



NORTHSTAR FIRE DEPARTMENT



Northstar Fire Department Acceptable/Non-Acceptable Plant List as of November 2025

Purpose of the Plant List

There are common plants that naturally resist fire and can even slow the rate of spread. In general, irrigated and well-maintained leafy plants burn slowly. By replacing highly flammable vegetation with these recommended species, you can significantly improve the statistical survivability of your home when a wildfire threatens. Courtesy of the "Villager Nursery" in Truckee, this list of vegetation should be considered when enhancing or adding landscape. *Note if you have a preferred vegetative species and it is not on the list, please contact the Northstar Fire Department Forester, Joe Barron at 530-562-1212 x2 or jbarron@northstarcsd.org.

Vegetation Selection

Here are key components to remember when selecting proper landscaping plants.

- Choose plants that do not produce a large quantity of litter such as dead branches and twigs.
- Plants that produce oils, resins or waxes should be avoided.
- When planting from the approved list, appropriately space plants to prevent fire spread.
- Never plant under conifer trees, this can create a ladder effect which allows smaller ground fires the ability to transfer into larger trees creating crown fires.
- To help ensure fire resistance, plants must be maintained, watered, and pruned.
- Routine care will provide you with an attractive defensible space-based landscape and help ensure the survival of your property if wildfire were to occur.
- The Northstar Fire Department (NFD) enforces the State of California, Placer County and Northstar Community Services District (NCSD) fire codes that may directly affect your landscape. The Northstar Fire Department's policy is that your landscape proposal is sent to the Northstar Property Owners Association (NPOA) prior to submittal to NFD's Fuels Management department.
- Be sure to review all approved and non-approved species before officially sending your landscape plan.
- Be familiar with Northstar Ordinance 38-22, Section 4 (Defensible Space Standards for Residential and Commercial Parcels). If there is a change in the landscape plan, please consult with the Fuels Management department and NPOA to make sure the plan stays compliant. To review the defensible space code, please refer to this location: <https://www.northstarcsd.org/fire-codes>
- A final on-site inspection must be arranged with NFD's Fuels Management department and NPOA to have the landscape plan approved. For an inspection, please contact Joe Barron at jbarron@northstarcsd.org.

Approved Trees

Please note that there may be other vegetative species that are proper for planting, and this list has been modified to demonstrate what is best suited for the Community of Northstar based on our elevation, and climate.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Apple	<i>Malus spp.</i>
Bigtooth maple	<i>Acer grandidentatum</i>
Cherry	<i>Prunus spp.</i>
Chokecherry	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>
Cottonwood	<i>Populus trichorcapa</i>
Hawthorne	<i>Crataegus spp.</i>
Hedge maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Maple	<i>Acer spp.</i>
Mountain ash	<i>Sorbus spp.</i>
Northern red oak	<i>Quercus rubra</i>
Paper birch	<i>Betula papyrifera</i>
Poplar	<i>Populus spp.</i>
Quaking aspen	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>
Western larch	<i>Larix occidentalis</i>
Western river birch	<i>Betula occidentalis</i>

*Note if a specific deciduous tree species is not on the list, please contact the Northstar Fire Department Forester, Joe Barron at 530-562-1212 x2 or jbarron@northstarcsd.org.

Approved Shrubs

Please note that there may be other vegetative species that are proper for planting, and this list has been modified to demonstrate what is best suited for the Community of Northstar based on our elevation, and climate.

Common Name	Scientific Name
American Cranberry	<i>Viburnum trilobum</i>
Amur Maple	<i>Acer ginnala</i>
Bearberry Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster dammeri</i> `Eichholz`
Bearberry Manzanita	<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i> cv.
Buffaloberry	<i>Shepherdia</i> spp.
Chokecherry	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>
Currant	<i>Ribes</i> spp.
Douglas Hawthorne	<i>Crataegus douglasii</i>
Dwarf Burning Bush	<i>Euonymus alatus</i> `compactus`
Dwarf Purple Willow	<i>Salix purpurea</i> `nana`
French Lilac	<i>Syringa vulgaris</i>
Goldflame Spirea	<i>Spiraea x bumalda</i> `Goldflame`
Hardy Shrub Rose	<i>Rosa</i> spp.
Lilac	<i>Syringa</i> spp.
Malus sargentii	<i>Sargent Crabapple</i>
Mockorange	<i>Philadelphus lewisii</i>
Mountain Alder	<i>Alnus tenuifolia</i>
Mountain lover	<i>Paxistima canbyi</i>
Mountain Maple	<i>Acer glabrum</i>
Mountain Spray	<i>Holodiscus</i> spp.
Northern Lights Azalea	<i>Rhododendron</i> `North`n Lights`
Oregon Grape	<i>Mahonia</i> spp.
Raspberry	<i>Rubus</i> spp.
Red-twig Dogwood	<i>Cornus sericea</i>
Russian Olive	<i>Eleagnus angustifolia</i>
Sandcherry	<i>Prunus besseyi</i>
Scouler's Willow	<i>Salix scouleriana</i>
Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier</i> spp.
Shrubby Cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>
Sierra Currant	<i>Ribes nevadense</i>
Skunkbush	<i>Rhus trilobata</i>
Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos</i> spp.
Sumac	<i>Rhus</i> spp.
Thimbleberry	<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>
Vine Maple	<i>Acer circinatum</i>
Western Spirea	<i>Spiraea douglasii</i>
Willow	<i>Salix</i> spp.
Wood's Rose	<i>Rosa woodsii ultramontana</i>

*Note if a specific shrub species is not on the list, please contact the Northstar Fire Department Forester, Joe Barron at 530-562-1212 x2 or jbarron@northstarcsd.org.

Approved Herbaceous and Perennial Ground Cover

Please note that there may be other vegetative species that are proper for planting, and this list has been modified to demonstrate what is best suited for the Community of Northstar based on our elevation, and climate.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Allium	<i>Allium spp.</i>
Bergenia	<i>Bergenia cordifolia</i>
Bishop's Weed	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>
Blanket Flower	<i>Gaillardia spp.</i>
Bugleweed	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>
California poppy	<i>Eschschilzia californica</i>
Candytuft	<i>Iberis sempervirens</i>
Columbine	<i>Aquilegia spp.</i>
Coral Bells	<i>Heuchera spp.</i>
Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis spp.</i>
Creeping Phlox	<i>Phlox subulata</i>
Creeping Thyme	<i>Thymus praecox</i>
Creeping Yarrow	<i>Achillea tomentosa</i>
Daylily	<i>Hemerocalis spp.</i>
Delphinium	<i>Delphinium spp.</i>
Dianthus	<i>Dianthus spp.</i>
Dwarf periwinkle	<i>Vinca minor</i>
English Lavender	<i>Lavendula angustifolia</i>
Evening Primrose	<i>Oenothera spp.</i>
Fescue	<i>Festuca spp.</i>
Fireweed	<i>Epilobium angustifolium</i>
Flax	<i>linum spp.</i>
Fleabane	<i>Erigeron spp.</i>
Hardly Ice Plant	<i>Delosperma spp.</i>
Hardy Geranium	<i>Geranium spp.</i>
Hens and Chicks	<i>Sempervivum tectorum</i>
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera spp.</i>
Hosta/Funkia	<i>Hosta spp.</i>
Iris	<i>Iris spp.</i>
Ivy	<i>hedera helix</i>
Jupiter's Beard	<i>Centranthus ruber</i>
Lamb's Ear	<i>Stachys byzantina</i>
Lamium/Deadnettle	<i>Lamium spp.</i>
Lavandin	<i>Lavendula x intermedia</i>
Lavender Cotton	<i>Santolina virens</i>
Lily-of-the-Valley	<i>Convallaria majallis</i>

*Note if a specific Herbaceous or Perennial Ground Cover species is not on the list, please contact the Northstar Fire Department Forester, Joe Barron at 530-562-1212 x2 or jbarron@northstarcsd.org.

Approved Herbaceous and Perennial Ground Cover Continued the following page...

Please note that there may be other vegetative species that are proper for planting, and this list has been modified to demonstrate what is best suited for the Community of Northstar based on our elevation, and climate.

Common Name	Scientific Name
Mahonia	<i>Berberis spp.</i>
Penstemon	<i>Penstemon spp.</i>
Poppy	<i>Papaver spp.</i>
Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinaceae spp.</i>
Pussytoes	<i>Antennaria spp.</i>
Red Hot Poker	<i>Kniphoffia uvaria</i>
Rock Cress	<i>Aubretia deltoidea</i>
Rocky Mountain Penstemon	<i>Penstemon strictus</i>
Sage/Salvia	<i>Salvia spp.</i>
Sea Thrift	<i>Armeria maritima</i>
Shasta daisy	<i>Leucanthemum x superbum</i>
Snow in summer	<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>
Spotted Lungwort	<i>Pulmonaria longifolia</i>
Spring Cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla (herbaceous spp.)</i>
Statice	<i>Limonium perezii</i>
Stonecrop/Sedum	<i>Sedum spp.</i>
Strawberry	<i>Fragaria spp.</i>
Sunrose	<i>Helianthemum nummularium</i>
Sweet William	<i>Dianthus barbatus</i>
Violet/Viola	<i>Viola spp.</i>
Wild Ginger	<i>Asarum caudatum</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea spp.</i>
Yucca	<i>Yucca spp.</i>

*Note if a specific Herbaceous or Perennial Ground Cover species is not on the list, please contact the Northstar Fire Department Forester, Joe Barron at 530-562-1212 x2 or jbarron@northstarcsd.org.

Non-Approved Vegetative Species

Highly Flammable Plant List: PLANTS THAT WILL IGNITE QUICKLY AND BURN READILY

The Northstar Fire Department will not allow the following vegetative and non-vegetative species to be planted or distributed on vacant properties or properties with structures, fenced outbuildings, or decks. This list is NOT all-inclusive as other plants with similar characteristics, such as low moisture, dry limbs and needles and abundant oils are potentially hazardous. Plant smart and use fire-resistant vegetation to create defensible space around all structures.

Non-Approved Tree Species

Common Name	Scientific Name
Acacia	<i>Acacia sp.</i>
Arborvitae	<i>Thuja sp.</i>
Cedar	<i>Cedrus sp.</i>
Cedar/Cypress	<i>Chamaecyparis sp.</i>
Cypress	<i>Cupressus sp.</i>
Douglas fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesi</i>
Fir	<i>Abies sp.</i>
Hemlock	<i>Tsuga sp.</i>
Juniper	<i>Juniperus sp.</i>
Pine	<i>Pinus sp.</i>
Sequoia	<i>Sequoia sp.</i>
Spruce	<i>Picea sp.</i>
Yew	<i>Taxus sp.</i>

Non-Approved Shrub Species

Common Name	Scientific Name
Blackberry	<i>Rubus armeniacus</i>
Bitterbrush	<i>Purshia tridentata</i>
Juniper	<i>Juniperus sp.</i>
Laurel sumac	<i>Malosma laurina</i>
Manzanita*	<i>Arctostaphylos sp.</i> *except for Kinnikinnick
Oregon grape*	<i>Mahonia aquifolium</i> *except for 'Compacta'
Rosemary*	<i>Rosmarinus sp.</i>) *except for 'Prostratus'
Sagebrush	<i>Artemisia sp.</i>
Scotch broom	<i>Cytisus scoparius</i>
Scrub oak	<i>Quercus sp.</i>
Wild Lilac	<i>Ceanothus sp.</i>

Non-Approved Grasses and Ground Cover

Common Name	Scientific Name/Remarks
Dry annual grasses	No dry annual grass is not allowed. Approved grass species should be well maintained during wildfire season.
*Bark mulch	*Bark mulch is <u>not</u> allowed within 5' of any part of the structure. Beyond this distance an average depth range of 1"-2" is acceptable.
Pampas grass	<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>
*Pine needle mulch	*Pine needle mulch is <u>not</u> allowed within 5' of any part of the structure. Beyond this distance an average depth range of 1"-2" is acceptable.
*Woodchip mulch	*Woodchip mulch is <u>not</u> allowed within 5' of any part of the structure. Beyond this distance an average depth range of 1"-2" is acceptable.

Remember, there are NO fire-proof vegetative species, but there are species which are more fire-resistant than others. Fire-resistant vegetation has the following characteristics:

- Vegetation that is less flammable and likely to ignite in a wildfire and it has a high moisture content, such as succulent plants.
- Select vegetation that is low growing or is a smaller sized species.
- The vegetation should have stems or leaves that are not resinous, oily, or waxy.
- Select vegetation that is easy to maintain and prune and has less accumulated debris and fewer dead branches.
- Select vegetation that has an open, loose branching pattern, and it has drought resistant characteristics, requiring less irrigation.
- Select vegetation that burns less intensely when ignited and has a characteristic of a lower rate of spread.