



AGENDA
MEETING OF THE WATER SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE
MONDAY, JUNE 8, 2026 – 3:30 P.M.
1391 Engineer Street, Vista, CA 92081
Phone: (760) 597-3100 www.vidwater.org

NOTICE FOR PARTICIPATION

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if special assistance is needed to participate in the Board meeting telephonically, please contact the Board Secretary during regular business hours at (760) 597-3128. Notification received 48 hours before the meeting will assist Vista Irrigation District in making reasonable accommodations.

The public may participate in this meeting in-person and by teleconference. To join this meeting via telephone, please dial (877) 873-8018; the Pass Code is 474698#.

Public Participation/Comment: Members of the public can also participate in the meeting by emailing your comments on an agenda item to the Board Secretary at BoardSecretary@vidwater.org; such email should include the agenda item number in the subject line and must be received before the time the meeting commences. Members of the public, whether participating in-person or telephonically, may address the Board of Directors in real-time during the public comment period and when specific agenda items are being considered. Please announce your attendance if participating telephonically or fill out a speaker slip if participating in-person if you would like to provide real-time public comment.

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. CONSIDER APPROVAL OF AGENDA

In the case of an emergency, items may be added to the Agenda by a majority vote of the Committee. An emergency is defined as a work stoppage, a crippling disaster, or other activity that severely imperils public health, safety, or both. Also, items that arise after the posting of the Agenda may be added by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

4. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Members of the public may address the Committee on items not appearing on the posted agenda, which are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Committee. Speakers are asked to limit their comments to five (5) minutes; the total time allowable for all public comment on items not appearing on the agenda at any one meeting may be limited. Comments on items listed on the agenda will be taken before or during discussion of the agenda item. Members of the public desiring to address the Committee are asked to complete a speaker's slip available on the table near the entrance of the Boardroom and present it to the Board Secretary prior to the meeting.

5. 2026 WATERSMART LANDSCAPE CONTEST

Recommendation: Review submittals and select a winner of Vista Irrigation District's 2026 WaterSmart Landscape Contest.

6. COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

This item is placed on the agenda to enable individual Committee members to convey information not requiring discussion or action.

7. ADJOURNMENT

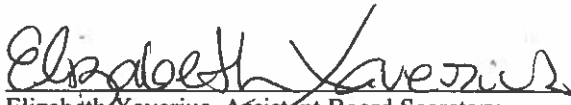
*NOTE: ITEMS ON THE AGENDA MAY BE TAKEN OUT OF SEQUENTIAL ORDER AS
THEIR PRIORITY IS DETERMINED BY THE COMMITTEE*

- *The agenda package and materials related to an agenda item submitted after the packet's distribution to the Committee are available for public review in the lobby of the District office during normal business hours.*
- *Agendas and minutes are available at www.vidwater.org.*
- *VID Committee meetings are held on an as needed basis.*

AFFIDAVIT OF POSTING

I, Elizabeth Xaverius, Assistant Board Secretary of the Vista Irrigation District, hereby certify that I posted a copy of the foregoing agenda outside the lobby of the District office at 1391 Engineer Street, Vista, California at least 72 hours prior to the meeting, in accordance with Govt. Code Sec. 54954.2(a).

Date: June 3, 2026


Elizabeth Xaverius, Assistant Board Secretary

 **VISTA
IRRIGATION
DISTRICT**
**WATER SUSTAINABILITY
COMMITTEE**
STAFF REPORT

Agenda Item:5

Board Meeting Date:	June 8, 2026
Prepared By:	Sandra Sanchez
Reviewed By:	Breona Paz/Shallako Goodrick
Approved By:	Brett Hodgkiss

SUBJECT: 2026 WATERSMART LANDSCAPE CONTEST

RECOMMENDATION: Review submittals and select a winner of Vista Irrigation District's 2026 WaterSmart Landscape Contest.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: At its August 20, 2025 meeting, the Board awarded a gift certificate and plaque to the winner of the District's 2025 WaterSmart Landscape Contest.

FISCAL IMPACT: \$300.

SUMMARY: The District participated in the 2026 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 Municipal 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 14th 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 posting contest information on the District's website, articles in the City of Vista's Vista News Center electronic newsletter and the Vista Press, social media posts by the San Diego County Water Authority, direct marketing to homes with attractive water-wise landscaping, and flyer distribution at Ganter Nursery in Vista, Alta Vista Botanical Gardens and the Vista Public Library. The District received five applications by the May 8, 2026 deadline.

Water Sustainability Committee members Nuñez and Kuchinsky 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 also have their landscape featured at 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

2026 WaterSmart Landscape Contest						
Applicant Name	Attractiveness/ Appeal	Plant selection	Design	Maintenance	Irrigation/Water Use	Total
Barnhill						
Griswold						
Leonard						
Lizarraga						
Sheahan						
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

Jacqueline Bamhill

Landscape Installation Date

06/22/2023

How did you hear about the contest?

Newspaper

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

I decided to change to a water wise landscape when my HOA removed a tree from in front of my house. In doing so they broke the front sprinkler system and all of the grass died. Since everything was completely compromised I decided it was a good time to change the landscaping.

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

Sage, rosemary, lavender, bougainvillea, oleander, olive , and pride of Madeira .

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

I have a drip system installed that I use during the dry spells.



BEFORE



AFTER



Owner's Name

Steve Griswold

Landscape Installation Date

06/10/2023

How did you hear about the contest?

Mail from VID

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

We installed a WaterSmart landscape to help conserve water in our area and make the yard look nicer.

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

Mexican Sage, Tectorum, Agave attenuata, Leucadendron Jester, Prairie Sundrops, Coppertone Sedum, and Breath of Heaven.

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

Drip irrigation, capture of occasional rainwater.

BEFORE





Owner's Name

Heidi and Martin Leonard

Landscape Installation Date

01/01/2023

How did you hear about the contest?

SoCal WaterSmart

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

We moved into our home in Vista in May 2022. We moved here from Henderson, Nevada and were well aware of the importance of using water wisely on our landscaping there.

Unfortunately, the yard in this home was overgrown with trees, bushes, and grass that didn't look healthy and was using so much water due to inefficient irrigation and water thirsty landscaping. We needed to do something and after a neighbor mentioned the water smart landscape program, we decided to take a look at what was involved and couldn't pass this opportunity up.

We applied for a Water Smart rebate in July 2022 since we were going to remove everything and start from scratch. This was a new venture for us, coming from Nevada, and it was important to us that we follow the guidelines/suggestions WaterSmart provided to achieve a successful result. Their guidance helped us develop a design that was beautiful and efficient.

Over the next 2 months, we submitted our plans to WaterSmart and our HOA for approval and received the go ahead early in September. Over the next month and a half, we removed all existing sod, dead trees, overgrown bushes and dug up years of inefficient and old irrigation systems. We brought in new soil, replaced some trees, then slowly added the new plants sparingly so we could see growth rate. As time has gone by, we have had to remove some plants but enjoy adding new plants to our garden. We frequently go to Waterwise Botanicals for ideas.

We love coming to our home now knowing our landscape is good for the environment and we get lots of compliments. It was an amazing experience and transformation.

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

Fruitless olive trees, Coastal Agave, Deergrass, Giant Wildrye, Lantana, California Fuchsia, Dudleya, Aloe Vera, Aeonium Succulents, Aloe Massawana, Aloe Ferox, Agave Blueglow, Elephant Bush, Ghost plant.

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

We removed all the existing irrigation system that was in the yard and replaced it with a Rainbird Smart Irrigation timed system. All of the plants use drip irrigation which allows us to make adjustments as needed for weather and also when we remove existing plants and replace with new varieties.

BEFORE



AFTER



Owner's Name

Jeannette Lizarraga

Landscape Installation Date

03/01/2025

How did you hear about the contest?

online

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

We moved into our home with just a dirt backyard with several fruit trees. We installed an artificial turf and had poor drainage. We did a backyard renovation that removed the artificial turf, installed a 750-gallon rainwater cistern capturing water from our roof, and planted native CA plants as well as a seasonal native lawn alternative.

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

Nodding Needlegrass, yarrow, sage, CA aster, CA brittlebush, agrostis pallens, artemisia, coyote mint, purple three awn, desert globe mallow, manzanita, and several CA wildflowers.

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

For installation, we used drip lines, with a new smart controller, to establish new plantings. After a year, we are already removing the drip lines since CA native plants are already established. We water our three existing avocado trees with the newly installed rain barrel.

BEFORE





Owner's Name

Farideh Sheahan

Landscape Installation Date

10/14/2015

How did you hear about the contest?

Email from Vista Irrigation District

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

From Turf to Transformation: My Journey to a Water-Wise Yard

As a resident and senior retired teacher, after retirement this became one of my great projects as well as a source of constant joy in my life:

Transforming my thirsty grass lawn into a vibrant, sustainable landscape. Living in Southern California, I knew that saving water wasn't just a good idea—it was my responsibility to our community. I wanted to show that you don't have to sacrifice beauty or life to be water-wise.

Building a Smart Foundation

The change started from the ground up. I replaced the old grass with 'plant oases' tucked into beds of gravel. This isn't just for looks; the gravel acts like a blanket for the soil, keeping moisture in and preventing it from evaporating the moment the sun comes out. I also made sure to install a proper drainage system under the surface, so when those rare heavy rains hit, the water is guided safely away without causing a mess.

Technology That Does the Thinking

The real 'magic' happens with the irrigation system. I paired a drip system with a smart water meter, which completely changed how I garden. Instead of spraying water into the air where it can blow away or feed weeds in empty spots, the drip lines deliver water right to the roots of each plant. My smart controller even keeps an eye on the weather; if the forecast calls for rain, it knows to skip a watering cycle automatically. It's a huge relief to know I'm not wasting a single drop, even when I'm away on vacation.

A Garden Full of Life

My yard is now a colorful collection of plants that love our climate. I have deep purple succulents and 'Sticks on Fire' that thrive on almost no water at all. For a bit of excitement, I planted Lantana and Cape Honeysuckle, which have turned my yard into a favorite stop for local hummingbirds and butterflies. I've even included Fig and Pomegranate trees to prove that a drought-tolerant garden can still provide a fresh harvest for the kitchen.

This project has been more than just a home improvement; it's a commitment to our city's future. As a retired teacher, my garden is now my way of showing my neighbors that with a bit of smart technology and the right plants, we can all help protect our most precious resource.

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

Trailing Lantana Golden Sedum Pencil Cactus
Water Usage: Very low

Bougainvillea. Cordyline (red spike plant) Sedum groundcover
Water Usage: Very low

1. Firestick Plant (*Euphorbia tirucalli* 'Sticks on Fire')

This is the tall, upright plant with orange and yellow tips.

- Water Usage: Extremely Conservative.

• 2. Echeveria (likely *Echeveria* 'Afterglow')

This is the large, purple-pink rosette in the center of the concrete planter.

- Water Usage: Conservative. Like most rosette succulents, it prefers the "soak and dry" method—watering deeply only when the soil is completely dry.

3. Ghost Plant (*Graptopetalum paraguayense*)

These are the pale, fleshy rosettes forming the dense groundcover in the first photo.

1. Succulents & Low-Water Plants

These make up the bulk of my garden and are highly water-efficient.

- Agave Attenuata (Fox Tail Agave): The large, smooth green rosettes in the center of the third photo.
- Senecio mandraliscae (Blue Chalk Sticks): The blue-grey, finger-like groundcover at the base of the Agaves.
- Sedum adolphii (Golden Glow/Sunset): The yellowish-orange succulents in the wooden tiered planter and scattered in the beds.

1. The Drought-Tolerant All-Stars

- Euphorbia tirucalli 'Sticks on Fire': The bright orange/coral branching plant in the center of the third photo.
- Crassula ovata (Jade Plant): The thick-leaved green plants with reddish edges in the foreground of the first photo.
- Aeonium 'Zwartkop' (Black Rose): The dark purple/maroon rosettes seen in several pots and tucked into the beds.
- Pygmy Date Palm (*Phoenix roebelenii*): The small palm tree in the black pot.
- Sedum (Stonecrop): The low-growing, light green/yellow carpet surrounding the blue birdbath.

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

Technology That Does the Thinking

The real 'magic' happens with the irrigation system. I paired a drip system with a smart water meter, which completely changed how I garden. Instead of spraying water into the air where it can blow away or feed weeds in empty spots, the drip lines deliver water right to the roots of each plant. My smart controller even keeps an eye on the weather; if the forecast calls for rain, it knows to skip a watering cycle automatically. It's a huge relief to know I'm not wasting a single drop, even when I'm away on vacation.

BEFORE



AFTER



LIVE



IVE

AFTER

