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MWA's Large Scale Cash for Grass Program Reaches Milestone

*More than 2-Million-Square-Foot of Turf Removed from High Desert
in Three Years*

Apple Valley, CA— More than 2-million-square-foot of turf has been removed in the High Desert since June 2015 thanks to Mojave Water Agency's (MWA) Large Scale Cash for Grass program.

The project, which subsidizes residents and business owners \$1 for every square-foot of turf removed from large properties, has served as an important water conservation tool during the recent drought. This program is open to schools, parks, golf courses, and commercial and industrial entities for projects ranging from 20,000 to 500,000 square feet. The program targets ornamental turf — grass that only serves an aesthetic purpose.

"The Large Scale Cash for Grass program achieves two important goals," said Kimberly Cox, MWA Board President. "First, by removing ornamental grass, we

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are saving water today and in the future. Secondly, by replacing turf with beautiful, native landscaping, we're changing our culture to use water more efficiently."

Building on the success from the Agency's smaller Residential Cash for Grass Program, MWA started the Large Scale Cash for Grass Program in 2015 with the objective of making a greater impact on water conservation by increasing the rebate from 50 cents to \$1.

The program is the only one of its kind in the High Desert and has been solely funded through grants received from the state and federal governments.

In 2015 and 2016, the MWA was able to secure two State of California grants — totaling \$922,000 and \$750,000, respectively — through the Prop 84 Integrated Regional Water Management Planning Act. Additionally, the Agency was able to obtain three WaterSMART: Water and Energy Efficiency grants starting in 2015. The three federal grants boosted the program's funding by nearly \$1 million.

Local golf courses, homeowners associations, schools, and business complexes have been among the many who have taken advantage of the program.

Ashwood Golf Course in Apple Valley utilized the program to remove a total of 192,000-square-feet of turf over a two-year span.

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“What a great program,” said Justin Lake, Ashwood Golf Course General Manager. “Removing turf saves water for the region and reduces our water costs. It’s also an opportunity for Ashwood Golf Course to demonstrate how native plants can be incorporated into golf course landscaping.”

Though the Agency no longer offers its Residential Cash for Grass Program, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) offers its own turf removal rebate program that can be accessed at www.saveourwaterrebates.com.

For more information about MWA’s Large Scale Cash for Grass program, visit www.mojavewater.org.

The Mojave Water Agency manages the region’s water resources for the common benefit to assure stability in the sustained use for its citizens. It is one of 29 State Water Contractors that is entitled to receive State Water Project water when available. The Agency’s territory encompasses 4,900 square miles with a population of 450,000.

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