



For Immediate Release



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'Westminster Watersmart Conservation Garden' to be Unveiled as Water Awareness Month Comes to a Close

Ribbon cutting set for June 2; Local beautification project to serve as a community oasis while reducing pollution runoff and saving 235,517 gallons of water each year.

Westminster, CA (June 1, 2023) – Water Awareness Month comes to a close with the unveiling of a long-awaited water-smart community pocket park and demonstration garden in the city of Westminster. The project was awarded to the city in 2018 for its outstanding participation in the annual Wyland National Mayor's Challenge for Water Conservation, a friendly competition between U.S. cities every April to see who can be the most water-wise.

The conservation garden, which was delayed due to the COVID shutdown, provides residents with a living example of home-based landscaping strategies that can save water, reduce pollution runoff, and reflect the beauty of southern California's native plants, trees, and wildlife. The project was created in partnership with the Wyland Foundation, Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWD OC), Saddleback College, The Toro Company, and the City of Westminster, with support from local businesses specializing in water-efficient landscaping and California native plants.

The ribbon cutting for the park will take place at noon on Friday, June 2, at Coronet Park in the City of Westminster, located at 15252 Oakcliff Dr., southeast of Bolsa Avenue and Magnolia Street.

The park is expected to save 235,517 gallons of water yearly over existing usage.

"Westminster has always been a community committed to being water wise," said Mayor Chi Charlie Nguyen. "Now, we can continue our efforts to educate residents and showcase how important it is to conserve water through this new garden."

"The park will serve as an educational resource and reminder to residents that water-smart landscaping is achievable, sustainable and beautiful with proper planning, drought tolerant plans, and the right irrigation equipment," said marine life artist Wyland, who started his namesake foundation in 1993.

"We are excited to unveil this water-smart demonstration garden in the City of Westminster," said MWD OC Board President Megan Yoo Schneider. "The pocket park design incorporates native plants and water-saving irrigation devices that can educate and inspire visitors to transform their own landscapes with confidence and enthusiasm."

Westminster residents made thousands of commitments to reduce their water footprint during their participation in the National Mayor's Challenge. The new conservation garden will reflect those efforts

as a showcase for readily available plants and landscaping products that reduce the need for fertilizers and pesticides while using less water overall and capturing storm runoff. Designed by student teams from Saddleback College, the project features bioswales and decomposed granite to help recharge groundwater, as well as native flowers and trees, permeable pavers, and the latest consumer-friendly water-saving irrigation equipment. Other elements include energy-efficient lighting and public artwork to celebrate the community's local environmental mindset, along with a companion webpage with tips on water-smart home landscaping, rebates, and STEAM activities and lessons for students to use the park as a living classroom. The water-smart conservation garden is a non-profit project of the Wyland Foundation, MWDOC, and their partners.

Special thanks to Aaron's Natural Landscaping, The Toro Company, KCAL / KCBS, Saddleback Pavers, David Volz Landscape Architecture, Pacific Interlock Pavers, Metropolitan Water District of Los Angeles, Brightview Landscape Services, QCP Concrete, Zoom Recreation, and Sepulveda Building Materials.

Visit: www.OCWaterSmartParks.com/Westminster to learn more.

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***The Wyland Foundation**, founded in 1993 by environmental artist Wyland, is a 501c3 non-profit dedicated to promoting, protecting, and preserving the world's ocean, waterways, and marine life. The foundation encourages environmental awareness through community events, education programs, and public art projects. www.wylandfoundation.org*

***The Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC)** is a wholesale water provider and resource planning agency whose efforts focus on sound planning and appropriate investments in water supply, water use efficiency and conservation, public information and outreach, legislative advocacy, water education for all ages, and emergency preparedness.*

MWDOC's 27 retail water agencies, made up of both city water departments and water districts, provide retail water services to the public. www.mwdoc.com

***The City of Westminster** is a vibrant and diverse community with a rich history and blend of residents, businesses, and tourists from many ethnic cultures and backgrounds. Located in northwest Orange County, Westminster occupies 10.2 square miles and is surrounded by some of Southern California's key attractions.*

The City is committed to providing the highest quality of service, ensuring that Westminster is a desirable place to live, work, play, and do business. www.westminster-ca.gov