

GREEN LANDSCAPING

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- 5 Sustainable Principles
- I Beautiful Campus



UAA's Landscaping Team Practices "Green" Landscaping

"TREErific Anchorage has chosen UAA as one of three local establishments to be recognized for exceptional use of landscaping and/or preservation of natural vegetation...The University is recognized for its preservation of existing natural vegetation on the campus, for enhancing it with a variety of tree species, and for having a certified arborist on staff."

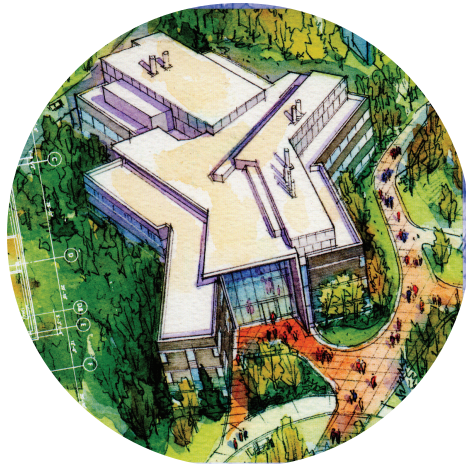
— TREErific Certificate of Recognition —

Landscaping Enhances the Natural Environment

The landscaping team at UAA integrates environmental responsibility into their daily operations, and has been recognized by TREErific, and the American Society of Landscape Architects Alaska Chapter for its sustainable practices. UAA has created a campus tree tour, a geological rock garden, and an herb garden to promote both student and public engagement. The landscaping team uses five sustainable principles throughout campus as it composts, reuses materials, reduces water consumption, and protects and restores natural habitats. All of this helps to keep plants healthy naturally and avoids the need for pesticides.

Reusing Materials

Flowers, grass and leaves are all composted without weeds, making the compost healthy for reuse. Frequently the landscaping team uses



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a Jacobson reel mower to leave nourishing clippings on lawns. Meanwhile, branches from shrubs and trees are chipped and used as mulch. When dead trees have to be cut down, the wood is reused on campus, in the campus sculpture class, or donated as firewood. The team also collects, stores and reuses rocks that would otherwise be disposed of, adding to the campus aesthetics and reducing costs.

Protecting Water and Reducing Waste

The UAA landscaping team's operating philosophy is that healthy plants don't need pesticides. While plants receive enough water enabling them to fight pests themselves, the team also implements water savings practices. Site appropriate plants are chosen, mulch is used to retain water, and watering is done in the morning or at night. To avoid unwanted pests and plants while protecting local water, landscaping uses the following best practices. Turf is watered and kept short to prevent and choke out weeds, interior plants use organic fertilizers, exterior plants use steer manure as fertilizer, new plants are quarantined, vegetation is removed from flowerbeds in the fall to avoid the wintering of pests, and the greenhouse is kept clean. Every August plants are removed and the greenhouse "bakes" by shutting down ventilation, effectively killing any "pests." When pesticides are warranted the team uses volk oil, pyrethrum, alcohol and Safer Insecticidal Soaps.

North of the Integrated Science Building, rain gardens will be planted to reduce impacts of storm water. Rain gardens are recessed areas of land, which have plants that thrive in wet soil. Water collects in rain gardens and plants act as filters for the water before it sinks back into local aquifers. These gardens replenish aquifers instead of adding pressure to storm drains.

Preserving and Rehabilitating Local Habitats

While conventional construction projects operate by clearing land, building facilities and then re-vegetating, UAA uses foresight in construction and landscaping plans. Instead of clearing a large area around its newly constructed Integrated Science Building, the general contractor protected trees and vegetation by fencing around trees and root-zone areas. The landscaping architecture firm, Land Design North, was able to conserve mature vegetation including birch and spruce trees.

While landscaping around the Integrated Science Building is an example of preservation and foresight, more conventional construction projects have taken place at UAA. When more conventional contractors have disrupted the local habitat, UAA has taken measures to restore the local habitat. An example of a restoration project is along the south fork of Chester Creek. When student housing was built, the surrounding habitat was cleared and Chester Creek was turned into a straight channel with grassy hills. In July 1988, UAA landscaping re-vegetated 1,450 feet of the stream bank. Areas affected by erosion were repaired and approximately 1,000 plants including cottonwood, willow and alder were planted. The project was such a success that fish still ran in the stream and 10 years later beavers moved in. After three years the beavers no longer call this area home, but it is still a thriving habitat for wildlife.

"I decided to make a career out of my work at UAA and wondered what would make a difference in 20 years, and it was planting trees."

– Pat Leary, Landscaping Horticulture Supervisor –

Key Players

UAA Landscaping: Pat Leary and her fantastic team.!

Key Environmental Factors

Hazardous Waste Reduction
Water Quality & Conservation

