



Bee City Subcommittee Parks & Public Landscaping Advisory Board

Agenda

**May 6, 2026
Library Community Meeting Room
951 Spruce Street
5:30pm**

Members of the public are welcome to attend and give comments remotely; however, the in-person meeting may continue even if technology issues prevent remote participation.

- You can call in to **+1 408 638 0968 or 833 548 0282 (Toll Free)**, Webinar ID # 885 1622 9475
- You can log in via your computer. Please visit the City's website here to link to the meeting: www.louisvilleco.gov/pplab

The Board will accommodate public comments during the meeting. Anyone may also email comments to the Board prior to the meeting.

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Approval of Agenda
- IV. Approval of Minutes
- V. Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda
- VI. Agenda Items
 - a. Bee City Art Contest

Persons planning to attend the meeting who need sign language interpretation, translation services, assisted listening systems, Braille, taped material, or special transportation, should contact the City Clerk's Office at 303.335.4574 or clerksoffice@LouisvilleCO.gov. A forty-eight-hour notice is requested.

Si requiere una copia en español de esta publicación o necesita un intérprete durante la reunión, por favor llame a la Ciudad al 303.335.4536 o 303.335.4574 or email Clerksoffice@louisvilleco.gov

- b. Earth Day and Community Meet Day at Memory Square
 - c. Pollinator Garden Tour
 - d. Check on progress of re-integration with PPLAB and City of Louisville, including signage for Louisville Bee City USA
 - e. Bee City/PPLAB Report to City Council, May 26
 - f. "Habitat Survival" guide for water wise community and Jody's memo on landscape irrigation
 - g. Xerces recommendations for pesticide-free plant sources
 - h. Cancellation of July Louisville Bee City USA Committee meeting?
- VII. Staff Updates
- VIII. Board Updates
- IX. Discussion items for Next Meeting
- X. Adjourn



Parks & Public Landscaping Advisory Board Bee City Subcommittee Minutes

April 1, 2026

5:30 - 6:15 PM

Louisville Community Meeting Room, 1st Floor

951 Spruce Street

5:30PM

Call to Order

Meeting called to order by Chair John Webb, 5:32PM

Meeting Attendance

Susan McEachern, Co-Chair

Helen Moshak, Secretary

John Webb, Chair

Amy Yarger, Director of Horticulture, Butterfly Pavillion

Unable to attend:

Jean Morgan, Community Member

Josh Cooperman, Community Member

Jody Ash, Community Member

Staff Members:

Chris Davis, Superintendent Parks and Forestry, and

Erik Switek, Supervisor Parks and Cemetery

Approval of Agenda

Motion by Susan M, seconded by Helen M, motion approved

Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda

Don Parcher of the neighborhood group NeighborsConnect.org introduced an event they are hosting at Memory Square Park on Saturday, May 16th from 1-4pm. The goal to help neighbors connect, there will be room for community groups to have tables and introduce themselves and help neighbors connect. Don invited the Bee Committee to participate and invited City Staff to attend also. If John's work schedule allows he will be present and if John is able to *bee* there, Helen agreed to be his second. John has the table and supplies. They will connect with each other and Don.

Agenda Items

A. **Bee City Outreach Activities, Supplemental Budget and Scheduling**

- a. **Lafayette's Earth Day Every Day** is scheduled for May 2 from 10:00AM - 2:00PM. Susan and John volunteered to staff the Bee City table. John will coordinate the registration and logistics. Helen can help if needed.
- b. **Bee City Committee Membership Recruitment**
Proposed starting a recruitment campaign at our events to educate folks about how fun and rewarding it is to *bee* on the Bee City Committee, have information about what membership entails, the benefits and how to sign up. Helen will work on a draft.
- c. **PPLAB approved \$1500 Bee City Budget and sent it to Diana Langley Council with recommendation memo**
There are several versions of the budget document. John proposed adjusting the budget allocations for public speakers and eliminating the contingency budget line to balance the budget request. Everyone was in full support.
- d. **Louisville Bee City Garden Tour**
The committee discussed possible dates surrounding Lafayette's Garden Tour (<https://www.lafayetteoldtowngardentour.org/>) date of June 20. To avoid conflict with Father's Day, the committee agreed on Saturday, June 13th for the Louisville date. John will let Casey Lyons, Lafayette Garden coordinator know so that the groups can help each other promote the events. Proposals for garden tour sites:
 - i. John will work on finding garden hosts in the neighborhoods who have recovered from the fire and have been able to employ fire-wise and water-wise garden designs.
 - ii. Susan's mother's garden (hosted by Susan).
 - iii. Perhaps Jody's and Jean's gardens.
 - iv. Susan has a list of potential folks/sites.
 - v. Helen's garden (hosted by John, Helen is unavailable)
 - vi. The group discussed encouraging folks to play a more active role in hosting and engaging with tour participants and providing more information and resources about their gardens. Helen has a letter-size laminator that can *bee* used to create materials or signs.
 - vii. John will schedule a tiger team planning meeting with Susan and Helen later in April.
- e. **Louisville Bee City Art Show**
 - i. Josh has been working on getting City review and approval of forms, logos and posters.
 - ii. Susan has developed a contact list and email outreach to teachers and community leaders.
 - iii. Materials and posters are with Ginger in Communications pending final approval.

- iv. Chris will follow up with Ginger on next steps and final approval so that outreach can begin as soon as possible in the schools.
- v. Once approved, Helen requested support from the City in printing the applications and posters so they can *bee* distributed to the schools and posted at the Library, Rec Center, and participating businesses. Also request support on posting on City Social Media channels. Chris will follow up with who Helen should work with for the printing and social media.
- vi. Helen will work with the Library on the drop off box, applications and schedule for posting the artwork as soon as the final approvals and printing are completed. See included Draft Poster:

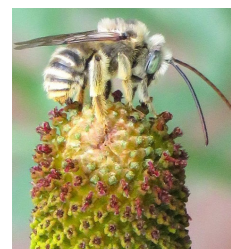
4th Annual Louisville Bee City Art Show
Create Art that Celebrates Native Pollinators and Plants!
Open to all K–8 students

Make Art Inspired by...

- Pollinators (bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, birds)
- Native plants
- Spring, gardens, flowers, or Earth Day themes

Any 2-D medium is welcome: drawing, painting, mixed media, photography, digital art, or AI-assisted images.

- **Size:** 9"x9" to 14"x18"
- **One entry per student**



Submit Artwork by Wednesday, May 13

Each piece must include a **completed entry form** (provided separately). Be sure to write the student's name, age, phone number and email on the back.

- **Drop off** at the Youth Services Desk at the Louisville Public Library or at participating schools

Judging & Recognition

- Entries are evaluated by the Bee City Committee.
- Age groups: **K–2, 3–5, 6–8**
- Winners receive **Sweet Cow certificates**.
- Winning artwork is featured in a **City Council slideshow**.
- All artwork is displayed at the Louisville Public Library through summer.

Key Dates

- **Wednesday, May 13** – Artwork due
 - Drop off at Louisville Public Library **or** Bee City will pick up from participating schools
- **Monday, May 18** – Winners announced and Sweet Cow certificates awarded
- **Summer 2026**
 - Winning artwork recognized at a City Council meeting (slideshow and student recognition)
 - Artwork displayed at the Louisville Public Library
- **August 2026** – Artwork can be picked up from the Louisville Public Library when school resumes

Questions or Support:

Bee City Louisville beecityloco@gmail.com

vii. Other proposed programs:

1. Discussion about Soil and composting program for Fall or January (John and Susan)
2. Discussion about Fossil Pollinator program in cooperation with CU Museum of Natural History (John)
3. Discussion about inviting Mikl Brauner of Harlequin Gardens to speak on Native Plants and Gardening (Susan)

B. Zoom meeting recording and AI notes for Bee City Meetings

This meeting was on Zoom and recorded. Additional discussion is tabled until May meeting due to time constraints.

C. Request to be aligned with Open Space Department for Education Outreach programs

Tabled until May meeting due to time constraints

D. Request for administration of Registration for Bee City Programs through Rec Center Registration system

Chris will follow up on Adam's initial support and finalize the approved model.

E. Bee City and PPLAB at City Council Meeting, tentatively scheduled for May 26 Council meeting

VII. Staff Updates

Chris updated the Committee on discussions in Council and information provided by staff on water requirements and possible water restrictions. Council will be making the decision for this summer, likely in April Council meetings. Refer to Council packets for additional information.

VIII. Committee Updates

See updates throughout the Committee Activities Topic under Agenda Items.

IX. Discussion Items for Next Meeting

Updates on Committee Activities and Education and Outreach and any outstanding tabled agenda items.

Meeting adjourned 6:15 PM



Fourth Annual Bee City Art Contest

Entries due Wednesday, May 13

The City of Louisville became a designated Bee City in 2023, and our Bee City Committee continues to spread the word on the importance of pollinators, native plants, and pollinator gardens. Local students are invited to share their artwork to help spread the buzz!

Artwork must be 2D and between 9"x9" and 14"x18". Accepted mediums include pencil, crayon, paint, photography, and AI-assisted images. Artwork must be dropped off with a completed entry form to the youth services desk at the Louisville Public Library or participating schools by Wednesday, May 13, 2026.

Limit one entry per artist.

[Learn More and Download the Entry Form](#)

Bee City 2026 Art Contest

Entries Due Wednesday, May 13, 2026

Open to all K-8 students

Announcing the Fourth Annual Bee City Art Show! The city of Louisville became a designated [Bee City](#) in 2023, and our Bee City Committee continues to spread the word on the importance of pollinators, native plants, and pollinator gardens, and the urgency of avoiding pesticide use. Local students are invited to share their artwork to help spread the buzz!



Artwork should be 2D, between 9"x9" and 14"x18", and can consist of pencil, crayon, paint, also photographs or AI-assisted images can be submitted.

Suggested themes include: Pollinators (bees, butterflies, moths, beetles, birds), native plants, spring, gardens, flowers, and Earth Day. Don't use pesticides.

Artwork must be dropped off with a completed entry form to the youth services desk at the Louisville Public Library or participating schools by Wednesday, May 13, 2026. Be sure to write the student's name, age, phone number and email on the back.

The Bee City Committee will evaluate all entries. Age groups include grades K-2, 3-5, and 6-8. Winners will receive Sweet Cow certificates, and their artwork will be featured in a City Council slideshow. All artwork will be displayed at the Louisville Public Library throughout the summer and returned in August 2026 when school resumes.

Limit one entry per artist.

Key Dates

- Wednesday, May 13 – Artwork due
- Monday, May 18- Winners announced and Sweet Cow certificates awarded
- Summer 2026
 - Winning artwork recognized at a City Council meeting (slideshow and student recognition)
 - Artwork displayed at the Louisville Public Library
- August 2026
 - Artwork can be picked up from the Louisville Public Library when school resumes

Send any questions to: beecityloco@gmail.com

BEE CITY 2026

-  Bee City Art Contest Entry Form-2026
 -  Bee City Art Contest Poster-2026
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Supporting Habitat Resilience while Preparing for Drought
By Kristine Johnson, Wild Ones Front Range Chapter, and
John Webb, Louisville Bee City USA Committee, contact us at:
kristinejohnson@icloud.com and johnwebb20@comcast.net

Snowpack in Colorado was far below average https://www.weather.gov/bou/co_snowpack and is melting quickly; we are not having or expecting normal streamflows this spring and summer. Temperatures have been very high (records for temperatures at or above 60F during winter, with a new high for average temperature for winter in Boulder County, <https://bouldercast.com/a-complete-failure-of-winter-across-the-west-and-what-it-means-for-the-rest-of-2026/>). All of Boulder County is in severe drought, with southeast Boulder County and much of the Denver Metro area recently classified as extreme drought. <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?CO>. These data indicate that we should take some measures to preserve and protect our landscapes. Colorado has seen drought in the past, so we have some good strategies for getting through it.

We are both based in Boulder County, but the information in this article is relevant to much of the Front Range of Colorado.

Message: Just because it's dry doesn't mean that habitat has to suffer. Drought is both natural and induced.

Outline of this resource:

- **Watering restrictions coming? Water conservation and drought planning links.**
- **Top tips for managing your landscape through a hot, dry growing season and possible drought restrictions.**
- **Regenerative agriculture principles.**
- **Water capture principles.**
- **Habitat principles.**
- **Sustainability principles.**
- **Trees and shrubs.**
- **Lawn.**
- **Pollinator/flower gardens.**
- **Vegetable gardens.**

Watering restrictions coming?

The last time Boulder County municipalities enacted watering restrictions was in 2002. Decisions on watering restrictions generally happen in early May after the accumulation of winter snowpack. Various municipalities provide information about drought and water conservation. Some cities along the Front Range are already issuing watering restrictions.

- **City of Boulder water conservation and drought planning:**
<https://bouldercolorado.gov/services/drought-watch-program#:~:text=Questions%20Toggle%20Menu->

[.Annual%20Water%20Supply.recommend%20additional%20measures%20if%20needed](#) and <https://bouldercolorado.gov/services/water-conservation>

- City of Louisville water conservation and drought planning: <https://www.louisvilleco.gov/living-in-louisville/residents/sustainability/waste-reduction-and-circularity/water-conservation-new> and <https://www.louisvilleco.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/28659/637363658410600000>
- City of Lafayette water conservation and drought planning: <https://www.lafayetteco.gov/1419/Water-Efficiency> and <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/62102d32cbc97713f25c3099/t/672e67d7aa77bf3e4470ea45/1731094487389/Lafayette+CWP+Grant+summary+SPBRT.pdf>
- City of Ft. Collins water conservation and drought planning: <https://www.fortcollins.gov/Services/Utilities/Programs-and-Rebates/Water-Programs/Residential-Water-Conservation> and <https://ourcity.fcgov.com/water-shortage-planning1>
- City of Denver water conservation and drought planning: <https://www.denverwater.org/residential/rebates-and-conservation-tips> and <https://www.denverwater.org/your-water/water-supply-and-planning/drought>
- City of Colorado Springs water conservation and drought planning: <https://www.csu.org/water-wise-rules/> and <https://www.csu.org/hubfs/Document-Library/2022WaterEfficiencyPlan.pdf>
- Numerous water conservation programs at Resource Central: <https://resourcecentral.org/>
- Numerous water conservation programs at Northern Water: <https://www.northernwater.org/environmental/efficient-water-use>

Top tips for managing your landscape through a hot, dry growing season and possible drought restrictions:

- Don't start a lawn.
- If you must have a Kentucky blue grass lawn, shrink its size this year.
- If you must start a lawn, particularly if it is in a low traffic area, consider using native grasses: <https://coloradonativegrass.org/>
- Carefully consider the new plants you establish this year; it may be challenging if watering restrictions ratchet up. All plants need at least some watering to get established, but native and xeric plants will require less.
- Prepare your soil to increase infiltration and storage: apply plant-based compost, judicious use of the appropriate type of mulch, avoid compaction.
- Prioritize how to "spend" the water you have: trees and shrubs should be top of the list
- This is a good time to kill your lawn! Consider sod cutting, solarization, sheet mulching. Huge opportunity! Make lemonade! <https://resourcecentral.org/lawn/> check out the Turf Removal Grants from Resource Central and Terra Foundation at <https://www.landscapingwithcoloradonativeplants.org/grants> (grants may be closed for the season, but they are offered every year, with the grant application processing

opening in March). Other grants may be available from local sources, so don't be afraid to Google "Turf Removal Grants!"

- If in an HOA: a good time to join landscaping committee and to advocate for reducing nonfunctional turf, replace with native plants (Northern Water grants <https://www.northernwater.org/environment/efficient-water-use/grants> Colorado Garden Foundation grants <https://www.coloradogardenfoundation.org/about/grants/> link to Kristine's grant article: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Y0lg36wub67HZKlgh_UmNJ6Pf63bBBbS2m_-ngj_fxA/edit?usp=sharing)
- Explore on-line resources at Resource Central about water conservation <https://resourcecentral.org/>
- Sprinkler audits, turf replacement, subsidized "Garden in a Box" program in many municipalities, programs for HOAs and larger properties.
- If we have not listed your municipality or county, search "town/county + drought planning" or "town/county + water conservation" to find out about local programs, rebates, grants, and possible restrictions.
- Consult the resources at CSU Extension, based on local climates and ecosystems. <https://extension.colostate.edu/resource/watering-a-home-landscape-during-drought/#:~:text=Xeriscape%C2%AE%20principles,-.Water%20Wisely%20and%20Efficiently,are%20established%20in%20the%20soil.>
- Mosquitos could be low this year or may arrive early. Don't create habitat for them in your yard through your watering. <https://bouldercolorado.gov/news/its-mosquito-season>

Regenerative agriculture principles:

- Tilling disrupts life in your soil, can further erosion and loss of soil organic matter, can bring dormant weed seeds to the surface, and breaks up existing soil structure and pores. In general, it is better to top dress with an amendment like compost and to allow soil life to work the material down into the soil.
- Use plant-based compost, top dressing rather than tilling (application rates and information <https://extension.colostate.edu/resource/soil-amendments/>); use as a top dressing and disregard the information about tilling in.
- Feed your microbes with compost, saved autumn leaves, and chop 'n' drop weeding!
- Instead of wood-based or gravel mulches, consider a cover crop of living mulch; dense planting of your native plants or planting in a matrix of native grasses. <https://frontrange.wildones.org/mulch-for-your-colorado-native-plant-garden/>
- Diverse plants in your garden ensure that something is active and growing as much of the year as possible to help crowd out weeds, provide forage and habitat for beneficial insects and birds, and help to infiltrate precipitation.
- Avoid synthetic inputs like fertilizers and pesticides; these can harm soil life, beneficial insects, birds, and other wildlife and pollute surface water.
- Regenerative agriculture includes grazing, which is hard to incorporate in our yards. If you have a native grass lawn, consider mowing it once every year or two (or mowing one third to one half per year).

Water capture principles:

- The soil is your best storage site for precipitation, and it stores more when it has more organic matter; <https://www.harvestingrainwater.com/2020/08/cool-yourself-your-neighborhood-and-the-planet-with-the-water-harvesting-soil-carbon-sponge/>
- “Soil is your tank”: soil organic matter and roots soak up and hold water to extend availability for plants.
- Where are your downspouts going? You want every drop of water that falls on your lot to stay on your lot and benefit what you are growing. Redirect downspouts to planted areas.
- In general, get in the practice of shoveling snow back onto your yard where it can soak in slowly.
- Links to precipitation harvesting resources by Brad Lancaster: <https://www.harvestingrainwater.com/>, and https://www.youtube.com/@Brad_Lancaster_Water_Harvester, Watershed Management Group <https://watershedmg.org/>, Wild Ones Front Range articles <https://frontrange.wildones.org/rainwater-harvesting/>, <https://frontrange.wildones.org/connecting-native-plant-gardening-and-rain-gardening/>, <https://frontrange.wildones.org/rain-gardening-thinking-about-next-steps/>, <https://frontrange.wildones.org/multi-stem-native-trees-and-large-shrubs-for-colorado-landscapes/>, and Wild Ones webinar <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIWaYtgV-4E>
- Consider common sense, legal, practical “greywater”: fill a bucket with the water that pours out when you are waiting for shower water to be hot enough; pour water you’ve used to rinse organic produce onto houseplants or landscape plants, etc.

Habitat principles:

- Choose xeric (low water), native plants. These resources can help you choose the right plant species for your area:
Wild Ones Front Range <https://frontrange.wildones.org/toolkit/>.
Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation: <https://xerces.org/pollinator-conservation/pollinator-friendly-plant-lists>,
The National Wildlife Federation: <https://www.nwf.org/Native-Plant-Habitats/Plant-Native/Why-Native/Keystone-Plants-by-Ecoregion>.
Audubon Rockies Habitat Hero: <https://www.audubon.org/rockies/get-involved/habitat-hero-resources>.
- Visit the Butterfly Pavilion in Westminster, <https://butterflies.org/exhibit/gardens-trails>, Rocky Mountain Botanic Gardens in Lyons, <https://rmbg.org/>, Denver Botanic Gardens, <https://www.botanicgardens.org/>, or one of the many xeric and native plant demonstration gardens in our area.
- Join your local garden club or native plant organization.
- Use locally-produced (and often free) arborist mulch rather than shredded bark products.
- Stay away from big box store plant sources (neonics and other “icides”): <https://frontrange.wildones.org/resources/purchase-native-plants/>.
- Plants which bloom early are really important; in Colorado, a lot of these are trees and shrubs: <https://csfs.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Native-Trees-for->

[Colorado-Landscapes-Fact-Sheet-7.421.pdf](#) and
<https://extension.colostate.edu/resource/native-shrubs-for-colorado-landscapes/>.

- Leave last year's stems cut to 12 or 14 inches for stem-nesting insects:
<https://www.pollinatorsnativeplants.com/uploads/1/3/9/1/13913231/stemnestingbeesweb1.pdf>.
- Bunch grasses—xeric, and they are host plants for butterflies and skippers:
<https://frontrange.wildones.org/wp-content/images/sites/105/2021/08/Cool-Warm-Season-Colorado-Native-Grasses-Sheet1-1.pdf>.
- Promoting soil health: don't fertilize! Compost your leaves, use plant-based compost, preserve the existing roots in the soil; consider chop and drop for weeding and try "living mulch" techniques (planting densely, planting in a matrix of native grasses):
<https://coloradonativegrass.org/resources/>.
- Provide water for birds and insects, remember to change out the water regularly for wildlife health and to reduce mosquito habitat: <https://www.xerces.org/blog/if-youre-thirsty-theyre-thirsty-make-simple-water-source-to-support-pollinators>.

Sustainability principles:

- Conserve water outside: don't overwater onto sidewalks and hardscape. Don't water in the heat of the day. Don't water if there's been any recent rain. CHECK YOUR LOCAL GUIDELINES.
- Save time by not mowing: Coloradoscaping and native grass lawns conserve water and require little to no mowing.
- Slow your watering down to allow infiltration.
- Hand watering and drip irrigation are more efficient; targeted, you generally won't overwater, and it may not be restricted.
- If there is a storm and you have an irrigation timer—pause it!
- Conserve water inside the house; now is a good time to buy aerators for faucets and to replace inefficient high output showerheads and toilets with low flow. Identify and fix leaks!
- Consider an irrigation system tied into a soil sensor but make sure to check it periodically (poke a finger into the soil).
- Consider a sprinkler audit (Resource Central, Northern Water), also Louisville, other municipalities.
- Use a mulching mower—over time you will save water and not need fertilizer. Go electric for better air quality and less noise!
- In choosing ornamental landscape plants: consider xeric native plants which are best adapted to our climate-related stresses. The Wild Ones Front Range toolkit has many plant lists for many situations: <https://frontrange.wildones.org/toolkit/>.
- Do NOT fertilize native plants, do not fertilize a mature lawn. Too much fertilizer causes eutrophication in surface drainages, pollution, overgrowth of plants, and increased water demand. It's not good for soil health; consider organic, slow-release options like plant-based compost. See the lawn section for more ideas.
- NO on pesticides (herbicide, insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, etc.), they can be persistent and mobile in the environment. Systemic pesticides like neonicotinoids are

present in plants long after they are applied. Nonchemical means of control are generally nontoxic and safe around people and pets. Plant for diversity and use trap plants in your veggie garden.

- Dealing with stinging insects: These are the wolves of the garden and native habitats, they are mostly harmless and clean up dead critters. You might trap yellowjacket queens early for more pleasant outdoor dining.
- Join iNaturalist or Seek and start learning about the food webs in your yard.
- Ditch that bug zapper. They don't kill mosquitos, which seek out warm bodies that are exhaling CO₂. Bug zappers only kill night-flying moths and other insects that have better things to do than entertain (or horrify) your BBQ guests!
- Turn off your porch lights, install motion detecting lights, and replace older outdoor light bulbs with yellow bulbs or Dark Sky certified fixtures.
- Make a mosquito bucket trap (pages 202 - 205) in Douglas Tallamy's book **How Can I Help?**
- Read the rest of Douglas Tallamy's book, **How Can I Help?**
- Join a conservation organization or a community science project!
- Buying organic produce supports soil conservation and environmental health somewhere else.

Trees and shrubs:

- We ask a lot of our long-lived members of our landscapes. Accordingly, watering trees and shrubs is the highest landscape priority during drought.
- Follow recommendations from CSU Extension, which include recommendations for dormant periods (fall and winter) and the growing season:
<https://extension.colostate.edu/resource/fall-and-winter-watering-of-plants-and-trees/>
<https://extension.colostate.edu/resource/watering-mature-shade-trees/>.
- In Winter: water once a month, with a slow trickle in the warmest part of the day. The way to remember is to use holidays: the week of a holiday (Thanksgiving! Valentine's Day!), think trees! Choose the warmest day that week, and water trees and shrubs when the temperature is at least 45F and it's at least two hours before sundown.
- Drought stress makes trees more susceptible to disease and pests.
- Consider planting native trees, adapted to our climate and soils and winds (see above); consider native shrubs—they are tough, some have edible fruit, support pollinators, birds (see the CSU links above; consult Wild Ones Front Range for plant lists).
- Mulch with arborist mulch, but do it appropriately: 3" from trunk, 3" deep, 3' out, no mulch volcanos around the trunk, no landscape fabric.
- If you remove your lawn: your tree had been watered when your lawn was getting watered; you must provide supplemental water for trees.

Lawn:

- Consider reducing your bluegrass lawn, particularly in areas where it's not being used for recreation (front lawns, hell strips, etc.). Resource Central, local water providers, and municipalities have good rebate programs and many offer sod removal services, as well as garden in a box and pre-planned collections for less thirsty, beautiful plants you can plant instead.
- Check out the Colorado Native Grass guide: <https://coloradonativegrass.org/>.
- Follow best practices: mow your lawn as high as you can—it will be healthier. Adjust your watering for your soil type (sandy vs. clayey) and the season/temperature. If you have programmable controls, break your landscape and garden watering into multiple short applications instead of one long one period, and water between 10 pm and 8 am (but be sure to check it once in a while to make sure everything is working properly and not filling your street gutters). Leave your clippings; they build healthy soil, which holds more water. Mature lawns do not require fertilization: <https://extension.colostate.edu/resource/lawn-care-basics/>.
- If watering restrictions come, be aware that Kentucky bluegrass will go dormant during hot and dry weather but will bounce back in cooler weather and when watering or precipitation resumes. Per CSU, fescues may not recover well from zero watering through intense drought and no watering: <https://extension.colostate.edu/resource/fine-fescues-for-lawns/>.

Pollinator/flower gardens:

- Water perennials planted last year; they are not fully rooted in (water by hand if necessary).
- Check your municipalities for opportunities for free compost or mulch. Use the local branch and tree recycling site or commercial (Western Disposal) opportunities, check out chipdrop.com, see above for best practices for mulching around trees.
- Leave a little bare ground for ground nesting bees. Landscaping fabric is especially problematic for ground-nesting bees (so many reasons to skip it!): <https://www.xerces.org/blog/clear-space-for-bees-why-pollinators-in-your-yard-need-access-to-bare-ground>.
- Remove the last of that landscape fabric or plastic. The soil, plants, ground nesting bees and other beneficial insects will thank you. It sheds microplastics, impedes water infiltration, and negatively impacts soil health.
- Take care of the plants you plant this season: optimal planting time is normally April or May; but also consider late August through early October for planting perennials.
- Consider and plant for seasonal bloom coverage; plant more than one individual of a species, try to have something blooming from spring through fall (trees and shrubs count). Look at the many articles in the Wild Ones Front Range Coloradoscaping toolkit: <https://frontrange.wildones.org/toolkit/>. Consider covering new plantings for several days to a few weeks (floating row cover, lawn chair, laundry basket, cut or ventilated milk jugs, etc.), especially if it is unseasonably hot when you plant. Remember to water to help the plants get established; even xeric plants need watering at the beginning.

- Consult Xerces, NWF, Audubon, to find high impact “Keystone” plants, Wild Ones Front Range has copious information about easy to grow plants, shade plants, xeric plants, and gardening info: <https://frontrange.wildones.org/toolkit/>, and plant data cards <https://frontrange.wildones.org/native-landscaping/native-seed-swaps/native-plant-data-sheets/> (see links listed above).
- Sources for plants: High Plains Environmental Center (Loveland), Harlequin’s Gardens (Boulder), look on Wild Ones Front Range website for more sources <https://frontrange.wildones.org/resources/purchase-native-plants/>. In the winter and spring, check with the Colorado State Forest Service Nursery and other regional and county conservation programs. Resource Central Garden in a Box collections are all xeric, not all are native, but do have native and Pollinator collections: <https://resourcecentral.org/gardens/>.
- Consider host plants for butterflies and moths that live in your ecozone. Check the resources elsewhere in this document (Wild Ones Front Range, Xerces, Audubon, NWF). Other organizations and resources exist, including from Environment for the Americas, the Boulder County Nature Association, CSU Extension, and the Butterfly Pavilion.

Vegetable gardens:

- Spread compost early; when used as a topdressing, it acts as a mulch, and it provides nutrients slowly; helps the soil hold more moisture.
- Use plant-based compost, <https://extension.colostate.edu/resource/soil-amendments/> over time the added compost will increase soil organic matter; don’t add salts from composted manure (read ingredients or make your own).
- If you think you need to fertilize, get a soil test done so you know what your soil needs and you don’t add fertilizer unnecessarily (pollutes water, affects soil biota).
- Understand your soil texture so you can water properly; slow and intermittent works well for most soils.
- Try to water the base of plants early in the day; saves water from evaporation, avoids powdery mildew.
- Consider planting “cold season” plants a little early (spinach, beets, radish, chard, cabbage family plants, snow and snap peas); these tolerate colder temperatures.
- Consider buying locally adapted seeds; <https://masaseedfoundation.org/>.
- Buy locally grown starts: MASA <https://masaseedfoundation.org/>, Growing Gardens, Harlequin.
- Limit or eliminate your use of pesticides and chemical treatments; consider floating row covers, blast of hose, picking off bugs (Squash and Japanese beetles), Japanese beetle traps can be effective if monitored and located away from target plants.
- Plant choices can impact Japanese beetle visits: they love roses, raspberries, grapes, Virginia creeper, etc., their larvae feed on the roots of turf grass in pristine lawns.
- “Chop and drop” weeds in the garden that aren’t going to seed or sprout new growth from scraps (bind weed) as added mulch.
- Plant densely to shade the soil.
- Mulch between rows/beds.

- Companion plant with native plants to increase fruiting; if you plant native flowering plants which host and attract native pollinating insects, you will get increased yield from your fruiting plants and host beneficial insects; provides a refugia for when the annual veggies aren't there (feeds and houses beneficial insects in off season).

Fire:

- Keeping your trees healthy is important!
- Remove leaves from around foundations and against fences; consider using them in your flower beds for the best quality and free mulch; can also be composted: <https://www.coolboulder.org/news/give-leaf-mold-a-go>.
- Create a 5 foot gap from your foundation with no wood mulch, and no plantings: <https://www.iafc.org/docs/default-source/1fire-prev/bookletguidetofirewiselandscapingandconstruction.pdf?sfvrsn=badfdd0d>, and the YouTube videos from Resource Central: <https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=firewise+landscaping&mid=0C590774DF3B76218C3E0C590774DF3B76218C3E&churl=https%3a%2f%2fwww.youtube.com%2fchannel%2fUC7tGRt78mo38awKR3Lt1uQ&FORM=VIRE>
- Because it's been so warm and snow free, we can do some of these activities early to hopefully store any precipitation that may come in our wettest months, April and May.
- Wildfire Partners has a lot of resources to start with: <https://wildfirepartners.org/>. Also check CSU Extension resources, and the Idaho Firewise list of low flammability plants <https://idahofirewise.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/FireXResistanceXofXPlantsXMasterXDatabase.pdf>.
- Spring is a great time to clean gutters.
- Consider replacing your wood privacy fence now or eventually. At the very least, replace any wood fencing within 5' of your home or other structures (it can act as a fire wick to your home). Tightly spaced boards on wood fences restrict movements of small pollinators, consider building bee/insect homes or birdhouses with your leftover fencing material and tree branch trimmings.
- Wildfire is now a year-round hazard, it's smart to be practicing good habits year-round.
- Keep your "habitat" areas far from homes, fences, structures; consider strategic placement of home-protecting elements like brick/stone/concrete patios and walkways, lawn, rock and crevice gardens closer to your home.
- Keep your compost moist (so it will break down and not become fuel for wildfire).

Share with:

WOFR, Bee City USA, Cool Boulder, Xerces... local garden clubs, HOAs, landscape cos, Harlequins, HPEC, any others? CSU Extension? Boulder Water Utility, Front Range Water, Northern Water, OSCAR, ask people to share? Parks and public landscapes, blooming seniors, open space, Resource Central, Xerces, EFTA, Audubon, PPAN, BCNA, KGNU, other media.

Clarifications from Denver Water for ALCC member questions

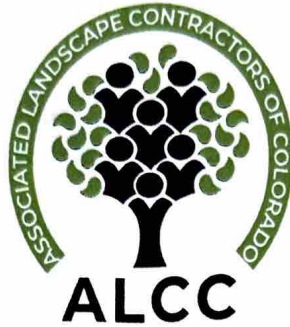
1 message

John McMahon, ALCC <alcc@memberclicks-mail.net>

Reply-To: jmcMahon@alcc.com

To: wildheritagegardens@gmail.com

Fri, Mar 27, 2026 at 3:18 PM



• also should address indoor use

• what is Parks plan?

• Hand watering uses more Water than drip!

Dear ALCC Members,

We have been in close contact with Denver Water and have clarity to questions members have sent me, as proactive efforts to ensure both **compliance and responsible service to customers**. Here is the **approved Stage 1 drought resolution** adopted by the Denver Board of Water Commissioners.

Per the resolution, annual and perennial flowers are treated the same under Stage 1 restrictions.

When irrigated using hand watering or drip irrigation, **annuals and perennials may be watered now**. However, given one of the lowest snowpacks in nearly 50 years, Denver Water is asking customers to **keep automatic spray irrigation systems turned off until mid- to late May**, and potentially later if conditions warrant. That means that if annuals or perennials are watered using spray or **overhead irrigation systems, we are asking that those systems are not turned on yet**, and when they are, that vegetation will be subject to the two days per week watering schedule, in addition to the **standard time-of-day restrictions**. Supplemental drip or hand watering will be allowed.

For newly established landscapes, there is a 21-day establishment variance available for new sod or seed. For now, the variance application form is available in the drop-down menu here: [Customer Care Contact Form | Denver Water](#).

Regarding system testing, an irrigation system may be operated outside the watering schedule for installation, repair or reasonable maintenance as long as the system is monitored throughout the period of operation and there isn't water waste. All irrigation control systems must be reprogrammed for operation in compliance with the watering day schedule or must be operated manually.

Denver Water appreciates the ALCC members working to understand and follow the rules set by the resolution and ultimately hope that you can help find as much water savings as possible!

It's important to note, Denver Water is also **looking at drought pricing this summer**, which would ultimately set a premium on higher/outdoor water use. So setting up systems efficiently as possible will also help landscapers save their customers money. Denver Water is dealing with conditions never seen before, and are doing what they can to help avoid needing to take further actions later this summer, especially if conditions continue to get worse.

Please also reference the [ALCC Drought Resources](#) page as you navigate this critical time.

From: [Sharon Selvaggio](#)
To: [ayarger@butterflies.org](#); [amcneal@louisvilleco.gov](#); [gcross@louisvilleco.gov](#); [hmoshak@gmail.com](#); [jhcooperman@gmail.com](#); [mdornfeld@louisvilleco.gov](#); [johnwebb20@comcast.net](#); [missjeanbee322@gmail.com](#); [parksandrec@louisvilleco.gov](#); [susanlmceachern@gmail.com](#)
Cc: [Laura Rost](#)
Subject: How Your Bee City Can Source Pollinator-Safe Plants
Date: Tuesday, April 14, 2026 10:46:41 AM

Hi Louisville Bee City Committee Members / Chairs!

Hello from Sharon and Jacqueline at Xerces' pesticide reduction team! Laura shared your information with us. We'd like to invite you to a meeting to learn and share with the Xerces Society and your Bee City and Campus neighbors near Denver and the Front Range, Colorado.

Do you ever wonder if the plants your city purchases for pollinator and wildlife habitat might actually contain pesticides harmful to bees or butterflies?

Would you like to make sure the plants your affiliate purchases are safe for pollinators?

Join us for a free 1-hour virtual learning & networking session on **May 15, 2026 01:00 PM Mountain Time.**

We'll discuss:

- How you and your neighbor BCUSA affiliates are sourcing plants
- Exploring partnerships with other nearby affiliates to expand your purchasing power
- How Xerces is securing pollinator-safe plants for its own restoration efforts, and
- Key ways you can ensure you are buying plants that are pollinator-attractive, no matter how or where you buy plants.

You'll leave with:

- A "contract grow" template you can adapt for your affiliate's plant purchases
- Ideas for potential nurseries in your area, including those voluntarily avoiding a wide range of harmful insecticides, and
- Free outreach materials to bring to your city or campus purchasing office (digital and hard copies available).

Please RSVP here.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/QfPnw7XZQuqi8BJuYJfNZw>

We look forward to seeing you there!

Sharon Selvaggio, Xerces Society, Pesticide Reduction Program, Nurseries and Natural Lands Lead

Jacqueline Buenrostro, Xerces Society, Pesticide Reduction Program, Urban Policy Lead

p.s. Later this year we will also be hosting a webinar, featuring the experiences of other affiliates who have started their own nurseries to provide the plants they need. Stay tuned for more information about this opportunity!

--

Sharon Selvaggio

Pesticide Program Specialist

The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

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