



Native Plants

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For government purchasers

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Responsible Purchasing Attributes

- Air quality
- Climate change
- Toxic chemical reduction
- Water conservation
- Water quality

Benefits of Purchasing

- Anchors soil.
- Reduces costs for chemical inputs and water.
- Facilitates environmental restoration.

How to Buy

State Contract [11804](#)
Native Plants

A wide range of native trees, grasses, sedges, grass-like and wetland plants, and vines suitable for planting in different microclimates are available on this contract.

Goal: To promote the purchase and use of native plants in landscapes, beside roads, and to help restore natural areas.

There are many benefits to purchasing and using native plants:

Lowers maintenance costs: Once established in appropriate conditions, native plants need little or no watering.

Reduces the need for pesticides and herbicides: Native plants have adapted to our climate, soil, and pests. You will have little need for herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, or synthetic fertilizers. These chemicals can be harmful to human health and the environment.

Increases biodiversity: Native plants provide important food and shelter for fish, birds, and other wildlife.

Increases aesthetics: Native plants and shrubs add a wide variety of height, shape, texture, color, and character to a landscape.

Reduces impacts of lawns: Compared to lawns, well-established trees, shrubs, and groundcovers:

- Prevent erosion by anchoring soil with their root systems.
- Reduce flooding by slowing run-off.
- Filter pollutants and sediment out of stormwater before it reaches waterways.
- Reduce pollution from gas-powered lawn equipment.

Reduces threats from invasive plant species: Some non-native plants, like English ivy, harm urban forests by crowding out other vegetation. More non-native plants are regularly being classified as noxious.

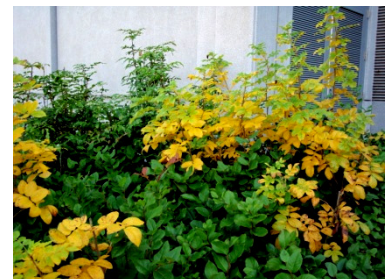
Leading the Way – Port of Seattle

In 2008, the Port of Seattle was one of the first three urban sites in Washington State to receive the [Salmon Safe Corporate and University Campus Certification](#).

The Port received the certification for its protection of aquatic habitat at its system of parks and public access points. Native plants were used extensively to reduce run-off and filter stormwater before it drains into creeks.

To help restore shoreline areas over nearly 50 acres of Port property, 168,000 native species were planted in wetland, floodplain, and creek areas.

At Miller Creek, the Port reestablished native plants to shade waterways and provide a food source for fish. To conserve water, landscapers use native species, as well as non-native trees and shrubs that can tolerate drought. The Port also earned a “Five Star” rating from the [EnviroStars](#) Program.



Environmentally Preferable Purchasing

The Department of Ecology offers tools and resources to make environmentally preferable purchasing easier.

Find out about environmentally preferable products, standards and certifications, law and directives, and more at our website:

www.ecy.wa.gov/beyondwaste/epp.html

Contact:

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Resources

[Native Plant Resources, King County, Washington](#)

[Pacific Northwest Native Wildlife Gardening Home](#)

Washington State University Extension, [Landscaping with Native Plants](#)

Washington Native Plant Society, [Landscaping](#)

[Valuing the Puget Sound Basin: Revealing Our Best Investments](#)

[Salmon-Safe](#)

Right Plant, Right Place

Preserving native plant life at building sites is the best choice. When this isn't possible, landscape architects at General Administration (GA) or your facility can specify native species for your landscape plans.

By incorporating native plants, your facility can earn [LEED](#) Credits in the Site Development, Stormwater Design, Water Efficient Landscaping, and Water Use Reduction categories.

Select native plants that are suited to existing soil, water, light, and weather conditions in your location. When choosing native plants, find out if the species are native to the region, elevation, and habitat where you will plant. Then ask the nursery to verify that the stock is of Pacific Northwest genetics.

By purchasing from local nurseries, you will receive plants conditioned to the local climate and lower transportation costs.

Native plants are not the best choice for every situation. Some urban landscapes, like traffic circles and parking lots, have limited soil area and lots of environmental stress.

The key concept for any landscaping project is "right plant, right place." For example, the Washington State Department of Transportation generally uses native plants along roadways. The agency may also include non-native ornamentals for more color and showiness.



Laws and Directives

Executive Order 02-03	Directs state agencies to modify their buying practices with goals to minimize energy use, shift to nontoxic materials, and expand markets for environmentally preferable products.
Executive Order 04-01	Directs state agencies to adopt measures to reduce the use of equipment, supplies, and other products that contain persistent toxic chemicals.
Executive Order 05-01	Directs state agencies to incorporate green building practices, based on Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards, into all building construction projects and major remodeling projects.

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