

# Landscapers

Working together, Oregonians have the opportunity to help restore clean water and wild salmon for the benefit of us all and for future generations. The suggestions in this guide are practical changes we can consider making in our daily land management, work and lives to support this statewide restoration effort. These suggestions do not substitute for any local, state or federal legal regulations.

For more information on these and other ways we can modify our activities to help restore clean water and salmon, please contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District.

This guide for landscapers is part of a series of lists targeting a wide variety of groups in Oregon. For information on other guides in this series, please contact the Governor's Natural Resources Office at (503) 378-3589.



**THE OREGON PLAN**  
*for salmon & watersheds*

# Ten ways landscapers can help restore clean water and salmon

## native plants

- In landscape planning, use native plants wherever possible. Native plants are more adapted to regional environmental conditions than are exotic plants. They require less water, fertilizer and pesticides, which when used in excess can pollute groundwater and surface water bodies.

## ground covers

- Consider using ground cover as an alternative to landscaping plastic. Ground covers can help prevent weeds and reduce erosion, while plastic covers can act to increase runoff and erosion. Erosion causes increased amounts of sediment to wash into storm drains or directly into streams, where it can cover gravel spawning and rearing beds required by salmon and can reduce the amount of oxygen available to fish and other aquatic life.

## plant placement

- Place plants with similar needs for soil type, sun and water in the same area. Planting in “zones” can save water, work, fertilizer and more.

## lawn alternatives

- Consider using trees, shrubs and ground covers instead of lawns. The root systems of trees and shrubs are more extensive and stable than those of grass and can help to prevent erosion. Most ground covers require less water and maintenance than grass lawns.

## bark dust use

- Avoid using bark dust near paved areas, ditches, storm drains and on steep slopes. Bark dust, when placed in areas where it can be easily washed away, can act to clog storm drains and cause flooding.

## streambank protection

- Avoid planting or maintaining a grass lawn that extends down to the edge of streams or wetlands. Instead plant native trees, shrubs,

woodland plants and wildflowers on streambanks. Larger, native plants can help control erosion, stabilize banks, provide habitat for wildlife, shade and cool waterways, and filter water that runs off the land before it reaches streams, improving water quality and instream habitat for fish and other aquatic life.

## natural compost

- Make chemical-free compost to provide fertilizer and mulch. Natural compost material can enhance soil productivity and serve as a protective groundcover. Make sure the compost pile is contained and away from ditches, storm drains and streams. If located in an area which facilitates runoff, compost materials can increase the amount of sediment in streams or clog storm drains.

## herbicides and pesticides

- Whenever possible, minimize use of herbicides and pesticides to kill insects, weeds, moss and rodents, follow label instructions completely and use them away from paved areas. These chemicals impact not only pests, but also the beneficial plants and animals that inhabit an area. When used on paved surfaces, they remain for long time periods, and once washed away they discharge directly into storm drains and streams.

## chemical disposal

- Dispose of leftover chemicals and chemical containers according to package directions. Improperly disposed chemicals inevitably find their way into waterways, where they kill fish and aquatic life and pollute water.

## efficient water use

- Water only as much as the plants need and mulch with compost or grass clippings. By using water as efficiently as possible, more water can be reserved instream to improve water quality for the benefit of all water-dependent organisms, including people.