



## Hedgerows and Screen Plantings

Bob Eddleman

Is there a need to screen an unsightly area from view? Do you want to muffle undesirable sounds or remove gases and odors from the air? Planting a hedgerow or screen is a good way to solve many of these concerns and also for you to become a part of central Indiana's exciting new "Plant a Million" project. The Hoosier Heartland Resource Conservation and Development Council and the soil and water conservation districts in Boone, Brown, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Marion, Monroe, Morgan and Shelby Counties are the sponsors of this project. The project goals are to help the people of the area plant over one million native trees and shrubs as well as to help people understand the importance of trees in our environment and how to take care of their trees.

A hedgerow is usually a planting of at least two rows of trees and/or shrubs. Evergreen or conifers are preferred in some locations where a dense cover or screening is desired year round. They do their work in urban as well as rural areas. Screening along highways is a valuable use of hedgerows. A combination of earth mounding and planting one or two rows green vegetation of trees and/or shrubs on the mound not only screens the highway from sight but also muffles the sound of auto and truck traffic. Another valuable asset of the hedgerow is that it filters the air and reduces the amount of harmful gases moving from the highway to the homes. A hedgerow is a great way to screen any undesired view in a natural way.

Snow management is another use of hedgerows. The hedgerow will capture the snow and deposit it adjacent to its down wind side. This will reduce the amount of snow on parking lots, roads and playgrounds. Good planning is essential, however, because they will also cause snow to deposit in unwanted areas when they are placed in the wrong location.

Wildlife habitat is another important function of a hedgerow. They provide valuable cover and nesting areas. A hedgerow or screen planting serves as a travel lane for wildlife to move safely from one location to another. A hedgerow leading from a wooded area to a stream is a great asset to ground moving wildlife to go from food and shelter to water and return. They provide nesting areas for songbirds that eat mosquitoes and other undesirable insects. Many of these birds consume more than their body weight in mosquitoes each day.

Hedgerows and other vegetative plantings are very important in the newly important area of carbon sequestration. Scientists are discovering that atmospheric gases called "greenhouse gases" are causing more of sun's rays to reflect back to the earth's surface and causing a gradual increase in temperatures. Growing vegetation captures the carbon from one of these gases, carbon dioxide, and stores it for long periods in the plants stems, leaves and root system. So we not only get the benefit of the hedgerow for the purpose we planted it but we also are benefiting the overall environment.

Planning and installation assistance for hedgerow planting is available from your local County Soil and Water



Conservation Districts and the agencies that work with them. Find their contact information on the Plant A Million website under the Contact Us page to see how easy it might be to solve a concern in your community.

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