

RESCAPE CALIFORNIA: NURTURE SOIL

ReScape California is a non-profit organization that educates about and advocates for a whole-systems approach to landscaping that works in harmony with the natural world and addresses the changing environment. ReScape's landscaping practices are based on 8 regenerative principles which foster soil health, sequester carbon, conserve water and protect habitat and valuable resources while reducing waste and preventing pollution in our communities and watersheds.



Our **Nurture Soil** principle is rooted in the practice of feeding the soil, not the plant, to encourage a thriving soil food web. Healthy soils are the foundation of any garden and can provide plant nutrients, filter pollution, retain water, and store carbon. The native soil in the Sacramento area has been significantly altered by human activities such as agriculture, urban development and mining—past gold dredging destroyed some soils and created new ones in the process. Building healthy soil in your garden starts with assessing the current conditions and determining what the soil needs (a soil test can help).

SIMPLE STEPS TO NURTURE THE SOIL

- 1. Protect the soil from compaction.** Create clearly defined paths and or raised beds to prevent compaction and maintain a healthy soil structure that allows water to permeate and soil organisms to thrive.
- 2. Defend against erosion.** Keep your soil covered with mulch, plants or cover crops to prevent erosion from rain and wind.
- 3. Amend with compost and sheet mulch.** Adding compost improves the soil's water-holding capacity, provides nutrients for plants and feeds the soil web. Sheet mulching can be used to establish a new garden area or remove a lawn without herbicides while enriching the soil.
- 4. Mulch regularly with organic materials such as chipped plant debris.** A 3 inch layer of mulch will slowly decompose, adding organic matter and nutrients to your soil. Avoid the use of bark mulch or gorilla hair—they do not add much in the way of nutrients.
- 5. Feed soils naturally and avoid synthetic, quick release fertilizers.** Topdress beds and trees once or twice a year by applying compost around your plants. Avoid quick release fertilizers which can damage soil microbes.

NURTURING THE SOIL PROTECTS OUR WATERSHED

- Choosing organic amendments that feed the soil avoids chemical inputs that can contaminate waterways.
- Storing carbon in the soil helps to mitigate the effects of climate change.
- Increasing the soil's water-holding capacity reduces runoff and prevents sedimentation of streams and stormwater drains.

Need Help?

Hire a landscape professional trained in ReScape's 8 Principles. Visit our ReScape Qualified Landscape Professional Directory at www.rescapeca.org

Join ReScape!

Be a part of California's regenerative landscape community by becoming a ReScape member. More details at www.rescapeca.org

Resources:

Calscape Native Plant Nursery Directory. www.calscape.org
California Association of Nurseries & Garden Centers Directory. www.cangc.org
Our Water Our World Eco-Friendly Product Locator. www.ourwaterourworld.org
Regional Water Authority. www.bewaterSMART.info
UCCE Master Gardeners of Sacramento County. sacmg.ucanr.edu/



More information, including how-to guides, available at www.rescapeca.org | info@rescapeca.org | 415.766.0191



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