

2017 MSGS Brush Cuts – Get Them Saws Ready!

By Jodie Provost

The MN Sharp-tailed Grouse Society (MSGS), MN Prairie Chicken Society (MPCS), DNR and USFWS cordially invite you to join us at the 2017 Brush Cuts spearheaded by MSGS. Please join the flocks for camaraderie, fresh air, good food, and prairie and brushland habitat enhancement for prairie chickens and sharp-tailed grouse.

NW MN Brush Cut, March 4 - We will meet at Ness Café in Erskine at 8 am for a breakfast buffet provided by MSGS and MPCS. After foraging we will head out to Glacial Ridge NWR where refuge folks will guide us in hand cutting scattered trees from an old nursery on a relatively new acquisition. If going directly to the site, we will likely be working near Highway 32, but contact me beforehand to be sure.

NE MN Brush Cut, March 25 - We will meet at Wilbert's Cafe in Cotton at 8 am for a similar breakfast buffet provided by MSGS. After foraging, we will proceed to the Sax/Zim WMA complex. DNR Tower Wildlife Area folks will lead the effort. If going directly to the site, we may park and work off County Road 7 as in the past, but contact me beforehand to be sure. Weather and ground conditions can sometimes cause a change in plans.

Grilled burgers will be provided at both events for lunch. Please come dressed properly and bring a water bottle. Layers are good for shedding as we warm up. Warm, dry footwear is also important. If we get deep snow, snow shoes can be very helpful. Hand saws will be provided, but please feel free to bring your own hand saws and nippers if you have them, to ensure enough tools for all. For safety, no chain saws are allowed, other than by trained DNR or USFWS personnel.

All attendees will be signed up as volunteers for the day, and all students will receive a one-year, free, MSGS membership. Also, this year for the first time, the **MSGS Golden Saw**, Traveling Trophy Award will go to the college bringing the most students. Will it be Brainerd, Bemidji, Vermillion, Crookston, or...? The more people that attend and put in sweat equity, the more volunteer power MSGS can show as match to its Expedited Conservation Partners Legacy grant. It would help greatly and be much appreciated!

Give Jodie a holler (office 218-429-3052, cell 218-838-3553, jodie.provost@state.mn.us) by one week prior to each event if you can join us, so we can get a head count and ensure adequate eats, or if you have questions. We've been having a great time and improving habitat at these events for many years. Look forward to catching up with old friends and making new ones!

