



ALLIANCE FOR WATER EFFICIENCY

WATER EFFICIENCY & CONSERVATION SYMPOSIUM 2025

AUGUST 6-8, 2025 | CHICAGO, IL

Stronger Together: Amplify through Partnerships

Room 400 11:15am – 12:30pm



This Session is Brought to You By

Gold-Level Sponsor:





Gary Tilkian

Senior Resource
Specialist

Metropolitan Water
District of Southern
California



Christine Chavez

Water Conservation
Manager

City of Santa Fe



Jessica Woods

Water Conservation
Coordinator

City of Round Rock



Lorna Bravo

Urban Horticulture
Agent

University of Florida



Water Use Efficiency Collaboration – How Do We Make a Bigger Pie?

Gary Tilkian

Senior Resource Specialist, Metropolitan Water District of Southern
California





Leveraging Additional / New Funding Sources to
Expand Incentives into Hard-to-Reach Sectors

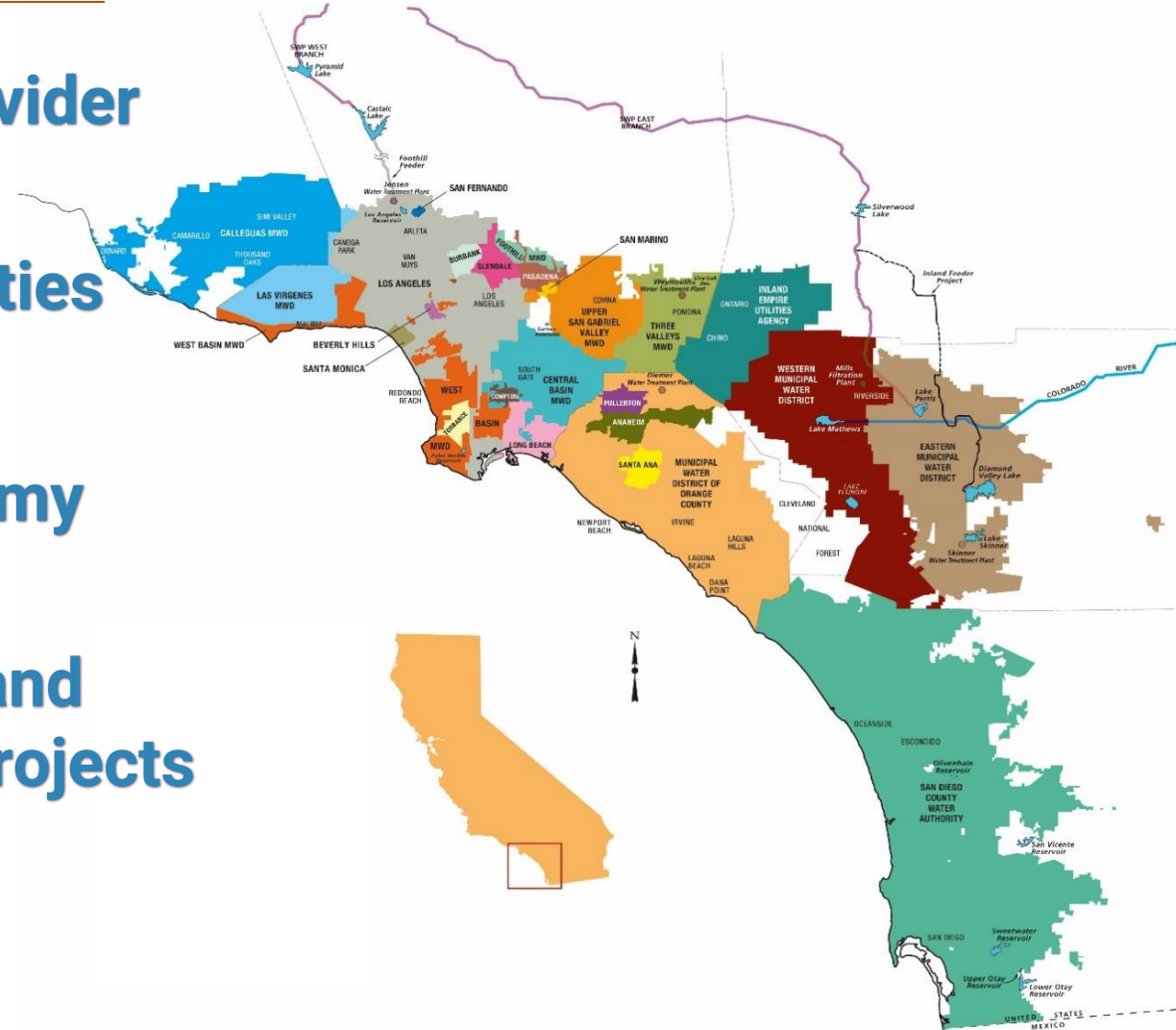
How Do We Make a Bigger Pie?

Gary Tilkian / Metropolitan Water District

AWE Water Efficiency & Conservation Symposium 2025

Metropolitan Water District

- Nation's largest wholesale water provider
- Service area: 19 million people/
5,200 square miles/parts of six counties
- 26 member agencies
- Supports \$1.6 trillion regional economy
(ranks 11th in the world)
- Imports water from Northern Sierra and
the Colorado River, invests in local projects
and conservation



Metropolitan Water District

- **“Regional” Program (Metropolitan-wide)**
 - **Devices (Indoor, Outdoor)**
 - **Turf Replacement**
 - **Classes and Landscape Certifications**
 - **Recycled Water Hook-up**
- **Water Savings Incentive Program (Performance-based)**
- **Member Agency Administered Program**
 - **Agency-run, Metropolitan subsidies**
 - **Device-based, Non-quantified, and DAC options**
- **Utility Partnerships**

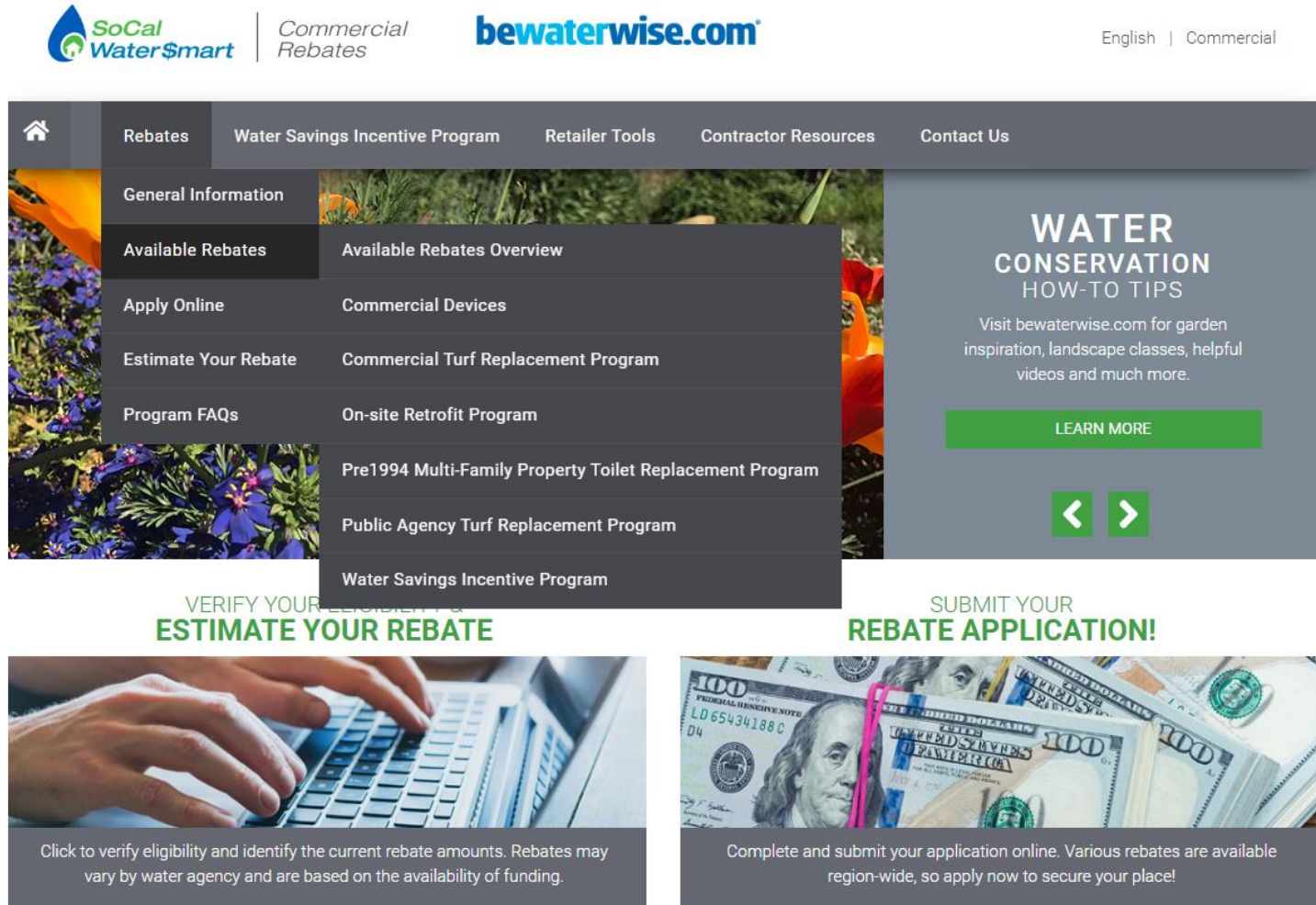
bewaterwise.com®



Metropolitan Programs & Stacked Incentives

“Regional” Program

- Member & retail agencies may co-fund (stack)
- 3rd Parties may also stack additional funding (agmt with member agency)



The screenshot displays the bewaterwise.com website. At the top, the SoCal WaterSmart logo is on the left, and the bewaterwise.com logo is on the right. Below the logos, the navigation bar includes links for Rebates, Water Savings Incentive Program, Retailer Tools, Contractor Resources, and Contact Us. The main content area features a sidebar with a menu for the Water Savings Incentive Program, including links to General Information, Available Rebates, Apply Online, Estimate Your Rebate, and Program FAQs. The main content area also features a section for Water Conservation How-to Tips, a Learn More button, and a Submit Your Rebate Application button. Below the website screenshot, there are two call-to-action boxes. The left box, titled 'VERIFY YOUR ELIGIBILITY & ESTIMATE YOUR REBATE', shows a close-up of hands typing on a laptop keyboard. The right box, titled 'SUBMIT YOUR REBATE APPLICATION!', shows a stack of US dollar bills with a pink ribbon bookmark.

VERIFY YOUR ELIGIBILITY & ESTIMATE YOUR REBATE

Click to verify eligibility and identify the current rebate amounts. Rebates may vary by water agency and are based on the availability of funding.

SUBMIT YOUR REBATE APPLICATION!

Complete and submit your application online. Various rebates are available region-wide, so apply now to secure your place!

Turf Replacement Program

- **Minimum \$2 per square foot of turf removed**
- **Incorporates watershed components to capture runoff**
- **State and Federal grants currently supplementing incentives**
- **Agencies may co-fund (stack)**



Water Savings Incentive Program

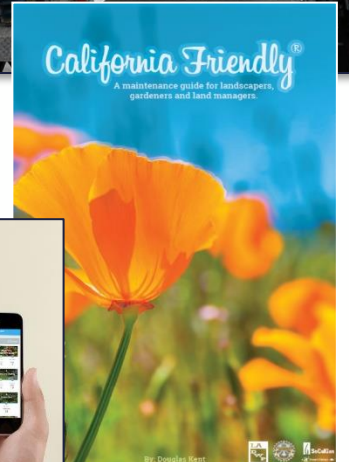
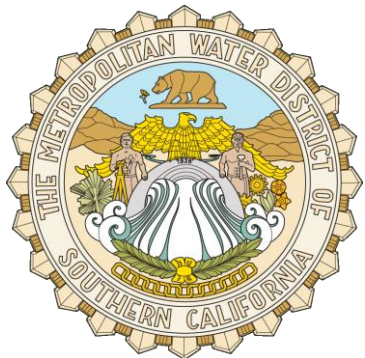
- **Performance-based incentives for non-residential, customized projects**
 - Retrofit equipment
 - Improve processes
 - Improve ag & landscape irrigation
 - Contract for water management services
- **Agencies & 3rd parties may co-fund**



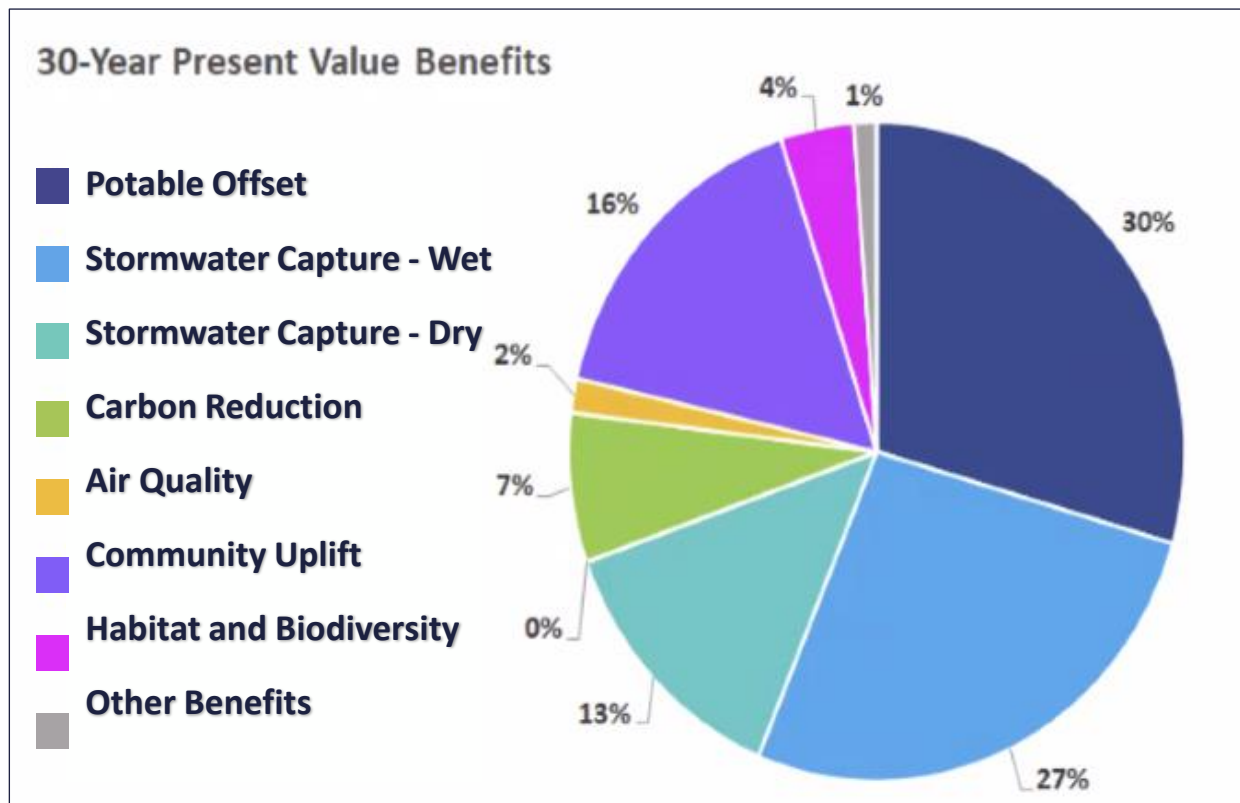
Utility Partnerships: Water & Energy Efficiency

Collaboration between Metropolitan and:

- Southern California Gas Company (SoCal Gas)
- Southern California Edison
- 3rd party funding??



Future Programs & Stacked Incentives



Unknowns?

- **Coordination with Other Agencies**
 - Who is the “Lead?”
 - Administration, contracts, etc.
 - Budget / Funding availability
- **Program Structure**
 - Benefit alignment
 - Goals & resources
- **EM&V / Success Metrics**
 - Data gathering & analysis
 - Pilot --> *Program?*



Gary Tilkian

Metropolitan Water District

gtilkian@mwdh2o.com

Collaborative Approach to Water Reuse and Water Conservation Programming

Christine Chavez

Water Conservation Manager, City of Santa Fe



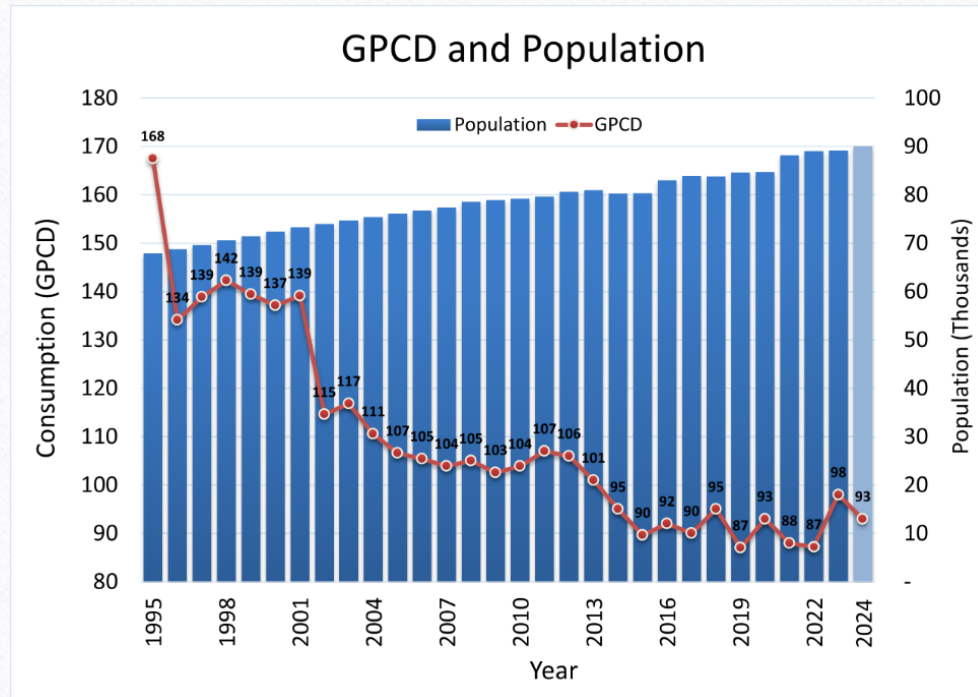


Christine Chavez
Water Conservation Manager
City of Santa Fe Water
www.savewatersantafe.com
505-955-4219
cychavez@santafenm.gov

2025 AWE Symposium Stronger Together: Amplify through Partnerships



Water Conservation Highlights



- **42% drop in per capita water use** since the mid-1990s (from ~168 to ~85 GPCD)
- **Among the lowest GPCD rates** in the southwestern U.S.
- **Maintained reductions** despite population growth and drought conditions
- **Tiered rate structure and rebate programs** drive behavioral and equipment changes
- **K-12 Education programs**
- **Transparent planning:** 5-Year Water Conservation Plan and performance scorecards
- **Increased drought resilience** through reduced demand and diversified supply

Return Flow Pipeline Project

Water Division Alignment with Santa Fe 2100

Technical Tools

Data Driven Targets (\$ spent/gallon saved)

New 10-year Plan in 2026

Community driven to data driven programming



Save Water Santa Fe

K-12
Education/
Marketing

Partnerships and
Collaborations

Sustainable Santa Fe

Recycling
Program

CEED Grant –
Energy
Efficiency in
low-income
housing

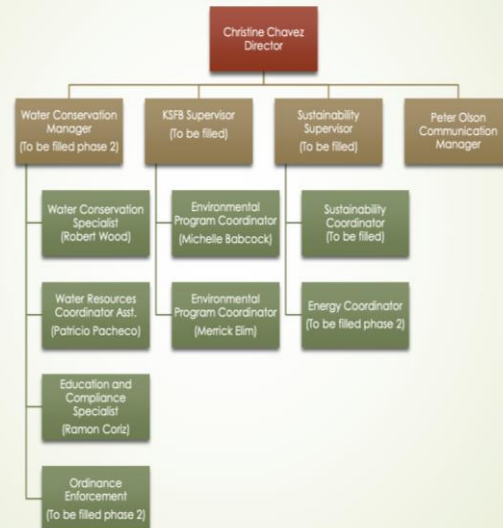
Keep Santa Fe Beautiful

Adopt a Median
Program

Litter Cleanups
and
Beautification
supported by
grants

New Division Structure

Conservation and Sustainability Division Organization Chart



AH hatherly Amanda
amanda.hatherly@sfcc.edu

- Figuring out revenue streams
 - Water Conservation Ordinance
 - Bag Fee Ordinance
- Different City Departments will invoice the new division for services such as:
 - Marketing
 - Education
 - Enforcement
- Communications from new division will include water reuse, water conservation, wastewater operations, composting, recycling, Adopt a Median Program, Sustainability and Water Conservation



KEEP **Santa Fe**
BEAUTIFUL



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Water Conservation Manager
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505-955-4219
cychavez@santafenm.gov

Strong Partnerships, Strong Programs

Jessica Woods

Water Conservation Coordinator, City of Round Rock





Strong Partnerships, Strong Programs

Jessica Woods

Water Conservation Coordinator

jwoods@roundrocktexas.gov

512-844-8514



Round Rock, TX

- Service area population ~170,000
 - City population ~140,000
- Provide water, wastewater, reuse water, & stormwater services.
 - ~37,700 water connections
- Wholesale to 10 MUDs
- 5 different water sources!
- 2 full time conservation staff!



Why communication has its challenges:

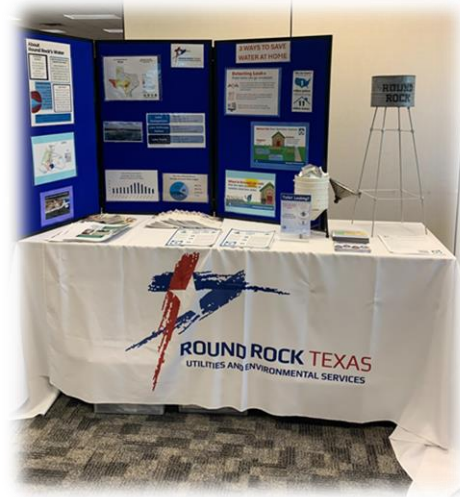
- Very close proximity to Austin, but different water situation
- One local newspaper that publishes as a supplement to Austin paper
- One monthly printed free news magazine
- No local TV station
- No local radio stations
- Round Rock is on **different water sources** from many neighbors.
- Different watersheds and planning groups from Austin and main broadcast media
- **No dedicated utility communications staff**
- **City Communications Dept very particular about social media posts.**
- Smallish budget and small staff size
- **Wholesale to MUDs but no authority in these areas (enforcement, rebates)**
- **Our surface water sources are NOT located in our city limits.**

Neighbors—

same county, same water supplier, same source water, same watershed, or literal neighboring town

Bottomline:

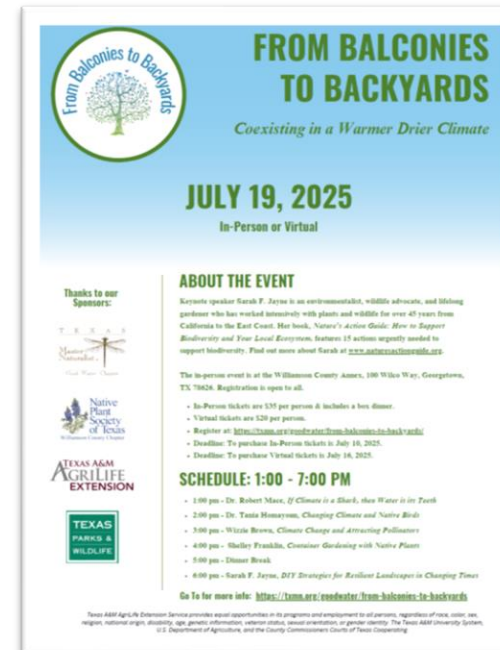
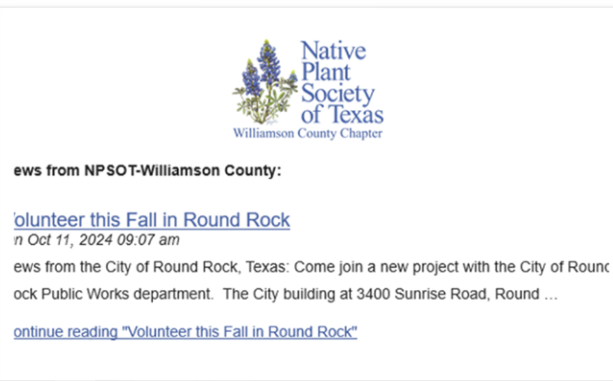
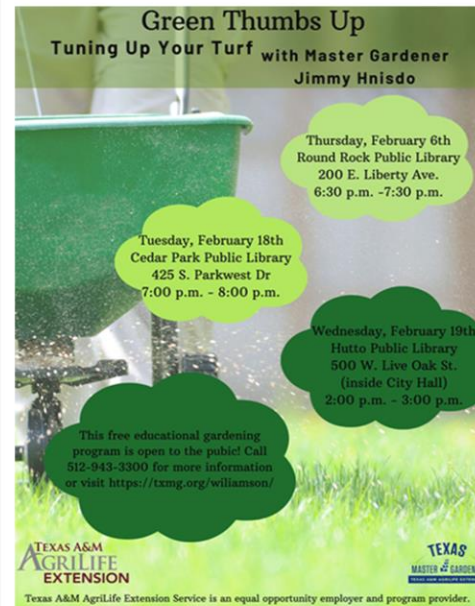
We are all trying to share the conservation message (*save water, don't waste water, etc.*) even if our need, or motivation, for conservation is different.



Education & Extension Agencies—

AgriLife Extension, Master Naturalists, Master Gardeners, Native Plant Society of Texas

1. These groups already have dedicated followers or members that are probably your residents.
2. And, they *love* to educate the public!



Private Businesses—

Partnering up helps you AND them!

- Local plumbing store reached out to us about promoting our rebates.
- Irrigation companies promote rebates on their invoices.
- Nursery holds weekly classes we “co-present” at.

Invoice #158448

American Irrigation Repair

American Irrigation Repair
LLC LI#6125
3560 E University Ave
Georgetown, TX 78626
info@fimyheads.com
+15129436080

Invoice 158448
Date 05/27/25
Total \$210.80
Payments \$210.80
Balance Remaining \$0.00

Charges

Item	Description	Type	Price	Quantity	Total
1000 20 Point System Tune Up	Current schedule is: Zones: 5 Start Time: 2:00am and 4:00am Watering Days: Monday Run Times: Rotors 12minutes/ Sprays 10-12minutes Backflow: DC What's included? Click here	Critical	\$106.00	1.0	\$106.00
Prepaid Club Service	Prepaid Grow Together club service	Critical	\$106.00	1.0	\$106.00
1670 Repair Main Supply up to 1"	Repair Main supply pvc pipe up to 1". Single repair price \$320 add on repair price \$248. Line repair details: Click here	Critical	\$248.00	1.0	\$248.00
Discount club	Your 15% discount for being a Grow Together club member! Your service requests will also be prioritized over customers who are not members.		-\$37.20	1.0	-\$37.20
	Subtotal		\$210.80		
	Tax		\$0.00		
	Total		\$210.80		
	Payments		\$210.80		
	Balance Remaining		\$0.00		

Terms
Due upon receipt. For security purposes credit cards over \$1200 need to be swiped at our office or team members tablet.

Notes
Thank you for your business! Tune up rebate links: Georgetown: <https://gus.georgetown.org/water/rebatesandprograms/> Round Rock: <https://www.roundrocktexas.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Smart-Irrigation-Rebate--March-2024.pdf>

JULY CLASSES & EVENTS



July 5th
BLOOM FESTIVAL
10 am-2 pm

July 12th
"Vegetable Gardening in Hot Weather" Class
10-11 am

July 19th
"Planting a Water-Wise Garden" Class
10-11 am

July 26th
"Houseplant Care 101" Class
10-11 am

FERGUSON



Better Bathroom Program

Special discounted pricing for all Round Rock Water customers

To reduce water consumption, the City of Round Rock [Better Bathroom Program](#) is offering homeowners **50% off WaterSense® certified bathroom fixtures** (toilets, showerheads, lavatory faucets) up to \$600 annually while funding is available.

Ferguson has partnered with the City of Round Rock to offer special pricing on WaterSense fixtures. Round Rock residents can take advantage of discounted city pricing by using the Round Rock Water Conservation account number (932490) when purchasing at your local Ferguson branch or by phone at **(512) 248-4050**.



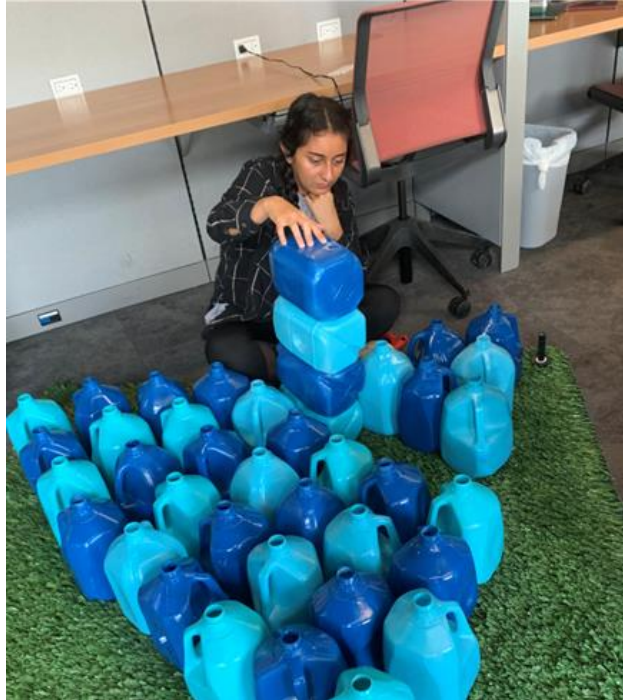
LOOK FOR THE LABEL
WaterSense
Meets EPA Criteria

APPLY TODAY!

ROUND ROCK TEXAS

All Round Rock Water customers in good standing are welcome to apply. Homeowners can submit an application directly to the city for approval.

Shop our WaterSense products at [FERGUSON.COM/WATERSENSE](https://www.ferguson.com/watersense) | 2501 North Mays Street, Round Rock, TX 78664 | (512) 248-4050



Go to the People—

city & hoa events

1. Find out who's holding a gathering:

- Read the website calendar of events
- Library
- Senior center
- Utility billing office
- Parks & recreation (always)
- Arts and culture
- Live music events
- Halloween/fall fest
- Pop-up play days
- City swimming pools
- HOA events
- Neighborhood services dept.
- Police/EMS service (community risk group)

2. Invite yourself to the party!*

** always bring a gift.*



A woman, Jessica Woods, is standing behind a white folding table outdoors. She is wearing a straw hat, sunglasses, and a colorful patterned shirt. She has her arms outstretched. The table is covered with a blue cloth and has various items on it, including a bowl of snacks, a sign that says 'ART CONTEST', and some brochures. The background shows a building with large windows and a paved area.

Strong Partnerships, Strong Programs

Jessica Woods

Water Conservation Coordinator

jwoods@roundrocktexas.gov

512-844-8514



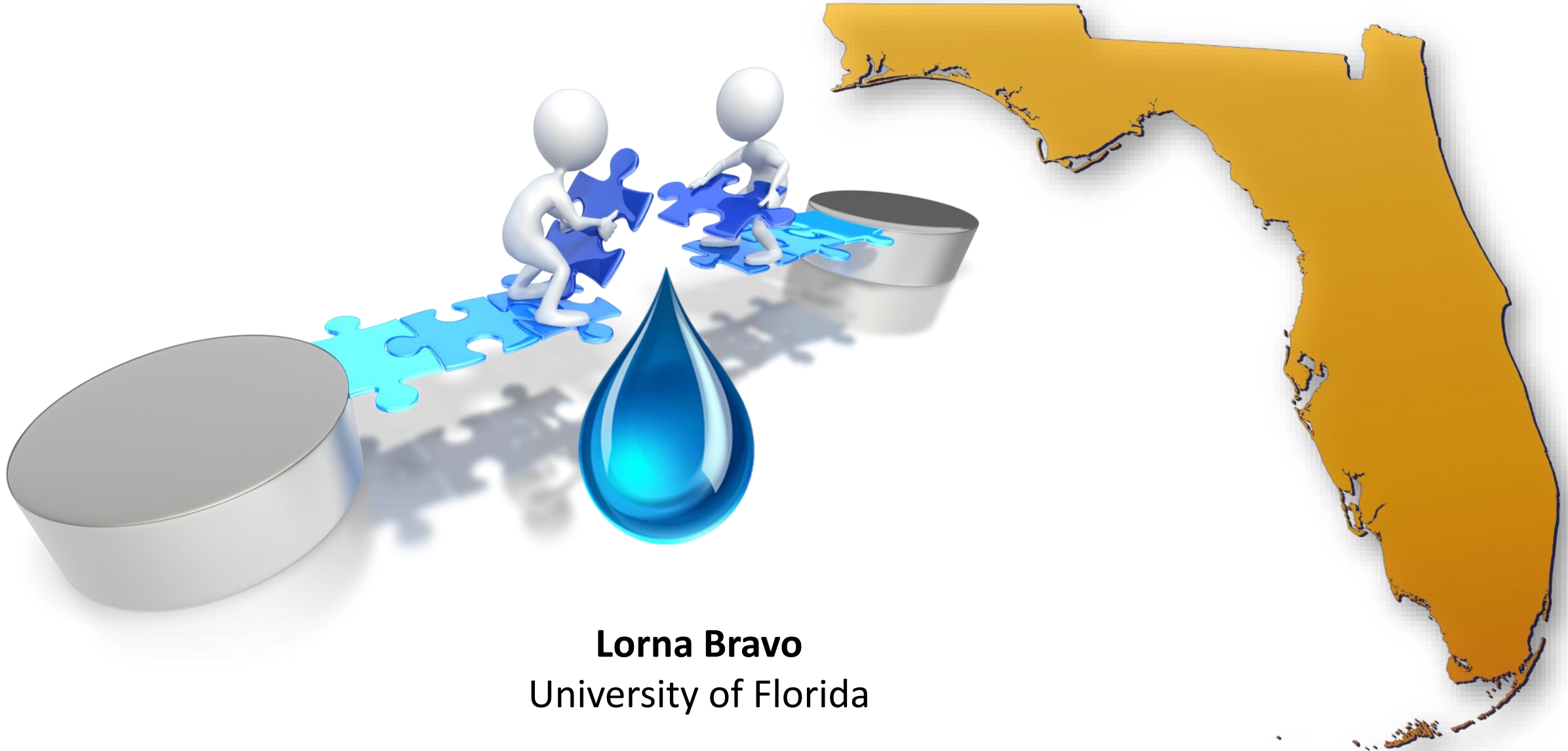
The Water Ambassador Program - Connecting Communities to Water

Lorna Bravo

Urban Horticulture Agent, University of Florida



Water Ambassadors: Empowering Urban Communities for Resilient Water Futures

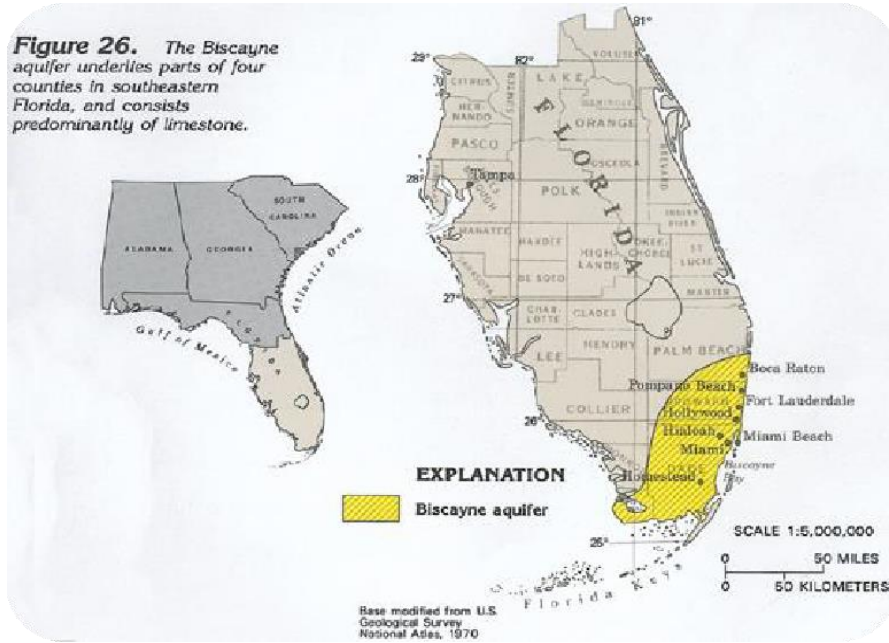


Lorna Bravo
University of Florida

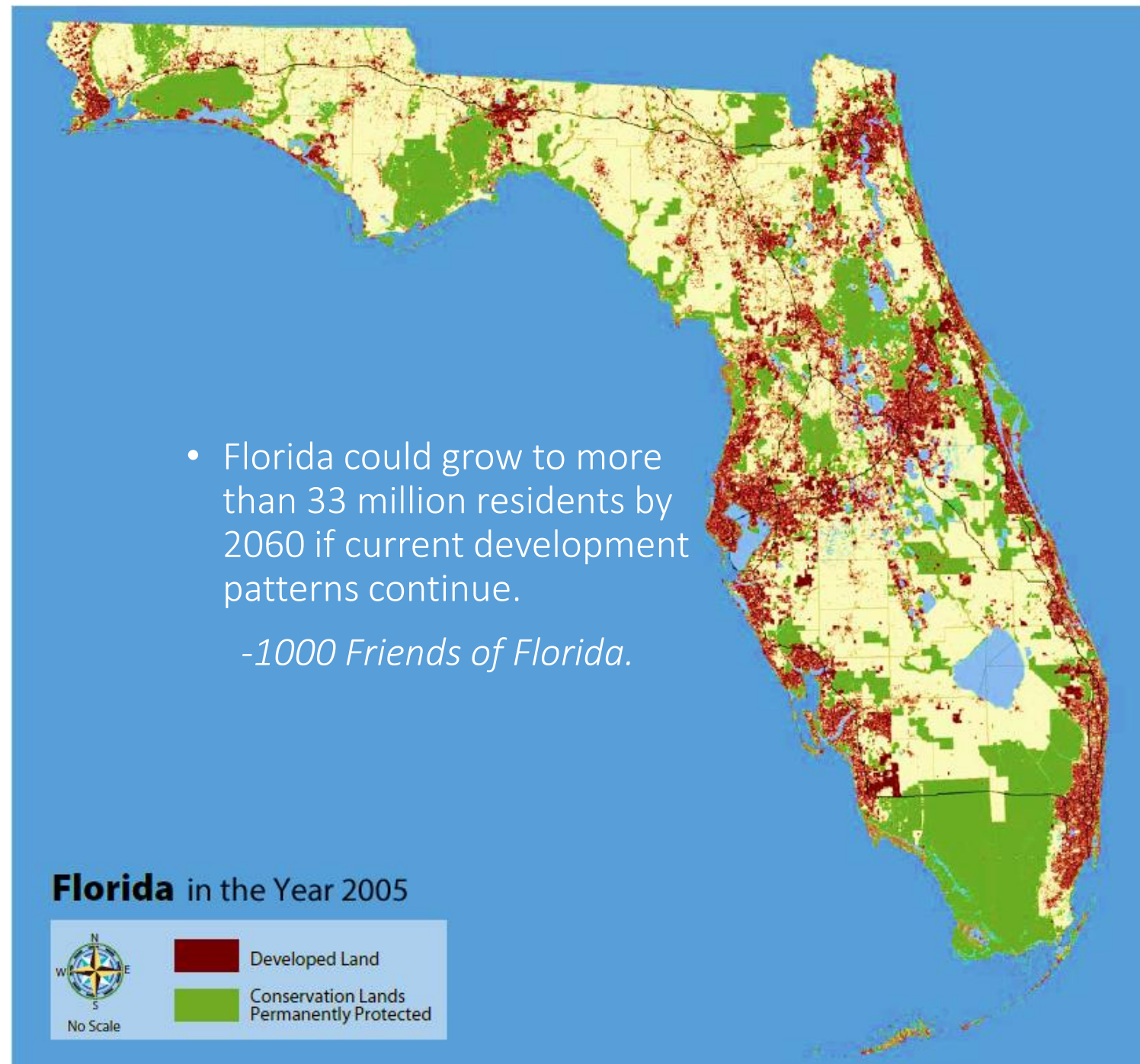
CHALLENGE

- ❑ Florida's Current Population estimate is **23.36 million**
- ❑ Between **1,700 to 1,750** move daily to Florida

ONLY SOURCE OF FRESH WATER



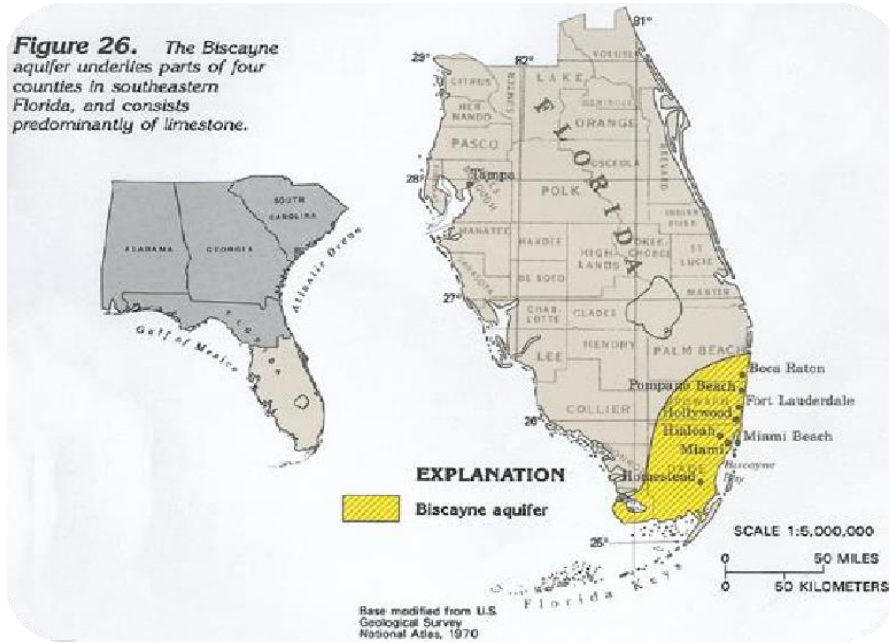
Approximately **60%** of Florida household water usage is for landscape irrigation.



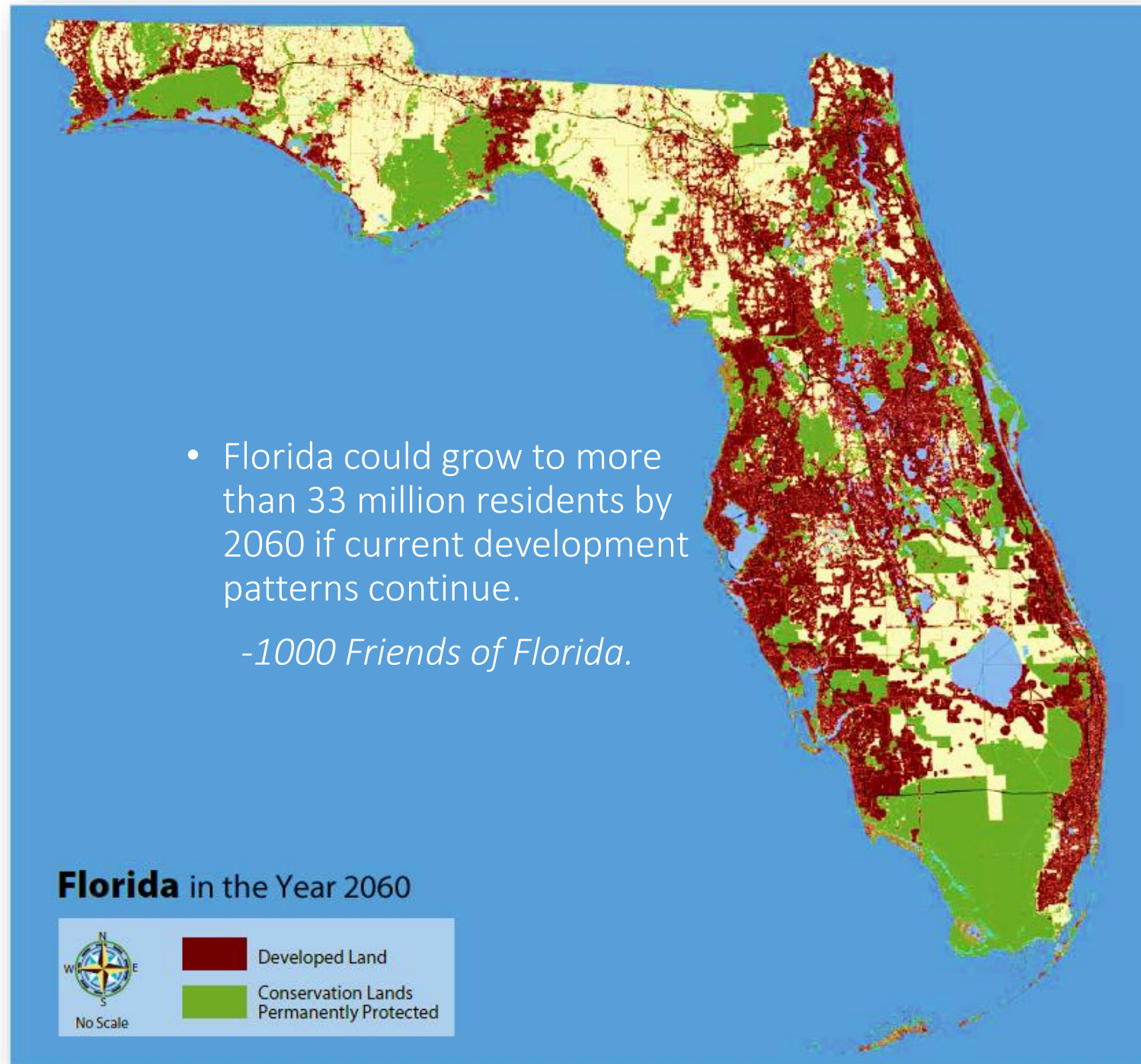
CHALLENGE

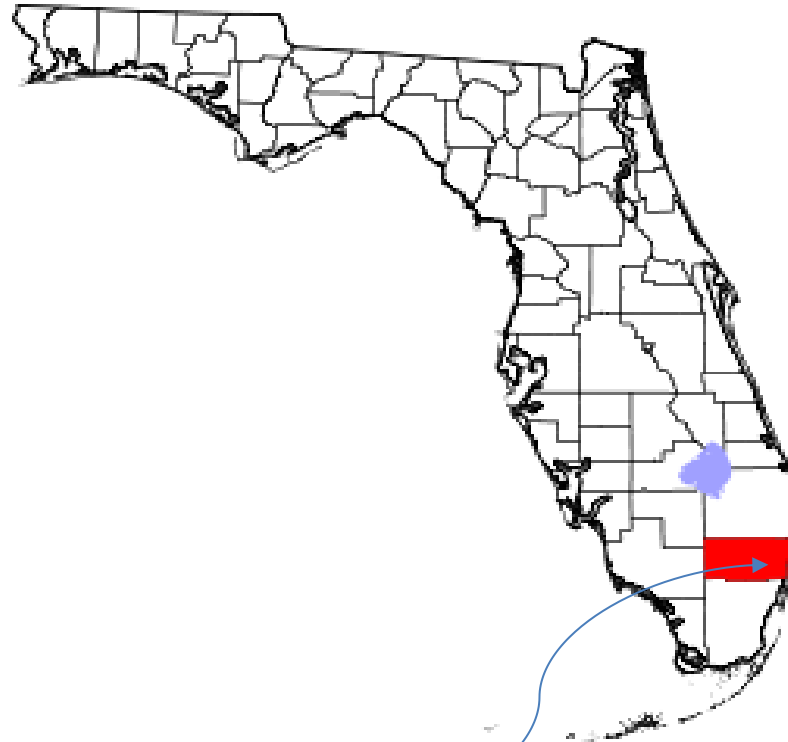
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ONLY SOURCE OF FRESH WATER



Approximately **60%** of Florida household water usage is for landscape irrigation.





1.9M



- So, how do we transform 1.9 million urban residents from water users into water stewards?

BRIDGING THE GAP: URBAN COMMUNITIES AND THEIR WATER SOURCE

RESEARCH

We partnered with Dr. Laura Warner at the University of Florida, developing the '**Connected to Water**' **scale**—a tool to measure shifts not just in knowledge, but in how people *feel* about their role in protecting water.

EDUCATION

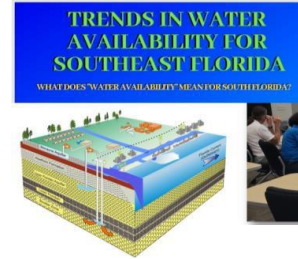
Participants receive advanced training in urban water conservation and sustainable landscaping, guided by leading research.

COLLABORATIONS

Over a 6-week course, Ambassadors learn from water experts, explore ecosystems like the Everglades, and collaborate with 16 diverse stakeholders, including the South Florida Water Management District and the Miccosukee Tribe.

THE WATER AMBASSADOR SOLUTION

USGS-WATER SCIENCE & WATER RESOURCES



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT- MANAGING WATER RESOURCES



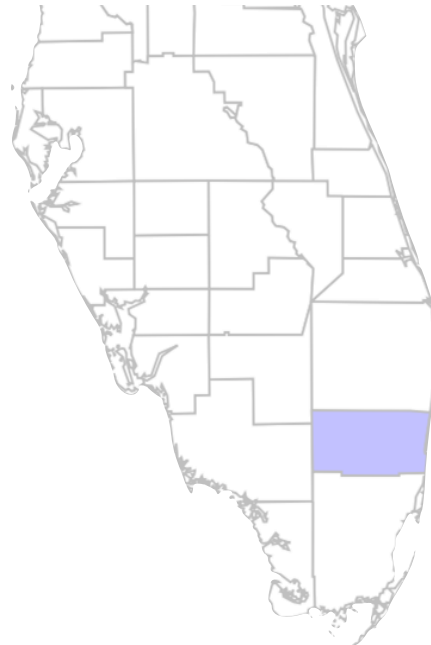
THE EVERGLADES – WATER UNITES US



CHANGING LANDSCAPES & CHANGING WATERSCAPES



GRASSROOTS ACTION & IMPACTS



COMMUNITY EDUCATION

35 Water Ambassadors → **200** homeowners educated

LANDSCAPE INSPECTIONS

50 Landscape Inspections → **33** landscape recognitions across 16 urban cities

WATER SAVINGS

11 million gallons/year = enough to supply **129** households

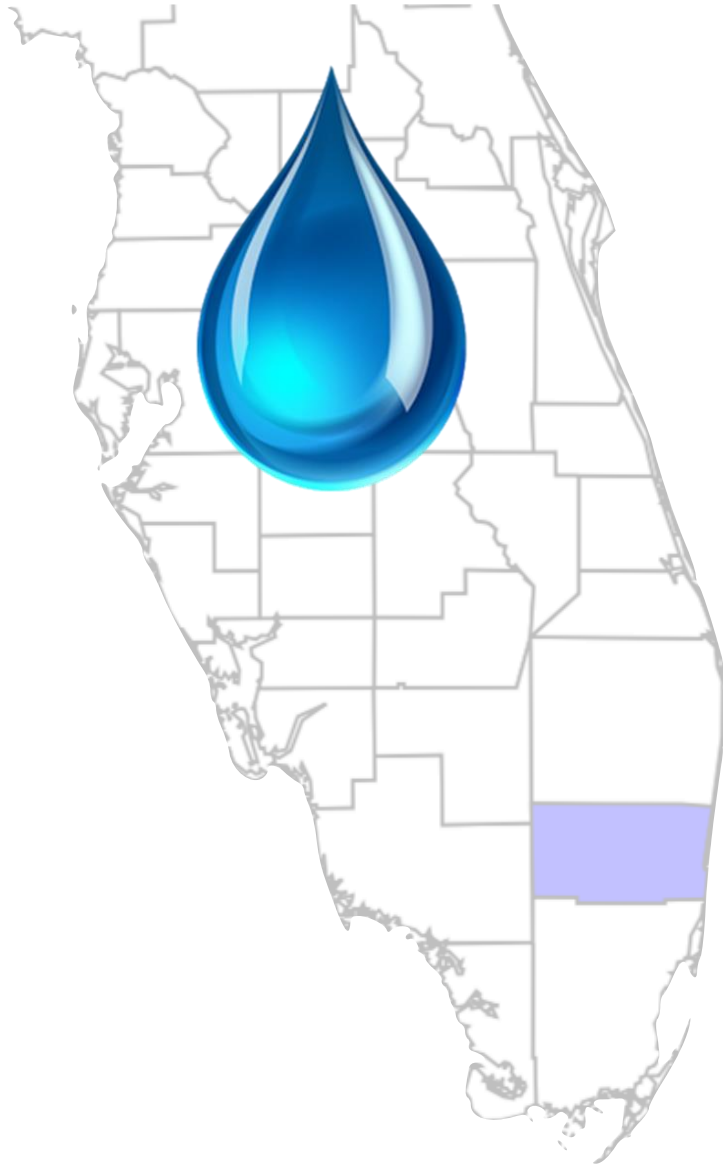
RESEARCH

+

EDUCATION

+

GRASSROOT ACTIONS



HERE'S WHAT WE'VE LEARNED:

- ☐ Research, education, and grassroots action have shown that we can reshape how urban communities think about and use water.
- ☐ Our vision is to expand the movement, engaging more residents and promoting stewardship across South Florida and beyond



THANK YOU

UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY of FLORIDA

Lorna Bravo bravo1@ufl.edu

Panel Q&A



Reminders & What's Next

Thank you all for participating in this session!

- **CEUs:** CEUs: AWWA CA-NV Water Use Efficiency Practitioner and Irrigation Association



- **Next:** Lunch (12:30 – 2:00 pm) Room 621



Thank You to Our Sponsors

