

Cottonwood and Willow Pole Planting

Cuttings from cottonwood and willow trees are able to sprout roots and leaves. Small cuttings of new growth, called whips, or larger cuttings from older wood, called poles, can be planted. Once planted, these cuttings can quickly turn into trees. Poles were planted in the creek valley along the Lost Creek Hiking Trail because their larger size makes them more robust and better able to compete with reed canary grass. Poles should be harvested from a large willow or cottonwood tree during its dormant period. Poles can be cut as short as 4 feet long, but longer poles should be used when possible. Longer poles have a better chance of survival because they do not have to compete with grasses for light, and their new leaves will be above the deer grazing level. Longer poles can be harder to obtain because a larger source tree is needed and because their large size makes them harder to handle. The poles need to be planted deep enough to have moist soil even in dry periods. In areas thick with reed canary grass, poles should be planted deeper than the roots of the reed canary grass. For more information on the creek valley pole planting project, visit http://fillmoreswcd.org/plan_b_details.htm.

MORE RESOURCES:

Collecting Willow, Poplar and Redosier Dogwood Hardwood Cuttings for Riparian Site Plantings
By Wayne Crowder, Pullman PMC

<http://www.plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/pubs/wapmctn290195.pdf>

Guidelines for Planting Dormant Pole Cuttings in Riparian Areas of the Southwest
Los Lunas Plant Materials Center, USDA-NRCS

<http://www.nm.nrcs.usda.gov/news/publications/pole-cutting-solution.pdf>

Hardwood Reforestation in a Creek Valley Dominated by Reed Canary Grass
By Tim and Susan Gossman, Chatfield, MN

<http://fillmoreswcd.org/otherSpecial.html>



Cottonwood tree that was planted as a pole



How a pole can grow into a full sized tree