

Choosing the *Right Plants* for your Garden





Sandi Ustunian/ David Lopez



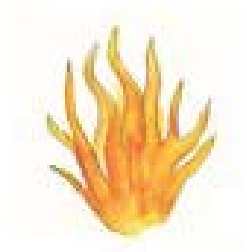
“Right Plant, Right Place”

By choosing plants that are well-suited to the location where they are planted they will perform well with limited additional input.

Tahoe Elements

Living in a wildland urban interface comes with additional considerations....





Tahoe Elements: Wildfire Safety

Minimize the risk of wildfire by reducing the amount of flammable vegetative materials.





Tahoe Elements: Wildfire Safety

Tahoe Friendly Garden

- Utilizes local fire districts for defensible space surveys
- Create a lean, clean and green garden
- Minimizes shrubby debris near home, ladder fuels, and dead or dying vegetation





Tahoe Elements: Wildfire Safety

5 Tahoe Friendly Plants for Wildfire Safety:

- Sierra Currant “Mountain Pink,” *Ribes Nevadense*
- Wood’s Rose, *Rosa Woodsii*
- Stonecrop, *Sedum spp.*
- Creeping Snowberry, *Symphoricarpos mollis*
- Blue Elderberry, *Sambucus cerulea*





Tahoe Elements: Beneficial Wildlife Habitat

Living in harmony with wildlife. Consider the pros and cons of which critters you want to invite in your yard.

Berries, seeds and leaves are an important food source for birds, mammals and beneficial insects and plants provide nesting materials and shelter from predators and the elements.



Tahoe Elements: Beneficial Wildlife Habitat

Tahoe Friendly Garden:

- Encourages wildlife habitat
 - Butterfly gardens (host & nectar plants)
 - Riparian corridors, transition zones
- Utilizes deterrents around favorite plants or vegetables
 - Fencing
 - Natural plant borders like: sage, Echinacea & peonies are deer deterrents

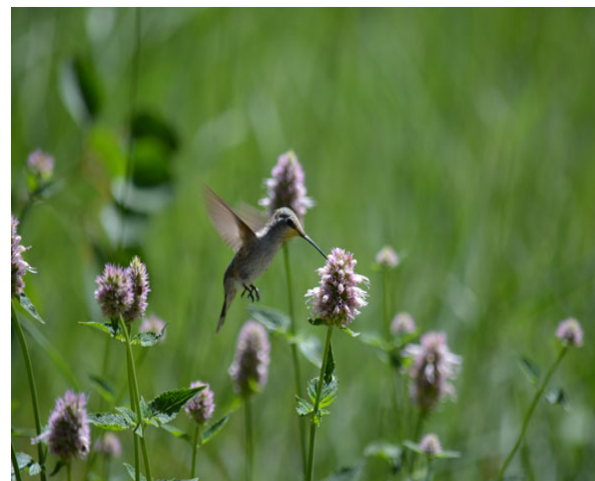




Tahoe Elements: Beneficial Wildlife Habitat

5 Tahoe Friendly Plants for Wildlife:

- Coneflower, *Rudbeckia californica* (attracts bees and other pollinators)
- California fuschia, *Epilobium canum* spp. *Canum* (attracts hummingbirds)
- Creeping mahonia, *Mahonia repens* (attracts pollinators and birds)
- Scarlet Bee Balm, *Monarda didyma*
- Blanket flower, *Gaillardia pulchella*



Megan's Favorite

Gaillardia aristata (Blanket flower)



- Tahoe Adapted
- Pollinator plant
- Beautiful as cut flower
- Likes dry soils and needs lots of sun



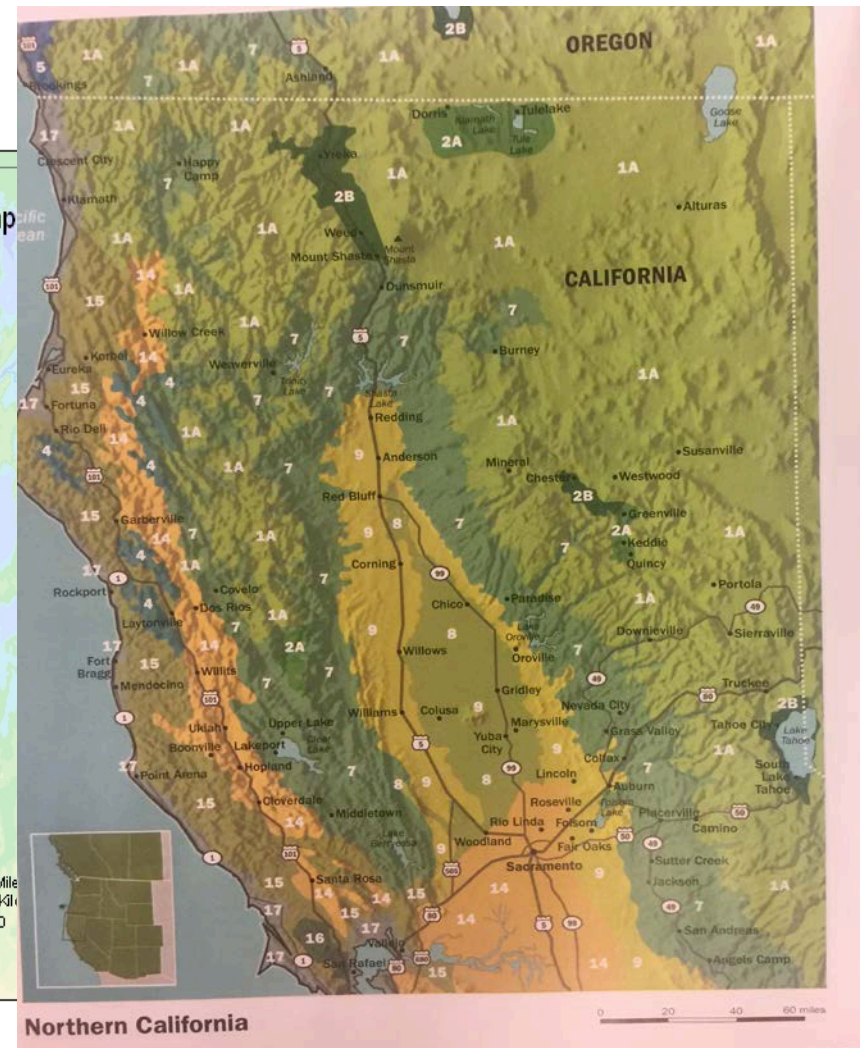
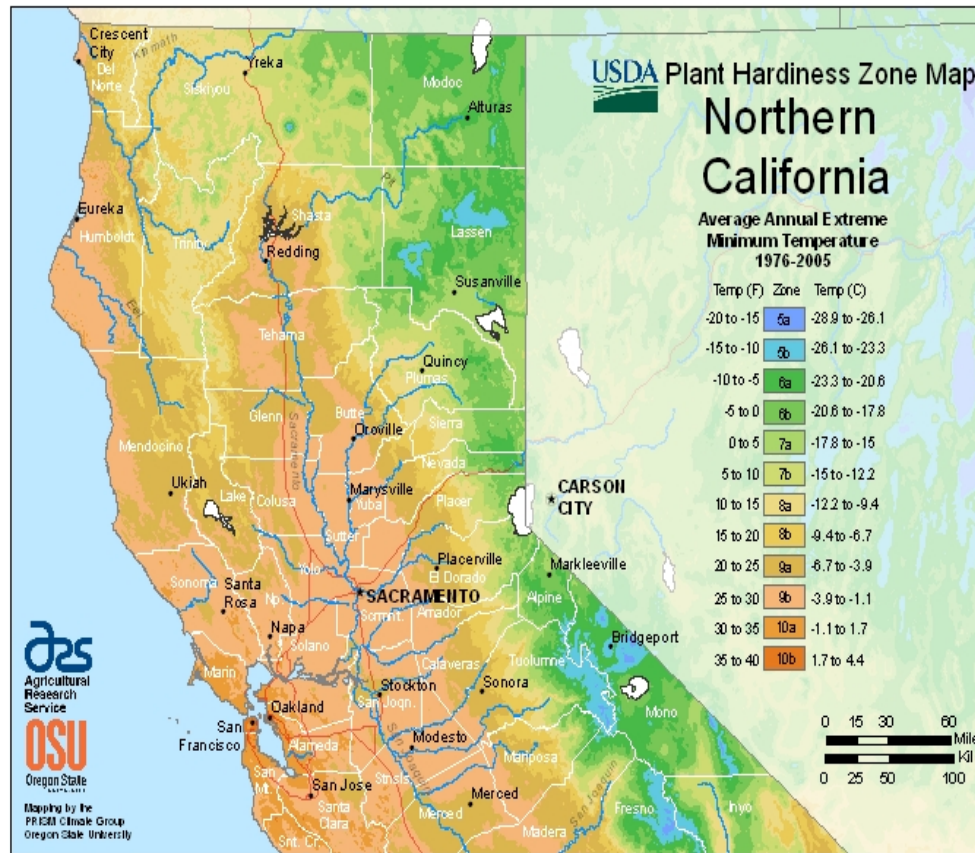
Criteria for Selecting the “*Right Plants*”



- Evaluate your Current Conditions
- Know your Hardiness Zones
- Plant types (groundcovers, flowers, shrubs, trees)
- Garden structure (placement, spacing, heights, colors, bloom schedules, usage)
- Native vs. Non-native
- Maintenance Considerations

Hardiness Zones

USDA zones vary between 5a (-15 to -20) to 6b Sunset zones 2B (CA) and 1A (NV)



Plant Types



- *Ground covers*
- *Flowering Plants*
(annuals vs. perennials)
- *Shrubs*
- *Trees*

Groundcovers

Steppable Ground Covers

[Not Shown]

Mertha requienii (Corsican mint): adapted, 1" height, sun to part shade, medium water needs, moderate traffic, rapid growth



Origanum vulgare 'Aureum' (golden marjoram): adapted, 3"-6" height, sun to part shade, minimal to medium water needs, drought tolerant, moderate traffic



Persicaria affinis (Himalayan Border Jewel): 6" height, sun to part shade, medium water needs, drought tolerant once established, long blooming, light traffic



Potentilla neumanniana 'Nana' (creeping cinquefoil): adapted, 2" height, full sun to part shade, medium

water needs, drought tolerant, heavy traffic, rapid growth.



Sagina subulata (Irish moss) or *Sagina subulata* 'Aurea' (Scotch moss): adapted, 1" height, part to full shade, medium water needs, high traffic, great for between rocks, thick with white flowers in spring



Sedum groundcover varieties: adapted, 3"-6" height, sun to part shade, minimal water needs, moderate traffic, drought tolerant, rapid growth, many sedum groundcovers available



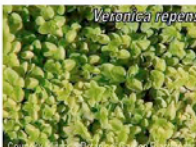
Symphoricarpos mollis (creeping snowberry): native, 1'-1.5' height, spreading, part shade, minimal to moderate water needs, light traffic, white fruit in fall



Thymus serpyllum 'Elfin' (elfin thyme): adapted, 1" height, sun to part shade, minimal water needs, drought tolerant, heavy traffic, easy to transplant, other varieties available



Trifolium repens (white clover): adapted, 6" height, sun to part shade, medium moisture needs, heavy traffic, mowable



Veronica repens 'Sunshine' (golden creeping speedwell) and *V. repens* (creeping speedwell): adapted, 1" height, part shade to sun, low water needs, moderate traffic, easy to transplant

Elfin Thyme



Note: Depending on site specific conditions, cultural practices, and individual seed or plant vigor, plant establishment, needs and care may vary. This is not a complete list.

In California:
Tahoe Resource Conservation District
(530) 543-1501 ext. 113
info@tahoe-rccd.org
TahoeRCD.org

NRCS
Natural Resources
Conservation Service
THE NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION
SERVICE IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
EMPLOYER AND PROVIDER

**UC
CE**

University of California

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Cooperative Extension

Becca's Favorite Groundcovers

Sedum



Spreads aggressively – good thing we have winter. Red flowers in Mid Summer. Photo taken 4/25/2018

Ajuga – Bugle Flower



Spreads aggressively – 6" tall Blue flower in late May, Early June. Photo taken 4/25/2018

Becca's Favorite Groundcovers

Vinca - Periwinkle



Not as aggressive as Sweet Woodruff or Ajuga – blooming now - Photo taken 4/25/2018.

Sweet Woodruff



Spreads easily. Sweet white flowers in May. Photo taken 4/25/2018

Flowers



Rocky Mountain Penstemon –
Penstemon strictus



Crainsbill – *Geranium*
viscosissimum



Colombine - *Aquilegia formosa*

Darya's Favorite

Nepeta spp., Walker's Low



Shrubs



Cinquifol - *Potentilla fruticosa*



Chokecherry - *Prunus virginiana* var. *demissa*



Arctostaphylos patula



Trees



Jeffery Pine – *Pinus jeffreyi*



Vine Maple – *Acer Circinatum*



Purple Leaf Plum - *Prunus cerasifera 'Atropurpurea'*

Garden Design

- Placement
- Spacing
- Heights
- Colors
- Bloom schedules
- Usage
- Style



Natives, Adapted or Non-natives

Native Plants are:

- Adapted to our Tahoe climate
- Lower nutrient and water needs
- Some are slow-growing and take on interesting forms
- Many do best when neglected



Benefits of Native Plants



- Well drained soil
- Lots of sun
- Only small amount of organic matter; no fertilizer
- Little to no deadheading (perennials)
- Occasional rejuvenation pruning (trees & shrubs)
- Avoid overwatering

Maintenance Considerations



- Mulching
- Soil amending
- Dividing
- Pruning
- Dead heading
- Pest management



CHOOSE WISELY!

Low Maintenance Perennial

- Life Span of 5 + years
- Cold Hardiness
- Heat, dryness & moisture tolerance
- Does NOT require frequent division
- Does NOT require staking
- Insect & disease resistant
- Does NOT require numerous prunings
- Not invasive
- Does NOT require heavy fertilizing

Evaluate Garden Conditions

- Soil type
- Water/Irrigation System:
- Microclimates in your yard
- Right plant, right place



Evaluate—soil conditions



- Sand
- Loam
- Clay

Evaluate—watering

- How do you water now?
- How would you prefer to water?
 - SUCCESS = Automated watering
 - Drip irrigation
 - Maintenance
 - Conservation
- Group plants by water needs = Hydrozoning



Evaluate - Microclimates

Shady

- Not all plants tolerate shade

Sunny

- Increases water use

Windy

- Increases water use
- Lowers temperature

Low-lying

- Cold air settles



Many microclimates also exist in the built environment.

Evaluate—right plant, right place

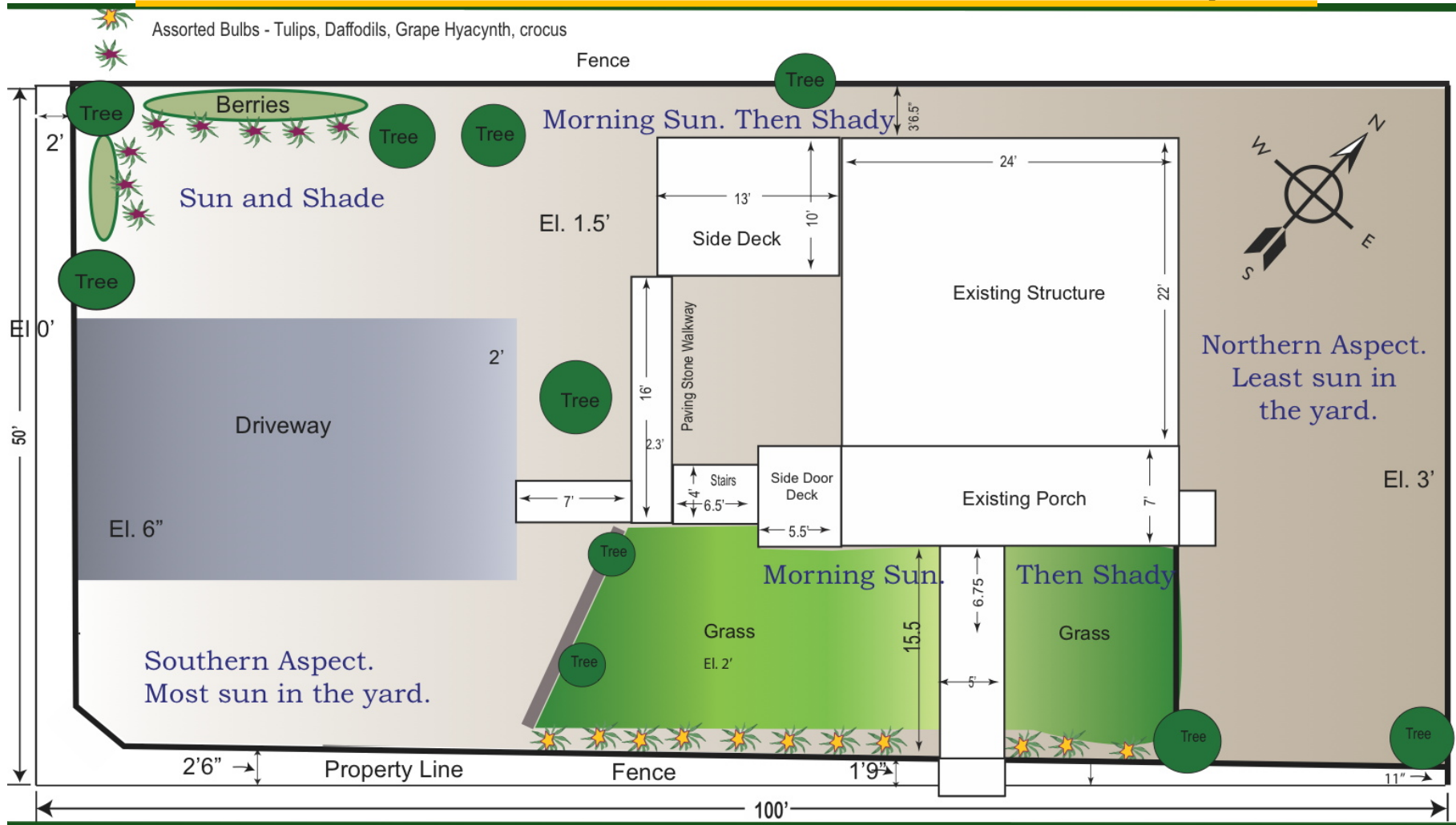
- Climate appropriate
- Microclimate
- Plant types
- Garden design
- Soil conditions
- Watering plan
- Habitat



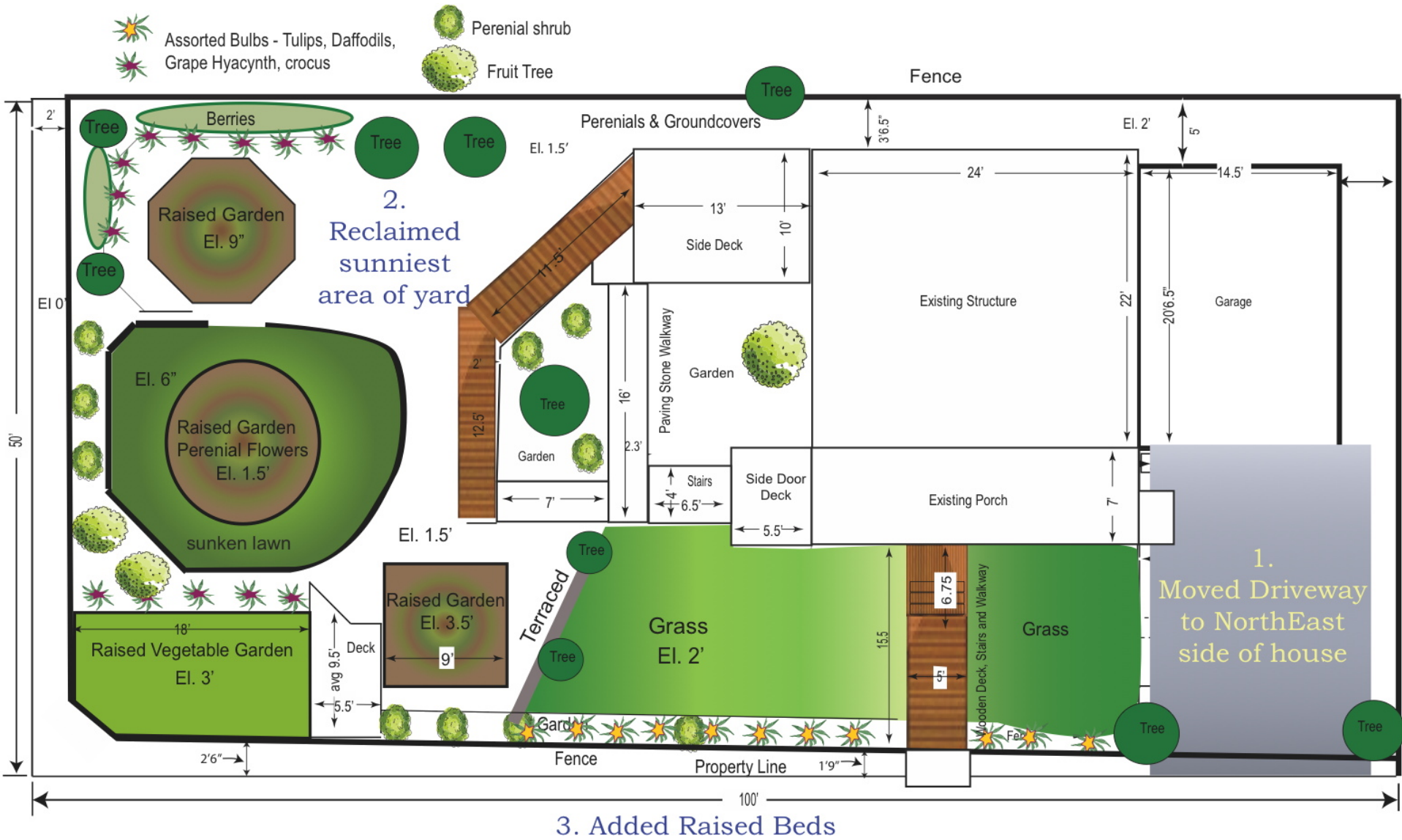
Before



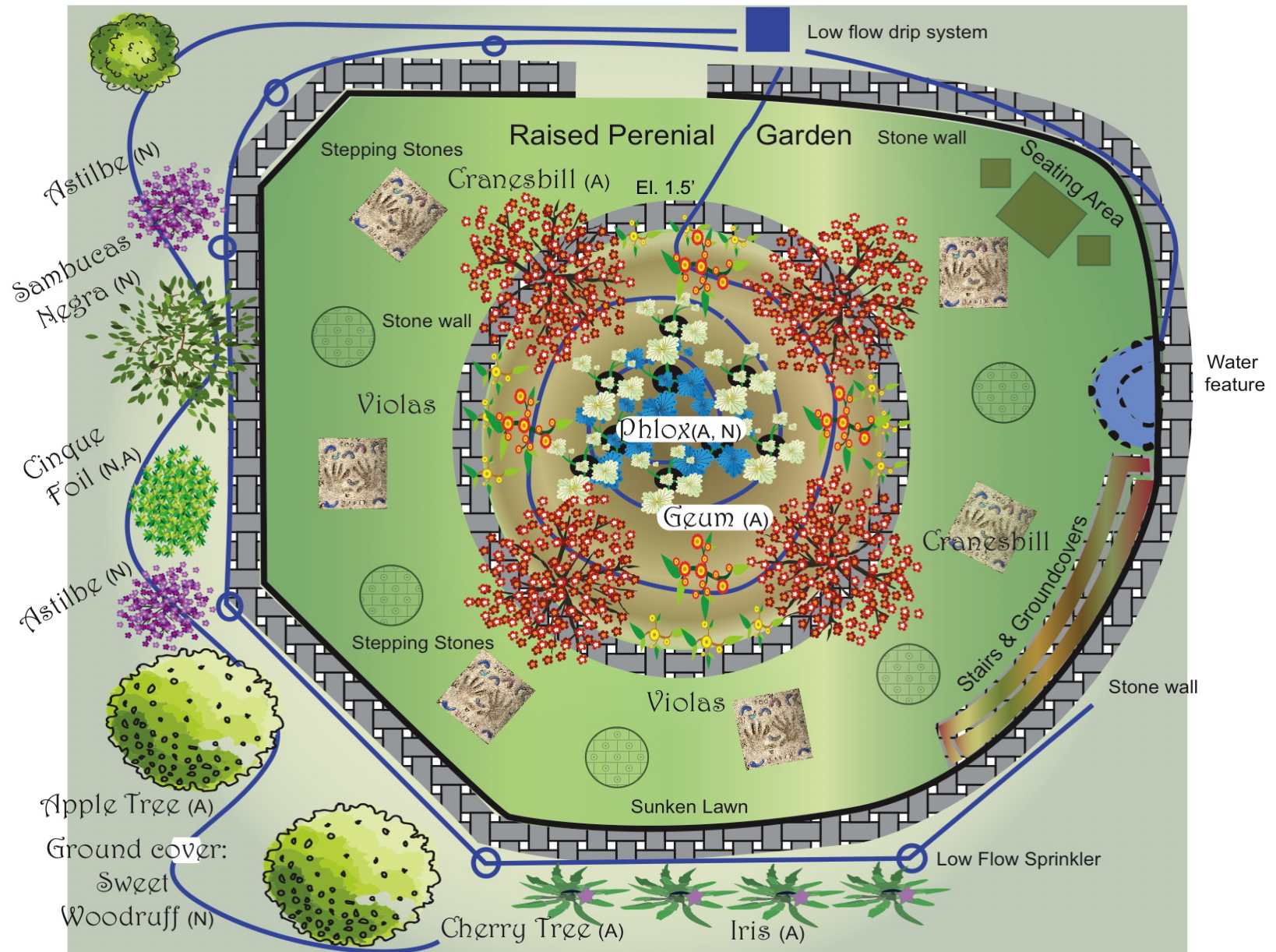
Site Plan: Microclimates & Sun Aspects



Rearranging Lot for Best Sun



Central Raised Bed



Mature Raised Bed



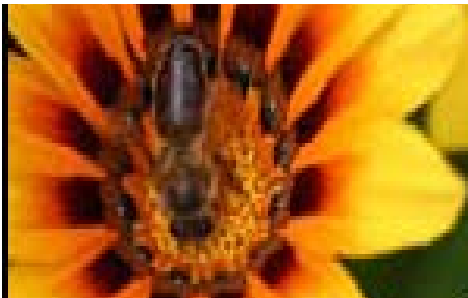


Keep in touch...

UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe

http://cecentralsierra.ucanr.edu/Master_Gardeners/LTMG/

530-314-8383



University of California

Agriculture and Natural Resources

Cooperative Extension