

WaterSMART Grants: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects for Fiscal Year 2021

Bureau of Reclamation NOFO No. R21AS00300

City of Santa Rosa

Cash For Grass Rebate Expansion

Please refer to the official [NOFO No. R21AS00300](#).

- See the Application Checklist (pp v) & Section D.2.2. Application Content (pp 12)*
- For greater detail on completing this template, turn on document markup to view comments.*

March 8, 2021

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TECHNICAL PROPOSAL AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

Executive Summary

Date: March 11, 2021

Applicant Name: City of Santa Rosa

Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Project Manager:

Thomas Hare

Water Resources Specialist

707-543-3396

thare@srcity.org

Applicant Category: Category A

Grant Funding Request: \$75,000

Non-Federal Matching Funds: \$75,264.80

Total Project Cost: \$150,264.80

Project Duration: Two years

Estimated Project Start Date: January 2022

Estimated Project Completion Date: December 2023

Located on Federal Facility: No

Unique Entity Identifier: 071879464

Project Summary

The City of Santa Rosa Water (the City), located in Northern California, is requesting funds to support outdoor water conservation through lawn removal and replacement with low water use plants. The City will use these funds to increase the amount of the existing Cash For Grass rebate for commercial landscapes to \$2.00 per square foot of lawn removed. Landscapes would be eligible for this funding if they plant one tree for every 600 square feet of landscaped area, providing a climate change mitigation and adaptation benefit. The Cash For Grass program has been independently evaluated for water savings, and achieves savings of 31 gallons per square foot converted. Cost sharing with Reclamation would increase program capacity, incentivize additional landscape transformations, and thereby save water while providing climate benefits.

Project Location

Santa Rosa is located in coastal Northern California, 55 miles north of San Francisco. All rebated turf conversions will take place within the City's service area (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. — Santa Rosa Water Service Area



Project Description

The City of Santa Rosa established the Cash For Grass Rebate program in 2007 for both residential and commercial landscapes to incentivize lawn removal and replacement with low water use plants. To date, 3,591,324 square feet of lawn have been removed, resulting in over 2,830 acre feet of water saved. Because of this, the City already has the staff and expertise needed to execute this project, but lacks the necessary funding. The existing rebate is \$0.75 per square foot of converted landscape. If this grant application is funded, commercial landscapes

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will be eligible for \$2.00 per square foot of converted landscape resulting in 37,500 square feet removed during the grant funded period. The water savings for this turf removed is 17.4 million gallons over the lifetime of these landscapes, assuming a 15-year life. Landscapes would be eligible for this funding if one tree is planted for every 600 square feet of landscaped area at landscape conversion.

Although the Cash For Grass program has been very successful, in recent years program participation in the commercial sector has declined. One major reason stated by landscape contractors, property managers, and HOA boards for this decline is the lack of funding to support landscape transformation. This grant would allow the City to incentivize landscape transformations at dedicated irrigation meters at commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family residential properties.

To encourage program participation, working with internal Community Affairs staff, the project manager will craft messaging appropriate for the website and to target commercial customers through direct mailers to advertise the increased rebate. The project manager will also present information about the increased rebate directly to the local chapter of the California Landscape Contractors Association, to local landscape companies through presentations and phone calls and other partners through direct communication, social media and through the City Connections newsletter of over 19,000 subscribers. The project manager will also work with the Sonoma-Marín Saving Water Partnership to send out updated program information to local Qualified Water Efficient Landscapers.

The project manager will carry out prequalification assessments and post installation inspections, educate customers about program requirements, and submit required rebate documentation to the Finance Department, who will issue the rebate checks. Project funds are only distributed if all requirements are met. Please see Attachment A for the City's current procedure, or click [here](#) to see this information on the City's website.

Evaluation Criteria

E.1.1 Evaluation Criterion A— Project Benefits

- Describe the expected benefits and outcomes of implementing the proposed project.
 - What are the benefits to the applicant's water supply delivery system?
 - If other benefits are expected, explain those as well. Consider the following:
 - Extent to which the proposed project improves overall water supply reliability
 - The expected geographic scope benefits from the proposed project (e.g., local, sub-basin, basin)
 - Extent to which the proposed project will increase collaboration and information sharing among water managers in the region

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- Any anticipated positive impacts/benefits to local sectors and economies (e.g., agriculture, environment, recreation, tourism)
- Extent to which the project will complement work done in coordination with NRCS in the area (e.g., with a direct connection to the district's water supply). Describe any on-farm efficiency work that is currently being completed or is anticipated to be completed in the future using NRCS assistance through EQIP or other programs.

The City of Santa Rosa established the Cash For Grass Rebate program in 2007 for both residential and commercial landscapes to incentivize lawn removal and replacement with low water use plants. To date, 3,591,324 square feet of lawn have been removed, resulting in over 2,830 acre feet of water saved. Although this program has been very successful, in recent years program participation in the commercial sector has declined significantly. One major reason stated by landscape contractors, property managers, and HOA boards for this decline is the lack of funding to support landscape transformation, but there is still significant need for further transformation and water savings. Of the 1,640 dedicated irrigation meters in the City of Santa Rosa, 689 have participated previously in the Cash for Grass program; many of these meters have the potential to remove additional turf. In addition to these meters, there are 951 meters that have never participated with a total of 20,492,370 sq ft of turf available for exchange. An independent assessment of program effectiveness showed that landscape conversions in the commercial sector save 31 gallons per square foot of lawn removed, providing tangible and long-lasting benefits to the City's water supply availability. This grant would allow the City to incentivize landscape transformations at dedicated irrigation meters at commercial, industrial, institutional, and multi-family residential properties.

According to an Alliance for Water Efficiency [study](#), water conservation programs in Westminster, Colorado altered irrigation patterns, reduced peak demand by 30%, and prevented Westminster from needing a 52 MGD expansion in water supply. Savings in irrigation usage are the most effective way to decrease peak demand, which occurs during the peak irrigation season of July in Santa Rosa. Reducing peak demand will help delay or eliminate the need for costly infrastructure projects in Santa Rosa such as increasing the size of our reservoirs or seeking additional water supply. Water efficiency and conservation is the most cost-effective source of water supply for Santa Rosa and has resulted in over 7,000 acre feet of savings from [Water Use Efficiency programs](#), such as the Cash for Grass rebate, since 1990.

The North Bay continues to experience dry weather following the third driest year on record in 2020 and is trending with 2014, the most recent historical drought. Average annual rainfall for the region is 36 inches but last year the region received only 16 inches of rain. As of February 1, 2021, the region has received 9 inches of rain, equating to 40% of normal rainfall for this time of year. Due to this dry year, water use efficiency and conservation is needed more than ever. Also, because of climate change, as of 2050, droughts will be twice as likely to occur. Extreme heat days are projected to increase 250% by 2050 and 500% by 2100 and heat wave duration is expected to increase 174% by 2100. Please see Attachment B for a two-page summary of Santa-

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Rosa specific climate impacts as reported by Cal Adapt. Increased air temperatures will drive increased evapotranspiration, which will drive increased local irrigation demand. This increased demand coupled with reduced water availability due to decreasing surface water supplies and decreased groundwater recharge makes water supply a critical issue for Santa Rosa. By implementing this grant in Santa Rosa, 37,500 sq. ft. of turf would be transformed into low water use landscapes with trees as an integral part of the new landscape. This will have a direct impact on water use, saving 1.2 million gallons every year, and 17.4 million gallons over the expected 15-year lifetime of the landscapes. It will also lead to more water savings by inspiring other locations to transform their landscapes; a recent study by the California Water Efficiency Partnership showed the significance of this peer-to-peer influence.

Santa Rosa purchases approximately 92% of its drinking water from Sonoma Water, the Region's water supply wholesaler. Sonoma Water, in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, manages two reservoirs: Lake Mendocino and Lake Sonoma. As of February 1st, Lake Sonoma is at 64% and Lake Mendocino is at 41% of their respective target water supply storage levels for this time of year. In response to dry year conditions, Sonoma Water filed, and the State Water Resources Control Board approved, a Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) to reduce minimum instream flow requirements in the Upper Russian River to preserve critical water storage at Lake Mendocino. Reduced minimum instream flows adversely impact multiple beneficial uses in the Russian River basin. Flow conditions in the Russian River basin also impact the Upper Eel River basin, as water is diverted from the upper Eel River to support minimum instream flows in the upper Russian River in the spring, summer and fall. Round Valley Tribes in the upper Eel River rely on water flow and fish populations, and this diversion to the Russian River is controversial. Both the Russian River and the Eel River are home to endangered and threatened runs of Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon, and Steelhead Trout, all of which require adequate streamflow to survive.

The Russian River is also home to nearly one million visitors every year. The Russian River contributes significantly to the allure of Sonoma County, where 7 million annual visitors regularly spend more than \$2 billion annually, a major factor in the local economy. One favorite activity of visitors is tubing or kayaking down the river. However, when flows get too low, parts of the Russian River become too shallow to kayak, and the river draws fewer people. Low flows also may contribute to conditions that favor the growth of toxic algae, which led to beach closures in the most recent 2015 drought. This [webpage](#) describes some of the conflict and complexity surrounding flows in the Russian River. This project will increase minimum instream flow through water conservation.

Santa Rosa is and will continue to be significantly impacted by climate change. Santa Rosa suffered catastrophic wildfires in 2017, 2019, and 2020 and wildfires are projected to burn 9.7% more of Santa Rosa per year by 2050, and 18% more by 2100 (see Appendix B for Cal Adapt projections). Planting trees is a way that Santa Rosa can save water and adapt to and mitigate against the effects of climate change. According to the EPA, trees help reduce the heat island effect, which is expected to intensify with increased temperatures. According to a 2014 report by Chan et al. for the National Wildlife Federation, trees can help reduce heat in their vicinity and

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provide cooling through increased soil moisture (*“Evaluating certified wildlife habitats & the minds behind them”*). Tree roots also break up soil creating increased water percolation and soil porosity, both of which help increase water retention in soil, reducing the amount of supplemental irrigation needed for plants near trees. Water quality can also be improved by trees through the reduction of soil compaction and erosion.

Trees also sequester carbon as part of their natural function. An international research team recently studied the impacts that reforestation could provide to the climate ([Bastin et al. 2019](#)). They found that by, “by planting more than a half trillion trees... we could capture about 205 gigatons of carbon (a gigaton is 1 billion metric tons), reducing atmospheric carbon by about 25 percent.” The impact of reducing atmospheric carbon by 25% is similar to half of the carbon emissions humans have generated since 1960.

This project will increase regional collaboration as the City would share resources developed such as marketing materials and results including water-saving and tree-planting potential with local water managers in the Sonoma-Marin Saving Water Partnership, a collection of 12 water agencies in Sonoma and Marin counties, in the Bay Area Water Conservation Managers meetings, and at a California Water Efficiency Partnership’s Peer-to-Peer conference among other venues.

E.1.2 Evaluation Criterion B— Planning Efforts Supporting the Project

Describe how your project is supported by an existing planning effort.

- Does the proposed project implement a goal or address a need or problem identified in the existing planning effort?
- Explain how the proposed project has been determined as a priority in the existing planning effort as opposed to other potential projects/measures.

The City of Santa Rosa has had a robust water use efficiency program since the 1970s and continues to treat water efficiency as a source of water supply. In the 2015 Urban Water Management Plan, Santa Rosa estimated future water savings from both passive savings, including the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance and National Plumbing Code, and active savings from water use efficiency programs. The active savings in 2020, 1,709 acre feet per year, is more than double the passive savings of 369 acre feet annually. Santa Rosa relies on active water use efficiency programs such as the grass removal program as a source of water supply to meet future demand. The Cash for Grass commercial program is one of the most cost-effective water use efficiency programs that Santa Rosa offers, with a cost of only \$526 per acre foot saved, compared to the wholesale cost of water at over \$960 per acre foot.

The Russian River Biological Opinion, available [here](#), is a determination by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to help restore and protect threatened or endangered steelhead, Coho

salmon and Chinook salmon in the Russian River due to activities of the U.S Army Corps of Engineers on behalf of Sonoma Water, the wholesale water provider of Santa Rosa. The biological opinion found that high summertime flows in the Russian River and Dry Creek make it difficult for juvenile steelhead and Coho to grow and thrive. Outdoor water conservation reduces summertime flows in the Russian River and Dry Creek, which are used as a conveyance system to provide water to Sonoma Water’s water retailers. The Cash for Grass program reduces water use in the summer through permanent water conservation exactly when the biological opinion requests reduced water use.

In addition to water savings, water use efficiency activities, including the Cash for Grass program are addressed in the City’s Municipal Operations Climate Action Plan, available [here](#), as energy savings. The Plan states that water conservation has saved over 1.46 billions of gallons of water every year, reducing the power needed to pump potable water and treat wastewater, which together account for over 50% of the Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) by municipal operations sector for the City. Since 2007 the City has reduced emissions by 13% in part related to reductions in water purchases by residential and commercial customers including participating in the Cash for Grass program.

In additional to municipal operations, the City has a Community Climate Action Plan, available [here](#). Goal 7 of this Plan is to, “improve the efficiency of wastewater and water operations in Santa Rosa and continue to develop a diversified water supply portfolio, including water conservation...”. Action item 7.1.2 lists continuing and expanding water conservation efforts including “water efficient landscaping”, as a major goal. Action 9.1.3, under Goal 9, Reduce Emissions from Construction and Lawn and Garden Activities, states, “Encourage the replacement of existing high maintenance and high water use landscapes (such as removing turf through the Green Exchange rebate program) with low water use vegetation to reduce the need for gas-powered lawn and garden equipment.”

E.1.3. Evaluation Criterion C—Project Implementation

- Describe the implementation plan for the proposed project. Please include an estimated project schedule that shows the stages and duration of the proposed work, including major tasks, milestones, and dates.
- Describe any permits that will be required, along with the process for obtaining such permits.
- Identify and describe any engineering or design work performed specifically in support of the proposed project.
- Describe any new policies or administrative actions required to implement the project.

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- Describe the timeline for completion of environmental and cultural resource compliance. Was the timeline for completion of environmental and cultural resource compliance discussed with the local Reclamation office?

The Cash for Grass Rebate Expansion Program does not require any permits to implement. Since each lawn removal project is taken on by a property owner on their own land and no projects will be performed on City property, no permits are needed from the City. If a property owner needs a permit for implementing their project, which is unlikely, it is the sole responsibility of the property owner to comply with any permit requirements.

No engineering or design work is required for this proposed project because the project will take place on the property owner's own land.

No environmental and cultural resource compliance is needed for the Cash for Grass Rebate Expansion Program since each project will take place on the business's property on previously developed land. A Program Analyst for the Bureau of Reclamation said she expects this project would likely be eligible for a categorical exclusion as there will be no adverse effect.

The Cash for Grass Program is already approved by the Board of Public Utilities as a water use efficiency program and therefore additional administrative action is not needed for this program. However, due to the Board's support of water use efficiency activities in the City of Santa Rosa, the project manager will report out on the successes of this project, merely to inform the Board.

The implementation plan for the proposed project is below in extended text form, and in condensed table form in Table 1 on page 12:

Q4 2021 (Oct-Dec)

- Pre-Award Work:
 - Start developing marketing materials that reflect the new Cash for Grass Rebate Expansion program so that program advertising can begin early in Q1 2022.

Q1 2022 (January – March)

- Milestone: Financial Assistance Agreement signed
- Milestone: Official start of Cash for Grass Expansion Program
- Marketing Tasks: Start marketing
 - Develop letter template to dedicated irrigation meter customers to inform them of the new Cash for Grass Rebate Expansion program
 - Contact local professional landscape companies to inform them about the new program
 - Contact all "pre-approved" Cash for Grass customers to inform them of the new expanded program and requirements to participate
- Program Implementation:
 - Update website to reflect new program requirements

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- Update program materials, including brochure, website procedure to reflect new program
- Update Cash for Grass rebate application to reflect the new program requirements and increased rebate amount
- Submit required grant reporting materials

Q2 2022 (April – June)

- Marketing Tasks: Increase marketing since program participation increases in summer
 - Send letter to all dedicated irrigation meter customers to inform them of the new Cash for Grass Rebate Expansion program
 - Develop social media post for Facebook and Twitter to highlight new rebate program
 - Develop City Connections e-newsletter article to inform customers about the new rebate program expansion
 - Develop digital targeted ads for those who search specific keywords such as “Landscaper” or “Grass Removal”
- Program Implementation:
 - Review website and program materials based on any program feedback received from customers
 - Pre-approve customer applications for the rebate
 - Approve rebate applications and issue funds for participating customers
 - Submit required grant reporting materials

Q3 2022 (July – Sept)

- Marketing Tasks: Peak marketing since program participation increases in summer
 - Partner with community partners, such as California Landscape Contractors Association to market program including writing an article for the upcoming newsletter to landscape professionals
 - Develop letter template and send to Qualified Water Efficient Landscapers about new program
 - Develop social media post for Facebook and Twitter to highlight new rebate program
- Program Implementation:
 - Review website and program materials based on any program feedback received from customers
 - Pre-approve customer applications for the rebate
 - Approve rebate applications and issue funds for participating customers
 - Submit required grant reporting materials

Q4 2022 (Oct – Dec)

- Marketing Tasks: Encourage program participation since the wet Fall and Winter months are an ideal time to plant new landscapes
 - Highlight new rebate program requirements at Water Use Efficiency customer workshop
 - Write article for Sonoma Marin Saving Water Partnership newsletter
 - Develop social media post for Facebook and Twitter to highlight new rebate program

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- Develop City Connections e-newsletter article to inform customers about the new rebate program expansion
- Program Implementation:
 - Review website and program materials based on any program feedback received from customers
 - Pre-approve customer applications for the rebate
 - Approve rebate applications and issue funds for participating customers
 - Submit required grant reporting materials

Q1 2023 (Jan – March)

- Milestone: Halfway through grant funded period
- Milestone: Removed 10,000 square feet of grass. Note, this is less than half of the total square footage to be removed as the City anticipates a lag time between prequalification and completion of landscape projects such that more projects will be completed during the 2nd year.
- Marketing Tasks: Encourage program participation since the wet Winter months are an ideal time to plant new landscapes
 - Develop and send letter to all dedicated irrigation meter customers about rebate program
 - Host one virtual workshop on new rebate program requirements
 - Develop social media post for Facebook and Twitter to highlight new rebate program
 - Develop City Connections e-newsletter article to inform customers about the new rebate program expansion
- Program Implementation:
 - Review website and program materials based on any program feedback received from customers
 - Pre-approve customer applications for the rebate
 - Approve rebate applications and issue funds for participating customers
 - Submit required grant reporting materials

Q2 2023 (April – June)

- Marketing Tasks: Increase marketing since program participation increases in the Summer and the grant period is drawing to a close
 - Present at California Landscape Contractors Association chapter dinner meeting
 - Highlight the expanded rebate at local events including the WaterSmart Expo, Sonoma County Fair, Wednesday Night Market, Home Show etc
 - Develop social media post for Facebook and Twitter to highlight new rebate program
 - Develop City Connections e-newsletter article to inform customers about the new rebate program expansion
- Program Implementation:
 - Review website, rebate application, and program materials based on any program feedback received from customers

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- Pre-approve customer applications for the rebate
- Approve rebate applications and issue funds for participating customers
- Submit required grant reporting materials

Q3 2023 (July – Sept)

- Marketing Tasks: Increase marketing
 - Connect with local landscape professionals to inform them that rebates will only be funded at the increased rebate amount through December 2023.
 - Highlight the expanded rebate at local events including the WaterSmart Expo, Sonoma County Fair, Wednesday Night Market, Home Show etc
 - Develop social media post for Facebook and Twitter to highlight new rebate program
 - Develop City Connections e-newsletter article to inform customers about the new rebate program expansion
- Program Implementation:
 - Review website, rebate application, and program materials based on any program feedback received from customers
 - Pre-approve customer applications for the rebate
 - Communicate with outstanding rebate applicants that projects must be completed by December 2023 in order to be eligible for increased funding
 - Approve rebate applications and issue funds for participating customers
 - Submit required grant reporting materials

Q4 2023 (Oct – Dec)

- Milestone: Grant funded period is over December 2023
- Milestone: Removed 37,500 square feet of grass
- Marketing Tasks: Wrap up marketing as grant funding period closes
 - Connect with local landscape professionals to inform them that rebates will only be funded at the increased rebate amount through December 2023.
- Program Implementation:
 - Pre-approve customer applications for the rebate
 - Approve rebate applications and issue funds for participating customers
 - Communicate with outstanding rebate applicants that projects must be completed by December 2023 in order to be eligible for increased funding
 - Submit required grant reporting materials

Q1 2024 (Jan – Mar)

- Milestone: submit final grant report

Table 2.— Project Schedule

SCHEDULE	Oct-Dec 2021	Year 1					Year 2				Jan-Mar 2024
		Jan 2022	Feb-Mar 2022	Apr-Jun 2022	Jul-Sept 2022	Oct-Dec 2022	Jan-Mar 2023	Apr-Jun 2023	Jul-Sept 2023	Oct-Dec 2023	
<i>Milestone/Task</i>											
Develop New Marketing Materials											
Sign Financial Assistance Agreement											
Update Old Marketing Materials											
Advertise Program											
Approve Rebate Applications											
Fund Completed Landscape Projects											
Square Feet Turf Removed (Thousands)							10			37.5	
Submit final report											

E.1.4. Evaluation Criterion D— Nexus to Reclamation

- Is the proposed project connected to a Reclamation project or activity? If so, how? Please consider the following:
 - Does the applicant receive Reclamation project water?
 - Is the project on Reclamation project lands or involving Reclamation facilities?
 - Is the project in the same basin as a Reclamation project or activity?
 - Will the proposed work contribute water to a basin where a Reclamation project is located?
- Will the project benefit any tribe(s)?

Although the City does not receive water from Reclamation projects, we are a water-constrained watershed. Accounting for recent rain events, the North Bay continues to experience dry weather following the third driest year on record in 2020 and is trending with 2014, the most recent historical drought. Average annual rainfall for the region is 36 inches. Last year the region received only 16 inches of rain. As of February 1, 2021, the region has received 9 inches of rain, equating to 40% of normal rainfall for this time of year. Santa Rosa purchases approximately 92% of its drinking water from Sonoma Water, the Region’s water supply wholesaler. Sonoma Water, in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, manages two reservoirs: Lake Mendocino and Lake Sonoma. As of February 1st, Lake Sonoma is at 64% and Lake Mendocino is at 41% of their respective target water supply storage levels for this time of year. In response to dry year conditions, Sonoma Water filed, and the State Water Resources Control Board approved, a Temporary Urgency Change Petition (TUCP) to reduce minimum instream flow requirements in the Upper Russian River to preserve critical water storage at Lake Mendocino.

Additionally, as all community members are encouraged to benefit from this grant funding through the Cash for Grass program, local tribes could benefit from this grant. In Sonoma County, Southern Pomo and Coast Miwok tribes formed a local federation called the Graton Rancheria and are federally recognized as a tribe by the federal government. If the City is awarded this grant, the project manager will reach out directly to Graton Rancheria to inform them about this funding opportunity for their commercial properties in Santa Rosa.

Furthermore, as is described by the local nonprofit organization Russian Riverkeeper [here](#), water is diverted from the Eel River basin to the Russian River basin. Because of this diversion, water conservation in the Russian River basin impacts water flow in the Eel River. This impacts the Round Valley Indian Tribes, a Sovereign Nation of confederated tribes in northern Mendocino county. There are seven Tribes in Round Valley: Yuki, Concow, Little Lake, Pomo, Nomlaki,

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Wailaki, and Pit River. Since “time immemorial” Round Valley Tribes have relied on water and fish in the Eel River. Round Valley Tribes are one of the partner members of the Two Basin Partnership ([website](#)), a partnership with diverse stakeholders striving to find a solution to management of the Eel River watershed that can best benefit both the Eel River and the Russian River basins. This project will increase flows in the Russian River through decreased diversions due to water conservation.

PROJECT BUDGET

Funding Plan and Letters of Commitment

Please identify the sources of the non-Federal cost-share contribution for the project, including:

- Any monetary contributions by the applicant towards the cost-share requirement and source of funds (e.g., reserve account, tax revenue, and/or assessments).
- Any costs that will be contributed by the applicant.
- Any third-party in-kind costs (i.e., goods and services provided by a third party).
- Any cash requested or received from other non-Federal entities.
- Any pending funding requests (i.e., grants or loans) that have not yet been approved and explain how the project will be affected if such funding is denied.

In addition, please identify whether the budget proposal includes any project costs that have been or may be incurred prior to award. For each cost, describe:

- The project expenditure and amount.
- The date of cost incurrence.
- How the expenditure benefits the project.

All water conservation programs and staff time are already budgeted in the City's Fiscal Year 20/21, 21/22 budget. This funding has been approved by the Board of Public Utilities and the City Council and is currently in a reserve account. This grant would allow a significant expansion of the existing conservation program and would increase the high-water use turf removed by 37,500 sq feet resulting in 17.4 million gallons saved over the lifetime of the project. This grant would allow the City to leverage these existing assets to achieve an increased impact commensurate with rebate expansion. With these funds, program participation will increase in the commercial sector.

The City is not seeking any additional third-party, state, or federal funding for this project. None of the funding will be used for direct installation or construction. If selected, the City will begin tracking marketing material development costs and staff time costs related to grant implementation in October 2021 so that marketing materials can be ready for distribution early in the first quarter of 2022. No rebate projects will be prequalified prior to the signing of a financial assistance agreement, expected in January 2022.

Budget Proposal

Table 2.— Total Project Cost Table

SOURCE	AMOUNT
Costs to be reimbursed with the requested Federal funding	\$75,000.00
Costs to be paid by the applicant	\$75,264.80
Value of third-party contributions	\$0.00
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$150,264.80

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Table 3.— Budget Proposal

BUDGET ITEM DESCRIPTION	COMPUTATION		Quantity Type	TOTAL COST
	\$/UNIT	Quantity		
Salaries and Wages				
Program Manager	36	1040	hour	\$ 37,440.00
Tech. Application Specialist	47.1	10	hour	\$ 471.00
Community Outreach Specialist	37.43	20	hour	\$ 748.60
Sustainability Coordinator	55.87	96	hour	\$ 5,363.52
Marketing & Outreach Coordinator	55.36	10	hour	\$ 553.60
Intern	15	1040	hour	\$ 15,600.00
Fringe Benefits				
Full-Time Employees	12.83	1176	hour	\$ 15,088.08
Part-Time Employees				\$ -
Travel				
Trip 1				\$ -
Equipment				
Item A				\$ -
Supplies and Materials				
Item A				\$ -
Contractual/Construction				
Contractor A				\$ -
Third-Party Contributions				
Contributor A				\$ -
Other				
Grass Removal Incentive	\$2.00	37,500	sq.ft.	\$ 75,000.00
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS				\$ 150,264.80
Indirect Costs				
Type of rate	percentage	\$base		\$ -
TOTAL ESTIMATED PROJECT COSTS				\$ 150,264.80

Budget Narrative

Salaries and Wages

- Program Manager

The Program Manager is compensated at \$36.00 per hour and will be the party implementing the Cash For Grass rebate program and fulfilling reporting requirements. The City anticipates the program manager will spend 1040 hours administering this program over the course of this project. This is the equivalent of 25% of the program manager's time over the duration of the program. This estimate reflects the amount of time it currently takes to manage the commercial landscape rebate program. The program manager will be responsible for most aspects of project implementation, including:

- fulfilling reporting requirements,
- presenting rebate information to customers and landscape professionals,
- preparing marketing materials,
- writing articles for professional distribution,
- verifying applicant eligibility,
- measuring turf area to be removed, and completing paperwork for rebate prequalifications,
- performing on site inspections,
- ensuring completed projects meet program requirements, and
- completing paperwork for issuance of rebate checks.

- Technology Application Specialist

The Technology Application Specialist is compensated at \$47.10 per hour and will be responsible for creating customized reports from the City's billing database allowing the program manager to target segments of commercial customers for marketing. The City anticipates the Technology Application Specialist will spend 10 hours assembling customized datasets over the course of this project.

- Community Outreach Specialist

The Community Outreach Specialist is compensated at \$37.43 per hour and will be responsible for creating marketing materials to encourage participation in the program. The City anticipates the Community Outreach Specialist will spend 20 hours creating marketing materials over the course of this project.

- Sustainability Coordinator

The Sustainability Coordinator is compensated at \$55.87 per hour and will be responsible for overseeing the program manager's implementation of this grant to ensure compliance with all grant requirements. The City anticipates the Sustainability Coordinator will spend 96 hours overseeing the implementation of this project, including

WaterSMART Grants: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects for FY 2021 – R21AS00300

reviewing all grant reports, approving all rebate applications, and working with the Community Outreach Specialist to development comprehensive marketing campaign etc.

- Marketing & Outreach Coordinator

The Marketing & Outreach Coordinator is compensated at \$55.36 per hour and will be responsible for directing the creation of marketing materials. The City anticipates the Marketing & Outreach Coordinator will spend 10 hours overseeing material creation.

- Interns

The City hires interns as part-time temporary staff at a cost of \$15 per hour. The City anticipates interns will spend 1040 hours working on this program, which equates to 10 hours per week for two years. Interns will work closely with the program manager and will be responsible for assisting in almost all aspects of project implementation, including:

- sending direct mailing marketing materials,
- measuring turf area to be removed,
- preparing paperwork for rebate prequalification,
- verifying applicant eligibility, and
- accompanying the program manager on site inspections.

Fringe Benefits

Full-time City staff receive fringe benefits at a rate of \$12.83 per hour. Part-time City staff do not receive fringe benefits.

Travel

No travel will be paid for by this grant.

Equipment

No equipment will be paid for by this grant.

Materials and Supplies

No materials and supplies will be funded by this grant.

Contractual

There will be no contracts funded with this grant.

Third-Party In-Kind Contributions

Not applicable.

Environmental and Regulatory Compliance Costs

The City does not anticipate any environmental or regulatory costs relating to this program as projects will only occur on already developed properties. All program participants must adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

WaterSMART Grants: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects for FY 2021 – R21AS00300

Other Expenses

Participants in this program receive a rebate of \$2.00 per square foot for converting their lawn to a landscape with trees and other low water use plants. This rebate will fund 37,500 square feet of lawn converted, for a total of \$75,000. This \$75,000 is the full amount the City is requesting with this grant application.

Indirect Costs

No indirect costs are included in this budget.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES COMPLIANCE

- *Will the proposed project impact the surrounding environment (e.g., soil [dust], air, water [quality and quantity], animal habitat)? Please briefly describe all earth-disturbing work and any work that will affect the air, water, or animal habitat in the project area. Please also explain the impacts of such work on the surrounding environment and any steps that could be taken to minimize the impacts.*

No adverse effects to the surrounding environment are anticipated for this program. Because work will only occur on already-developed properties, no impacts to animal habitat are expected. Projects should have a positive impact on air and water quality as low water use plant landscapes will not need to be mown or have a lot of chemical fertilizer inputs which can run off to local waterways.

- *Are you aware of any species listed or proposed to be listed as a Federal threatened or endangered species, or designated critical habitat in the project area? If so, would they be affected by any activities associated with the proposed project?*

There are no threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat in the project areas that will have their landscapes transformed. The City expects a beneficial impact on threatened and endangered species of salmonids in the Russian River and the Eel River as water conservation will help the flows in the rivers better match the needs of the fish.

- *Are there wetlands or other surface waters inside the project boundaries that potentially fall under CWA jurisdiction as “Waters of the United States?” If so, please describe and estimate any impacts the proposed project may have.*

No, the proposed projects will occur on already-developed properties and will not adversely impact any wetlands or other surface waters. The City expects a beneficial impact on water flows in the Russian River and the Eel River due to water conservation.

- *When was the water delivery system constructed?*

From 1873 until 1947, the City was served by two separate potable water systems. Established in 1873, a privately owned and operated system called the Santa Rosa Water Company diverted water diverted from Santa Rosa Creek and from the newly constructed, privately owned Lake Ralphine. In 1893, the City began building a municipal water system to serve a portion of Santa Rosa with water pumped out of Santa Rosa Creek at the north end of Farmers Lane. In 1947, the City purchased Santa Rosa Water Company from the private owner and integrated the acquired assets into the operation of the City’s municipal water system.

Between 1948 and 1958, the City constructed eight groundwater supply wells, and by June 1959, the City’s primary water supply source was groundwater. In June of 1959, the City signed a contract with the Sonoma County Flood Control and Water Conservation

WaterSMART Grants: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects for FY 2021 – R21AS00300

District (District), which later became the Sonoma County Water Agency (Sonoma Water) to purchase potable water diverted from the Russian River for the City's municipal water supply. The City put its production wells on standby status and discontinued using local surface water diversions. By 1960, the City had 12,000 water connections and 31,721 residents.

Over the next six decades, the City gradually expanded its potable distribution system and infrastructure to ensure ongoing reliable service for its customers. The City has added water mains, pump stations, storage reservoirs (above ground tanks), and two groundwater wells (shifting them from standby status to active status). As of December 2020, the City's potable water system has grown to over 55,000 water connections serving 173,628 residents.

- *Will the proposed project result in any modification of or effects to, individual features of an irrigation system (e.g., headgates, canals, or flumes)? If so, state when those features were constructed and describe the nature and timing of any extensive alterations or modifications to those features completed previously.*

No, the proposed project will not result in any such modifications or effects.

- *Are any buildings, structures, or features in the irrigation district listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places? A cultural resources specialist at your local Reclamation office or the State Historic Preservation Office can assist in answering this question.*

While historic sites are located within the City of Santa Rosa's service area, the proposed project will only occur on already-developed properties and will have no adverse effect on any building, structure, or feature listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

- *Are there any known archeological sites in the proposed project area?*

No, there are no known archeological sites in the proposed project area. Proposed projects will only occur on already-developed properties.

- *Will the proposed project have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations?*

No. Any eligible business can participate in the rebate program, and there is no penalty for not participating. Low income and minority populations will be encouraged to participate in this program and save money on their water bill through water conservation.

WaterSMART Grants: Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects for FY 2021 – R21AS00300

- *Will the proposed project limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites or result in other impacts on tribal lands?*

No, the proposed project will not limit access to or use of sacred Native American sites or result in any adverse impacts on tribal lands. Tribal members will be invited to participate in the rebate program on any commercial properties they have in the City, and there will be no penalty for not participating.

- *Will the proposed project contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area?*

No, this program will only allow the planting of non-invasive species per program guidelines.

REQUIRED PERMITS OR APPROVALS

No permits or approvals will be required for this project.

LETTERS OF PROJECT SUPPORT

Five letters of support are attached that indicate that this project is well supported by the Santa Rosa and State-wide water use efficiency community. Sonoma Water, Santa Rosa's water wholesaler supports this project, as does the Russian River Watershed Association, a coalition of 11 cities, counties, and special districts that work together to promote projects that protect watershed resources, restore fisheries, and improve water quality. Additionally, California Water Efficiency Partnership has provided a letter of support, as has WaterNow Alliance. Lastly, LandCare, a local landscape management company has indicated support of this project through a letter of support.

Letters of project support from the following entities are included in Attachment C:

1. Sonoma Water
2. Russian River Watershed Association
3. California Water Efficiency Partnership
4. WaterNow Alliance
5. LandCare

OFFICIAL RESOLUTION

The City Council will meet on April 13th to approve this application with an official resolution. Following approval from the City Council, this resolution will be submitted as an addendum to this application.

UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER

The City of Santa Rosa is registered with SAM. The City's DUNS number is 071879464.



Cash for Grass Rebate

Green Exchange Program

Cash for Grass and Irrigation Efficiency Rebate cannot be issued for the same project area

Rebate Amounts:

Residential: \$0.75/sq. ft. up to max of 1,000 sq. ft. or \$750.00 once for the life of the account

Commercial: \$0.75/sq. ft. up to max of 10,000 sq. ft. or \$7,500.00 annually

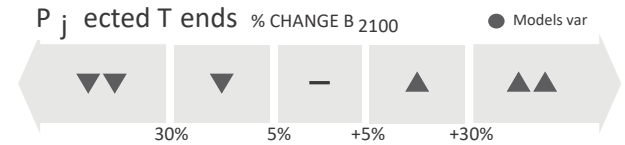
Applicant must:

- Have a City of Santa Rosa water account (service) in their name for the property where the project will be completed.
 - If the property owner is the participant in the program and not the water account holder, they must receive written consent from the water account holder using a City of Santa Rosa Tenant/Account Holder Permission Form
- Have lawns that are green, regularly mowed, irrigated and well taken care of (dead lawns or lawns already removed at the time of the pre-inspection are not eligible for rebate).
- Agree that lawn must not be reinstalled while you are the current account holder or property owner. If lawn or any other high-water use plants (such as gardens) are reinstalled during that time, the entire rebate amount must be refunded.

Steps to Participate:





- 1) Call Water-Use Efficiency staff at 707-543-3985 for pre-qualification, eligibility verification and a potential site visit. All rebates require a pre-qualification before any work is started.
- 2) After eligibility of site is verified, you will receive your Green Exchange Eligibility Form (required to qualify for rebate). You may then proceed with lawn replacement. You have 120 days from the date on the eligibility form to complete the project.
- 3) **Project Guidelines:**
 - a) It is recommended that the lawn is sheetmulched however physical removal may be used but is not recommended.
 - b) Only permeable landscapes are allowed (mulch, rock, decomposed granite, small pavers, etc.).
 - i) Not allowed: solid plastic sheeting, rubber mulch, artificial turf, concrete, patios, mortared or glued paths.
 - c) Only non-invasive low or very-low water use plants are allowed as determined by WUCOLS: <http://ucanr.edu/sites/wucols/>
 - i) A plant density requirement of 50% at plant maturity is required as calculated by planted square footage divided by total project area. Planting areas 6 feet wide or under are exempted from this plant coverage requirement.
 - d) If you have an existing irrigation system in the project area, you must do one of the following:
 - i) Cut off irrigation valve, remove it and cap the pipes (resulting in hand or no watering)
 - ii) Cut and cap all sprinkler heads (resulting in hand or no watering)
 - iii) Cut and cap all but select sprinkler heads and convert those heads to a drip system using an all-in-one conversion kit (must have a pressure regulator and a filter built in).
 - iv) Cut the output side of the irrigation valve and convert to a drip system with a pressure regulator and filter from there
 - e) If you do not have an existing irrigation system you may either install a new irrigation valve with a pressure regulator, filter, and drip system, or you can hand water.
- 4) Once project is finished, and within the 120-day period, call 707-543-3985 to setup a post-inspection.
- 5) City staff will verify project completion and that the project follows the guidelines above.
- 6) Rebates are processed within 4 to 8 weeks after completed project is approved.

PROJECTED CLIMATE CHANGES AND ASSOCIATED IMPACTS FOR SANTA ROSA, CA



CLIMATE CHANGES	METRIC	TREND	PROJECTED CHANGES
Air temperature	Minimum temperature	▲	+4.4°F by 2050 and +8.1°F by 2100 COMPARED TO OBSERVED ANNUAL AVERAGE OF 43°F FROM 1961–1990
	Maximum temperature	▲	+4.3°F by 2050 and +7.5°F by 2100 COMPARED TO OBSERVED ANNUAL AVERAGE OF 71.1°F FROM 1961–1990
Precipitation	Annual precipitation	●	+5.5 inches per year (+16%) by 2050 and +9.9 inches per year (+28%) by 2100, but model projections vary widely COMPARED TO OBSERVED AVERAGE OF 34.9 INCHES FROM 1961–1990
	Seasonality	▲ ▼	Shorter/more intense wet season, with later onset of fall rains and earlier onset of the dry season; more pronounced interannual variability
Extreme heat	Extreme heat days MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES OVER 98.1°F	▲ ▲	+10 days per year (+250%) by 2050 and +20 days per year (+500%) by 2100 COMPARED TO OBSERVED AVERAGE OF 4 DAYS PER YEAR FROM 1961–1990
	Heat wave duration LONGEST CONSECUTIVE EXTREME HEAT DAYS PER YEAR	▲ ▲	+2.5 days per year (+109%) by 2050 and +4 days per year (+174%) by 2100 COMPARED TO OBSERVED AVERAGE OF 2.3 DAYS PER YEAR FROM 1961–1990
Extreme precipitation	Intensity of extreme events 2-DAY TOTAL EXCEEDED ONCE IN 20 YEARS	▲	+0.3 inches (+3%) by 2050 and +1.9 inches (+20%) by 2100 COMPARED TO OBSERVED 20-YEAR RETURN LEVEL OF 9.4 INCHES FROM 1961–1990
	Frequency of extreme events # OF EVENTS WITH 2-DAY TOTAL OVER 1.99 INCHES	●	+2 events per year (+67%) by 2050 and +3 events per year (+100%) by 2100, but model projections vary widely COMPARED TO OBSERVED AVERAGE FREQUENCY OF 3 EVENTS PER YEAR FROM 1961–1990
Drought	Risk of drought years	▲ ▲	Drought years are twice as likely to occur in any given year by 2050
	Drought severity	▲ ▲	Severe droughts that now occur every 20 years will occur once every 10 years, while 100-year droughts will occur every 20 years by 2100
Wildfire	Annual area burned	▲	+9 hectares per year (+9.7%) by 2050 and +16.9 hectares per year (+18%) by 2100 COMPARED TO OBSERVED ANNUAL AVERAGE OF 93.1 HECTARES (RANGE OF 20–220) FROM 1961–1990

Projections were obtained from Cal-Adapt (<http://cal-adapt.org>) using high-emissions scenario for 2050/mid-century (average of 2035–2064) and 2100/late-century (average of 2070–2099) time periods compared to average conditions between 1961–1990. Precipitation seasonality and drought projections from (1) Swain, Angerbrunner, Neelin, et al., *Nature Climate Change* 8, 427 (2018); (2) Cook, Ault, Smerdon, *Science Advances* 1, e1400082 (2015); (3) Pierce, Ralston, Cayan, “Climate, drought, and sea level rise scenarios for the Fourth California Climate Assessment” (California Energy Commission, 2018).

CLIMATE CHANGES	IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH PROJECTED CHANGES
 <p>Higher average temperatures & more extreme heat</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced growth and productivity of agricultural crops and native vegetation due to heat stress and increases in evapotranspiration • Potential increase in insect pests and disease vectors (e.g., mosquitoes, rodents), with associated impacts to agriculture, public health, and native plants and wildlife • Increased heat-related illness and death, particularly among vulnerable populations • Greater demand for emergency services, public spaces that provide relief from extreme heat (e.g., libraries, community centers), and water-dependent recreation
 <p>Shifts in rainfall seasonality & increased risk of extreme flooding</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced growth and productivity of agricultural crops and native vegetation due to a longer dry season • Increased runoff during heavy rainfall events that follow dry periods, resulting in greater risk of landslides and flash floods • Increased risk of injuries/death and property damage or loss during extreme flooding • Damage to roadways and/or temporary loss of access to isolated neighborhoods • Interruption of public services and possible public health impacts following damage to utilities • Economic impacts of damage to businesses and agricultural operations
 <p>More frequent and/or severe droughts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced water availability due to declining surface water supplies and groundwater recharge combined with increased demand for agricultural and household use • Increased stress and mortality in agricultural crops and native vegetation • Increased cost of food and water • Economic losses due to crop failures and loss of tourism associated with water-dependent activities
 <p>More frequent and/or intense wildfires</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased risk of injuries and death due to burns and smoke inhalation, as well as longer-term health impacts related to eye and respiratory issues • Damage and loss of homes, businesses, and other infrastructure, particularly within the wildland-urban interface (WUI) • Possible disruption of critical supply chains, access to public services, and other linkages • Economic losses due to direct damages (i.e., to businesses) as well as declines in tourism and recreation following fire • Increased frequency of preemptive power outages for wildfire prevention, resulting in the loss of air conditioning, greater risk of food/medication spoilage, disruptions to public services, and other impacts

*Climate change icons are from the Sonoma County Climate Protection Authority report, "Climate Action 2020 and Beyond"

Sources

- Cal-Adapt (<http://cal-adapt.org>)
- California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment (<https://www.climateassessment.ca.gov/>)
- California Adaptation Clearinghouse (<https://resilientca.org/>)
- California Governor's Office of Emergency Services, "California Adaptation Planning Guide" (Cal OES, Merced, CA, 2020)
- Sonoma County Regional Climate Protection Authority, "Climate Action 2020 and Beyond: Sonoma County Regional Climate Action Plan" (Sonoma County CP A, Santa Rosa, CA, 2016)



**Sonoma
Water**

March 3, 2021

Paul Piazza
Sonoma Water
404 Aviation Blvd.
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**RE: Support of City of Santa Rosa's Application for WaterSMART Grant:
Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion**

Dear Ms. Graber,

Sonoma Water provides clean, reliable drinking water to Sonoma County, including Santa Rosa and eight other cities and special districts. Sonoma Water effectively manages the water resources for the benefit of people and the environment through resource and environmental stewardship, technical innovation, and responsible fiscal management. Sonoma Water is pleased to voice support for the City of Santa Rosa's proposal for funding from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for the Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion.

The Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion increases the City of Santa Rosa's turf removal rebate amount to \$2.00 per square foot removed and requires one tree per 600 square feet of rebated area. Lawn removal has a documented history of achieving water savings for the City of Santa Rosa, with over 3.5 million square feet of turf removed since 2006 with water savings of over 2,800 acre feet achieved. Combining Santa Rosa's successful lawn removal program with incentivizing tree installation will further help Santa Rosa adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Sonoma Water supports Santa Rosa's application for funding. Sonoma Water is the leader of the Sonoma Marin Saving Water Partnership (Partnership), which represents twelve water utilities in Sonoma and Marin counties, including Santa Rosa, that have joined together to provide regional solutions for water use efficiency. Sonoma Water supports Santa Rosa's application for funding because it aligns with Santa Rosa's and the Partnership's goals to implement water use efficiency projects and maximize the cost-effectiveness of water use efficiency programs in our region.

Thank you in advance for considering the Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Piazza".

Paul Piazza
Water Use Efficiency Manager
Sonoma Water



March 15, 2021

SENT VIA: EMAIL

Ms. Robin Graber
Rgrab@usbr.gov

SUBJECT: Support of City of Santa Rosa's Application for WaterSMART Grant: Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion

MEMBER AGENCIES

- City of Cloverdale
- City of Cotati
- City of Healdsburg
- City of Rohnert Park
- City of Santa Rosa
- City of Sebastopol
- City of Ukiah
- County of Mendocino
- County of Sonoma
- Sonoma County Water Agency
- Town of Windsor

ANDY RODGERS

Executive Director

300 Seminary Avenue
Ukiah, CA 95482
(707) 508-3670

cleanwater@rrwatershed.org

www.rrwatershed.org

Dear Ms. Graber:

The Russian River Watershed Association (RRWA) is a coalition of eleven public agencies in the Russian River Watershed in Sonoma and Mendocino Counties that have come together to coordinate regional programs for clean water and watershed enhancement. RRWA is pleased to voice support for the City of Santa Rosa's proposal for funding from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for the Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion.

The Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion increases the City of Santa Rosa's turf removal rebate amount to \$2.00 per square foot removed and requires one tree per 600 square feet of rebated area. Lawn removal has a documented history of achieving water savings for the City of Santa Rosa, with over 3.5 million square feet of turf removed since 2006 with water savings of over 2,800-acre feet achieved. Combining Santa Rosa's successful lawn removal program with incentivizing tree installation will further help Santa Rosa adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.

RRWA supports Santa Rosa's application for funding. RRWA developed the Russian River-Friendly Landscape Guidelines (RRFLG) program in 2010 as a means of targeting professional landscapers to protect water quality and carry out sustainable landscape practices. The RRFLG program is actively utilized in our watershed. Santa Rosa has been instrumental in developing the watershed-wide RRFLG program and continues to be a leader in these implementation efforts. The proposed project further enhances the message of sustainable landscape practices introduced with the RRFLG

Thank you in advance for considering the Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation funding.

Sincerely,

Andy Rodgers, RRWA Executive Director

cc: Chairperson Maureen Mulheren



A Chapter of the Alliance for Water Efficiency

March 4, 2021

Bureau of Reclamation
Water Resources and Planning Division
Attn: Ms. Robin Graber
P.O. Box 25007, MS 84-51000
Denver, CO 80225

Subject: Support of City of Santa Rosa's Application for WaterSMART Grant:
Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion

Dear Ms. Graber,

The California Water Efficiency Partnership (CalWEP) is an innovative leader, voice and expert on water use efficiency in California. The Partnership helps water supplier partners meet legislative and regulatory requirements, fosters research and evaluation, serves as an information clearing house, helps build partnerships to improve water use efficiency, and serves as technical experts to members, including the City of Santa Rosa. CalWEP is pleased to voice support for the City of Santa Rosa's proposal for funding from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for the Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion.

The Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion increases the City of Santa Rosa's turf removal rebate amount to \$2.00 per square foot removed and requires one tree per 600 square feet of rebated area. Lawn removal has a documented history of achieving water savings for the City of Santa Rosa, with over 3.5 million square feet of turf removed since 2006 with water savings of over 2,800 acre-feet achieved. Combining Santa Rosa's successful lawn removal program with incentivizing tree installation will further help Santa Rosa adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.

CalWEP supports Santa Rosa's application for funding. CalWEP advocates for its water supplier partners to advance water use efficiency and climate change benefits locally. The Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion will help Santa Rosa meet its local water savings goals, and state regulatory water use efficiency requirements while keeping water rates affordable in the service area.

Thank you in advance for considering the Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Foley".

Sarah Foley
Executive Director, Operations

March 9, 2021

Camille Calimlim Touton
Acting Commissioner
Bureau of Reclamation
1849 C Street NW
Washington DC 20240-0001

Subject: Support of City of Santa Rosa's Application for WaterSMART Grant:
Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion

Dear Acting Commissioner Touton:

On behalf of WaterNow Alliance, I am pleased to submit this letter in support of the City of Santa Rosa's Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion application under the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSMART Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects. WaterNow Alliance, a national network of local water leaders supporting sustainable water management measures, has been working with the City of Santa Rosa's water department for the past year to support their water efficiency objectives.

As one of the largest cities in northern California, Santa Rosa provides retail water services to over 53,000 residential and commercial accounts. The City has a longstanding and demonstrable commitment to water conservation and efficiency, as seen through multiple planning efforts such as their 2015 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), which provides an implementation plan for meeting the City's water use targets and addressing the State of California's water use efficiency legislation requirements. In particular, the Cash for Grass Rebate Program is detailed in the City's UWMP as an effective strategy for achieving water conservation and demand management, which supports the City's goal of diversifying its water supply portfolio.

The City of Santa Rosa's Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion increases the City's turf removal rebate amount to \$2.00 per square foot removed, up from \$0.75 per square foot, and requires one tree per 600 square feet of rebated area. Lawn removal has a documented history of achieving water savings for the City of Santa Rosa, with over 3.5 million square feet of turf removed since 2006 and water savings of over 2,800 acre feet achieved. Combining Santa Rosa's successful lawn removal program with incentivizing tree installation will further help Santa Rosa adapt to and mitigate the effects of climate change.

We believe that Santa Rosa's proposal advances the goals of the WaterSMART SWEP program to conserve and use water more efficiently, which will further bolster their water supply reliability to help meet future demands. For these reasons, we urge your favorable consideration of their application for the Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or would like to discuss.

Sincerely,



Cynthia Koehler, Executive Director
WaterNow Alliance

cc: Hon. Jared Huffman

March 2, 2021



LandCare
930 Shiloh Rd. Bldg 44, Ste B,
Windsor, CA 95492

Subject: Support of City of Santa Rosa's Application for WaterSMART Grant:
Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion

Dear Ms. Graber,

LandCare is a commercial landscaping company committed to connecting customers with the wonders of nature. LandCare provides landscape management, landscape design and installation, and irrigation and water management to customers across Santa Rosa and beyond. LandCare is pleased to voice support for the City of Santa Rosa's proposal for funding from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation for the Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion.

The Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion increases the City of Santa Rosa's turf removal rebate amount to \$2.00 per square foot removed and requires one tree per 600 square feet of rebated area. Lawn removal has a documented history of achieving water savings for the City of Santa Rosa, with over 3.5 million square feet of turf removed since 2006 with water savings of over 2,800 acre feet achieved. Combining Santa Rosa's successful lawn removal program with incentivizing tree installation will further help Santa Rosa adapt and mitigate the effects of climate change.

LandCare supports Santa Rosa's application for funding. Through our clients, LandCare has worked with the City of Santa Rosa through the Cash for Grass program previously and remains committed to additional lawn removal projects in the future. The current financial climate for commercial customers makes an increased rebate for lawn removal imperative for motivating commercial customers.

Thank you in advance for considering the Cash for Grass Rebate Program Expansion for U.S. Bureau of Reclamation funding.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Reinecke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, circular flourish around the name.

LandCare
Michael Reinecke
Senior Account Manager
707.331.0443