

DWR Public Comments (Jun 19)

- My name is Fred Hanker and I am a sales executive with Delta Bluegrass Company, one of the largest turf producers in the state. We have proudly produced turf products for the greens industry here in California for over 40 years.
- It is only because of a news broadcast on public radio that we heard of this hearing and the major changes that you are considering to make in the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance.
- Given the lack of time, we, and others in the turf industry in California have not had the opportunity to give this proposal a proper reading, much less retain consultants or attorneys. We have more questions than answers.

For example:

- If the measures proposed are in response to the drought and to the Governor's Emergency Proclamation, then will the new ordinance have a sunset date? If so, when?
- Have all CEQA requirements been met?
- Why the immediate urgency? The drought has been going on for 4 years? Why weren't we given proper notice?
- These changes will have a tremendous effect on our industry, on the state, on our cities, and on each and every one of us.
- In the DWR press release dated June 12th, one week ago, it claims that there would be limits on the installation of new turf. Is that true?

- **It must be true.** I recall the governor saying that "We're in a new era... The idea of your nice little green grass getting lots of water every day, that's going to be a thing of the past."
- While I am not an attorney, I can read. I note that government code 65596 Section A, which is the referenced authority for the model ordinance, says in part "The model ordinance **shall not** prohibit" **specific plant species**. It also says that "the model ordinance shall not include conditions that have the effect of prohibiting" specific plant species. This ordinance as written does both; and I have to believe that you know it. This sure seems to be a direct assault on turf, all forms of turf.
- Additionally, in the model ordinance turf is defined as "a ground cover surface of mowed grass."
- Saying that turf is all the same is patently false. There are many different types of turf with different water usage. Many of our varieties are very drought tolerant and are painted here with the same brush.
- As an industry leader, Delta Bluegrass, has invested a tremendous amount of time, money, and energy developing native turfs that use minimal water.
- If we had more time to prepare, and respond, there would be many benefits, and truths, that we could share with you about turf.
- This ordinance fails to address the many benefits.
- Some of the benefits, which turf contributes largely to, are stated in the government code 65593. It says "Landscapes are essential to the quality of life in California by providing areas for active and passive recreation and as an enhancement to the environment by cleaning air and water, preventing

erosion, offering fire protection, and replacing ecosystems lost to development.”

- My employer spearheaded an innovative **voluntary** program to curtail water usage in the San Joaquin Delta that was just accepted by the state.
- On our ranch alone we will save approximately **2.4 billion** gallons of water for the balance of this year. It appears that your proposed ordinance strives to save 16,000 gallons per new residence. While we dispute your ability to accomplish this goal, we on our one farm, will save enough water through voluntary fallowing, crop shifts, etc. to save enough water to accomplish your goals for **150,000 new homes**.
- I ask you truthfully, how many homes did you really expect to save 16,000 gallons for?
- We need to work together to get through this drought. This direct assault on turf needs to stop. Turf, particularly drought tolerant turf, is not the problem.
- Tell us what your goals are and let us help you. Be transparent. Allow for more time.
- Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.