

Town of Truckee

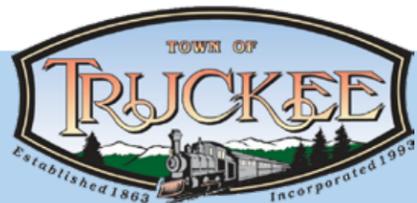
Recommended Plant List

In support of our Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WEL0) Standards

Created by the Town of Truckee Planning Division

Written by Christy Lyle, edited by Yumie Dahn and Heather Benson

Landscaping in Truckee with
Native and Adapted species
for a climate-wise community



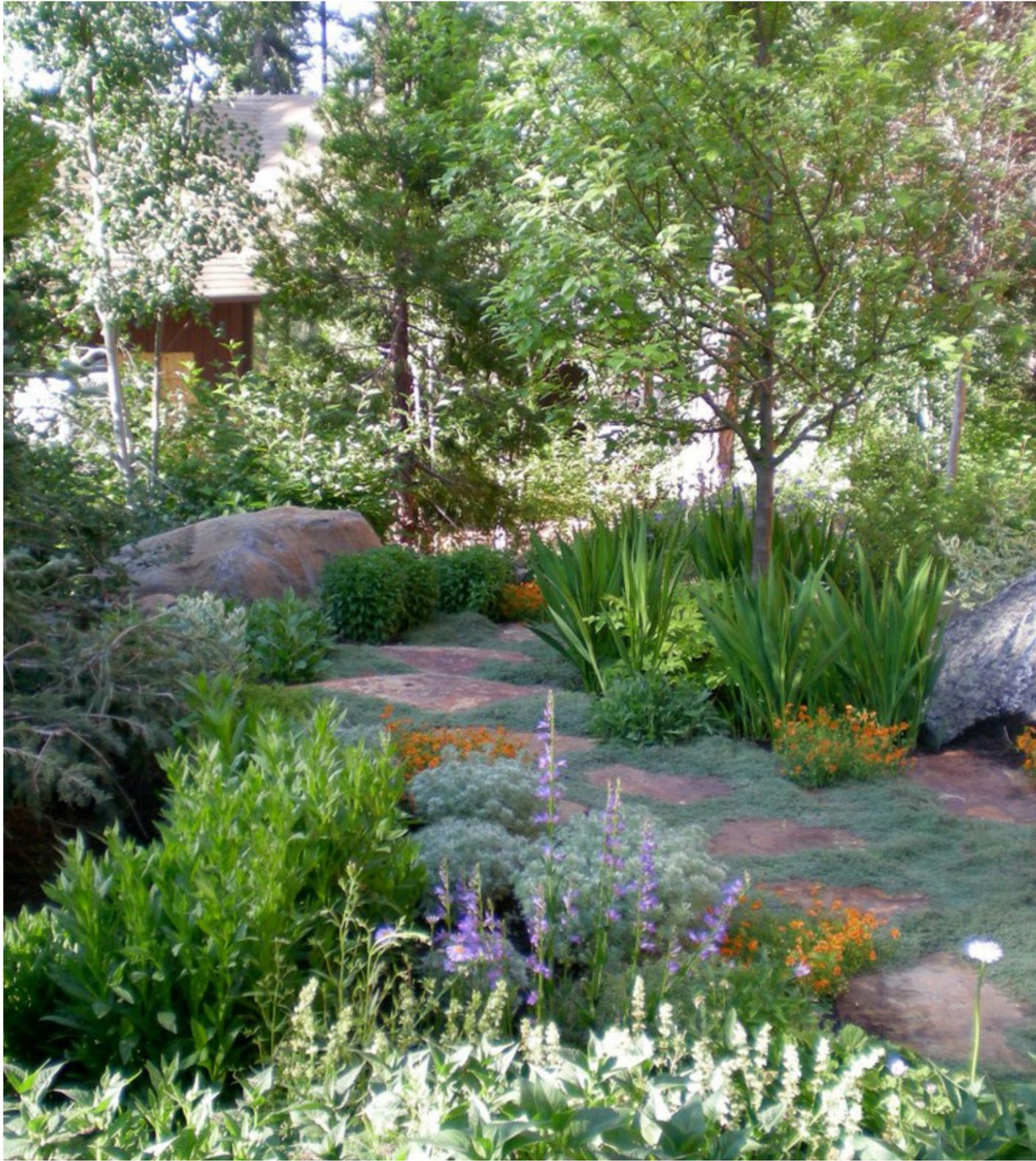


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What is WELO?

The Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (WELO, Development Code Section 18.40.060) is a set of landscape design **requirements** established **in response to the ongoing drought in California**. The Town of Truckee adopted a set of regionally-specific standards in 2013 to increase water efficiency for new and retrofitted landscapes. The design guidelines include water-conserving tactics such as installing **efficient irrigation systems, capturing on-site stormwater, and limiting the terrain covered by turf**. WELO design standards require water-wise plant species and prohibits inefficient turf (for example, bluegrass may only be used in limited recreational settings).



The Planning Division wanted to provide the public with a local plant palette that not only follows the local aesthetic but meets low water requirements found in many municipalities. **This packet is a resource to help owners and developers address the requirements of the Ordinance to enhance the built environment.** All projects with landscaping over 500 sf, including owner-provided landscaping on single-family lots, **must adhere to WELO standards.** It is still recommended that projects under 500 sf utilize the primarily native, low-water plant palette to ensure consistency in design throughout the community.

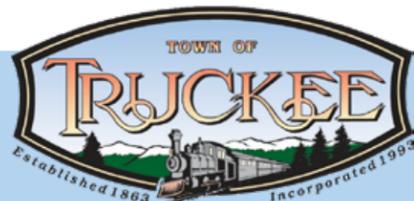
Truckee receives a majority of its precipitation in the winter months, so **most native plants have adapted for life and growth on a limited water supply.** Native plants and adapted species (discussed on the following page) can be used ornamentally, do not require fertilizers and pesticides, and attract valuable insect and bird species. Landscaping projects can increase scenic value and reduce water usage by grouping native and adapted plants together in a practice known as hydrozoning. **Through hydrozoning, plant species with similar water requirements are clustered together in an effort to conserve water.** Including multiple hydrozones in landscape design improves visual composition, promotes biodiversity, and reduces water usage.

Practices like these are strongly recommended, and in some cases required, for landscapes in Truckee. **We hope this packet acts as a guide to aid in your own landscape design and plant selection!**

WELO: A California mandated ordinance



For more information about the Town of Truckee's WELO requirements, visit the link here: <https://www.townoftruckee.com/government/community-development/planning-division/plans-and-regulations/development-code/water-efficient-landscape-standards>



Landscaping in Truckee

Native versus Adapted species

Whether you are new to Truckee-Tahoe or a longtime local, you may notice most of the plant species out on the trail are also found in your neighbors' yards. **That's because it's becoming more common to utilize native plant species in our built landscapes as people are learning how they may positively impact the environment.** Incorporating native and adapted plants into your landscape plan is easy to do and can significantly decrease your water usage. This packet provides a helpful list of suggested native and adapted plant species that are ideally suited for our mountainous and semiarid region. But first, what do we mean by **“native”** and **“adapted”** plants?

“Native” plants refer to species that have developed in a particular region or ecosystem without human propagation. The flora of Truckee, located in planting zones 5b to 6b, **must be able to survive long, harsh winters and warm, dry summers.** This range of zones is expressed in the image on the bottom right. Most native plants in Truckee require very little water though there are some riparian varieties, found near our rivers and streams, that are also native. Those plants are further explained in the next section about Microclimates.

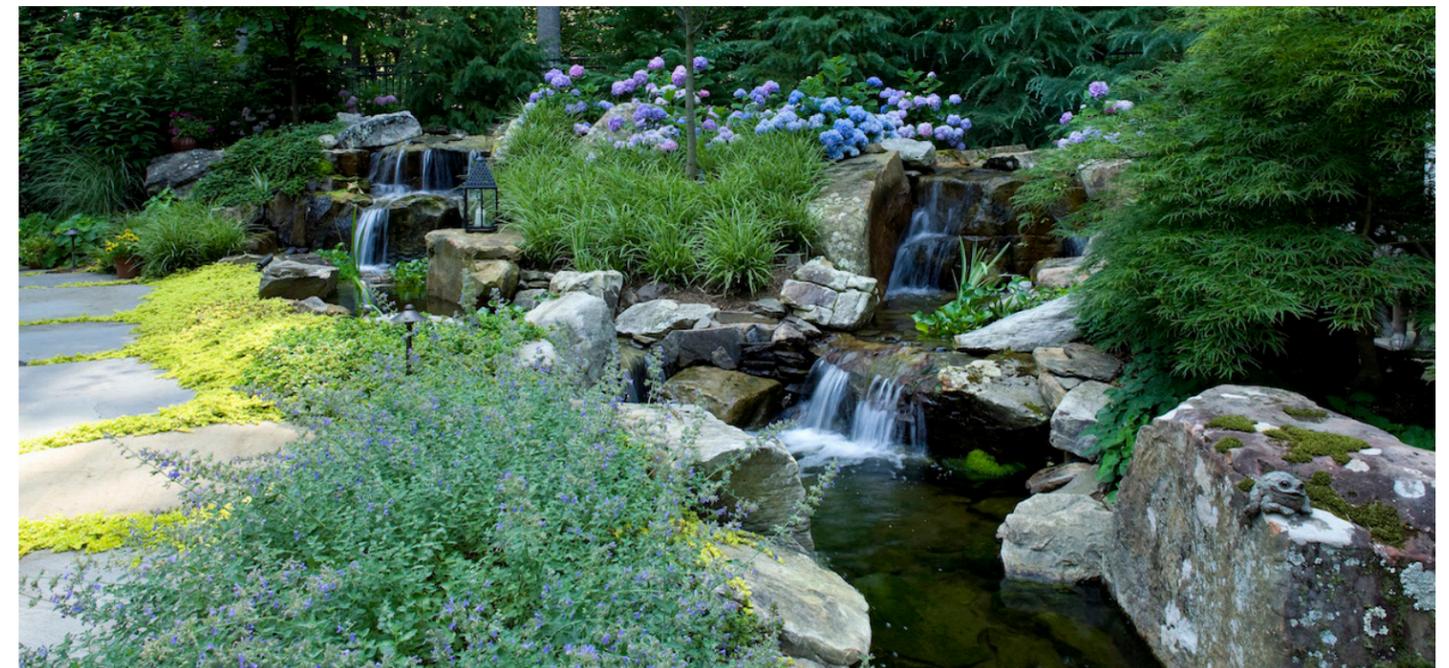
“Adapted” plants are non-native and non-invasive but can thrive in the local climate and soil conditions. **These species are also considered as ornamental plants that are more assured to thrive in our challenging climate.** Adapted species are better suited closer to buildings and structures as native plants are more so used to transition back into the natural landscape. Although most non-native plants are neutral or beneficial, **invasive plants adversely affect habitats and bioregions, causing ecological, environmental, and even economic damage.** In Truckee, invasive plants in landscaping projects are strongly discouraged—some are even prohibited—but may be used sparingly in a contained pot or planter if desired.

Utilizing the native and adapted species shown in this packet ensures consistency in local landscape design while allowing room for creativity. **The provided plant species are commonly used and proven to succeed in the Truckee-Tahoe region but are not required by the Town of Truckee.**

Microclimates

Understanding the microclimates around your neighborhood can aid in determining which plants are well-suited to your property. **The term “microclimate” refers to a small area with a climate that differs from the surrounding area.** For example, a microclimate near your home could present itself as a sunny exposed meadow, a shady north-facing slope, or the riparian edge of the Truckee River. Most native and adapted plants in Truckee require very little water, and you may feel inclined to incorporate only water-wise plants into your landscape design. However, some riparian varieties (situated alongside rivers and streams) have high water requirements and are also native. If your property contains a stream or watershed, moderate or high-water use plants may be more suitable.

You can enhance your awareness of microclimates around your home by walking through your property and conducting a simple site analysis. **Important things to note during your site inventory include sun exposure, existing vegetation, natural waterways, and native boulders and rock outcroppings.**



Landscaping in Truckee

Defensible Space

The ongoing threat of wildfire is also worth considering when selecting landscaping and building materials. California continues to witness record-breaking wildfire seasons, many hitting with force more devastating than in previous years. **When homeowners maintain defensible space, it reduces the risk that the flames, radiant heat, and embers from wildfires will ignite homes, thus reducing structure losses.** This includes selecting ignition-resistant building materials, brush clearing and regular yard maintenance, and intelligent landscape design. It is also essential to eradicate ladder fuels, such as tall grasses, shrubs, young trees, and low-hanging branches. Ladder fuels allow a fire to climb from the ground to the tree canopy. In areas prone to wildfire, like Truckee, creating a separation in vegetation by removing ladder fuels is an important task.

Plant selection and placement play a significant role in protecting your home from wildfires. **It is recommended—and sometimes mandated—that homeowners maintain a “no-fuel zone” within 5 feet of all structures.** However, this buffer zone may include irrigated, non-woody, and herbaceous plant varieties, like colorful perennials and ornamentals that require semi-regular watering. Some plant species are even considered ignition-resistant and are ideal for planting within the no-fuel buffer. Trees and shrubs are strongly discouraged within this zone, and homeowners should trim back overhanging branches at least 10 feet from all roofs.

The area of your property between 5 and 30 feet away from your main structure is optimal for integrating plants with low to moderate water requirements. Boost visual aesthetic by breaking up the scenery and creating “landscape islands.” The benefits of landscape islands are two-fold: (1) they act as additional wildfire buffers, and (2) they are excellent ways to add color and texture to a large expanse of terrain. Landscape islands provide opportunities to incorporate irrigated ornamental trees and shrubs while keeping your yard clear of debris that may become flammable.

The most distant zone (30 feet or more from your main structure) is recommended as a space for **naturalizing the landscape.** Sticking to native and adapted plants and minimizing density in this zone helps to soften the transition between the landscaped area and the natural terrain while remaining mindful of fire safety. Keeping this area clear of ladder fuels is critical in slowing the spread of wildfire and protecting your home. **In this extended zone, less is more!**

Landscaping with Snow Storage

Snow storage is another element to consider. Whether it’s falling from the sky or being pushed by the plow, **snow needs somewhere to go!** Section 18.30.130.B.1 of the Town’s Development Code states, “In areas with a snow load less than 200 pounds per square foot (psf), the required snow storage area shall equal at least 50% of the total parking and driveway area; in areas with a snow load of 200 psf or greater, the required snow storage area shall equal at least 75% of the total parking and driveway area.” Setting aside a portion of your property for snow storage may interfere with your landscaping plans. To find your property’s snow load requirements, you may use the link here: <https://www.townoftruckee.com/government/community-development/building-and-safety/snow-load-design>



Luckily, there are a variety of local plants that are appropriate within these storage areas. For instance, perennial wildflowers are ideal for landscaping along driveways because they do not interfere with snow storage in the winters and provide ornamentation in the spring and summer months. You could even add hardier shrubs like **compact mugo pine or ornamental grasses like Karl Foerster** to add height throughout the year in snow storage areas. Trees are strongly discouraged in this type of landscape application as they could get damaged from snow plows. The key is to **keep the landscaping minimal and the brittle-branched shrubs out of the snow storage area for a healthy landscape year-round.**

Native Trees

LOW WATER USE



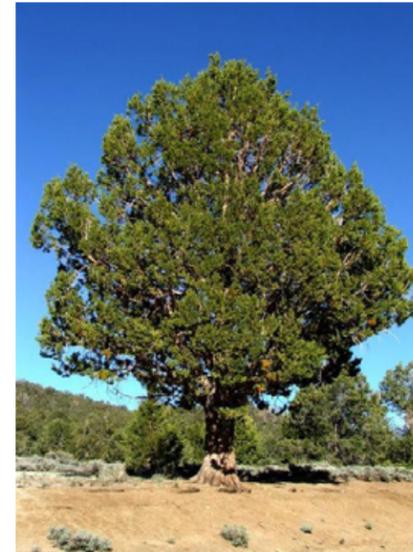
Sugar Pine
Pinus lambertiana
up to 200'



Ponderosa Pine
Pinus ponderosa
up to 160'



Western White Pine
Pinus monticola
up to 160'



Western Juniper
Juniperus occidentalis
up to 30'



MODERATE WATER USE



California Incense Cedar
Calocedrus decurrens
up to 120'



Red Fir
Abies magnifica
up to 160'



MODERATE WATER USE



Jeffrey Pine
Pinus jeffreyi
up to 160'



White Fir
Abies Concolor
up to 160'



Mountain Hemlock
Tsuga mertensiana
up to 20'



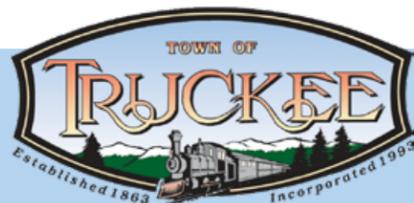
Quaking Aspen
Populus tremuloides
up to 50'



Mountain Maple
Acer glabrum
up to 20'



Mountain Alder
Alnus incana
up to 20'



Native Large Shrubs

LOW WATER USE



Western Serviceberry
Amelanchier alnifolia
up to 25'

D



Utah Serviceberry
Amelanchier utahensis
up to 12'

D



Mountain Mahogany
Cercocarpus ledifolius
up to 12'

E



Curleaf Mountain Mahogany
Cercocarpus ledifolius
up to 30'

E

MODERATE WATER USE



Bittercherry
Prunus emarginata
up to 15'

D



Lemmon's Willow
Salix lemmonii
up to 15'

D



Scouler's Willow
Salix scouleriana
up to 20'

D



Blue Elderberry
Sambucus nigra 'caerulea'
up to 10'

D



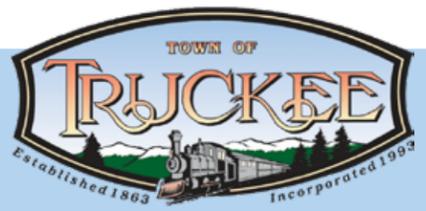
Red Elderberry
Sambucus racemosa
up to 12'

D



Western Chokecherry
Prunus virginiana 'demissa'
up to 20'

D



MOST COMMONLY USED
 LOW WATER
 MODERATE WATER
 HIGH WATER
 FULL SUN
 PART SUN
 MOSTLY SHADE
 GOOD IN SNOW STORAGE
 LOW FIRE DANGER
 E EVERGREEN
 D DECIDUOUS
 BLOOM/COLOR
 GROUND COVER

Native Shrubs

LOW WATER USE



Pinemat Manzanita
Arctostaphylos nevadense
 12" tall, spreading

E



Greenleaf Manzanita
Arctostaphylos patula
 up to 6'

E



Big Sagebrush
Artemisia tridentata
 up to 3'

E



Mahala Mat
Ceanothus prostratus
 6" tall, spreading

E



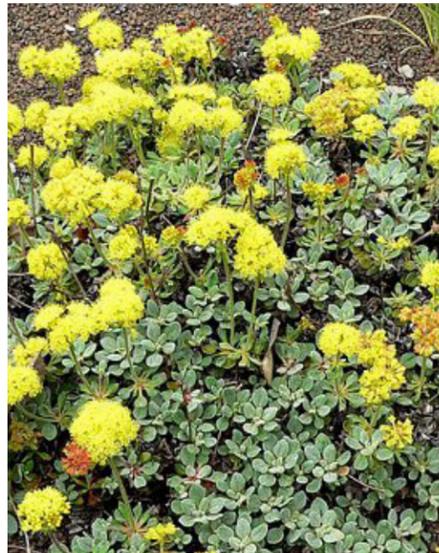
Snowbrush
Ceanothus velutinus
 up to 6'

E



Rabbitbrush
Ericameria nauseosus
 up to 4'

E



Sulfur Buckwheat
Eriogonum umbellatum
 up to 2'

E



Creambush
Holodiscus discolor
 up to 6'

D



Bitterbrush
Purshia tridentata
 up to 3'

E



Wax Currant
Ribes cereum
 up to 6'

D



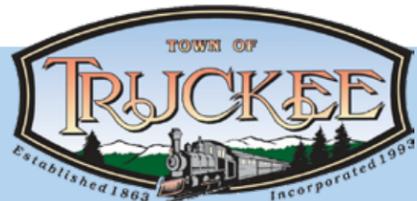
Sierra Gooseberry
Ribes roezlii
 up to 3'

D



Mountain Spirea
Spiraea splendens
 up to 3'

D



MOST COMMONLY USED
 LOW WATER
 MODERATE WATER
 HIGH WATER
 FULL SUN
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 GOOD IN SNOW STORAGE
 LOW FIRE DANGER
 EVERGREEN
 DECIDUOUS
 BLOOM/COLOR
 GROUND COVER

Native Shrubs

LOW WATER USE



Creeping Snowberry
Symphoricarpos mollis
6" tall, spreading



Silver Sagebrush
Artemisia cana 'bolanderi'
up to 4'



Mountain Sagebrush
Artemisia tridentata 'vaseyana'
up to 6'



Mountain Snowberry
Symphoricarpos rotundifolius
up to 4'



Bearberry
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi
6" tall, spreading



MODERATE WATER USE



Red Twig Dogwood
Cornus sericea
up to 6'



Twinberry
Lonicera involucrata
up to 6'



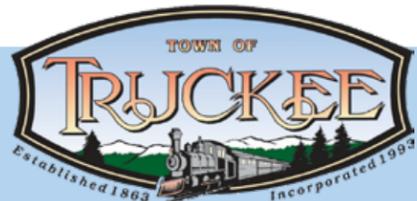
Sierra Currant
Ribes nevadense
up to 5'



Woods Rose
Rosa woodsii
up to 5'



Thimbleberry
Rubus parviflorus
up to 3'



Native Accents

LOW WATER USE



Squirrel Tail Grass
Elymus elymoides
up to 2'



Blue Wildrye
Elymus trachycaulis
up to 4'



Tufted Hairgrass
Deschampsia cespitosa
up to 4'



MODERATE WATER USE



Idaho Fescue
Festuca idahoensis
up to 2'



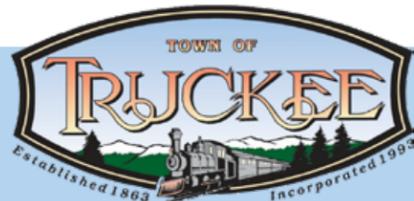
HIGH WATER USE



Lady Fern
Athyrium filix-femina
up to 3'



Western Brackenfern
Pteridium aquilinum
up to 4', spreading



Native Perennials

LOW WATER USE



White Yarrow
Achillea millefolium
up to 24"



Pearly Everlasting
Anaphalis margaritacea
up to 18"



Blue Flax
Linum lewisii
up to 24"



Mountain Pennyroyal
Monardella odoratissima
up to 18"



Silver Lupine
Lupinus argenteus
up to 30"



Bigleaf Lupine
Lupinus polyphyllus
up to 36"



Lewis' Monkeyflower
Mimulus lewisii
up to 24"



Rock Penstemon
Penstemon deustus
18", spreading



Showy Penstemon
Penstemon spectabilis
up to 30"



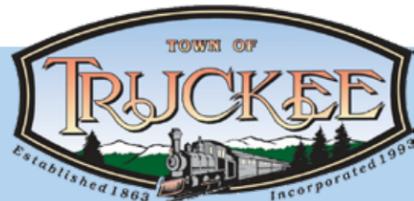
Firecracker Penstemon
Penstemon eatonii
up to 24"



Spreading Phlox
Phlox diffusa
6", spreading



Fireweed
Chamerion angustifolium
up to 18"



Native Perennials

MODERATE WATER USE



Prairie Smoke
Geum triflorum
18", spreading

☔ ☀️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Aster
Aster spp.
up to 24"

☔ ☀️ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Western Columbine
Aquilegia formosa
up to 18"

☔ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Sierra Larkspur
Delphinium glaucum
up to 36"

☔ ☀️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Wild Strawberry
Fragaria virginiana 'vesca'
6", spreading

☔ ☀️ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸 🌿



Blue Penstemon
Penstemon azureus
up to 24"

☔ ☀️ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Jacob's Ladder
Polemonium occidentale
up to 18"

☔ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Mules Ears
Wyethia mollis
up to 24"

☔ ☀️ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Coral Bells
Heuchera spp.
up to 18"

☔ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



California Fuschia
Epilobium canum
up to 24"

☔ ☀️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Mountain Butterweed
Senecio integerrimus
up to 18"

☔ ☀️ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸

HIGH WATER USE



Camas Lily
Camassia quamash
up to 24"

☔ ☀️ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Riverbank Lupine
Lupinus latifolius
up to 48"

☔ ☀️ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Goldenrod
Solidago canadensis
up to 48"

☔ ☀️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



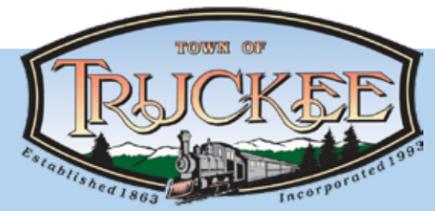
Blue Flag Iris
Iris missouriensis
24", spreading

☔ ☀️ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



Muskflower
Mimulus moschatus
up to 12"

☔ ☀️ ☁️ ❄️ 🔥 🌸



★ MOST COMMONLY USED
☔ LOW WATER
☔☔ MODERATE WATER
☔☔☔ HIGH WATER
☀️ FULL SUN
☀️☁️ PART SUN
☁️ MOSTLY SHADE

❄️ GOOD IN SNOW STORAGE
🔥 LOW FIRE DANGER
🌿 EVERGREEN
🌿 DECIDUOUS
🌸 BLOOM/COLOR
🌿 GROUND COVER

Adapted Trees

LOW WATER USE



Douglas Hawthorn
Crataegus douglasii
up to 20'



Crabapple
Malus spp.
up to 30'



Norway Spruce
Picea abies
up to 80'



Austrian Pine
Pinus nigra
up to 60'



Blue Spruce
Picea pungens 'glauca'
up to 60'



Golden Chain Tree
Laburnum x watereri
up to 30'



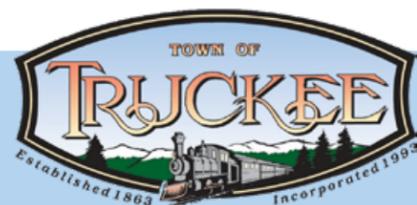
Sand Cherry Tree
Prunus cistena 'Big Cis'
up to 15'



Flowering Pear
Pyrus spp.
up to 25'



Japanese Tree Lilac
Syringa reticulata
up to 20'



Adapted Trees

MODERATE WATER USE



Lodgepole Pine
Pinus contorta 'latifolia'
up to 120'



Alpine Fir
Abies lasiocarpa
up to 180'



Vine Maple
Acer circumnatum
up to 20'



Canada Red Chokecherry
Prunus virginiana 'Canada Red'
up to 30'



Maidenhair Tree
Ginkgo Biloba
up to 50'



Washington Hawthorn
Crataegus phaenopyrum
up to 30'



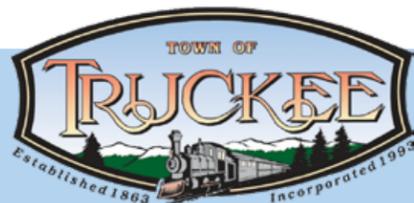
HIGH WATER USE



Paper Birch
Betula papyrifera
up to 40'



Mountain Ash
Sorbus scopulina
up to 15'



Adapted Shrubs

LOW WATER USE



Compact Mugo Pine
Pinus mugo 'compacta'
up to 3'



Shrubby cinquefoil
Potentilla fruticosa
up to 3'



Golden Currant
Ribes aureum
up to 6'



Bearberry Manzanita
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi
6", spreading



Alpine Carpet Juniper
Juniperus communis 'Alpine Carpet'
12", spreading



Icee Blue Juniper
Juniperus horizontalis 'Icee Blue'
4", spreading



Western Sand Cherry
Prunus besseyi
up to 6'



Lilac
Syringa vulgaris
up to 8'



Mountain Lover
Paxistema canbyi
up to 8", spreading



Nest Spruce
Picea abies 'Nidiformis'
up to 2'



Adapted Shrubs

MODERATE WATER USE



Ninebark varieties
Physocarpus spp.
 varies, 4'-8' tall



Spirea varieties
Spiraea spp.
 varies, 2'-5' tall



Dwarf Arctic Willow
Salix arctica
 up to 5'



Cotoneaster
Cotoneaster spp.
 up to 3', spreading



Oregon Grape Holly
Mahonia aquifolium
 up to 5'



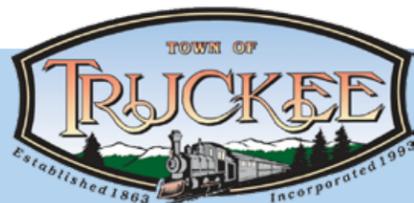
Butterfly Bush
Buddleia davidii
 varies, 4'-10' tall



Viburnum varieties
Viburnum spp.
 varies, 5'-9' tall



PJM Rhododendron
Rhododendron 'PJM'
 up to 5'



Adapted Accents

LOW WATER USE



Hop Vine
Humulus lupulus
climbing to 30'



Western Virgin's Bower
Clematis linguisticifolia
climbing to 30'



Jackman Clematis
Clematis jackmanii
climbing to 12'



Maiden Grass varieties
Miscanthus spp.
varies, 2'-8' tall



MODERATE WATER USE



Ostrich Fern
Matteuccia struthiopteris
up to 4'



Feather Reed Grass
Calamagrostis x acutiflora
'Karl Foerster'
up to 4'



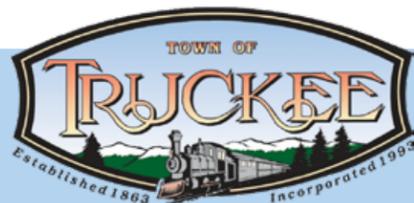
Gold Flame Honeysuckle
Lonicera heckrottii
climbing up to 15'



HIGH WATER USE



Horsetail
Equisetum laevigatum
6', spreading



Adapted Perennials

LOW WATER USE



Silver Mound
Artemisia schmidtiana
up to 12"



Larkspur Delphinium
Delphinium x belladonna
up to 48"



Penstemon varieties
Penstemon spp.
up to 30"



Stonecrop varieties
Sedum spp.
varies, typically spreading



MODERATE WATER USE



Daylily
Hemerocalis spp.
up to 36"



Snowdrop Anemone
Anemone sylvestris
up to 12"



Alpine Columbine
Aquilegia alpina
up to 24"



Sweet Woodruff
Asperula odorata
6" tall, spreading



Harebell
Campanula rotundifolia
up to 18"



Mountain Geranium
Geranium richardsonii
up to 24"



Arctic Iris
Iris setosa
up to 12"



Lupine varieties
Lupinus spp.
varies, 18"-48" tall



Yellow Monkeyflower
Mimulus guttatus
up to 24"



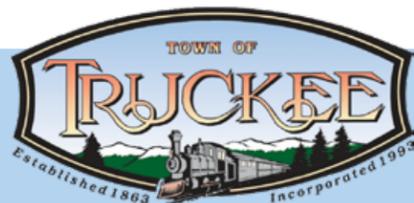
Coneflower varieties
Echinacea spp.
up to 36"



Black Eyed Susan
Rudbeckia hirta
up to 36"



Prairie Mallow
Sidalcea x hybrids
up to 36"



Adapted Perennials

MODERATE WATER USE



Meadow Rue
Thalictrum rochebrunianum
up to 48"



Foamflower
Tiarella cordifolia
up to 12"



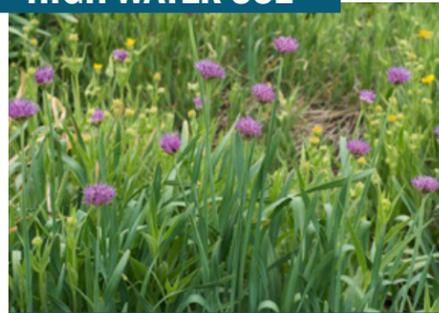
Sweet violet
Viola odorata
up to 8"



Spring Cinqufoil
Potentilla tabernaemontanii
6", spreading



HIGH WATER USE



Swamp Onion
Allium validum
up to 36"



Golden Columbine
Aquilegia formosa
up to 30"



Fringed Bleeding Heart
Dicentra eximia
up to 18"



Resources



Town of Truckee WELO

<https://www.townoftruckee.com/government/community-development/planning-division/plans-and-regulations/development-code/water-efficient-landscape-standards>

Calscape

<https://calscape.org/>

Martis Camp Approved Vegetation List

<https://2yu1xxyh2m415qno6gkakhjg-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/MCVegetationListweb-8-2015.pdf>

TRPA Home Landscaping Guide

<https://tahoercd.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/LandscapingGuide.pdf>

Ready Nevada County: Ready, Set, Go! Handbook

<https://www.townoftruckee.com/home/showdocument?id=19076>

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/ct/technical/ecoscience/invasive/?cid=nrcs142p2_011124

ReScape

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5fe120bdfce3cd3cca992359/t/6076e180eb8d2017362f8f64/1618403715047/Flier3-SaveWater.pdf>

