



**Board of Directors
February 20, 2019**

SUBJECT:

Adopt Proposed Resolution to Support the Transformation of Landscape Culture and Appropriate funds (\$500,000) for Turf Replacement

BACKGROUND:

On May 20, 2015, the Board approved the appropriation of \$1.3 million to fund turf removal projects in Eastern Municipal Water District (EMWD). Since 2015, 3.5 million square feet of non-recreational turf grass at non-residential sites in EMWD has been replaced with water efficient landscaping. This achievement was made possible by grants and partnerships with EMWD customers, the Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, California Department of Water Resources, and U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. Even with these completed projects, staff estimates that 15 million square feet of turf, not used for recreation purposes, remains in the District associated with large landscape, commercial, industrial and institutional accounts.

To conserve water and encourage water use efficiency throughout EMWD, staff has been directed to implement a long term effort to transform the landscape market place and remove turf without a recreational purpose in commercial, industrial and institution settings. Staff is proposing two short term actions to advance landscape changes within our service area.

First, staff is requesting the appropriation of \$500,000 of funding for turf replacement. This funding will be used in tandem with funding from the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and any grant funding awarded to EMWD to target the removal of 1,000,000 square feet of non-recreational turf in 2019. Rebates will be offered to large landscape, commercial, industrial, and institutional customers to replace turf not being used for functional purposes. Customers currently exceeding their budgets and public agencies will be specifically targeted, and rebates will be awarded on a first come first serve basis. Design requirements will be in place to encourage aesthetically pleasing landscapes to influence the region towards long term transformations. Water savings of 50 percent (approximately 18 gallons per square foot per year) can be expected when proper water management practices are employed. An estimated water savings of 28 acre-feet per year is estimated for the appropriated funding.

In addition to funding, staff is requesting the approval of a resolution (Exhibit A) supporting the long term market transformation of landscaping. This resolution will be used as a supporting document for grant funding applications and to encourage stakeholders to participate in the effort to transform landscaping throughout the region.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

This project will be funded from the Special Projects and Studies budget.

STRATEGIC PLANNING GOAL/OBJECTIVE:

Water Use Efficiency: Promote efficient use of water resources through the implementation of industry-leading programs and practices combined with customer education and awareness.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT:

This item is not a project as defined in the California Environmental Quality Act Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15378.

RECOMMENDATION:

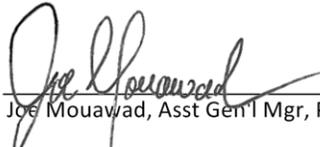
Approve and authorize allocation of \$500,000 from the Special Projects and Studies budget to fund non-recreational turf replacement project; and adopt a resolution to support the transformation of landscape culture throughout the region and promote water use efficiency as a way of life.

SUBMITTED BY:



Paul D. Jones II, P.E., General Manager

2/8/2019



Joe Mouawad, Asst Gen'l Mgr, PEC

2/4/2019

Attachment(s):

Exhibit A - Resolution
Presentation

History:

02/14/19 Board Planning Committee RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL
02/20/19 Board Meeting

Staff Contact: Elizabeth Lovsted