

Recommended Roosevelt Tree Replacement Options

Dustin Blakey, Inyo and Mono Counties Farm Advisor

These are in my order of preference, but any should be fine on that corner. All are evergreen.

California Incense Cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*) - 80 feet

A good choice. These are a bit slow to start but then get going. We know these do well in Big Pine near 395 as there are several in town. Some nice ones by the school. Once established these are tough trees. They usually live about 150+ years on the west side.

Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) - 90 feet

There are nice specimens behind the courthouse in Independence. These do well in Owens Valley. Will spread wide with age so don't plant another tree close by. When all goes well, they are very long lived. Looking at the health of the ones in Independence, I'd guess 100+ years is reasonable.

Colorado Blue Spruce (*Picea pungens* var. *glauca*) - 50 feet

Not as tall as the other species on this list, but with age it widens considerably. The books say 20 feet wide. Might get wider. They are long lived if they don't have problems. In Owens Valley they can get mites, but it is rare and seems to be more common over lawns on the northeast side. Not enough of an issue to worry about since every tree has some issue. *P. pungens* also comes in green-leaved forms as well. They became popular in the 1970s. There are many alive and doing well in Owens Valley.

Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodara*) - 60 feet

These are close relatives to *C. libani* and do very well in Owens Valley. They are not as tall due to their habit of having a "weeping" top and branches that droop somewhat. The form is beautiful but may not work exactly as a landmark until it is fairly old. In most landscapes it is a fantastic choice, but the extra size of the Cedar of Lebanon is more desirable.

Italian Cypress (*Cupressus sempervirens*) - 50 feet

These are the pointy exclamation marks in California's landscapes. For this site, probably planting 3 or 5 in a group would be best to add visual mass. They grow well in Owens Valley, but with age (40+ years) some can have some individual branches turn a bit wonky due to heavy snow. It is mostly noticeable only because of their neat, formal growth habit. Having more than one planted will reduce this effect visually, if it happens.

Giant Sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) - 150 feet

This is what was there before. It survived more than a century so not a bad choice. Eventually it will succumb again, but that may be another 100 years down the road. Who knows? This time you have the advantage of knowing the cause of death and could provide better oversight. Plus, there isn't much chance for the soil grade to change again. Worth considering, but not best.

Less Desirable Options – or Companion Trees

Jeffrey Pine (*Pinus jeffreyi*) - 100 feet

A good tree, but a little lower in elevation than it likes. Some concerns about the soil alkalinity at the location keep me from fully recommending it, but it may do better further from the corner with enough water. (Can say the same things about ponderosa pines, but why plant those?)

Singleleaf Pinyon (*Pinus monophylla*) - 30 feet

Not very tall but should survive the location with some extra care. Like Jeffrey pines, the valley floor is a lower than it would like. It has a higher chance of success than Jeffrey pine and can tolerate alkalinity better.

Utah Juniper (*Juniperus osteospermum*) - 30 feet

Should have few problems although the valley is a little lower than it prefers. Not noted for being long lived in landscapes. Perhaps 75 to 100 years?

Canyon Live Oak (*Quercus chrysolepis*) - 50 feet

These are found on the east side on Oak Creek so we know they grow and are hardy. They are found higher up in elevation than the valley floor, but that could be because of access to water. For live oaks, this is the only reasonable option. Should be considered a bit experimental, but with a good chance of success. They get very wide with age.

Arborvitae (*Thuja* spp. & its hybrids) - 40 feet

We know these grow well in Owens Valley and have been used for a long time. 'Green Giant' is common in the nursery trade. Usually found in rows, it is also a fine tree planted alone or in groups. Probably over-planted which could lead to problems in the far future, but for now it works well. It does prefer having its west side protected from full sun here.

Poor Choices

These trees will not likely survive, or if they do, would be short-lived. Not recommended.

- Bristlecone pines
- Limber pine
- Lodgepole pine
- Foxtail pine
- Coast redwood (Dawn redwood, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, is OK but is deciduous.)
- Douglas, red, or white firs
- Arizona cypress
- Leyland cypress