**North DakotaChampion Tree Program**

**Common Questions**

***What is a tree?*** A tree is defined as any plant that has achieved one erect perennial woody stem or trunk at least 3 inches in diameter 4-1/2 feet above the ground (breast height); a definitely formed crown of foliage; and a height of at least 13 feet. To be a champion tree, a tree must meet these minimum requirements. In contrast, shrubs are small woody plants, usually with several perennial stems branching at the base.

***What is eligible?*** A tree is eligible as long as it is rooted and in relatively good health. Measurements for height and average crown spread incorporate all parts of the tree, dead or alive. Native and common non-native trees growing in North Dakota are acceptable. Only major species are accepted. Cultivars, named varieties, ornamentals, and unclassified varieties are excluded. *Note: The classification of various species as invasive is not consistent across state boundaries, since each species does not always exhibit invasive characteristics in every location. State coordinators shall decide whether a nominated tree fits the definition of invasive in their state and, therefore, exclude that species from nomination to the Register.* Common buckthorn was removed in 2011, as it is considered an undesirable species in North Dakota.

***What’s the difference between native and naturalized non-native?*** Native tree species (also called indigenous) are wild and grew naturally in the undisturbed environment before the arrival of Europeans. A naturalized non-native tree is an introduced species that has become established and is reproducing on its own in “wildland” settings.

***How long does a champion tree stay in the register?*** A tree stays in the register until it is dethroned by a larger tree, dies, or is removed. When two trees have scores that fall within 5 points of each other, they may be listed as co-champions. Trees are measured not more than every five years.

***Can I visit the champion trees?*** The champion trees located on public land can be visited without a problem. If a tree is located on private land, we ask that you respect the private landowner and ask permission before making a visit.

***How can I nominate a champion tree?*** At the back of this register is the information you need and a form that can be submitted to the ND Forest Service headquarters by December 31.

***What is North Dakota’s largest tree?*** A cottonwood in Steele County with a girth of 360 inches (30 feet), 105 feet tall, and an average crown spread of 108 feet.

***What is the nation’s (and world’s) largest tree?*** The “General Sherman” giant sequoia in California is the largest living thing in the world (as heavy as 360 elephants) with a girth of 1231 inches (102-feet), 275 feet tall, and an average crown spread of 107 feet.