

GUIDELINES FOR PROTECTING LANDSCAPE PLANTINGS ON PRIVATE PROPERTY FROM WILDLIFE DAMAGE

Genesee's protected environment has caused wildlife to become progressively more invasive. Genesee has essentially become a wildlife refuge. This refuge setting has resulted in deer and elk browsing on residential landscape plants to become what is perceived by many as a problem. Although deer and elk naturally feed on native vegetation, they are especially attracted to the more succulent nonnative vegetation commonly used for conventional landscape plantings.

In general to minimize grazing never feed or provide a salt lick for animals and maximize the use of native landscape vegetation. The booklet, "Native Plants of Genesee" is available in the Genesee Foundation office for viewing or selected copying, and can be used as a guide for plant selection.

To help preserve the aesthetically attractive natural environment, and at the same time allow residents to protect reasonable amounts and types of landscaping from wildlife browsing, the following guidelines have been developed by the Genesee Architectural Review Committee for selected types of plantings.

TO PROTECT ASPEN TREES:

The bark and small branches on Aspen trees are browse material, especially during the winter. While there is no proven method to totally protect Aspen, the following methods are recommended:

Planting New Aspen: Select trees large enough that the lower branches are above the reach of deer and elk. Plant Aspen trees in locations where moisture is plentiful and where they will receive full sun; however, they should never be planted in hot, dry locations, including south-facing slopes.

Existing Aspen Trees: When the lower branches are above the reach of deer and elk, Aspen trees can be protected by individual tree trunk wrapping. No ARC approval required.

Tree Trunk Wrapping: Black plastic open-weave fabric or paper wrap can be used to closely wrap individual Aspen tree trunks to protect them from bark removal by deer and elk. White plastic tape, chicken wire and corrugated black piping are unacceptable; both are highly visible and promote insect and fungus infestations because they do not allow air to circulate around the trunks. Both black plastic open weave fabric and paper wrap should be expanded regularly to prevent insect damage and to adjust fencing for tree growth.

TO PROTECT NEW EVERGREEN TREES:

New evergreen tree plantings should be protected from wildlife after planting to stabilize young trees until their roots are well established in the soil.

Individual Trees: "Birdblock" netting is dark brown or black in color and may be wrapped directly on the branches of individual trees to prevent browsing. If staking is used to support the netting, follow the Specifications for Fenced Corrals outlined below. No ARC approval required.

Fenced Corrals: Corrals can be erected to protect groupings of three to five evergreen trees as long as there is no more than three feet of open space between trees. Spacing greater than three feet requires that each tree be individually wrapped. The corral area should be as small as practical and should provide minimal visual obstruction. The perimeter of the corral area should be no more than 12-18" away from the branches of the tree. Property owners who choose to erect corrals shall submit plans for such corrals for review by the ARC.

Corrals of limited size can be erected to protect clumps of small Aspen trees and shoots from being eaten until the lower branches are above the reach of deer after which the trunks can be individually wrapped. Corral fencing should provide minimal visual obstruction. Property owners who choose to erect fencing corrals shall submit plans for such corrals for review by the ARC. Corral area should be as small as practical to protect aspen but should not exceed twenty-five square feet.

Deer and elk will easily jump a six foot fence. Corrals can be up to eight feet tall except where slope or other site-specific considerations require a different height. Fencing on hills should be stepped to limit the maximum height as much as possible while remaining effective. Minimizing the interior area of the corral makes it less appealing to elk and may allow fencing to be effective at a lower height.

Poles may be round or square, metal or wood. Three- inch round or 3x3 inch square poles are sufficient for most fencing. Poles should be stained or naturally aged wood, or painted black, brown or dark bronze to minimize visibility. If standard green metal "T" posts are used, the factory-painted white tops shall be painted the same green color to reduce visual impact. Poles should be installed vertically, regardless of topography or slope of the land.

Fencing materials of a dark color are least visible. The ARC approves materials such as black plastic mesh or matte finished metal mesh in natural color or painted black or brown. Mesh in green, orange, white and other colors is highly visible and therefore unacceptable. Wire fasteners and ties that match the color of the mesh should be used to connect the mesh to the supporting poles. Corrals should be maintained to minimize and repair sagging and deflection of the mesh. Wire strung between posts is not an acceptable corral material. Barbed wire creates dangers for wildlife and residents and is unacceptable.

TO PROTECT FLOWER AND VEGETABLE GARDENS:

Place "Birdblock" netting in a black or brown color directly over the plants.

Certain commercial products available from local nurseries may be used to repel animals. Animal repellents should cause no aesthetic detriment to the environment or harm to the animals, and can be used as residents wish. No ARC approval is required for the use of animal repellents.

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