

MINUTES OF THE
WATER SUSTAINABILITY COMMITTEE OF
VISTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT

June 23, 2022

A meeting of the Water Sustainability Committee of Vista Irrigation District was held on Thursday, June 23, 2022, at the offices of the District, 1391 Engineer Street, Vista, California.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Vásquez called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Committee members present: Sanchez and Vásquez

Committee members absent: None.

Staff present: Marlene Kelleher, Director of Administration, and Brent Reyes, Water Conservation Specialist.

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. 2022 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 tenth year the District has participated in the Contest.

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

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

6. COMMENTS BY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chair Vásquez commented that he would like to see more low income customers participate in the Contest. Director Sanchez commented that the District might be able to leverage the recently declared Level 2 drought response condition to promote water-wise landscaping and the Contest.

7. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee, at 9:40 a.m. Chair Vásquez adjourned the meeting.


Richard L. Vásquez, Chair

ATTEST:



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



**WATER SUSTAINABILITY
COMMITTEE
STAFF REPORT**

Agenda Item: 5

Meeting Date: June 23, 2022
Prepared By: Brent Reyes
Reviewed By: Breona Paz/Marlene Kelleher
Approved By: Brett Hodgkiss

SUBJECT: 2022 WATERSMART LANDSCAPE CONTEST

RECOMMENDATION: Review submittals and select a winner of Vista Irrigation District's 2022 WaterSmart Landscape Contest.

PRIOR BOARD ACTION: At its July 21, 2021 meeting, the Board awarded a gift certificate and plaque to the winner of Vista Irrigation District's 2021 WaterSmart Landscape Contest. The Board also awarded two framed certificates to honorable mention recipients.

FISCAL IMPACT: \$300.

SUMMARY: The District participated in the 2022 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 tenth 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 landscape training workshops hosted by the District. 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 13, 2022 deadline.

Water Sustainability Committee members Vásquez 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 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

2022 WaterSmart Landscape Contest

Applicant Name	Attractiveness/ Appeal	Plant selection	Design	Maintenance	Irrigation/Water Use	Total
Ball						
Damon						
Dell						
Johnson						

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

Greg & Brenda Ball

Landscape Installation Date

09/01/2015

How did you hear about the contest?

Email from Water Conservation Specialist

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

To conserve water by removing a bunch of grass, resulting in a much more beautiful landscape.

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

Jerusalem sage, Mexican sage, Echeveria 'Sahara", Rose-red spreader, Agave Attenuata, Iceberg rose, Salvia Greggii 'Concord

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

Drip irrigation and MP rotators as needed. We use 4 rain barrels as well.



BEFORE







Owner's Name

Cristina Damon

Landscape Installation Date

07/31/2016

How did you hear about the contest?

City of Vista newsletter

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

My front yard liquid amber tree was getting too unruly with its roots lifting up the concrete and trouble-some to cut the surrounding grass on that little space. I have had the tree removed, took out the concrete and roots and replaced it with flagstones. Installed drip irrigation system for the new drought tolerant plants. Mixed with succulents, are 2 cypress trees and blue glow, attenuata, and foxtail agaves.

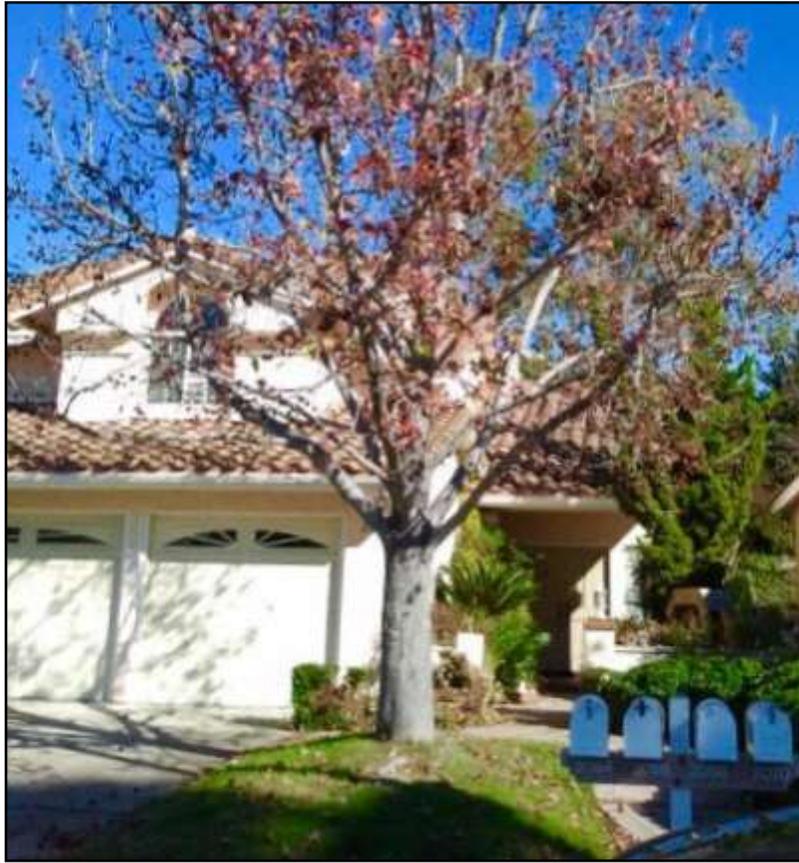
Stripped lawn in the backyard and replaced with artificial grass, and river rocks.

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

Succulents include Aeonium, crassula, senecio, blue chalk sticks, elephant ear, fire sticks, money plant, and rosettes to name a

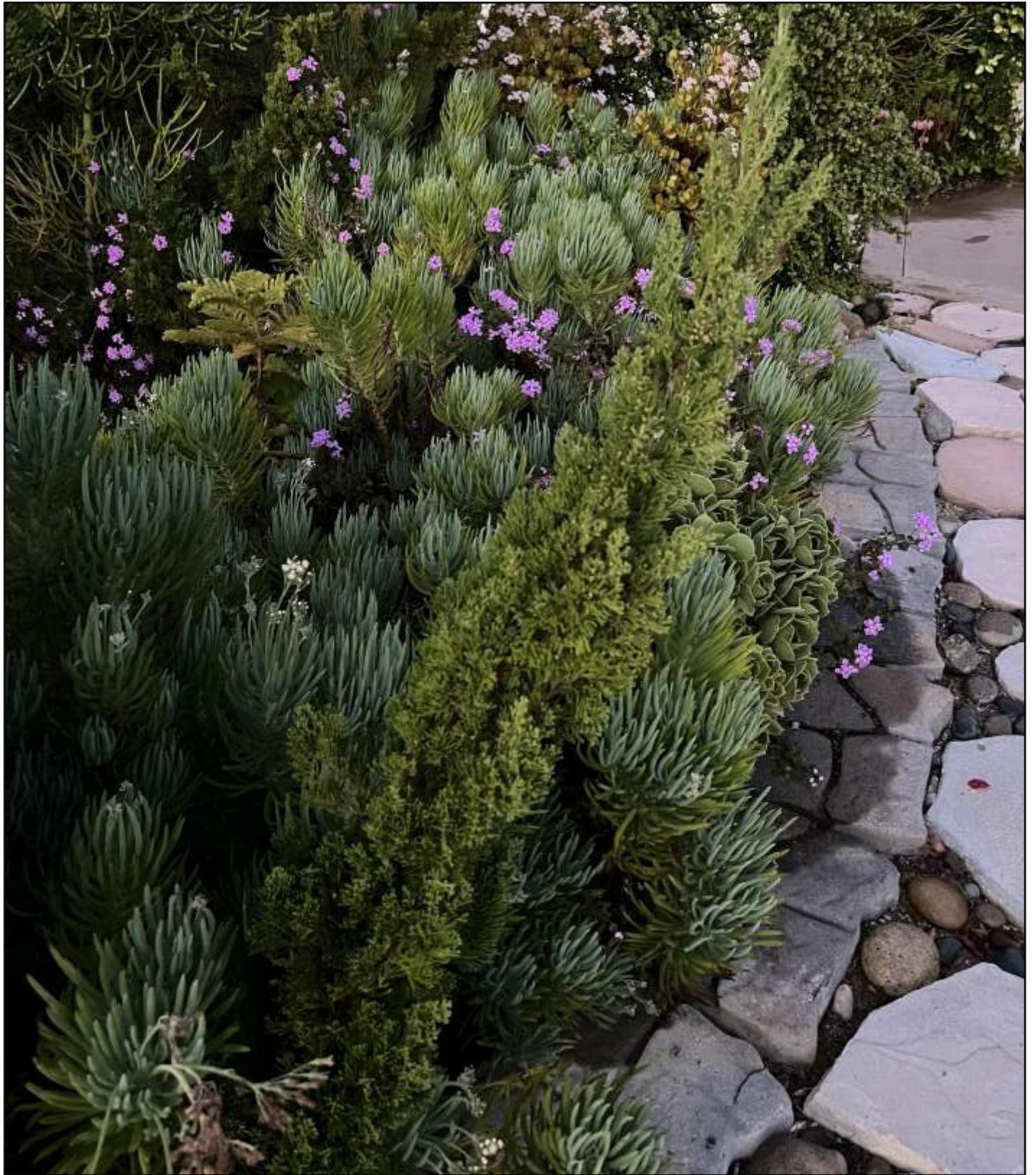
Describe how you water your landscape (50 - 100 words):

Installed drip irrigation. Also uses harvested rain water and mix settings of efficient spray nozzles, watering 2x week manually.



BEFORE







Owner's Name

Jennifer Dell

Landscape Installation Date

05/30/2021

How did you hear about the contest?

Vista Irrigation District

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

Replacing the standard, weed ridden, water intensive lawn of my very hot and sunny, south-facing house was a high priority when I purchased the property in October 2019 and the water-wise grant program was the perfect incentive to ensure I made smart, environmentally friendly choices. When I started the project, the ground was like concrete. I had to soak the dirt before I could dig even a small hole to plant the drought tolerant plants I wanted to grow. I focused on reclaimed or recycled materials - collecting cardboard from family and neighbors to cover the grass and weeds under my chipdrop mulch. Buckets and truck loads of rocks were hauled from Freecycle, offer-up and Facebook marketplace postings. Only the metal edging and drip irrigation was purchased new. I started with trees as a privacy screen and shade around the edge of the garden. I've continued to add fruit trees and native plants to build habitat for the bees and butterflies that especially love the Mexican bush sage, lavender, and pride of madeira. I use the arched trellis to grow vining flowers and fruits in season. I chose water smart landscaping because I didn't want to waste water on grass that provides no value to me or the local wildlife. I wanted a lush and colorful landscape with as low of a water bill as possible! With the heavy mulch, rocks, swales and berms, I keep what little rainfall we get on my soil. I use rain barrels to collect the rainwater from my gutters, which I then use to water my citrus and other fruit trees with slow draining 5 gallon buckets to get a long, deep watering. Over the past year, I've only used my drip irrigation after planting something new or in the worst of the summer and these climate appropriate plants and trees continue to survive, despite my near-neglect. I look forward to the summer blooms of my California native plants and watching everything continue to grow. I'm amazed at how much of a change there has been in only this first year. The ground is now soft and retains moisture, making it easy to add new flowers, edible plants and more fruit trees. I'm looking forward to filling in the garden with more native, flowering plants and adding a diversity of succulents along the narrow strip between the sidewalk and my back garden. I think my before and after photos speak for themselves. What was a mundane, flat waste of water is now, and will increasingly be, a joyful, colorful, and dynamic habitat for humans and other wildlife.



BEFORE







Owner's Name

Kimberly Johnson

Landscape Installation Date

12/11/2021

How did you hear about the contest?

email from VID

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

The importance of being "water smart" with landscaping, decreasing outdoor use, and the rising costs of water led us to trans-

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

anigozanthos
euphorbia
salvia leucantha
nandina
leptospermium

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

we have drip irrigation directly to each plant with programmable controller. We also created a surface water management "river

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

I've not done a good job of keeping track of the plants I have used. The edge trees are podocarpus and purple hopseed. I recently added bay, pluot, peach, fig, loquat and elderberry trees to the grapefruit, mandarin, lemon and lime citrus trees. I plan on installing an Australian willow to the left of the driveway for more shade. I have Mexican bush sage, pride of maderia, a native sage, lavender, iceburg roses, random clearance roses, agapanthus, cosmos, marigold, a couple of California poppy that didn't start well from seed, oregano, jasmine, honeysuckle, and rosemary that started as Christmas decorations but are now massive. I have a few succulents, propagated from friends and family - rock purslane, agave, firestick.

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

With the heavy mulch, rocks, swales and berms, I keep what little rainfall we get on my soil. I use rain barrels to collect the rain-water from my gutters, which I then use to water my citrus and other fruit trees with slow draining 5 gallon buckets to get a long, deep watering. Over the past year, I've only used my drip irrigation after planting something new or in the worst of the summer heat and these climate appropriate plants and trees continue to survive, despite my near-neglect. I converted the existing in-ground sprinklers to two drip irrigation zones, one for the smaller plants and another which runs longer, but less frequently for the trees. I have 1/2 and 1 gallon per hour emitters at the base of smaller plants and 2 or 4 gallon per hour emitters for my trees.



BEFORE



