

# A Gift of Trees

*Earlier this summer, Legacy received a call from the Agroforestry & Woodlot Extension Society (AWES). They had some good news. Several hundred tree and shrub saplings had become available ...*

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A forestry project elsewhere had fallen through, and the saplings were ready to be planted. Certainly exciting but we needed to find somewhere to plant them, and quick!

A landowner in Bergen had previously inquired about rehabilitating the area surrounding an ephemeral stream that runs through their property, dividing two hay fields. Further along the stream drains into Fallen Timber Creek, shortly before it joins the Red Deer River.

The landowner had maintained one stand of Aspen Poplar along the stream bank which was reduced to only a few trees some 35 years ago.

The poplar has spread significantly since then, and has been joined recently by transplanted Blue Spruce and Manitoba Maple. This property had great potential as a home for the new saplings, which could complement the ongoing efforts to reintroduce native species.

Thanks to AWES several hundred saplings of various species were planted in early June this year. We also received weed suppression mats, made of hemp and wood



fibre, which Legacy staff and volunteers placed around the saplings. Hopefully, these mats will keep the weeds and grasses from competing with the saplings as well as keep precious moisture from evaporating.

A few good showers before the onset of the drought allowed for lots of new growth early in the saplings' life, and a high success rate for them overall (so far, at least).



In the past couple of weeks, we have combatted the extremely dry conditions by helping the landowner with watering.

Using a big water tank in a trailer we drove along the field's edge, running a hose to the saplings, taking buckets to where the hose wouldn't reach.

We may need to make a couple more watering trips if the Rain Gods do not start cooperating, but we remain very optimistic about the future of our saplings and this stream!



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