Conservation landscaping is characterized by deep high-quality soil, less turf and more native plants.

**Conservation landscaping:**

- Requires less water and can save up to 70% on outdoor watering costs.
- Eliminates the need to apply fungicides, pesticides and synthetic fertilizer.
- Reduces mowing and maintenance time by a third.
- Does not require an irrigation system.
- Uses deep, high-quality soil to provide the foundation a healthy landscape needs to grow.
- Uses native and well-adapted plants that thrive in Texas’ tough climate.
- Uses a design that ensures proper placement and spacing of plants.

**GUIDANCE FOR CONSERVATION LANDSCAPING**

**Soil**

- Minimum soil depth: 6 to 8 inches.
- Use healthy, native soil: a minimum 20% compost and less than 20% clay. Soil should be filtered of materials larger than 1 inch diameter (stones, stumps, roots, etc.).
- Do not use sandy loam. Caliche is not considered soil.
Turf

• Choose a recommended turf species based on the slope of the lawn.
  ○ Slopes less than 20%: blue grama, buffalo grass, curly mesquite, bermuda, zoysia or shortgrass prairie seed mixes.
  ○ Slopes greater than 20%: bunch grasses and shortgrass prairie seed mixes.

• Maintain grass on the highest mower setting (around 3 inches) to maximize root growth and water retention.

Plants and trees

• Choose native and well-adapted plants. Browse the Grow Green Native and Adapted Landscape Plants Guide for plants native to the Edwards Plateau.

• Add 2 to 4 inches of a high-quality organic mulch/compost blend to landscape beds to protect plant roots and retain soil moisture. Reapply mulch annually.

• Avoid using rock instead of mulch. Rock creates higher localized temperatures.

• Place new trees strategically to provide shade from the afternoon sun.
Conservation Landscaping Design Example

- Edwards Plateau native shade trees, such as Texas Red Oak
- Blue grama, buffalo grass, curly mesquite, bermuda, zoysia or shortgrass prairie seed mixes
- A biodiverse selection of Edwards Plateau native shrubs, forbs, fruiting plants and grasses

For more information
Visit [www.lcra.org/hlwo](http://www.lcra.org/hlwo) or contact LCRA at hlwo@lcra.org.