

Practical Guidelines for Roadside Revegetation

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Call it xeriscaping, natural landscaping, or arid land revegetation, the goal is the same. We are asked to plant in a highly disturbed landscape. This is no place for gardening. We are faced with establishing plants where few will survive, on the roadside. During road construction, the project turns the soils and their seed banks over and in many directions, much like in a mining operation. Nothing much remains except subsoils when we are called on to revegetate to slow erosion, protect water quality, stabilize slopes, seed after a wildfire, utility disturbances, or a crash site. So what strategy can we use to succeed? First, do no harm or do not introduce easy-to-establish plants from far away places that will become invasive, aggressive, and weedy after we drive away from the project. So how do we choose plant species to match the site? What specifications will assure establishment? And what best management practices can we use for future success? This presentation will attempt to answer these questions through case studies gathered around the nation.