

## PROPOSAL PAPER

### Independent Technical Panel on Demand Management Measures Final Report on California Landscape Water Use *01-13-16 Draft*

**Section #9** *(From the current draft outline)*

**Section Title:** Public Perceptions and Social Norms *(From the current draft outline)*

**Recommendation #1:** Defining Professionals, recognition of examples of low water use landscapes and a sustainable statewide approach to outreach and information.

**Authors:** Peter Estournes, William Granger, Jeff Stephenson

#### **Background:**

During its investigative process and discussions with horticulture industry professionals and public officials, the ITP found a significant lack of information into the process and procedures to locate and hire the correct level of professional for residential landscaping. The differences between landscape designers, Landscape Architects, Landscape Contractors, garden centers and irrigation professionals is typically not known or clear to homeowners in need of landscape services. Often and unknowingly, homeowners turn to unlicensed operators using cost to determine who to hire. The end result is often a landscape that is not designed and installed to industry standards, and therefore, not as water-efficient or aesthetically pleasing as desired. In the end, it is every homeowner's responsibility to be a water manager, both inside and outside of their home. And when asked, nearly all homeowners say they conserve water. Unfortunately, when pressed further about their water conservation activities it becomes apparent that most homeowners lack basic information on water conservation. In addition, most do not measure or track their actual water use nor are they knowledgeable about their irrigation systems or the type of plant material in their yards. To assist these homeowners there needs to be easily accessible examples of local and regional landscapes that are designed, installed and managed for low water use. Furthermore, a methodology for a sustainable (long-term) approach to educate and outreach to homeowners with respect to the proper design, installation and management of low water use landscapes needs development, including information on how to identify the appropriate landscape professional for each type of project.

#### **Recommended Action:**

The definitions, roles and requirements of and for landscape professionals should be made easily available to homeowners in order to provide them with informed choices when considering landscape services. Examples of well-designed and correctly installed low water using landscapes should be available, easily obtained and recognized on a local level. The WUCOLS website and plant list should also be readily available and easy to use.

#### **Proposal:**

The Department of Water Resources in partnership with ACWA will convene a work group with representatives from academia, the CUWCC, industry and others to develop an educational campaign for homeowners that identifies the variety of professional horticulture services available in the marketplace. The campaign will also identify and make available to homeowners examples of properly designed and installed low-water use landscapes for each of the state's climate zones. Included in the

campaign will be information on how homeowners can access and utilize the WUCOLS plant list. Initial steps include:

1. Convene representatives from horticulture groups (landscape designers, architects, and contractors), academia, irrigation manufacturers and distributors, nurseries (wholesale and retail), water agencies, industry trade organizations and consultants.
2. Review of and search for existing definitions and campaigns and current levels of funding.
3. Identify services performed by each type of landscape professional.
4. Identify process to obtain examples of low water use landscapes.
5. Identify user friendly platform to access WUCOLS.
6. Consider the role of invasive plants.
7. Consider the role of and how to address concerns related to unlicensed operators (e.g. lack of insurance, etc.).
8. Develop metrics to evaluate residential type of work for current professionals. Identify who typically does what and what is working, what is not working and where the gaps are in the different roles.
9. Develop marketing campaign to promote WUCOLS plant list and its use.
10. Select the criteria for creating the information and identify how to best disseminate (e.g. through the realtor community, water agencies, cities, retail garden stores, etc.).
11. Develop an implementation plan that includes a timeline for program roll-out, a list of deliverables, roles and responsibilities, and impact evaluation to measure effectiveness.

EXTRACTED from Table in 6.1 to consider including in either Section 9 or 10:

Invasive Plants – prohibit invasive plants	§492.6	(a)(1)(G) The use of invasive plant species, such as those listed by the California Invasive Plant Council, is <del>strongly discouraged</del> . <u>prohibited</u>	Prohibiting the use of invasive plants would support local, regional, and state-wide efforts to protect watersheds by reducing the spread of these ecologically harmful plants and by decreasing the need for costly and time-intensive removal efforts.
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