



The Barlow Ranger District on the Mt. Hood National Forest Goes Green



The Barlow Ranger District Office received a greener look this year because of water conservation and native planting projects. The Ranger District Office was renovated three years ago and since the newly designed building has been in place, many individuals have dedicated hundreds of hours towards installing a landscape that matches the natural environment, requires less maintenance and takes less water. The newly landscaped area also

is a great tool for educating the public about drought tolerant plants and landscaping.

“There are roughly 90 species planted around the Barlow Office,” said Christina Mead, Botanist for the Ranger District and the landscaping project coordinator. “Most are native to the Gorge or Mt. Hood area and are adapted for the drought-prone climate.”

Most of the plants used in the project were purchased from local native-plant nurseries, transplanted from the forest, or grown from hand-collected seed. From Arrowleaf Balsamroot to Woolly Sunflowers, the landscaping plan set out to minimize water consumption while also enhancing the beauty of the compound.

“It’s important that the Forest Service sets a good example of what it means to be wise stewards of our natural resources,” said Kameron Sam, Barlow District Ranger. “We can’t expect the public to do things we aren’t doing ourselves and by providing educational opportunities for school groups and the general public to learn, we’re perpetuating those good practices which will hopefully lead to generations of wiser resource management.”



The Mt. Hood National Forest includes dense temperate rainforests in the Bull Run Watershed and high steppe areas on the eastern flanks of Mt. Hood. Most of the Barlow Ranger District is in the high steppe climate zone, so the area gets just less than 14 inches of rain annually.

“I think people on the windward, or rainy, side of Mt. Hood think about water consumption in a different way than people who rely on minimal rainfall to grow crops,” Mead said. “We’re hoping to teach many people and especially young people that water is a finite resource that we need to use wisely.”

