

EBMUD LAC Project Committee Meeting

DATE: Thursday July 18, 2024

TIME: 2:00pm – 3:30pm

LOCATION: EBMUD Watershed Headquarters, 500 San Pablo Dam Road

Attendees: Kristin Bowman, Charles Bohlig, Geneva Gondak, Nicolle Patterson, Bob Eagle, Scott Sommerfeld, Eric Santos, Jerri McNair, Hannah Braun, Ashley Shannon, Justin Burks, Ann- Marie Benz, Dave Phelps, Dona Wessells

MEETING MUNUTES

- 2:00 **Welcome**
- 2:05 **Legislative Updates**
- [AB 1572](#) - Prohibition of watering non-functional turf with drinking water effective per State Water Board. 2027 statewide law, phased approach starting with municipalities. AB 1572 opportunities i.e. San Leandro Home Depot
- 2:10 **Project Updates**
- Payback lawn conversion calculator
 - o Overall group found easy to use – liked the feature to put in one total cost rather than itemizing.
 - Recommendations– make it printable.
 - Available statewide with updated ET values.
 - Add link for references.
 - Waiting for MOA to be approved by StopWaste and EBMUD for public use.
 - Calculator live for internal use at [Lawn to Garden Payback Calculator](#).
 - See page 3 (below) for references on water savings from compost/sheet mulching from StopWaste.
 - Spring Irrigation Audit rebate
 - o Will offer again next year. Good approach to kick-start spring irrigation repairs.
 - Landscape Rebates – up to \$20,000 thru end of 2026 for commercial
 - Lafayette Reservoir Demonstration Garden update
 - o May prioritize AB 1572 EBMUD lawn conversions over demonstration garden.
 - CNPS landscaper certification program – English and Spanish
 - o Kudos to Dave Phelps and Ann-Marie Benz – job well done in quickly offering this Spring training for landscapers and designers in CCWD/EBMUD water districts. CCWD/EBMUD looking to offer again in early winter 2025.
 - Bureau Grant
 - o \$500,000 to enhance Commercial Landscape rebate program with rebate increase, design assistance, and long-term planning support.
 - o May ask LAC for letters of recommendation.
- 2:20 pm **Discussion**

- Residential lawn conversion rebate program evaluation. Is there room to improve?
 - Evaluation found the rebate program is successful in moderately reducing water usage over time as compared to the average single family residential water usage in EBMUD service area. Additional considerations include:
 - Overall low water use for SFR in EBMUD service area demonstrating a growing water conservation culture.
 - Increased water use for some of the participants may reflect deficit to no watering of lawns during drought years.
 - Possible multiplier effect – other SFR landscapes being converted without rebate.
 - Additional education on controller programming may be helpful such as DIY videos.
 - More savings may be found by including a longer post-installation period. See [Valley Water reports](#).
 - CNPS noted some success with reaching realtors through the CNPS landscaper program certification to reduce lawns installed for house sales. Also suggested emphasizing firescaping – very popular topic right now.
 - Valley Water offers:
 - Online [Irrigation Scheduler](#) – this is available for statewide use.
 - Consultation with those that have completed a lawn conversion rebate to review maintenance (pruning, soil, etc.), approx. 1-2 hours. Consultant paid at \$275/visit - conduct about 15-20 per month. Not advertised on website. *Could the EBMUD LDAP program be expanded to include maintenance follow up?*
 - Eric mentioned the importance of drip layout. A popular design is .9gph emitters at 12 inches – this design uses a lot of water. Point source can leave the area too dry.
 - CCWD offers:
 - [Waterwise House Call](#) - Teaches homeowner to program controller correctly. Emphasizes the need to train their landscaper.
 - Rating converted landscapes to determine if quality is being maintained over time.
 - Calwep peer-to-peer (Spring 2024) discussion included idea of creating a standard methodology to evaluate conservation program water savings – this will make it easier to compare results.
 - Considerations for a ½ day symposium
 - Recommendation is to advertise as SFR focus to attract the right crowd.
 - Also interest in getting HOA's together.

3:15 pm

Next General Meeting Ideas

- Heat Island Effect
- In the field - maintenance round robin at Gardens for Heather Farm (Fall 2024)

Sheet mulching/compost water saving references

The assumptions for water savings from sheet mulching include: cardboard is used as a weed barrier, no fertilizers or herbicides are applied, mulch is included in the plant factor determination, and compost is applied at a rate of 4 cubic yards/1000 square feet.

- Gleick , P.H., Haasz, D., Henges-Jeck, C., Srinivasan, V., Wolff, G., Cushing, K.K., and A. Mann (2003) Waste Not, Want Not: The Potential for Urban Water Conservation in California. Pacific Institute
- Approx 1% increase in organic matter per 1 cubic yard compost / 1000 square feet; McGill Environmental Systems personal communication
- Hudson, B. E. 1994. Soil organic matter and available water capacity. Journal of Soil and Water Conservation. Vol. 49, No. 2. p. 189-194