Recycle Landscape Trimmings

Federal agencies have the opportunity to effect both good landscape management practices and good waste management practices by recycling and using recycled landscape trimmings. A significant portion of what is treated as waste is comprised of leaves, grass clippings, plant trimmings, and woody material. These elements are a desirable resource for composted material, mulches, and landscape amendments. By using these products, federal agencies can effectively and economically enrich the soil, promote plant growth, preserve soil moisture, reduce erosion, and inhibit weed growth.

4. Implement Water and Energy Efficient Practices

Irrigating lawns and landscapes can account for a significant proportion of total water use, particularly during peak watering season. Reducing the inefficient irrigation of lawns and landscapes with potable water can reduce water cost, and the energy usage/cost associated with water pumping. In addition, water use efficiency can relieve the increasing demand being placed on water resources, distribution systems, and wastewater treatment systems.

Federal facilities can effectively reduce water use and conserve potable water through a number of practices. For example, water usage can be reduced through the use of mulches and careful selection and siting of plants. Plants adapted to local conditions can be selected so supplemental water will not be required after an initial establishment period of 3-5 years. Other water-efficient landscape practices include: determining the water requirements for discrete water-use zones; using and maintaining efficient irrigation systems; and watering only as needed. A water-efficient and costeffective manner of irrigation which is becoming increasingly popular, where available, is the use of recycled or reclaimed water.

Recent legislation, as well as recent executive orders, reflect the federal government's commitment to energy and water conservation. Water-efficient landscape practices contribute two-fold: first, to the conservation of fresh, potable water; and second, to the conservation of energy associated with the distribution and treatment of water. Landscape practices may also directly impact energy conservation by siting plants to provide shade and cooling to paved surfaces and building structures resulting in reduced building cooling

loads. Conversely, plants may also be sited such that they optimize solar heat gain and inhibit heat loss during cooler periods to reduce building heating loads.

To assist agencies in meeting the energy and water conservation requirements mandated by the Energy Policy Act of 1992 [Public Law 102–486, October 24, 1992], the Department of Energy was directed to establish the Federal Energy Efficiency Fund. Administered by the Federal Energy Management Program office, the fund provides grants to agencies for energy and water conserving projects. Grant proposals are competitively assessed for their technical and economic effectiveness. Water conserving landscapes are eligible to compete for grants under this fund.

5. Create Outdoor Demonstration Projects

Landscape demonstration projects promote public awareness and education and can be a catalyst for similar initiatives by the general public as well as other governmental agencies. They can also aid in the development and expansion of beneficial techniques and technologies. Outdoor demonstration projects are an effective method of promoting and sharing information about environmentally sensitive landscape approaches and the use of environmentally and economically beneficial landscape practices. Outdoor demonstration projects can also showcase partnership opportunities among industry, academia, and other governmental agencies. Cooperative agreements can assist in the development of technologies and techniques in such areas as recycled or reclaimed water use.

Other Initiatives

To further promote and demonstrate that environmentally beneficial practices can be both beautiful and economical, the Executive Memorandum identified a number of initiatives. These include: (1) The establishment of annual awards to recognize outstanding efforts in site design, and development, landscaping management practices of agencies and individual employees; and (2) the requirement for the Department of Agriculture to conduct research on the sustainability, propagation and use of native plants.

· Establishment of Annual Award

The Office of the Federal Environmental Executive in conjunction with the Department of Energy's Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP), has established an annual award recognizing outstanding efforts by agencies and individual employees in the demonstration of beneficial landscape management practices. This annual award has been incorporated into FEMP's Annual Federal Energy and Water Conservation Award Program. In October 1995, the winners of the first annual Beneficial Landscape Practices award will be announced.

• Research by the Department of Agriculture in Cooperation With Other Agencies on Suitability, Propagation and Use of Native Plants for Landscaping

As identified in the National Performance Review, Accompanying Report: Reinventing Environmental Management, barriers to the use of native plants include: limited availability of native plants; lack of knowledge about the use, maintenance, and propagation of native plants; the more prevalent use of exotic species; and the spread of invasive exotics. The U.S. Department of Agriculture possesses experience and expertise in the development of plants, management of federal lands, and conservation of soils. By working with other federal agencies, universities, botanic gardens, arboreta, and commercial nurseries, the USDA's Agricultural Research Service and Natural Resource and Conservation Service can further the use of native plant species in the landscape. In addition, the USDA has been directed to make information available to agencies and the public on the suitability, propagation and use of native plants for landscaping.

Guidelines

Applicability

These guidelines are meant to assist Federal decision-making at the agency and facility level. Where cost effective and to the maximum extent practicable, they shall be incorporated into agency guidance and policy and reflected in agency landscape management practices, site design, and development. These guidelines apply to decisions regarding landscape management practices, site design, and development on Federal grounds and at Federal projects in any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, and any other territory or possession over which the United States has jurisdiction. Federal facilities located outside the customs territory of