

WILD BLUEBERRIES

Benefits of Shelter Belts

Wild blueberries are being exposed to stronger storms with heavy precipitation and high winds. Reduced snowpack in winter further exposes wild blueberry plants to the elements.

Climate Impacts Addressed

Erosion: high winds can blow away topsoil in dry conditions.

Plant damage: high winds, heavy rain and blowing snow can damage blueberry plants and cause fruit to drop.

Reduced snowpack: declining snow cover exposes blueberry plants to damaging winter wind, freezing rain, blowing ice and extreme cold, increasing plant injury and lowering yields.

Reduced pollination: land-use changes and climate change stressors are reducing pollinator abundance and biodiversity, limiting successful pollination and reducing fruit set.



Key Adaptation Strategy



Shelter belts are windbreaks made of trees and shrubs. When beneficial species are planted around wild blueberry fields, they can provide a variety of climate adaptation benefits.

Wind protection: shelter belts slow wind across fields, reducing topsoil erosion and plant damage from high wind, debris and ice.

Snow retention: shelter belts reduce the movement of snow by the wind, promoting more uniform snow cover protection and more consistent soil moisture conditions during snow melt periods.

Pollinator habitat: beneficial trees and shrubs increase habitat and forage for pollinators, increasing abundance and biodiversity for improved plant pollination success and fruit set. Increased pollination from native insects supplements commercial pollination services.

Carbon sequestration: shelter belts have the added co-benefit of storing carbon in woody biomass.

Resources



Living Labs –
Shelter Belts and
Riparian Zones



Resilient Agricultural
Landscape Program
(RALP)

