



## Landscape Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

375 Eleventh Street, Oakland

October 19, 2015

3:30-5:00 pm

Meeting of 25 members and EBMUD staff was called to order by Richard Harris, Manager of Water Conservation at 3:40 pm.

All members introduced themselves.

Richard Harris gave a brief presentation on EBMUD's current water supply, drought response and pending state drought actions. A copy of his presentation is posted on the new LAC web page under "presentations." The following are highlights of Richard's presentation:

1. Total EBMUD end-of-water year (Sept. 30, 2015) system storage was 355,000 acre feet, or 62% of average and 46 % of capacity.
2. Statewide reservoirs, snow pack and groundwater have declined since 2012
3. EBMUD end of September storage has declined every year since 2011.
4. This year 40 TAF of supplemental supply and 45 TAF of from customer conservation have helped reduce the severity of the drought for EBMUD customers and help with overall supply should dry conditions continue. Ongoing customer conservation is still required for the foreseeable future.
5. According to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA):
  - a. Western states temperatures in 2015 were warmer than normal conditions, and projected temperatures for coming months are for more of the same.
  - b. Western states precipitation is predicted to be 60 to 70% wetter than normal in southern California and then progressively less wetter than normal moving north. A point just north of the Bay Area the probably of a wetter than average rain year drops to 50/50.
  - c. Some level of drought is predicted to persist from the Bay Area north but improves from the Bay Area south.
6. Current State Emergency Drought Regulations are to remain in effect until February 12, 2016 unless extended by the Governor/State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)
7. The 2015 Revised M-WELO (Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance) goes into effect December 1, 2015. The M-WELO significantly reduces the water allowed for new landscapes.
8. For the first time cities and counties are required to report the number of landscape reviews they complete to the DWR (Department of Water Resources).

Lauren de Boer, EBMUD WaterSmart Gardener Program Lead, walked members through the new LAC resource web page and a Request for Information (RFI) for workshop speakers and facilitators. The following are highlights from Lauren's presentation:

1. The new web page to LAC activities went live on Friday, October 16. Lauren went over components of the WaterSmart Gardener web page first, including the WaterSmart Community Garden Grant Program. General grant awards range from \$500 to \$7,500, with two awards per year at a large project \$15,000 level.

2. The WaterSmart Gardener page contains a link to the new LAC page. Go to the [ebmud.com](http://www.ebmud.com) and search for “LAC” or use the following link: <http://www.ebmud.com/water-and-drought/conservation-and-rebates/water-smart-gardener/landscape-advisory-committee/>
3. All upcoming LAC meetings through July 2016 are listed on the page. Meeting agendas, notes and presentations will be posted as they come available.
4. The LAC website includes a statement of purpose and goals, drought updates, a Landscaping Toolbox (links to other web pages), and print resources available from EBMUD.
5. EBMUD wants this webpage to be the committee’s project; it’s designed for the community’s use. The website is a place for networking, a repository of knowledge and educational opportunities with videos, printable material, and more. Email Lauren de Boer [ldeboer@ebmud.com](mailto:ldeboer@ebmud.com) or Scott Sommerfeld [ssommerf@ebmud.com](mailto:ssommerf@ebmud.com) with any ideas you might have for the page.
6. Upcoming professional workshops/training: An RFI has been posted to the EBMUD website calling for speakers and facilitators for workshops on Sustainable Gardening and Outdoor Water Conservation. Respondents to the RFI will be placed on a Speaker Roster which will be renewed every two years. There is currently no deadline to apply for the 2015-2016 Roster. Speakers and facilitators will receive a stipend for their work. LAC members with specific expertise are encouraged to apply, or if you know a speaker you think LAC members would benefit from, please encourage them to apply.
7. EBMUD currently has a Department of Water Resources grant to fund one or more workshops related to outdoor water use efficiency (e.g., irrigation, soils) and will be scheduling these workshops over the next two quarters.

Scott Sommerfeld, EBMUD Water Conservation Representative, presented the Landscape Advisory Committee Survey results. A copy of his presentation is posted on the LAC web page under presentations. The following are highlights from Scott’s presentation:

1. **Background:** The LAC met in April to brainstorm how the drought impacted professionals and what messages were needed to reach out to customers. A LAC Steering committee was formed and met twice to brainstorm additional strategies to deal with the drought. Staff organized strategies into categories and created an online survey for members to rank strategies and get additional member feedback.
2. **Survey purpose:** To establish three to five short- and long-term goals to create an LAC work plan. The goal is to make the LAC a valuable resource for members, the community, and EBMUD.
3. **Survey rankings:** Refer to the presentation posted on the LAC web page to see the ranking of strategies. The top three overall short term strategies are:
  - a. Promote transition from traditional to sustainable landscaping.
  - b. Devise an EBMUD incentive for homeowners to consult with landscape architects, designers, certified water management professionals.
  - c. Work more closely with non-profits and organizations to leverage resources rather than reinvent the wheel (StopWaste, Bay Friendly Landscaping, Master Gardeners, Wholly H2O, CUWCC, Save Our Water and others).

4. The top long-term strategy was: To enhance and expand EBMUD's landscape upgrade program to facilitate higher quality, more holistic landscapes with benefits beyond water savings—i.e. take a watershed approach.
5. Survey Next Steps:
  - Staff proposed three subcommittees as follows:
    - a. Education and Outreach
    - b. Professional development
    - c. Technical
  - Staff will establish general guidelines for how the subcommittees will work.
  - Prior to the next regularly scheduled LAC meeting on December 7, 2015 staff will send out an online survey for members to volunteer for the subcommittees. The focus of each subcommittee will be more clearly defined in the survey.
  - Newly established LAC subcommittees will meet to establish goals, refine survey responses and develop LAC work plan tasks.

**Other Action Items:**

A committee member requested a link to water recycling be posted on the LAC website. (A link to the EBMUD Recycled Water Program webpage and a pdf of the Recycled Water for Commercial Trucks has been posted to the site.)

**Open forum:**

Ongoing discussion of the presentations, surveys and general questions closed out the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 pm.