

### Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia



*The landscaping around homes and business can have a significant impact on the natural environment, for better or for worse. This fact sheet provides information on ways to enhance potential benefits and minimize harmful impacts.*

There are many guidelines that you can follow to protect environmental values during the landscaping of new developments. These are described in more detail in *Develop with Care 2014: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia*.

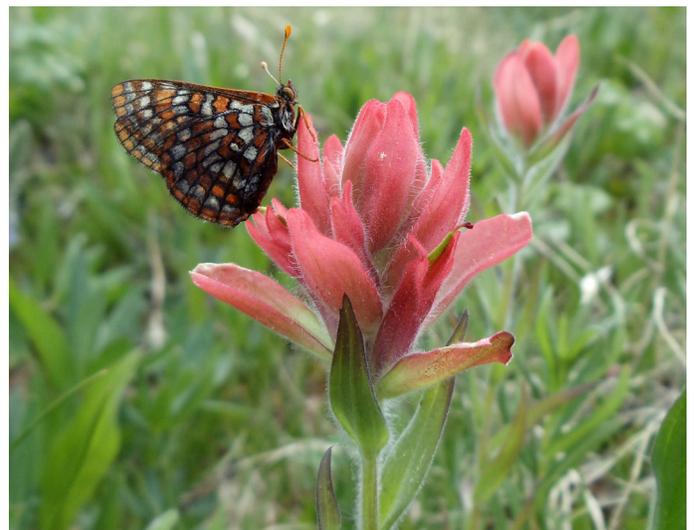
#### LAWNS AND GARDENS

Minimize the amount of lawn and create low maintenance areas using native ground covers such as Kinnikinnick and native shrubs such as Red-flowering Currant and Oregon Grape. This will reduce the time homeowners need to spend mowing lawns and weeding.

- Plant native species that are adapted to local climate conditions. This will reduce the costs of summer watering (once plants are established) and provide plants that are more resistant to disease and pests.
- Plant trees that will provide shade. Deciduous trees on the south side of buildings will provide shade from summer sun, while letting in the winter sunlight.
- Top hazard trees at 3–5 m or higher rather than completely removing them. This creates a standing dead snag, a food source for a variety of bird species and potential nesting sites for owls and other wildlife.
- Plant local, native species that will attract desirable wildlife such as birds and butterflies. Avoid species that attract browsing animals such as deer, as this may lead

to conflicts with homeowners and traffic safety concerns. Species such as flowering current and honeysuckle will attract hummingbirds in the spring.

- Avoid all invasive species such as English Ivy, Knapweed, and Purple Loosestrife, as these ‘escape’ from gardens and displace native plant and wildlife species.
- Plant fruit trees and bushes to grow local food.



Choose plants that will attract butterflies and hummingbirds.

☒ Avoid, or minimize, the use of chemical pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, and pressure-treated lumber. These chemicals can end up in local soils and waterways, harming native plants and animals.

☒ Place a minimum of 20 cm of topsoil in all garden areas. This will help to establish lawns and ground covers that need less watering during dry seasons.

☒ Design the site to infiltrate as much rainwater as possible. Create 'rain gardens' that take runoff from roofs and driveways and allow it to seep slowly back into the ground. This helps to maintain natural groundwater recharge processes, and minimizes impacts on streams.

☒ Establish small constructed ponds and wetlands where water-loving species can live. These areas can be designed to assist in water storage to supplement summer dry periods.

☒ Plan for the future. Is the climate in your area expected to get wetter? drier? warmer? Select plant species suited to current conditions that will also survive and thrive in future climates. This is especially important for long-lived species such as trees.

## BOULEVARDS AND ROADSIDES

☒ Provide at least 1 m depth of soil for boulevard trees, and allow space for their roots to spread as the tree grows.

☒ Plant drought-tolerant, slow-growing native grasses such as Hard Fescue to minimize water use and mowing requirements.

☒ Use grassed swales for drainage water to enhance ground water recharge and trap pollutants.

☒ Minimize future water use by installing highly efficient irrigation systems. For more information see [www.irrigationbc.com](http://www.irrigationbc.com).

☒ Avoid planting roadside species that provide fruit or berries which attract bears, or deer (which in turn may attract cougars or create traffic hazards).

☒ Minimize light pollution by focusing the street lighting on the areas where it is needed.



Plant using native species



Provide enough soil and space for trees to grow to their full size

For more information see *Develop with Care 2014: Environmental Guidelines for Urban and Rural Land Development in British Columbia* and other **Guideline documents**  
<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/BMP/bmpintro.html>