

## CONSERVATION Connection News

### CONSERVATION SAVES MORE THAN WATER

The City of Bend Utility Department's Water Wise Program views water conservation as an obtainable source of water. To support that view, the Utility Department's recent (September 2021) Water Management and Conservation Plan (WMCP) has identified 7.9 billion gallons (28,350 acre-feet) and \$21,000,000 in water and infrastructure savings that can be achieved through conservation measures over the next 20 years.

### REDUCING WASTE BY CREATING POLLINATOR PATHWAYS

The WaterWise Program utilizes several outreach and monitoring programs to reach conservation benchmarks. A key conservation program for



*Irrigation overspray and runoff due to overhead irrigation in a parkway median landscape.*

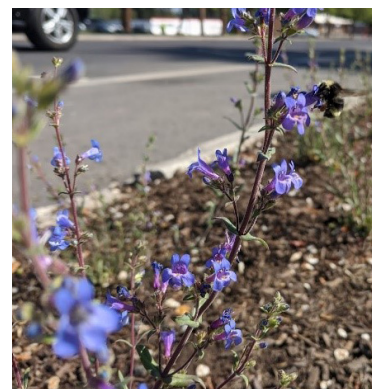
use. In Bend, up to 8 million gallons of water per day during the height of summer can be lost due to inefficient irrigation practices. While no irrigation system is 100% efficient, much of this water loss could be avoided if more time was spent monitoring and maintaining irrigation systems. Simply put, water waste is the amount of water applied that serves no benefit to the landscape plantings where it was applied. Water Waste is specifically outlined within [Bend Code 14.20 Use of Water](#). The majority of water waste complaints received by the Utility

Department involve irrigation overspray and runoff along parkway strips adjacent to neighborhood streets and area roadways. These areas are difficult to irrigate with conventional overhead irrigation due to their narrow and irregular shapes. This combination often leads to irrigation overspray, runoff, and unwanted flows to street drains.

#### AN OPPORTUNITY ARISES

This past summer, Bend's Pollinator Pathway organization approached the Water Conservation Program

regarding city-owned Utility Department sites as potential grounds for pollinator-friendly planting



*Pollinator Pathway  
Courtesy: Bassey Klopp*

projects. The stated goal of the Pollinator Pathway project is to "create a corridor of contiguous native pollinator gardens throughout our community using



the adjacent lands of residents, businesses, parks, and open spaces. The result will be the connection of habitat within the range of most of our native pollinators.” A collaborative planting project at a city-owned well-site led to the idea of taking the same treatment to a few



city-owned parkway strip problem areas. The concept offered a win-win opportunity; eliminate water waste on city-owned property and provide habitat for pollinating species at the same time. Sections of the Franklin and Chandler at Century Drive roundabouts were chosen as trial areas due to a history of water waste and as ideal locations to demonstrate a landscape conversion project. The existing sod will be removed in selected areas and

replaced with clusters of pollinator-friendly plants. Evaluating the best irrigation strategies will include replacing overhead irrigation with point source or inline drip irrigation. Construction on these projects will begin in early spring of this year.

### REDUCING WASTE WHEN CONVERSION IS OUT OF REACH

As momentum grows and more and more pollinator pathways or other landscape conversions take place to tackle water waste, an answer is still needed for the miles and miles of parkway strips throughout the city where a landscape conversion is currently out of reach for one reason or another. Although overhead irrigation isn't the best choice in these areas, much can be done with existing irrigation systems to reduce overspray and runoff along Bend's streets and roadways. This summer season, the City of Bend's WaterWise Program will be piloting a series of irrigation efficiency rebate programs to address this issue. Rebates will be offered to City of Bend water customers only

and identified through our seasonal outreach programs. Piloted rebates will be available to all City of Bend water customer classes, including Single-Family Residential, Multi-family, and Commercial customers.

The piloted rebates will include:

- High-Efficiency Sprinkler Nozzles (Toro Precision, Hunter Mp Rotator, and RainBird R-VAN)
- PRS -Pressure-regulating Sprinkler bodies (Hunter or RainBird)
- Weather Based Irrigation Controllers – Water Sense approved (must have accompanying smart module, sensor, and smart features enabled)
- Drip Irrigation Retrofit kit (includes 1800 Retro, drip tubing, emitters, and misc. fittings).

### SHARE YOUR SOLUTIONS

When planning a landscape conversion project in a parkway landscape, there are

several factors to consider. Preserving access to utilities, maintaining vehicle and pedestrian site lines, access to walkways, and public safety are all variables that must be accounted for in a functional design. The WaterWise team would love to see solutions that our local landscape professional industry has come up with to address this challenge. Please share your ideas and pictures with us at [Conservation@bendoregon.gov](mailto:Conservation@bendoregon.gov).

### UPCOMING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES:

The G<sup>3</sup> garden group will present a training series for community members and landscape professionals on March 8, 15, and 24, 2022. The G<sup>3</sup> is accredited by the EPA WaterSense program and a recipient of the 2021 Excellence in WaterSense Promotion and Outreach Award. All classes are open to anyone interested. For more information, visit <https://www.greengardensgroup.com/city-of-bend-oregon-classes>.



Accommodation Information for People with Disabilities  
To obtain this information in an alternate format such as Braille, large print, electronic formats, etc., please contact Utility Staff at: [Utilities@bendoregon.gov](mailto:Utilities@bendoregon.gov) or 541-317-3000 Ext 2; Relay Users Dial 7-1-1, and fax: 541-317-3046.