



Transforming Turf__

How HOAs Can Save Water & Enhance Community Spaces



Vallecitos Water District, San Diego County



■ IMPACT

107k sq.ft.
of turf replaced.

4.7M gallons
of water saved annually.

\$437k
in utility incentives.

■ PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Homeowners associations often struggle to maintain underused grass areas while also trying to conserve water, manage stormwater runoff, and comply with evolving regulations. Through a collaboration between Vallecitos Water District, the San Diego County Waterscape Program, Metropolitan and the San Diego County Water Authority, HOAs around Lake San Marcos have successfully replaced traditional lawns with vibrant, drought-tolerant landscapes.

The Fairways at Lake San Marcos HOA replaced 23,000 square feet of turf with native plants, a butterfly garden and a rock-lined swale that prevents runoff and enhances aesthetics. The project is expected to save one million gallons of water annually — enough to supply about 10 San Diego households. El Norte Park HOA replaced 10,000 square feet of grass with native and low-water plants, and added stormwater retention features that cut irrigation runoff by as much as 450,000 gallons per year.

The program provides HOAs with hands-on technical assistance, streamlined rebate applications and significant cost savings. It also helps the associations comply with a new state law that prohibits using potable water to irrigate nonfunctional turf.

With more than 4.7 million gallons saved annually across participating HOAs and more than \$400,000 in utility incentives secured, these projects showcase how landscape optimization can protect local water supplies, reduce pollution and provide long-term cost savings — all while making communities more beautiful and resilient.

■ PROJECT BENEFITS

- Minimizes runoff and prevents pollutants from entering local waterways.
- Ensures compliance with new nonfunctional turf watering regulations.
- Demonstrates a successful program model for HOAs looking to make water-efficient upgrades.

