storm. Shown above are state road workers Paul Mason and Darrell Dillingham. Dillingham said that it appeared that a small tornado went through the Quail area around 7:30 a.m. Sunday.

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