

# Counter productive investments

Our federal government has been promoting a plan to plant millions of trees for the purpose of combatting climate change. The plan would have some merit if the governments of Canada and Manitoba were to discontinue the practice of utilizing our income tax system to subsidize the removal of trees by our agricultural industry.

Currently, the full cost of removing trees may be claimed as a business expense in the year the trees are removed. A further subsidy directed at encouraging tree removal and drainage emerges from capital cost allowance schedules, enabling agriculture to claim depreciation expenses on non-agricultural implements, such as Caterpillar tractors, earth moving equipment and backhoes.

In my time, I have witnessed the Whitemud Watershed Conservation District, at significant public expense, establish an impressive network of field shelter belts. I am now witnessing the final stages of the use of our income tax system to subsidize the removal of these same shelter belts.

I would suggest that our federal Member of Parliament, Dan Mazier, research the issue and report to the readers of the Banner the value of the public investment dedicated towards establishing trees and shelter belts in agricultural Manitoba during 2020-21. I would also suggest that he call upon Revenue Canada to make public the value of tax expenditures made by both levels of government during the same time period to assist Manitoba's agricultural sector in tree removal and drainage projects.

# Letter: Dust storms a not-so-distant memory

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The Honourable member may consider bringing the matter to attention of the Parliamentary Budget Officer and the Auditor General of Canada.

It would appear to the casual observer that expending tax dollars to plant a tree and then utilizing tax expenditures to destroy the same tree may be considered counter productive. On a positive note, the subsidized removal of trees and shelter belts by our agricultural industry has improved my opportunity to view the not-so-infrequent dust storms of 2020-21. Previous assurances by industry spokespersons, "with the farming practices today, droughts and soil erosion are only memories from the past," have been proven correct. The past was last year and very memorable.

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