

WYOMING NATIVE PLANT POSTER CONTEST

Open to all 6th - 8th grade students

Win \$250!

**Governor Gordon Has Declared
April 2026 Wyoming Native Plant Month**

**Create a poster illustrating the theme:
“Native Plants Benefit People”**



Contest Rules:

- **Three student winners will each receive a \$250 cash prize**
- **The teacher of each winner will also receive a \$250 cash prize**
- Winning artwork will be featured on the Wyoming Native Plant Society website and shared via social media channels
- Artwork of student winners will be framed and may be displayed at Wyoming libraries and later returned to the students

Contest Rules and Judging Criteria:

- All Wyoming 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students may submit one entry.
- Poster must be original artwork created by a 6th - 8th grade Wyoming student.
- Entries will be judged on the following criteria:
 - 1) Clearly illustrates how plants native to Wyoming benefit people;
 - 2) Accurately depicts the Wyoming native plants listed on the student entry form; and
 - 3) Creates a visually appealing and engaging composition that demonstrates creativity, a well-composed layout, and effective use of color and technique.
- The Entry Form must list the Wyoming native plants featured in the artwork.
- Artwork must be between 8.5” x 11” and 18” x 24”.
- Entries may be done in crayon, paint pens, watercolor, ink, acrylic, colored pencil, and/or tempera paint.
- Entries must be received by April 3, 2026 and mailed to: Kimberly McMorrow, 3465 North Pines Way, Ste. 104-52, Wilson, WY 83014.

**Sponsored by the
Wyoming Native Plant Society**

Native Plants Benefit People In Many Ways

Native Plants Are Adapted to Local Conditions and Need Less Water and Fertilizer



Wyoming is home to more than 2,500 native plant species. Native plants have evolved over thousands of years to adapt to the conditions of a particular region and to the plants and animals around them. Because they are well suited to local environments, native plants require less water, maintenance, and fertilizer than non-native plants. By reducing the need for fertilizers and pesticides, native plants help keep our water cleaner by limiting the amount of pollution that rainwater runoff carries into our waterways.

Native plants play a crucial role in protecting streams and rivers and maintaining healthy waterways for fish. Native willows stabilize riverbanks because their rapidly growing and dense roots hold stream bank soils and their bendable stems absorb flood energy, reducing erosion at the water's edge. Cottonwood trees help stabilize stream banks by growing deep roots that extend horizontally anchoring the soil and preventing whole sections of a bank from collapsing.

Native Plants Stabilize Soils and Prevent Erosion



Native Plants Sustain the Insects Responsible for Pollinating our Crops



Three-fourths of the world's flowering plants and about 35% of food crops depend on animal pollinators to reproduce—that's one out of every three bites of food you eat. Native plants evolved with local pollinators, such as native bees and butterflies and provide the nectar and pollen those species rely on to survive. For example, bees pollinate alfalfa flowers, allowing seeds to form in pods and new alfalfa plants to grow. Without bees, alfalfa flowers fall off and no seeds are produced.

Many native plants are edible and have long been used for medicinal purposes. For example, chokecherries have been used to make jams and pemmican, a calorie-dense food prepared from meat and berries. The common sunflower which grew wild across much of the U.S. was the breeding basis for all our sunflower seeds and oil. Native Americans have used native plants such as chokecherry, big mountain sagebrush, yarrow, and willow for medicinal purposes. Willow is notable because it contains salicin, a compound that became the basis for aspirin. Willows are also used to make furniture and baskets.

Many Native Plants are Edible and Have Been Used for Medicinal Purposes



Helpful Resources to Learn How Native Plants Benefit People

- Explore the Wyoming Native Plant Society [website](#) to learn about the importance of Wyoming native plants. **Click on the plants** in this [interactive poster](#) to learn about the benefits of native plants.
- Read about how people in different regions, cultures, and times have used plants [here](#).
- Read this [article](#) to learn how pollinators are critical to food crops.
- Watch this short [video](#) on the benefits of willows.
- Learn about the many uses of native plants [here](#).
- Learn about native plants that are both edible and medicinal through these books which may be available through your public library. *Edible Native Plants of the Rocky Mountains* by H.D. Harrington (1903); *Edible & Medicinal Plants of the Rockies* by L. Kershaw (1951); and *437 Edible Plants of the Rocky Mountain West: Berries, Roots, Nuts, Greens, Flowers, and Seeds* (2018) by C. Warnock.
- Your local [Conservation District](#) may have information about native plants in your region.

Entry Form

Deadline: Please attach a copy of this completed form to the back of the poster. Entries must be **received by no later than April 3, 2026** and mailed to: Kimberly McMorrow, 3465 N. Pines Way, Suite 104, Wilson, WY 83014. Artwork will not be returned except for winning entries.

Artist's Name: _____ Artist's School: _____

Artist's City (Must be in Wyoming): _____

Grade: _____ Age: _____

List the Wyoming native plants in the artwork and the benefits they provide on this Entry Form. For example, the dense roots of willows hold and stabilize soils along stream banks and their bendable stems absorb flood energy and reduce erosion.

Teacher's Name: _____

Teacher's Email and Phone Number: _____

If this student wins, where should the check and poster be mailed? _____

How did you hear about the contest? _____

Please note: Collages, computer or photo-generated art, works completed by multiple students, submissions that contain names of commercial products, companies, and/or organizations, or matted, mounted, laminated, framed or folded entries will NOT be considered.

