

Colorado State Conservation Board 2009 Matching Grants Project:
Baca County Conservation District: Agro-forestry Cost-Share Program

What natural resource problem(s) did the project address?

Southeastern Colorado is a land of light soils and strong, frequent winds. Shelterbelts, made by planting trees, reduce soil erosion, provide shelter for livestock, create wildlife habitat, improve air quality by preventing dust blowing, reduce energy use around homesteads by mitigating weather, and help keep roads open from blowing snow or dust. They are a many-faceted benefit that addresses the soil erosion and wildlife habitat concerns in the district long-range plan.

Baca County Conservation District established a demonstration plot for many of the tree and shrub species suitable for shelterbelts in the area and offered cost-share for landowners to establish shelterbelts.

What was achieved?

- **35 tons of topsoil per year will be saved** by the mature shelterbelt trees
- **6.5 acres of livestock shelter and wildlife habitat created.**
- **Demonstration row of regionally suitable shelterbelt shrubs and trees planted outside district office** with locals and tourists taking an interest
- **Seven landowners** planted shelterbelts with **1,200 trees and shrubs planted.**
- All shelterbelts planted to **Natural Resource Conservation Service standards and specifications**
- **District donated use of its barrier roller and landowners contributed 56% of material and labor costs.**
- District will monitor establishment of shelterbelt trees and provide **ongoing technical assistance to landowners as needed.**

Baca County Conservation District's newly planted demonstration row of shelterbelt trees and shrubs.

Plastic weed barrier and drip irrigation systems help maximize plant survival of shelterbelt plantings.

