

# MEETING SUMMARY - Day 2

## Independent Technical Panel (ITP) for Demand Management Measures

November 20, 2014 | Meeting #16

Prepared by the Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS

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### 1. MEETING SYNOPSIS

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Independent Technical Panel (ITP) for Demand Management Measures met for their sixteenth meeting on November 19 and 20, 2014 to accomplish the following meeting objectives:

1. Receive information from diverse landscape industry organizations and advocacy groups regarding water use efficiency opportunities and challenges in the landscape industry.
2. Engage in open dialogue with landscape industry and advocacy group representatives.
3. Identify initial objectives for ITP 2014-2015 work on landscape topics including potential format and schedule of recommendations.
4. Identify key topics to focus ITP time and staff resources on in support of future landscape topic recommendations.

Please visit the DWR webpage to review the associated meeting presentations and materials: <http://www.water.ca.gov/calendar/index.cfm?meeting=23102>

### 2. ACTION ITEMS

1. **Peter E.** to provide update to ITP on status of CLCA Water Manager Certification program
2. **Greg Weber** to develop abbreviated list of recommended actions, associated timetable, and summary of the CUWCC “New Normal” report for reference by the ITP

3. **Julie S.** to contact the “Save Our Water” campaign for updates on their campaign development and outreach plans.
4. **Peter B.** to circulate DWR’s 2007/08 full landscape report to ITP as reference document
5. **Dave C.** to contact San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board and request list of prohibited plants per stormwater LID requirements
6. **Peter B.** to confirm 1881 provides DWR discretion to revise MWEL0 as necessary
7. **Dave C.** to circulate the seven framing topics as stand-alone document
8. **Julie S.** to support securing panelists for next ITP meeting
9. **All ITP and public members** to submit any further comments to Julie, Peter, and Dave Ceppos via email

### 3. RECAP OF DAY ONE (NOV. 19<sup>TH</sup>) HIGHLIGHTS

During day one of the meeting, 13 panelists from various landscape industry organizations and advocacy groups presented to the ITP on (a) their respective current and anticipated challenges to achieve conservation goals and objectives, and (b) conservation practices they would recommend to the ITP.

A **summarization of the key points** made in each panelist’s presentation can be found here:

Document Title: Challenges and Recommendations to ITP

[http://www.water.ca.gov/calendar/materials/itp\\_-\\_panelist\\_challenges\\_recommendations\\_11-19-2014\\_18211.pdf](http://www.water.ca.gov/calendar/materials/itp_-_panelist_challenges_recommendations_11-19-2014_18211.pdf)

In response to these presentations, a **list of key topics to potentially focus ITP time and staff resources on in support of future landscape** ~~topic recommendations~~ **topic recommendations**

method for organizing the discussions had on day two. This document can be viewed here:

Document Title: ITP Organizing Topics from Day One

[http://www.water.ca.gov/calendar/materials/itp\\_organizing\\_topics\\_from\\_day\\_1\\_11-20-14\\_18210.pdf](http://www.water.ca.gov/calendar/materials/itp_organizing_topics_from_day_1_11-20-14_18210.pdf)

### KEY POINTS OF DISCUSSION

- ITP members acknowledged that water use efficiency as related to the landscape industry is an ambitious topic:
  - Nearly 4 million acre feet / year of water is committed to landscape water use annually.
  - ITP’s recommendations can provide tremendous value to the State.
  - When discussing recommendations that are actionable, ITP members should keep in mind opportunities for legislative actions, as well as administrative or educational initiatives relating to demand management measures and urban water conservation.
- The following themes were emphasized by multiple presenters from day one, and subsequently recognized by the ITP:

- The transition of **social norms** related to water conservation is largely customer-driven. Efforts should be made to increase public awareness of the “new normal” for California.
- **Unlicensed landscape maintenance service companies/individuals** are a key target audience for education. Companies/individuals are not required to be licensed if charging less than \$500/occurrence.
- The issue of **non-native and invasive plant species** requires further discussion. Appropriate plants should be used at the appropriate sites.
- **Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO)** requires a thorough assessment of functionality and use, e.g. where it is being reviewed, administered, audited or not audited, etc.
- Further discussion is needed on California Landscape Conservation Association’s (CLCA) **Irrigation Certification Program** and the possible opportunities to (a) leverage this program or (b) suggest recommendations to improve its effectiveness (relative to performance criteria, design, installation, maintenance)
- Improvements to **incentive programs** should be explored for soil-based sensors in addition to weather-based smart controllers (pricing, rebates, tax credits, etc.)
- **Localized issues** should also be addressed e.g. City of Santa Monica inclusion of parkways into plan reviews, enforcement of water use restrictions, etc.

**ACTION ITEM:** Peter E. to provide update to ITP on status of CLCA Water Manager Certification program

Based on presentations and discussion, the following framework was proposed for considering initial objectives for 2014-2015 ITP work:

1. Overarching Goals/ Framing
  - a. Watershed Approach
  - b. Integrated Governance
2. Performance Criteria
  - a. MWELO
  - b. Enforcement
  - c. Stormwater
  - d. Plant Use
3. Work Force
  - a. Design
  - b. Installation
  - c. Maintenance
  - d. Credentialing
  - e. Education
4. Incentives
  - a. Pricing
  - b. Tax Rebates
  - c. Enforcement

5. Social Norms
  - a. Plant use
  - b. Messaging and State-wide Branding
  - c. Customer Perceptions
6. Research
  - a. Data capture
  - b. Messaging (in terms of market research)
7. Codes & Standards
  - a. MWELO

**ACTION ITEM:** Dave C. to circulate the seven framing topics as stand-alone document

### OVERARCHING GOALS/FRAMING

- An overarching question to consider is “What is the goal of the State for water use?”
- ITP can support and encourage a watershed approach to residential, commercial, and institutional parcels.
  - Many agencies are interested in the same site but are not working together. There is a need to determine what the drivers are for the agencies (e.g. water sharing credits, etc.)
- California’s Urban Water Conservation Council’s (CUWCC) “New Normal” symposium document may be a good platform to draw from when clearly defining objectives and timelines.
  - CUWCC also works to facilitate agencies working together
  - **ACTION ITEM:** Greg Weber to develop abbreviated list of recommended actions, associated timetable, and executive summary of the CUWCC “New Normal” report for reference by the ITP

### EDUCATION & CERTIFICATION

- Education and certification may later be approached as separate topics of consideration:
  - Should classes be mandated for unlicensed landscape contactors, etc.?
  - What does continuing education mean to the various stakeholders?
  - Is there an opportunity to address gaps in education? For example, irrigation is an optional course, not a required course.
- ITP could consider recommending increased funding for regional and statewide messaging for water conservation.
  - WaterSense, a US Environmental Protection Agency partnership program, has professional certification programs that can be reviewed and possibly leveraged.
- Education is needed for those who are reviewing or enforcing water use performance standards.
- Several members would like to increase the budget for the statewide messaging campaigns.
  - Budgets for rebates

- Budgets for branding and messaging (note: ITP would not engage in brand development, but recommend that financial resources are dedicated to brand development)
  - One suggestion was “Save our Watershed.” Not a brand for the drought, rather a brand for the future encouraging sustainable living that also leverages the current sensitivity of the drought.
  - This recommendation may be stronger if it is included as part of the full report of the ITP after having vetted the issues of research, education, certification, etc.
  - Possible to learn from similar efforts such as “Save Our Water,” “Flex Your Power,” and “California Friendly”
- **ACTION ITEM: Julie S.** to contact the “Save Our Water” campaign for updates on their messaging and outreach plans.

### MWELo, CODES & STANDARDS

- A five-year of review of MWELo should be considered
  - When first adopted, MWELo was focused on commercial and public spaces. It excludes the residential market, which was identified as having the biggest impact on water use.
  - **ACTION ITEM: Peter B.** to confirm 1881 provides DWR discretion to revise MWELo as necessary
- Planning and permitting processes should be made more efficient for expediency and cost savings.
- Opportunity for landscape ordinances to be written in to building codes.
- Water waste enforcement efforts can be reviewed and improved upon.
  - Opportunity for California Conservation Corps to do landscape conversion.
  - How can the State make it easier for homeowners to schedule irrigation?
  - There is potential for ITP to recommend measures to improve water use efficiency that would concurrently meet other public management objectives, such as stormwater retention.
- **ACTION ITEM: Peter B.** to circulate DWR’s 2007/08 full landscape report
- There is a need for better understanding of the permissibility of rainwater capture and regulations in California.

### NON-NATIVE & INVASIVE PLANT MATERIAL

- In general, plant labeling as part of public education initiatives should be addressed:
  - Labeling of retail and commercial plants for high / moderate / low water use could be more pronounced.
  - Consider using “climate appropriate” terminology for plan labeling for positive reinforcement of behavioral change (as opposed to “drought-tolerant”).
- May explore future partnerships with big box stores, such as Home Depot, based on previous successful collaborations where Home Depot de-listed SKUs of invasive plants.

- There is a need to identify the most invasive and high-water use plants currently out on the market, and use this information as part of the ITP’s future recommendations to landscape contractors, etc.
  - Some plants require two or more years for water-use and soil-retention review. Several Universities are currently engaged in these efforts.
  - Beneficial to obtain a list of plants for southern California that can live on the extreme wet/dry cycle, surviving without water for nine+ months.
  - **ACTION ITEM: Dave C.** to contact San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board and request list of prohibited plants per stormwater LID requirements
  - Water Use Classification of Landscape Species (WOCULS) list is another reference list.
- Plant metrics are important, and may be further addressed in relation to performance criteria or incentives.
- Can also explore further the statewide tendencies of nursery operations, and address the issue of native plants being cultivated in inappropriate parts of the state (e.g. Redwoods being grown in the Central Valley).
- Keep open dialogue on traditional and new varieties of turf grass species.
  - Recent use of light box technology to scientifically identify drought stress in turf.
  - Some companies are currently developing California native grasses in sod form.
  - Efforts are being made for labeling maintenance instructions of turf grass (and other products). E.g. Sod X should be watered on Y schedule.

#### SUGGESTED FUTURE PANELISTS

- California State Licensing Board
- California Department of Food & Agriculture
- California Department of Fish & Wildlife
- CalTRANS or other public works department for stormwater infrastructure
- Irrigation Association
- WaterSense
- Joe Berg, Orange County
- Housing Organization Association
- Building industry design
- MWELo experts
- Save Our Water
- Flex Your Power
- California Association of Nurseries and Garden Centers (not priority)
- San Diego and Los Angeles Regional Boards (not priority)

## 4. GENERAL DISCUSSION – ITP OBJECTIVES FOR LANDSCAPE TOPIC

Many, if not all, of the topics discussed above need to be pursued in more detail.

Possible priority tasks for the ITP to address/recommend include:

- Development and agreement on the overarching goal for related ITP objectives for the landscape topic
- Examination of the \$500 threshold for unlicensed landscape contractors
- Product specifications for irrigation equipment
- Revision of building standards and codes
- Getting a requirement for updating MWELo every five years through legislation
- Labeling regimes for living landscape material
- Development of a statewide messaging campaign

ITP may pursue tasks in an iterative fashion. Such as:

- Drafting letters of recommendation
- Introducing spot bills later in the year
- Publishing a full report that may become the basis for legislation

Suggested Topics and Organization for ITP Meeting #17

- Panel discussion from select other groups noted above
- Prioritizing the overarching goals of the ITP
- Panelist discussion on MWELo and inconsistencies in performance criteria, codes and standards
- Other priority topics of discussion and ITP actionable next steps

**ACTION ITEM:** Julie S. to support securing panelists for next ITP meeting

**ACTION ITEM:** All ITP and public members to submit any further comments to Julie, Peter, and Dave Ceppos via email