

Climate Change and Trees Discussed Saturday in Brownville

(KTNC) - The implication of a warming climate on trees in Nebraska was the topic of discussion in Brownville Saturday afternoon. Justin Evertson with the Nebraska Statewide Arboretum and the Nebraska Forest Service spoke to a gathering and answered questions for about an hour at the Furnas Arboretum.

Evertson said that indications are that the future climate in Nebraska will be warmer – and drier in many parts of the state, especially western Nebraska. Exactly how that will impact the state’s trees remains to be seen, but he says they’re trying to be proactive and pull tree species to Nebraska from states like Kansas, Oklahoma, and Missouri. He says southeast Nebraska is a crossroads. (play audio :32 “monitor that.”)

Evertson says a lot of the species are already being tested in the state. (play audio :20 “continues to shift.”)

Evertson says he expects a decline in the number of evergreen trees – due both to climate and disease. For those looking to plant, or replant, a windbreak, he advises to include a variety of tree species. (play audio :58 “some shelter.”)

Many places in Nebraska experienced their driest year on record in 2012. Evertson says his home county of Kimball, in the panhandle, got only five inches of rain during the growing season last year. The drought came on the heels of record flooding for many in eastern Nebraska in 2011.

Evertson said indications are that western Nebraska will likely be warmer and drier in the future, while eastern Nebraska will be warmer but not necessarily drier.