

SECTION 5: IMPROVEMENTS IN EXISTING LANDSCAPES

RECOMMENDATION #3: State Owned Facilities

Background

There are nearly three thousand ~~state-publically~~ owned facilities in the State of California¹, ~~with an currently unknown total of much of the land area is irrigated. It is assumed that most of the land area is in natural habitats such as in state parks, for example, and as a result left unirrigated~~with a cumulative approximation of ~~XXX,XXX acres [citation pending] of landscaped area. In addition,~~~~In addition,~~ there are approximately 2,300 properties leased by the State¹, and the State has some influence on the landscaping and landscape maintenance practices at these facilities.

Per Governor Brown's Executive Order (EO) B-18-12, all State operated facilities are required to report annual water use to the Energy Star Portfolio. According to ~~2012-2015~~2014 data, ~~14.8 billion gallons amount~~ of water ~~based on benchmarking by DGS [citation pending]~~ is utilized by State facilities annually. ~~In total,~~~~Additional data compilation is on-going to determine the an~~ estimated ~~XX,XXX acres that [citation pending]~~ could potentially undergo landscape conversion to sustainable, drought-tolerant landscaping at publicly owned facilities. Estimated ~~water savings from feasible land~~landscape conversions ~~associated with irrigated landscapes could result in savings of up to XX AFY [citation pending]. may be estimated when more data is available to complete the analysis (DGS, March, 2016).~~

EO No. B-18-12 aimed to address landscape water use on State operated facilities. However, there was a lack of implementation resulting from funding difficulties. Overall, the budget estimate to support ~~this effort is \$___ Million [citation pending]. still needs to be quantified such that a legislative budget proposal may be completed.~~

The ~~state-majority of the State's publicly~~ owned sites ~~have design oversight and/or are managed by either many state departments, including the DGS, State Architect,~~ ~~or the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR), California Highway Patrol (CHP), CalFire.~~ The State Architect oversees the building of all ~~public,~~ K-12 and ~~University community college~~ buildings. ~~Recently, t~~The State Architect has established their own version of the California Green Standards Building Code (CALGreen), ~~with an and recently~~ adopted ~~an~~ ordinance for water use in 2015.

There are approximately 2,400 higher education institutions throughout the ~~State~~State ~~all overseen by the State Architect.~~ Many of these institutions, such as University of California and

¹ Department of General Services, Statewide Inventory of Property as of February 1, 2016
<http://www.dgs.ca.gov/resd/Home/SPIhomepage/SPISummary.aspx>

California State University facilities, already operate at a high standard of landscape management and have dedicated staff for maintenance. There are also college water efficiency groups where staff on campuses work collaboratively to employ initiatives to cut water use. While the majority of campus water use is either indoors or for athletic fields, nearly all landscaped areas can be irrigated with a higher degree of efficiency.

CalTrans is also a primary water user of the State, with approximately 30,000 acres of land under their jurisdiction requiring approximately 9 billion gallons of water annually. CalTrans received a directive from the governor resulting from the severe drought conditions, and set its own goal to reduce water demand by 50%. It is recognized that~~though~~ additional measures could be implemented with additional appropriated resources.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this recommendation is to ensure that landscapes of State owned facilities are meeting or exceeding water use efficiency standards. In this way, the State can lead by example, provide education on sustainable landscaping, and promote stewardship towards landscape water use efficiency.

It is recommended that facilities with customer service buildings be addressed with the highest priority as they are frequented by a significant number of people and thus have high visibility. Their “lead by example” demonstrations will further help to educate the public, demonstrating ideas of how beautiful California-friendly sustainable landscaping can be.

This recommendation is encouraged to be applied at federally owned facilities, and State university and college campuses.

The Independent Technical Panel Recommends That:

The ~~Department of General Services~~each state agency responsible for its facilities be provided with sufficient authority, funding and resources, in collaboration the California Department of Water Resources to implement sustainable landscaping at its facilities, including the following actions:
with the State Architect:

- 1) The State (oversee by all appropriate state agencies) shall to continue to update and maintain per Government Code 11100,² sustainable landscaping initiatives through implementation of Management Memo directives. Lack of current funding should be resolved to allow for more full execution of these directives.

² CalTrans has a large platform developed for online training of Best Management Practices (BMPs). This training platform can be utilized to provide water training to other state agencies. This would leverage the financial investment the State has already made.

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2) At minimum, require all state owned facilities to comply with Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELo) including water budget requirements pursuant to Section 493.1 by January 1, 2021. Said compliance should include mandatory rainwater and/or stormwater capture where site conditions permit.

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3) Have an overarching goal to retrofit all State-owned buildings or facilities from traditional landscape/turf to sustainable landscaping within 20 years. Note that functional/recreational, or registered historical site landscape is exempted from this requirement.

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4) Prioritize for retrofit State-owned customer service buildings (any building that is open to the public and that agency customers commonly visit) from traditional ornamental turf to sustainable landscaping at a rate of 10% per year (to achieve complete retrofit in 10 years)³. Note that functional/recreational, or registered historical site landscape is exempted from this requirement. These sites may be prioritized based on the level of visitation by the public.

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5) Where feasible and known high visibility, install demonstration/educational signage identifying sustainable landscaping and water resulting water savings on select landscapes, primarily around customer service buildings. It is assumed that this may encompass up to 10-20% of the customer service buildings in the state depending on the threshold for visitation set in updated Management Memos or other directives to state owned facilities.

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~~1) State shall Retrofit all State-owned buildings or facilities from traditional landscape/turf to sustainable landscaping within 20 years. Note that functional/recreational, or registered historical site landscape is exempted from this requirement.~~

~~2) Retrofit State-owned customer service buildings (any building that is open to the public and that agency customers commonly visit) from traditional ornamental turf to sustainable landscaping at a rate of 10% per year (to achieve complete retrofit in 10 years)⁴. Note that functional/recreational, or registered historical site landscape is exempted from this requirement.~~

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³ The State Capitol has historical gardens with some high water use plants. MWELo has an exception for existing plant collections that are part of botanical gardens and arboretums, such as these gardens.

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~~6) Require educational training for identified job classifications that serve in the capacity of State-employed landscape managers. Training shall include on irrigation efficiency, water budgets and landscape management with that includes sustainable landscaping concepts as the focus. DWR shall oversee a universal training curriculum hosted online, including a library of educational materials and landscape design templates~~

~~5) DWR (or other entity) to develop universal training curriculum hosted online, including a library of educational materials and landscape design templates⁵.~~

~~6)7) Seek to employ and/or contract with sufficiently trained landscape design professionals and managers. Require State agencies to review and give preference to the most qualified landscape managers bidding on to help ensure that the investment in landscape upgrades or new landscapes are sufficiently designed and maintain to protect the shift in social norms to aesthetic benefits of sustainable landscaping. Some landscapes left in disrepair may serve to negatively impact the public perception that is trying to be promoted through State's leadership with this effort. new projects/contracts, and not only consider the lowest bids when selecting contractors as has often been done historically.~~

~~7)8) Encourage the optimized use of recycled and non-potable water on landscapes.~~

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