

November/December 2002



THE Waterline

Sustainable Water Use for Utah's Future

Ninth Annual Utah Water Summit

Water interests from around the state were represented at the Annual Utah Water Summit held November 14 in Salt Lake City. Hosted jointly by the Utah Water Conservation Forum and the Utah Water Users Association, this year's Summit addressed the theme, "Water—Key to the Future."

Attendees heard from a variety of speakers, panelists, and

presenters who addressed topics from drought conditions to cooperative efforts in water development projects. The luncheon keynote speaker, Dr. Gary Reed of Oregon State University, talked about world agriculture and food production and urged listeners to make environmental and business decisions based on a world- wide view. He cautioned that with this nation's food production

capability, we have responsibilities to the rest of the human family to use that capability and our abundant resources for the widest possible benefit.

Approximately 150 people attended this year's Summit, which was planned and prepared by a committee from the Forum and Utah Water Users Association.

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First Annual Water Conservation Coordinators Conference

The Utah Water Conservation Forum is supporting the First Annual Water Conservation Coordinators Conference this January. The conference will focus on sharing water conservation ideas and methods as well as introduce the coordinators to many different resources. Subjects such as Planning, Demonstration Gardens, Landscaping, Pricing, Water Fairs, and (our favorite) Funding will be covered.

The conference is designed to give the Conservation Coordinators an opportunity to network with other coordinators throughout the State and bring a consistent message to all the residents of Utah. For more information about attending please contact Molly Waters, Division of Water Resources at (801) 538-7254 mollywaters@utah.gov or Joe Whittaker, US Bureau of Reclamation at (801) 379-1169 jwhittaker@uc.usbr.gov.

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And don't forget to visit our
web site:
www.utahwaterforum.org

The Garden Dedicated in St. George

*by Julie Breckenridge
Water Conservation Coordinator,
Washington County Water
Conservancy District*

Just one year after construction began, The Garden, southern Utah's first water conservation demonstration garden, was dedicated in St. George October 24, 2002. Directing the project through a year's planning prior to construction have been Julie Breckenridge, Washington County Water Conservancy

District; John Costanza, private landscape architect and designer of the garden; Lynne Scott, St. George City Parks & Recreation Division; Rick Heflebower, USU Extension Horticulturist; and Matt Callister, St. George City Parks & Recreation Division.

The mission of The Garden is to educate residents on managing landscapes to be water efficient. The Garden will provide information on irrigation technology and practices, soil composition and fertility, local climate and weather, design principles, and appropriate plant materials.

From the outset of planning, The Garden was intended to be a community project, where residents would feel ownership. The steering committee went to local businesses and volunteer groups and asked for help, and the response has been overwhelming. St. George residents have been willing to contribute whatever resources they have available—time, products, or both.

Funding for the Garden has included \$58,000 of in-kind contributions plus a grant from the Bureau of Reclamation for \$25,000. Washington County Water Conservancy District has also contributed funding and services, bringing the total value of The Garden, so far, to \$108,000.

The Garden is located at St. George City's park, Tonaquint, at 1851 South Dixie Drive. Although not all the themes in The Garden are complete, this "work in progress" will be ongoing, an incentive for visitors to return again and again.

Personnel Changes at Jordan Valley

Cheryl Izatt, Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District's innovative Conservation Programs Coordinator, has announced her retirement from active service effective December 1. Since she assumed her position in early 1999, Cheryl has spearheaded many of JWVCD's conservation efforts, including the Demonstration Garden, numerous garden fairs, consumer surveys, the model landscape ordinance, and the Slow-the-Flow water audit program. Her friendly smile and valuable contributions to the Forum will be missed as she

leaves to fill an even more demanding role—full-time mother of three.

Paula Mohadjer, JWVCD conservation horticulturist and overseer of the Demonstration Garden, has accepted the Conservation Programs Coordinator post. Paula is a Utah native who looks to water-wise landscaping as “the best way to have a successful, sustainable and beautiful landscape in a place that has a nasty climate, pretty crappy soils, and very little precipitation. (Not too mention that all-turf landscapes are pretty boring).”

Paula received degrees in Horticulture from Utah State University (BS) and Oregon State University (MS), and

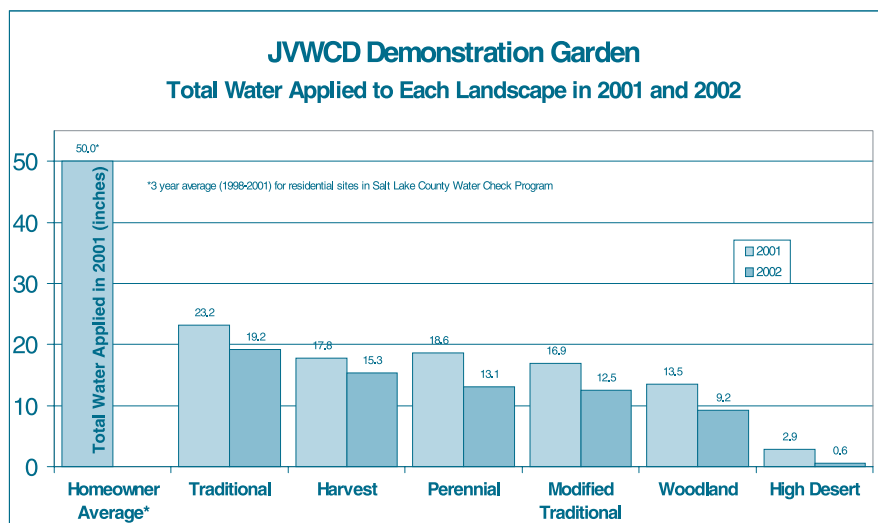
along the way has accumulated experience in all aspects of nursery plant production and retail sales. Immediately before her employment at JWVCD, she managed the Drought Tolerant, Native Plant, Herb, and Medicinal Gardens at Red Butte Garden in Salt Lake City. She has taught classes and written publications on waterwise landscaping and has been supervising the construction and maintenance of the JWVCD Demonstration Garden, along with “other duties as assigned.”

Paula is already well-known to Forum Board Members, and we look forward to her continued participation in Forum activities.

Summer Watering Data Compiled by JWVCD

The figures are in: the heat was up but the water use was down this year at the Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District Demonstration Garden. Paula Mohadjer, JWVCD's Conservation Horticulturist, reports that even during a summer that was hotter and drier than usual, the Demonstration Garden showed an impressive reduction in water applied. The chart below shows comparisons between the various sites in “The Neighborhood” and common homeowner averages.

The Neighborhood Garden was completed during the fall of 2000. It features six themed yards, or landscapes, along a



mock residential street. These landscapes demonstrate water-efficient practices that can be used as attractive alternatives to a typical predominantly blue-grass landscape. Each yard has its own water meter to monitor the actual amount of water being applied, so irrigation is tracked throughout the season and posted for comparisons.

The six yards include: Traditional Landscape, Modified Traditional Landscape, Woodland Landscape, High Mountain Desert Landscape, Harvest Landscape and the Perennial Landscape.

—from JWVCD 2002 Water Conservation Programs Summary



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DNR Gets a Haircut

*By Molly Waters
Water Conservation Coordinator,
DWR*

Among the seven principles of water-wise landscaping, maintenance is perhaps the most overlooked. While having the ability to be low maintenance, water-wise landscaping is not “no maintenance”.

The water-wise landscape at the Department of Natural Resources in Salt Lake City was installed in 1991. Over the past 11 years this garden has flourished and grown into a beautiful, although somewhat unruly, menagerie.

It was decided that we would completely trim back the garden this year. In late November, a landscaping crew came to the DNR and did just that. Almost all plants in the garden were cut back close to ground level, large trees were trimmed, and a new thick layer of mulch was added to cover all bare spots.

Cutting back plants in a well established garden is an excellent way to give a garden a new lease on life. Most plants can be cut back, and will start growing again in the spring. Herbaceous perennials can generally be cut back to the ground each year, and many of the more woody species benefit from an occasional trim as well.

Plants that have been cut back will generally grow very quickly in the spring, as the plant has a disproportionately large root system to support new top growth. Also, the plant will have a more manicured and compact look when it grows back, which can really help to tame a wild garden.

If you have questions about what can and can't be cut back to the ground, ask your local extension agent. However, my advice is to experiment!

The DNR garden looks very lifeless at the moment. But when spring comes, it will be thrilling to see all these plants putting out entirely new growth and thriving.