

Community Forestry Assistant



Newsletter

October 2007



Northwest
Management, Inc.



Which Trees?

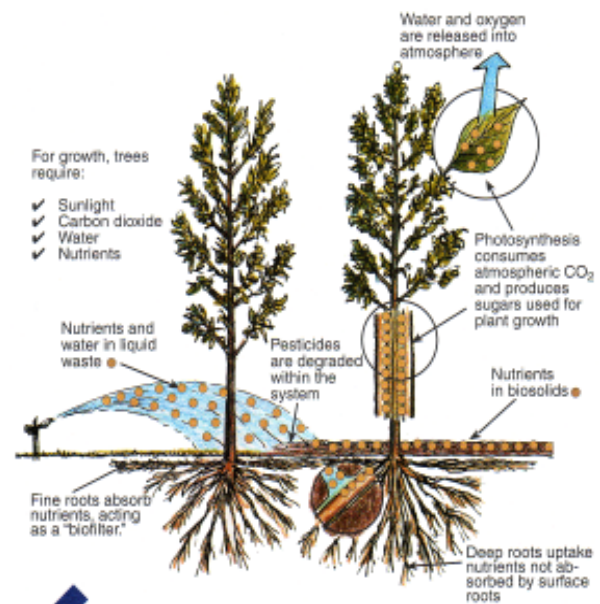
Success in using trees to remove wastes depends on the species and the length of the growing season. Trees that are well suited for treating wastes include several species with rapid growth rates, which allow more nutrients to be absorbed than trees that grow more slowly. Extensive and deep root systems are also desirable, enabling nutrients to be effectively filtered out and keeping them from moving into ground water.

Hybrid poplar and hybrid willow are especially attractive for this type of plantation because of their ease of regeneration. When selecting trees for eventual harvesting, check with local mills on the potential market for wood products.

Working Trees Series: Working Trees for Treating Waste

Excess nutrients and other chemicals from agricultural, municipal, and industrial operations impact surface and ground water quality. Plant science and engineering have combined forces forming a natural partnership between treating waste and growing trees. The technology of putting fast growing trees to work recycling nutrients from solid and liquid waste is increasingly being adopted as an alternative to more expensive treatment methods, such as constructed treatment plants.

Because trees absorb excess nutrients and breakdown harmful chemicals, they provide a natural cleaning process for soil and water resources. What was once considered waste is now a valuable resource. There are other advantages over treatment plants—trees can generate new sources of income from the products they produce. Additionally, they also provide visual, noise, and odor buffers, while reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide by absorbing and storing carbon in the wood and roots.



Municipal and Industrial Waste

– Management of municipal and industrial effluent and biosolids is becoming increasingly challenged, as stricter regulations to improve water quality are imposed within our Nation's rivers, lakes, and ground water. The beneficial use of municipal and industrial wastes in tree plantations is one of the innovative approaches being developed. The trees use nutrients in the effluent and biosolids that would otherwise contribute to the problem of nutrient loading in the streams. In addition, the plantations enhance landscape aesthetics and generate income from the production of wood products.

This information is excerpted from "Working Trees for Treating Waste" developed by the USDA National Agroforestry Center (NAC) in cooperation with Washington State University, The Upper Columbia Resource Conservation and Development Council, and Greenwood Resources, Inc. Go to <http://www.unl.edu/nac/workingtrees/wttw.pdf> to download a copy of the complete publication.

If you would like more information, please contact your local Idaho Department of Lands supported North Idaho Community Forestry Assistant, Northwest Management, Inc. at 208-883-4488.