



NORTHSTAR FIRE DEPARTMENT

910 Northstar Drive
Truckee, California 96161



ACCEPTABLE AND NON-ACCEPTABLE PLANT LIST

Defensible Space and Fuel Modification Standards

Issued for Public Use

Effective Date: April 2026

1. Purpose and Intent

This document establishes the **approved and non-approved vegetation standards** for landscape development within the jurisdiction of the Northstar Community Services District.

The purpose of this plant list is to:

- Reduce wildfire risk to structures and infrastructure
- Support defensible space compliance
- Provide guidance for fire-resistant landscape design
- Improve the survivability of structures during wildfire events

While no vegetation is fireproof, properly selected, spaced, and maintained vegetation can significantly reduce fire intensity and rate of spread.

2. Applicability

This standard applies to:

- All new landscape installations
- Modifications to existing landscaping
- Residential and commercial properties
- Vacant parcels subject to development

All landscape plans shall be reviewed in coordination with:

- Northstar Property Owners Association (NPOA)
- Northstar Fire Department – Fuels Management Division

3. Regulatory Authority

All vegetation and landscape requirements shall comply with:

- Northstar Ordinance 38-22
- Placer County Fire Code
- California Public Resources Code (Defensible Space Requirements)

Failure to comply may result in required modification, enforcement action, or denial of landscape approval.

4. Approved Trees

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. Additional vegetative species may be suitable for planting; however, the species identified herein have been selected based on their demonstrated performance within the Northstar community, considering local elevation, climate, and fire-resistance characteristics.

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: Species not listed require prior approval from the Northstar Fire Department (Fuels Management Division).

Contact: Joe Barron | 530-562-1212 ext. 2 | jbarron@northstarcsd.org

5. Approved Shrubs

This list is not intended to be all-inclusive. Additional vegetative species may be suitable for planting; however, the species identified herein have been selected based on their demonstrated performance within the Northstar community, considering local elevation, climate, and fire-resistance characteristics.

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>

6. 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>

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

Note: Species not listed require prior approval from the Northstar Fire Department (Fuels Management Division). Contact: Joe Barron | 530-562-1212 ext. 2 | jbarron@northstarcsd.org

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 deltoidia</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.

7. 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>

8. Non-Approved Grasses / Ground Cover

Common Name	Scientific Name/Remarks
Dry annual grasses	Dry annual grasses are prohibited. All approved grass species shall be maintained in a green, irrigated condition during wildfire season.
Bark Mulch*	Prohibited within 5 feet of any structure. Beyond this distance, mulch depth shall not exceed 1–2 inches .
Pampas grass	<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>
Pine Needle Mulch*	Prohibited within 5 feet of any structure. Beyond this distance, mulch depth shall not exceed 1–2 inches .
Woodchip Mulch*	Prohibited within 5 feet of any structure. Beyond this distance, mulch depth shall not exceed 1–2 inches .

* Combustible mulch materials are restricted due to their potential to ignite from embers and contribute to fire spread near structures.

9. Fire-Resistant Vegetation Characteristics

No vegetative species are entirely fireproof; however, certain species exhibit characteristics that make them more **fire-resistant** and suitable for use in defensible space landscaping.

Fire-resistant vegetation typically exhibits the following characteristics:

- Vegetation with **low flammability and high moisture content**, such as succulent or well-irrigated plant species
- Low-growing or **compact growth forms** that reduce vertical and horizontal fire spread
- Leaves and stems that are **non-resinous and low in oils or waxes**
- Species that produce **minimal dead material**, litter, or woody debris
- Plants that are **easily maintained and pruned**, reducing fuel accumulation over time
- Vegetation with an **open, loose branching structure**, minimizing fuel continuity
- Species that exhibit **lower combustion intensity and slower rates of fire spread** when ignited

Proper placement, spacing, irrigation, and routine maintenance are critical to ensuring that vegetation performs as intended within a defensible space system.