



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

CALIFORNIA COUNCIL
AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

June 16, 2015

Julie Saare-Edmonds
Water Use and Efficiency Program
California Department of Water Resources
901 P Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-3515

RE: June 12, 2015 Public Draft, Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWEL0)

Dear Julie:

On behalf of the California Council, American Society of Landscape Architects (CCASLA), I want to thank you and the SWRCB for the opportunity to comment on the Draft MWEL0 document. CCASLA has begun a careful examination of the draft and will submit our final evaluation comments prior to the submittal deadline. We also wish to express our continued support of the MWEL0 update process.

While still in the process of evaluating the draft, there are several areas of interest that we wish to offer initial comments:

Efficient Irrigation – We continue to strongly believe that encouraging and/or offering incentives to retrofit older irrigation systems to current high efficiency equipment accompanied with proper, ongoing maintenance in conjunction with the use of more climate appropriate and native plantings should offer substantial water savings.

Limiting Turf – The use of turfgrass for purely decorative purposes should be highly discouraged. However, the use of turfgrass for recreational purposes should not be heavily restricted. Public parks in particular are the highest and best use of our urban water resources since their use can be demonstrated to help alleviate a number of public health and welfare issues including childhood obesity and mental health.

Tree Protection – Trees comprise some of our greatest and most sensitive landscape assets. They play a critical role in helping address a number of issues in the urban environment including climate moderation, storm water management, wildlife habitat, and aesthetics. The necessity of continuing the proper irrigation of these critical assets should be specifically addressed in the MWEL0 update.

Landscape architects rely on water efficient landscape ordinances to direct their planning and design projects on a daily basis. As such, we take seriously the effort to update the MWEL0 to address changing environmental conditions while helping to ensure that California benefits from a realistic, achievable approach to water conservation. Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or desire further discussion.

Sincerely,

Jon Wreschinsky, President
California Council of ASLA