

# Colorado Native Landscaping Coalition



Photo: Lisa Olsen

## Who We Are

The Colorado Native Landscaping Coalition is a growing coalition of mission-aligned organizations working in collaboration to recommend policies that will transform landscaping and landscape practices across Colorado. If your organization has a strong interest in promoting native landscaping and regenerative land management practices in our state and would like to join the Coalition, please contact us:

- Audubon of the Rockies
- Colorado Native Plant Society
- Colorado Wildlife Federation
- People & Pollinators Action Network
- Wild Ones - Front Range Chapter

## Our Goals as a Coalition

*Promoting landscaping with native plants for healthy ecosystems in Colorado.*

1. Local and state governments should promote native landscaping. There are many effective measures available to implement this, ranging from modified development codes, to financial assistance, to education, to demonstration projects. We stand ready to advise in this vitally important process and help Colorado make this transformation.
2. The definition of “xeriscape” should be revised to prioritize the native plant palette. The term xeriscaping should be updated to explicitly recognize the many benefits of native plants.
3. Landscape management practices should build healthy regenerative soils and support biodiverse ecosystems. To achieve natural resilience in Colorado landscapes, we should reduce ornamental turf areas, minimize pesticide use, adjust landscape maintenance practices to benefit wildlife, and boost the percentage of native plants on state, municipal, and privately managed lands.



# *Why Transform Colorado Landscaping?*

## *Together We Make an Impact.*

It's simple: native plants are essential to regional food webs. The vast majority of native insect species are specialists: they feed only on host plants with which they have co-evolved. The act of feeding pollinates plants, ensuring the survival and enabling the spread of native plant communities. Landscapes planted with non-native species are literally inedible to most of our insects. Why is this important? Insects form the foundation of the majority of bird and many mammal species' diets. Native plant habitats are vital to preserving biodiversity. To address the critical loss of biodiversity, we begin at home, converting lawns to native gardens.

Next, with the help of city planners and parks departments, we connect those gardens, planting pollinator pathways adjacent to sidewalks, bike paths and roadways. Expanding the area and the ecological value of our residential, commercial and public spaces through native landscaping is a neighborhood solution to the global biodiversity crisis.

Native plants are part of the solution to the climate crisis. Native landscapes supported by healthy soils are efficient carbon sinks and require less water, fertilizer and pesticides to maintain, reducing individuals' carbon footprints. Native landscapes reflect the inherent beauty of Colorado and honor the cultures and land management practices of the indigenous peoples who tended this land for generations.

## *Reforming "Xeriscaping"*

Xeriscaping is a landscaping method developed especially for arid and semiarid climates that utilizes water-conserving techniques (such as the use of drought-tolerant plants, mulch, and efficient irrigation). At present, promoting native landscaping is not considered an aspect of xeriscaping.

Some xeriscape programs and literature commend native landscaping but the predominant meaning of the term is "low-irrigation." Of the associated seven "principles" of xeriscaping, none emphasize native landscaping.

## *Putting Policies in Place*

Want to take action and make impactful change in your community? Contact us at: [CONativeLC@gmail.com](mailto:CONativeLC@gmail.com).

Coalition members offer guidance on updating current and developing new municipal programs and materials that promote landscaping with native plants and regenerative maintenance practices.



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*For more information or to become part of the Coalition contact the following organizations:*

- Audubon Rockies: [rockies.audubon.org](http://rockies.audubon.org)
- Colorado Native Plant Society: [cnps.org](http://cnps.org)
- Colorado Wildlife Federation: [coloradowildlife.org](http://coloradowildlife.org)
- People & Pollinators Action Network: [peopleandpollinators.org](http://peopleandpollinators.org)
- Wild Ones Front Range Chapter: [frontrangewildones.org](http://frontrangewildones.org)
- Email CNLC: [CONativeLC@gmail.com](mailto:CONativeLC@gmail.com)

