

How can you help natural areas?

- Learn which plants are weeds
www.denvergov.org/natural_areas
- Watch areas change, but be patient as the process takes time
- Report weed infestations that can spread into natural open space
- Report illegal dumping in open space areas
- Volunteer for weed control
- Visit our website for more information on the Natural Areas Program
www.denvergov.org/natural_areas



HOW MOWING WILL CHANGE

Mowing will change in selected areas of Denver to provide greater benefits



The changes will:

- Conserve water and other natural resources
- Reduce maintenance time and costs
- Restore native plants and improve biological diversity
- Improve breeding habitats and food sources for birds and animals
- Provide people with broader opportunities to appreciate and learn about nature
- Improve environmental quality by reducing pollutants to water and air
- Control noxious weeds and improve competitive ability of native grasses and flowers

City and County
of Denver



For information on mowing
call Natural Resources
303-698-4906

How mowing will change



Seasonal timing

Many non-native weeds actively grow in spring and are referred to as “cool season” plants. Some of our native species are dormant in early spring and grow more actively as the season gets warmer. These are referred to as “warm season” plants.

Cool season weeds use soil moisture and nutrients before native plants get going. If we mow the undesirable cool season plants early, the native plants gain a more competitive edge.

Selective mowing

There are many native plants growing among non native, less desirable species. Instead of mowing the entire landscape, we will only mow the undesirable plants.

Less frequent mowing of native plants

A longer interval between mowing allows native plants to grow taller, stronger, more drought resistant, and produce flowers and seeds for their own reproduction and for wildlife food.

Managing plant growth

Knowing the plants we mow is key to managing their growth. Mowing some weeds may promote the spread of underground stems. However frequent mowing can reduce the plant's ability to build food reserves, weakening and putting them under stress.



Managing plant height

Varying mowing height can encourage growth of one species over another. For example, cutting tall weedy plants allows more sunlight, moisture, and nutrients for more desired plants.

Preventing seed production

Mowing right before or during seed production weakens a plant's ability to compete as well as reduces its ability to spread or disperse seeds to other areas.

Protecting wildlife

Mowing plants at different heights creates transitions between types of vegetation. This can make useful wildlife cover.

For example, leaving areas of taller vegetation can reduce conflicts between people and prairie dogs. Prairie dogs are less likely to venture out to explore areas if they can't see what is on the other side.

Mowing can also be scheduled to protect nesting habits of ground nesting wildlife such as horned larks, meadowlarks, and killdeer.

