

Michele King

From: Clerk of the Board
Subject: FW: Education Outreach Program Support Item for Consideration

From: Lori [mailto:lori@beneficialgardens.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 14, 2017 2:49 PM
To: Clerk of the Board <clerkoftheboard@valleywater.org>
Subject: Fwd: Education Outreach Program Support Item for Consideration

Dear Clerk of the Board —

The letter below was sent to you yesterday via my peer Stephanie Morris (no relation, unfortunately). Please include this correspondence for tonight's (2/14/17) Board of Directors meeting. I believe this would be applicable under Section 4.2 (Board Committee Reports). Thank you.

Lori Morris
Santa Clara Valley Water District Landscape Committee Chair
408-829-8788

Begin forwarded message:

From: Stephanie Morris <stephlmorris@gmail.com>
Subject: Fwd: Education Outreach Program Support Item for Consideration
Date: February 14, 2017 at 1:57:04 PM PST
To: Lori Morris <lori@beneficialgardens.com>

----- Forwarded message -----
From: Stephanie Morris <stephlmorris@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Feb 13, 2017 at 10:59 PM
Subject: Education Outreach Program Support Item for Consideration
To: <board@valleywater.org>

February 14, 2017

RE: Education Outreach Program Support

I am a member of the Santa Clara Valley Water District Landscape Committee and I initiated this letter to show my support for the Education Outreach Program and the work that Heidi McFarland is doing. I wish to bring the Board's attention to the program to explore funding and additional collaboration possibilities.

Heidi was invited to provide the Landscape Committee with an update of her programs in September 2016 as well as our most recent meeting on Tuesday, February 7, 2017. Both times, Heidi's professional expertise and enthusiasm for education programs was notable. As a result of our discussions, it's clear that Education and Water Conservation have some overlapping goals and collaboration could enhance both programs. It's also clear that most of the Education programs cannot succeed without further permanent staffing and an increased budget.

Due to time constraints last Tuesday, the Landscape Committee wasn't able to discuss specific ideas for support, collaboration and funding. Therefore, this letter has been circulated via email to Landscape Committee members and those who have signed below are in agreement that we would like to A) show support for the work of the Education Outreach Program, B) request that the Board consider additional staff and funding for the Education Outreach Program and C) request that the Board consider fostering additional partnerships between Conservation and Education programs.

A few specific goals of the Education Outreach Program worthy of consideration:

1) Research and develop design plans for a public visitor/education center with the focus on water with demonstration gardens to include low water and native plants, storm water management such as rain gardens, and innovative irrigation. Chino has a wonderful Water Conservation Education Center <http://www.cbwcd.org/145/Water-Conservation-Center-Campus>

- 2) Improve facilities for student field trips to outdoor classrooms for underserved schools (need restrooms and overhead cover).
- 3) Replace outdated Water District informational signs in local public landscapes that are outdated and worn/damaged.
- 4) Support various youth programs: Youth Stewardship Commission, 'Kids in Creek's program (working with schools that have adopted creeks to do water quality testing at their school creek sites), library programs, science/STEM fairs, etc. An additional staff member is needed to support these programs.
- 5) Increase our outreach numbers up on par with other local jurisdictions (we reach only 3% of the total population of students, Sonoma County is reaching 65%!) This can only be possible with an additional full-time position.
- 6) Offer more teacher training workshops and expand an existing teacher check-out kit program.

Education was one of the highest priority goals mentioned by attendees of the first Landscape Summit hosted last May by the Water District, and the goal of fostering education extends to the importance of education in the early formative years. We are passionate about supporting a District education program which would also naturally feather in and help bring to fruition the goals of our Landscape Committee. The timely opportunity for the District to have a fully functioning educational facility/Visitor's Center ON SITE to host educational programs for children and adults would also further our Committee's often-stated goal of making the Santa Clara Valley Water District THE benchmark for other districts to aspire to.

Thank you for your consideration,

Stephanie Morris, Landscape Architect

Committee members in Support (more names may be forthcoming)

Lori Morris, Landscape Committee Chairperson

Trish Mulvey, Purissima Hills Water District

Kit Gordon

Katja Irvin

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Stephanie Morris

Landscape Architect #4580

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