

In the late 1980's Jim Felthous from Ashippun, WI started planting trees on 16 acres of farm ground along State Highway 30 just southeast of Cedar Rapids, IA. Mr. Felthous was able to enroll 8.1 acres of the cropland in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), and hardwood trees were then planted. In the late 1980's there were some dry years in Iowa which made it difficult on new tree plantings during that time. Mr. Felthous was committed to the project and with good maintenance and some re-planting he was able to establish a quality stand of trees on ground that was heavily eroded due to past management activities. Species on this site include black walnut, red, white, bur, and swamp white oak, and green ash.

Mr. Felthous has worked hard over the years to re-plant, prune, and in recent years he has begun to thin some trees out to improve the growth of selected trees. When he started this project his goals were to: establish a woodland, have an opportunity to work with trees (i.e. planting, thinning, pruning, and care), provide habitat for wildlife, future financial potential, and to keep his woodland in good condition for future generations.

At this point in time Mr. Felthous is off to a good start in reaching his goals. The trees range from 10 feet up to 25 feet tall, and the overall survival and tree density on the site is very good. The rural areas around Cedar Rapids, IA are becoming overrun with residential development, and large portions of forest cover are being fragmented into small pieces. This planting is showing how with hard work an open field ( that was once forested many years ago-soils indicated forest derived soil) can be re-established to forest cover and provide many benefits. For example, since the tree planting has been established the soil base as started to re-build thanks to new leaf litter each fall, erosion has slowed down significantly thanks to the protection of the tree canopies during heavy rains, and wildlife such as deer, turkey, squirrels, and songbirds have returned to the area thanks to increased cover.



**Jim Felthous CRP Tree Planting Spring 2004**

