

# Planting and Care of Cedar Trees

## PLANTING LOCATIONS

- Plant a least three feet away from the water-edge of the river.
- Plant the small cedars at least 5 feet apart.
- Plant them where you would want them to grow into a large tree.
- Look up! Don't plant them under electric or telephone lines, or too close to existing trees, or under roof overhangs.
- Look down! Don't plant on septic drain fields or over buried pipes or cables.
- They need sun light; but will grow a little slower in the shade.
- Don't plant in areas subject to flooding for more than two continuous weeks per year.

## PLANTING

- Use care with roots. Do not let them dry out or disturb them any more than you have to.
- Use good planting soil in a 6-8 diameter inch hole. Carefully place the roots pointing downward into the hole and fill with soil. Compact the soil tightly around the roots. DO NOT use a planting spike for this process.
- Keep soil around the newly planted tree continually moist for at least a month. Water every couple days during this period. Water during dry spells as needed.
- Keep roots completely submerged in a bucket of water while you are planting. Do not keep a bundle of seedlings in your hand while looking for the next spot to plant a tree.
- On a seedling 6-12 inches tall, 7-8 inches of a healthy, fibrous root system is all that is needed for good survival. Cut off 2 inches maximum immediately before planting with a sharp knife or scissors.
- Make sure the roots are straight up and down in the planting hole and the soil is firmly packed around the roots. Any voids between the soil and the roots will cause the roots to dry out and affect survival.
- If you cannot plant the trees immediately, it's OK to keep the roots submerged in water for up to a week. However, beyond that time root rot will occur and the survival rate will decrease substantially.

## AFTER PLANTING

- Grasses, ferns, and weeds can not only rob your seedling of valuable moisture, nutrients, and sunlight, but also harbor insects and diseases that will have an affect on survival. It will be necessary to remove this vegetation from around the young seedling occasionally. Pull it out by hand without disturbing the root system of the young cedar seedling. Do not use herbicides.
- Occasional feeding with liquid fertilizer (for conifers) is good, but not essential unless your soil is poor.

## CARE TO PREVENT DESTRUCTION BY BROWSING ANIMALS

- Tender cedar leaves are the number one favorite winter food for the deer. However, they will generally not eat cedars from May through October.
- Rabbits will also eat baby cedar trees in the fall, winter, and early spring. Occasionally, they will nibble the tops off even in the summer.
- Securely stake a chicken wire mesh cage around and over the top of the newly planted cedar tree. The cage can stay in place around the tree until it out grows the cage. You may wish to remove the cage in the summer and replace it each year during the months of November, December, January, February, March, and April.
- Several years from now you will need to build a new larger cage to fit your growing cedar tree until its crowns out of reach of the deer. Beginning in the summer of 2000, the "Cedars for the Au Sable" project will partially subsidize the cost of a six foot enclosure for your cedar trees.
- If trees you planted earlier are out-growing their cages, extend the existing cage with 24-inch wide poultry netting material. Re-use the existing cage top on the top of the raised cage.