Plant Material Selection BMPs

Sheila Anderson
Natural Resource Specialist
• THE REVEGETATION/LANDSCAPING TREATMENTS ARE THE LAST THINGS DONE ON THE PROJECT SITE....BUT THE FIRST AND SOMETIMES ONLY PART OF THE PROJECT THAT MOST PEOPLE SEE.

• THE REVEGETATION IS ALSO THE FIRST AND LAST IMPRESSION OF THE “SUCCESS” OF THE PROJECT.

• CARDINAL RULE: Always establish and maintain limits of disturbance to protect existing vegetation. Established, native plants have irreplaceable functions and values.
Initial Considerations

Adaptability to harsh climatic conditions and soils are limiting factors.
- Cold freezing winter temperatures, short growing season, minimal growing season precipitation, more-or-less low moisture holding capacity in soils. Other soil factors that can come into play are pH (measure of acidity and alkalinity), macro nutrients, and possibility of contaminants.
- Lake Tahoe is within USDA Plant Hardiness Zone 6-7 – based on average annual minimum temperatures over a 30-year period. OR Sunset Magazine Zones 1&2. Guidelines.

Moisture zones with and without irrigation – or temporary irrigation for plant establishment.
- Irrigation expands the palette of plant choices available. If irrigation is not available, limit planting to native adapted species.

Defensible space zone: 0-5 feet, 5-30 feet, > 30 feet; and aspect (north vs. south slope).
- Your entire project site could be somewhat warmer or cooler than the surrounding area because it is sheltered or exposed. You could also have pockets that are warmer or cooler than you zone if sites are sheltered, exposed to wind, or in low spots where cold air pools.
Luckily for us....

HOME LANDSCAPING GUIDE FOR LAKE TAHOE AND VICINITY

UNR COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

• CHAPTER 7 Pages 70-99 TRPA Recommended Plant List
TREES – Pages 86-88

• Largest, most dominant, need the most room. Attract birds. Provide Shade. Create the Visual Framework.

• Spacing is important.... Especially to reduce fuel hazards for crown fire conditions.

• Page 96 98– Accent trees. Make a statement.
**SHRUBS** – Pages 78-84

- Diversity, structure, color, and texture.
- Spacing is important – can create ladder fuels that carry a ground fire into a crown fire.
- Page 94-96 - Accents.
• **GROUNDCOVERS –**
  Pages 78-79

• Low growing, reduced biomass fuel, erosion control; 5-30’ defensible space zone.

• Fills the function of dry, combustible organic mulch material (pine needles, wood chips).
FLOWERS (FORBS) – Pages 74-76

- Focal areas, grouped planting for visual interest.
- Color, fragrance, texture.
- Incorporate with rock and boulders
- Many choices.
- Grouped planting for water use.
- Hummingbirds, Butterflies, and other pollinators including BEES
- Check for potential allergies
OTHER THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

• MAINTENANCE – pruning, fertilizer, winterization

• SNOW STORAGE – flexible stems, perennial growth forms

• NATIVE VS. ADAPTED – important consideration for some people

• SEASONAL LOOK -

• PERSONAL PREFERENCES – formal vs. naturalized
Questions?