

'Re-Grow' Volunteers Plan A Plant Giveaway To Aid Recovery After Wildfires

Leimone Waite, Master Gardener, March 13, 2020



File photo - A Shasta College plant sale is seen in this 2017 photo. (Photo: Jay Thesken)

Q: Can you tell me more about the Re-Grow Shasta project that I am hearing about from Master Gardeners?

A: This project started in the fall of 2018 when Master Gardeners wanted to do something for the thousands of home owners who lost homes and landscaping during the Carr fire and other local fires of 2018.

Initially we started with bulbs, wild flower seeds, native plants and a few other plants that master gardeners brought to meetings to be divided or started from cuttings. The initial plan was to quickly get plants back into burned areas so that folks could stabilize soil and also have something that would grow in the spring and bring them hope for recovery.



File photo - Native plants are seen in this 2017 photo. (Photo: Jay Thesken)

Many master gardeners and folks from the McConnell Foundation, California Native Plant Society and the Shasta College Horticulture Club jumped in to help with getting plants ready for our first plant giveaway in October of 2018. At this first plant giveaway we also wanted to have information available on soil stabilization, rebuilding and resources available for cleanup and rebuilding.

With this in mind master gardener volunteer Vickie Wolf worked tirelessly so that local agencies like the Western Shasta Resource Conservation District, the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the California Native Plant Society were in attendance to help answer questions. She also contacted Hedgerow Farms in Winters and requested a donation of wildflower seed that was distributed to homeowners in the burn areas. Over 400 plants were given out at that first event and since then we have had two other plant giveaways with several hundred more plants distributed.

Last fall, one of our long time master gardener volunteers, Jack, passed away and his family left his large cacti and succulent collection to the Re-Grow Shasta project. Some were given away last fall, but we have more to give away as master gardeners have been propagating some of them so that Jack's cacti now have "grandbabies" as one of our master gardeners calls them.

We have another plant giveaway coming up on March 28 from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Shasta College Farm. The plants are free to anyone who had landscaping that experienced burn related trauma due to the Carr Fire or other recent fires and needs replacement trees, shrubs or plants.

Each family is welcome to come pick up to 10 plants even if they have received plants from Shasta Master Gardeners and Re-Grow Shasta project in the past.

Volunteers have started plants and trees and have hundreds to be given away. Many of the plants are California native plants and trees.

Master gardeners and members from the local chapter of the California Native Plant Society will be on site to answer questions about erosion control, replanting and landscaping.

For more information please contact the Master Gardener Office at 242-2219 or Leimone Waite, coordinator, Shasta College and UC Master Gardener Program, Shasta College horticulture instructor, 242-2210.

The Shasta Master Gardeners Program can be reached by phone at 242-2219 or email mastergardener@shastacollege.edu. The gardener office is staffed by volunteers trained by the University of California to answer gardeners' questions using information based on scientific research.