

MINUTES OF THE  
WATER SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE OF  
VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

June 14, 2023

A meeting of the Water Sustainability Committee of Vista Irrigation District was held on Wednesday, June 14, 2023, at the offices of the District, 1391 Engineer Street, Vista, California.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Miller called the meeting to order at 10:15 a.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

Committee members present: Miller and Sanchez

Committee members absent: None.

Staff present: Brett Hodgkiss, General Manager, and Brent Reyes, Management Analyst.

Other attendees: None.

**3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was approved as presented.

**4. PUBLIC COMMENT TIME**

No public comments were presented on items not appearing on the agenda.

**5. 2023 WATERSMART LANDSCAPE CONTEST**

See application packages attached hereto.

Water Conservation Specialist Brent Reyes provided an overview of the WaterSmart Landscape Contest. He explained that the WaterSmart Landscape Contest is jointly coordinated and promoted, but individually judged by the participating agencies. Mr. Reyes commented that this is the eleventh year the District has participated in the Contest and that the District received four entries.

After discussion and careful consideration of all the applications, the Committee selected Diane Krupnak, as the winner, Ms. Krupnak will receive a plaque and a \$250 gift certificate.

The Committee suggested that staff invite Ms. Krupnak to an upcoming Board meeting so the Board can congratulate her and thank her for her participation.

**6. COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

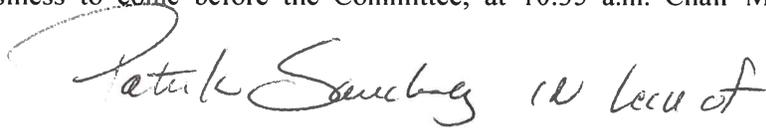
Director Sanchez mentioned that during the June 7, 2023 Board meeting Director Kuchinsky raised the possibility of the District becoming a member of Alta Vista Botanical Gardens (Gardens) as well as sponsoring an event and demonstration garden/display at the Gardens. These items were referred to the Water Sustainability Committee (Committee) to review and make a recommendation to the full Board. Director Sanchez suggested that staff schedule a Committee meeting to discuss these topics.

**7. COMMENTS BY GENERAL MANAGER**

None were presented.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, at 10:35 a.m. Chair Miller adjourned the meeting.



\_\_\_\_\_  
Marty Miller, Chair

ATTEST:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Lisa R. Soto, Secretary  
Board of Directors  
VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT



**WATER SUSTAINABILITY  
COMMITTEE  
STAFF REPORT**

**Agenda Item: 5**

**Meeting Date: June 14, 2023**  
**Prepared By: Brent Reyes**  
**Reviewed By: Breona Paz/Shallako Goodrick**  
**Approved By: Brett Hodgkiss**

SUBJECT: 2023 WATERSMART LANDSCAPE CONTEST

RECOMMENDATION: Review submittals and select a winner of Vista Irrigation District's 2023 WaterSmart Landscape Contest.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: At its August 17, 2022 meeting, the Board awarded a gift certificate and plaque to the winner of Vista Irrigation District's 2022 WaterSmart Landscape Contest.

FISCAL IMPACT: \$300.

SUMMARY: The District participated in the 2023 WaterSmart Landscape Contest jointly coordinated and promoted, but individually judged, by the participating agencies. The District participated along with eleven other local agencies (Helix Water District, Olivenhain Municipal Water District, Otay Water District, Padre Dam Municipal Water District, San Dieguito Water District, Sweetwater Authority, Vallecitos Water District, California American Water, Rincon Del Diablo Water District, and the cities of Escondido and Oceanside) in this year's contest. The landscape contest winner receives a \$250 gift certificate from their participating agency.

DETAILED REPORT: This is the eleventh straight year the District has participated in the landscape contest. Promotional materials were emailed to customers who participated in regional turf removal rebate programs and/or attended recent residential landscape training workshops. Additional landscape contest promotional efforts included: promotional articles in the City of Vista's Vista News Center email newsletter, social media posts by the San Diego County Water Authority, direct marketing to homes with attractive water-wise landscaping, and announcing the contest on the District's website. The District received four applications by the May 12, 2023 deadline.

Water Sustainability Committee members Miller and Sanchez are the judges for the contest. A \$250 gift certificate and plaque will be presented to the landscape contest winner at a future Board meeting. The District's winner will have their landscape featured at [www.landscapecontest.com](http://www.landscapecontest.com) as well as on the District's website.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Contest Judging Matrix/Criteria
- WaterSmart Landscape Contest Applications

## **JUDGING CRITERIA**

### **Overall Attractiveness:**

- Curb appeal
- Pleasing color, form, texture and contour
- Plants are well maintained
- Weeds kept to a minimum

### **Appropriate Plant Selection:**

- Climate-appropriate plant palette
- Minimal or functional turf
- Functional landscape
- Plants meet needs of owners

### **Design:**

- Landscape is able to thrive with less water
- Adequate plant coverage and permeable soils
- Takes advantage of site features like shade, micro-climates, or low-lying flood areas
- Landscape also meets needs of owners

### **Appropriate Maintenance:**

- Mulch
- Weeds kept to a minimum
- Plants are neat, tidy and attractive

### **Efficient Methods of Irrigation:**

- Uses appropriate irrigation equipment for plant material such as drip irrigation or efficient rotating spray nozzles
- Water consumption is appropriate to area
- Uses smart controllers or irrigation sensors
- Irrigation is supplemented with rainwater capture or other water

## 2023 WaterSmart Landscape Contest

Applicant Name	Attractiveness/ Appeal	Plant selection	Design	Maintenance	Irrigation/Water Use	Total
<b>Ford</b>						
<b>Krupnak</b>						
<b>Rees</b>						
<b>Shabestari</b>						

Please rate the landscape contest applicants on the basis of the following five (5) areas. Please rate from 1-5 (5 being high).

**Overall attractiveness:**

Curb appeal; pleasing color, form, texture, contour; plants are well maintained; weeds kept to a minimum

**Appropriate plant selection:**

Climate-appropriate plant palette; minimal or functional turf; functional landscape, meets needs of owners

**Design:**

Landscaping is able to thrive with less water, has adequate plant coverage, permeable soils, and takes advantage of site features like shade, micro-climates, or low-lying flood areas; landscaping also meets needs of owners

**Appropriate maintenance:**

Mulch; weeds kept to a minimum; plants neat, tidy and attractive

**Efficient methods of irrigation:**

Uses appropriate irrigation equipment for plant material, such as drip irrigation or efficient rotating spray nozzles

**Owner's Name**

Analyn Ford

**Landscape Installation Date**

04/25/2023

**How did you hear about the contest?**

Vista Irrigation District Website

**Tell us why you decided to install a WaterSmart landscape (300 - 500 words):**

We decided to install a WaterSmart landscape for various reasons:

- we strongly support the State of California fight against drought due to climate change.
- we thrive to adopt measures to save money and support the City of Vista
- to express and share our passion to Succulents and drought tolerant plants

**List the water-wise plants you used in the design:**

Agave, Aloe Vera, Aeonium, Jades, Sunburst and Kalanchoe

**Describe how you water your landscape (50 - 100 words):**

From old sprinkler system, we decided to install a water catchment system coming from the house gutter to catch basin creek type. We also installed 3-4" mulch all around to reduce evaporation.

Before







**Owner's Name**

Diane Krupnak

**Landscape Installation Date**

08/05/2022

**How did you hear about the contest?**

Brent Reyes

**Tell us why you decided to install a WaterSmart landscape (300 - 500 words):**

During the severe drought, I wanted to reduce my outdoor water consumption by having slightly more hardscape, all drip irrigation and no turf. I redesigned my front yard saving \$68 on my June water bill and the \$50 cost to mow.

I took the WaterSmart Landscape Makeover Series of classes, learning soil assessment and plant choices, creating a plot plan, using drip irrigation, and mulching. I also successfully applied for the BeWaterWise turf removal program.

I intensely researched the plants and how they related to one another in height, length, color, and needs, drew plans and worked with a hardscaper and a landscaper who planted and transformed my irrigation system to drip.

My execution included paver hardscape with an inviting low sitting wall. The patio has two large planting areas within the wall and another along the side and front of the house. The largest planting area is in front of the wall to the street. A medium-sized planting area is on the opposite side of the driveway and another runs along the right front and far side of the house.

I included lighting (on choice plants and along the wall), a horizontal rock swale to keep water in the yard and not in the sewer, and a large rock found while digging.

Instead of popular succulents, I chose a softscape of moderate to low water use plants that relax the hardscape and complement the Mediterranean influence of the home.

I used more than 60 plants, and an additional six in pots on the patio. I restricted my plant palette to greens, whites and limited pops of color.

Every Mediterranean home needs bright red geraniums, which, in this case, bring your eye from the front yard and into the patio.

The cheerful red of the Alstroemeria on the opposite side of the driveway and inside the patio picks up the same hue. Intense orange blossoms and bright green foliage of the Tecoma Stans Bells of Fire Esperanza bushes at opposite ends of the yards always receive rave comments. Coleonema Sunset Gold bushes shine a brilliant yellow green.

The striped leaves of several scattered dwarf agapanthus harmonize the yard's predominant medium green and white. The whimsical Cousin Itt, is a shaggy green delight in the middle of the main planting area. Green is also mirrored in the different textures of the Pittosporum Wheeler's Dwarf, the dwarf juniper, dwarf day lilies and the Italian oregano. An explosion of green, yellow, orange, and red comes from the Nandina Firepower, which are planted at either side of the garage door and along the side of the largest planter. White Lightnin' trailing lantana and Scaevola White are stunners. The scaevola morphed into gorgeous carpets that are now highlighted with a light shade of lavender, which adds to the lavender of the dwarf agapanthus flowers.

The focal point of the landscape is the drought-tolerant Olea Swan Hill fruitless olive tree, which, again, strongly denotes Mediter-

**List the water-wise plants you used in the design:**

Swan Hill European fruitless olive tree

Tecoma Stans Bells of Fire Esperanza

Agapanthus 'Peter Pan'

Dracaena marginata

Geranium 'Caliente Deep Red'

Lantana 'White Lightning'

Aacacia 'Cousin Itt'

Scaevola 'White'

Coleonema pulchellum 'Sunset Gold'

Alstroemeria 'Kate'

Nandina 'Firepower'

Pittosporum Wheeler's Dwarf

Dwarf Daylilies

Creeping juniper

Italian oregano

Potted on patio: Elephant foot palms, Tecoma Stans Bells of Fire Esperanza, Peppermint, Spearmint, Geranium 'Caliente Deep Red'

**Describe how you water your landscape (50 - 100 words):**

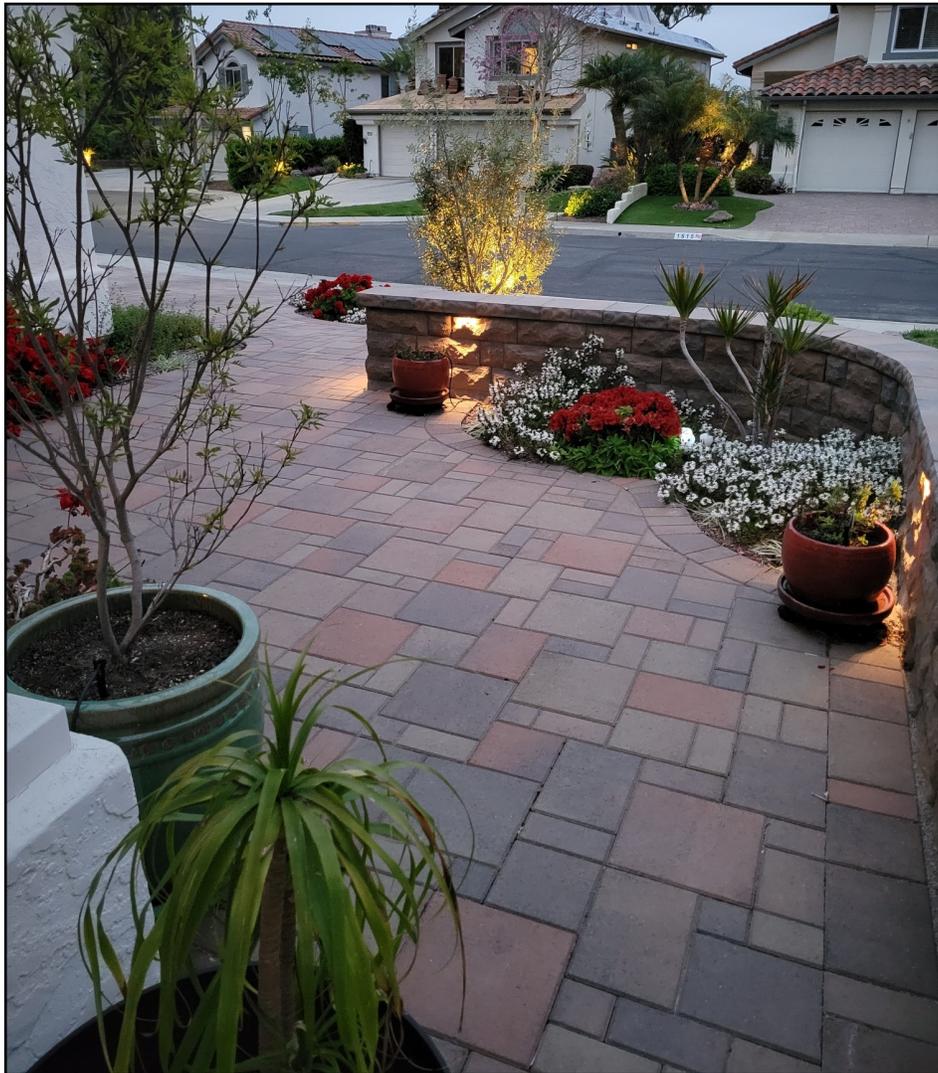
The irrigation is all new and is solely drip irrigation. I use a Rainbird ESP-ME3 smart controller, which doesn't water when it rains.

The horizontal rock swale in both main planting areas has proven to be effective in catching the recent rains from pouring into the sewer.



Before







**Owner's Name**

David Rees

**Landscape Installation Date**

11/07/2018

**How did you hear about the contest?**

Received email

**Tell us why you decided to install a WaterSmart landscape (300 - 500 words):**

Our house (on 2-3 acres) originally had 4 lawns, pepper trees, ficus trees and various non-native landscape. Our water bills were really high, and the lawns were never very green (despite consuming so much water). We also had a lot of problems with gophers and ants. We met with native plant specialist Greg Rubin who helped us lay out a plan for all native plants. The idea was to have colored blooms at different times of year with all native plant species that required far less water than the traditional lawn and non-native plants we had. Greg helped us pick out a variety of different native plants which were planted on 2 acres, with DG trails that wind between the planting areas. The initial plants were small and spaced apart, and the ground between the plants was covered with gorilla hair mulch. As part of the new plant layout, we put in a new irrigation system with low volume sprinklers. The first year we watered the small plants regularly to get them established. Once the plants were established, we began turning off the sprinkler system from October to May. Within a few seasons the plants matured and have created a very nice space, frequented by bees and hummingbirds. Presently we water twice a month June - Sept. Our water usage is very low, and you'll note from the pictures we now have far more growth than we had with our water hungry lawns. This time of year (early Summer) the blue Ceanothus has passed and the yellow Sun Drops and purple Margarita Bops are in their prime, along with the Matilija Poppy. Late summer will be the reds of the California Fuschia and the Galvezia. Needless to say, we are very happy with our native garden now and spend much of our free time in the yard.

**List the water-wise plants you used in the design:**

Ceanothus , Manzanita, Margarita Bops, Trichostema, Cleveland Sage, Sun Drops, Galvezia, California Fuschia, Oak tree (Quercus) Cercis occidentalis, Toyon, Baccharis "Pigeon Point", Mahonia

**Describe how you water your landscape (50 - 100 words):**

When we put in our water wise landscape, we put in a new irrigation system that was a combination of low volume sprinklers, drip irrigation, and high efficiency spray nozzles spread strategically over a 2 acre area. Our plan was to water the small plants until they were established, at which point we could turn off the irrigation system from October to May. During the summer months we run the system twice a month. On average we water our native garden 8 times a year. We also added rain barrels which provide additional water.

Before







**Owner's Name**

David Shabestari

**Landscape Installation Date**

06/01/2022

**How did you hear about the contest?**

Someone from VID mailed us a letter suggesting we enter.

**Tell us why you decided to install a WaterSmart landscape (300 - 500 words):**

Our old yard was difficult to maintain, and used a lot of water. We also wanted a new look.

**List the water-wise plants you used in the design:**

Agave, lantana, paddle plant, and others I don't know the names of!

**Describe how you water your landscape (50 - 100 words):**

The yard, front and back, is 100% low pressure drip irrigated.

# Before



