

ASLA Code of Environmental Ethics

Preamble

Members of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) should make every effort within our sphere of influence to enhance, respect, and restore the life-sustaining integrity of the landscape for all living things.

Members should work with clients, review and approval agencies, and local, regional, national, and global governing authorities to educate about, encourage, and seek approval of environmentally positive, financially sound, and sustainable solutions to land-use, development, and management opportunities.

The following tenets are the basis of the ASLA Code of Environmental Ethics:

- The health and well-being of biological systems and their integrity are essential to sustain human well-being.
- Future generations have a right to the same environmental assets and ecological aesthetics as presently exist.
- Long-term economic survival is dependent upon the natural environment.
- Environmental stewardship is essential to maintain a healthy environment and a high quality of life for the earth.

Ethical Standards

As landscape architects and members of ASLA, we have an ethical obligation to:

ES1 Act responsibly in design, planning, management, and policy decisions affecting the health of natural resources, a synopsis of which follows:

ES1.1 Support planning, design, and construction policies and regulations that will enhance air quality such as multi-modal transportation facilities and measures to reduce fugitive dust, greenhouse gas emissions, and volatile organic compounds.

ES1.2 The coastal zone and its resources should be carefully preserved, developed, and used in a planned, regulated, and responsibly managed manner.

ES1.3 Non-native invasive species adversely impact the ecological function of natural systems worldwide. Non-native invasive species should not be introduced where those species could contribute to the degradation of the environment, and long-term maintenance and management programs should be established to control or remove non-native invasive species from land and water.

ES1.4 National Parks should be created, expanded, and professionally managed to preserve cultural heritage, provide educational experiences, and maintain critical ecological reserves of biodiversity.

ES1.5 Preservation of ample, ecologically diverse, interconnected open space should be incorporated into every planning effort, from the regional to the site level.

ES1.6 Historic sites, districts, and cultural landscapes should be identified, inventoried, evaluated, classified, protected, and enhanced so that they are available for the education and enjoyment by present and future generations.

ES1.7 Public lands should be managed for ecosystem stewardship and biodiversity; assess other uses based on long-term sustainability.

ES1.8 Rural landscapes and communities are a limited resource with vital ecological, economic and cultural qualities that should be conserved as the competing needs of a growing population are met.

ES1.9 State, regional, and local governments should continue to build on the strong nationwide legacy of parks and other protected public areas to preserve lands of significance for future generations and to provide safe and healthful outdoor recreational opportunities for all citizens, while conserving landscape character and environmental, historic, and cultural resources.

ES1.10 Transgenic plants should be regulated and used judiciously only after long-term empirical studies indicate that they will cause no adverse environmental effects.

ES1.11 The appropriate use of vegetation in the built environment is a major influence on the quality of life in a healthy environment; native plants should be integrated into the built environment to increase sense of place and reduce needs for irrigation and maintenance.

ES1.12 The quality of the visual environment is as important as that of natural, historic, and cultural resources and should be protected, enhanced and maintained by careful stewardship.

ES1.13 Water resources should be used efficiently and allocated equitably; all forms of water pollution should be eliminated to maximize the availability of safe drinking water; land use should conserve water and related ecosystems to sustain both human communities and natural ecosystems.

ES1.14 The natural and cultural elements of waterways should be protected through the systems of national, state, and local designation of rivers and greenways to facilitate their integrity and use by present and future generations.

ES1.15 Wetlands are essential to the quality of life and the well-being of the earth's ecosystems; wetland resources should be protected, conserved, rehabilitated and enhanced; and careful site-specific development and management efforts should allow for compatible land use while preserving the ongoing functions of wetland resources.

ES1.16 The principles of land-use planning and design and the principles of wildlife habitat protection should be integrated to promote the enhancement, protection, and management of landscapes that support wildlife and ecosystem biodiversity.

ES2 Support and facilitate the public affairs policy statements of the Society, a synopsis of which follows:

ES2.1 Protect agricultural areas from incompatible or encroaching development, and support sustainable practices in agriculture, silviculture, and animal husbandry that: protect air and water quality; promote biodiversity; and balance the conservation of soil, native habitats and wetlands with the provision of fresh, healthy food and other agricultural products.

ES2.2 Support the regulation of outdoor signage so that public safety and the visual quality of the environment are not diminished.

ES2.3 Support the development and use of educational tools to promote an understanding of the interdependence between the natural and built environments.

ES2.4 Support planning and design decision-making processes that provide for fair and meaningful public participation opportunities for all communities and interests.

ES2.5 Urge policy makers to employ sustainable design policies and practices, minimize environmental degradation, avoid excessive consumption, and respect the needs of future generations.

ES2.6 Support the creation of affordable housing choices in livable communities that include a mix of land uses, are built and sited sustainably, incorporate universal design and are properly related to open spaces and transportation options.

ES2.7 Promote planning and design practices that have a positive impact on human health and well-being by promoting active lifestyles, mitigating the impacts of environmental stressors such as air pollution and heat, and providing a diversity of public spaces that foster social interaction and contact with nature.

ES2.8 Promote the creative planning, design and management of communities that respect ecological and cultural systems, promote economic development, strive for social equity, and provide places for positive social interaction.

ES2.9 Support the design and placement of commemorative memorials in a manner that respects the physical and cultural environment while providing opportunity for education, celebration or healing.

ES2.10 Advocate the regulation of outdoor lighting in land use plans and ordinances, to reflect best practices that increase efficiency, reduce energy consumption, and improve aesthetics.

ES2.11 Support the profession in its advocacy for a unified voice on designed projects of national significance.

ES2.12 Develop planning, design and management solutions through open, participatory design processes that engage the public and stakeholders and create better communities and healthier environments.

ES2.13 Encourage initiatives to provide security measures that are designed as integral components in the landscape while providing the required security.

ES2.14 Support integrating comprehensive transportation with natural systems analysis, including the design, construction, and management of streets and highways that enhance interconnected transportation options, particularly for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and people with disabilities.

ES2.15 Promote the principles of Universal Design that create equal use by all people via integral components of design, without separation or segregation of any users.

ES2.16 Advocate implementation of land use policies at the local, state, and federal levels that enable and encourage urban and local agriculture.

ES2.17 Advocate for the sustainable development of our urban environments through responsible social, economic, and ecological practices, and encourage communities to adopt policies that promote in-fill and redevelopment utilizing existing infrastructure rather than development patterns that result in urban sprawl.

ES3 Seek constant improvement in our knowledge, abilities, and skills; in our educational institutions; and in our professional practice and organizations.

ES3.1 Increase the ability to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public and natural environment through life-long learning, research, and intra-disciplinary collaboration among academic, private and public practitioners.

ES3.2 Develop and specify products, materials, technologies, and techniques that conserve resources and foster landscape regeneration.

ES3.3 Support licensure of the practice of landscape architecture as the most effective regulatory measure to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

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