



MWELO

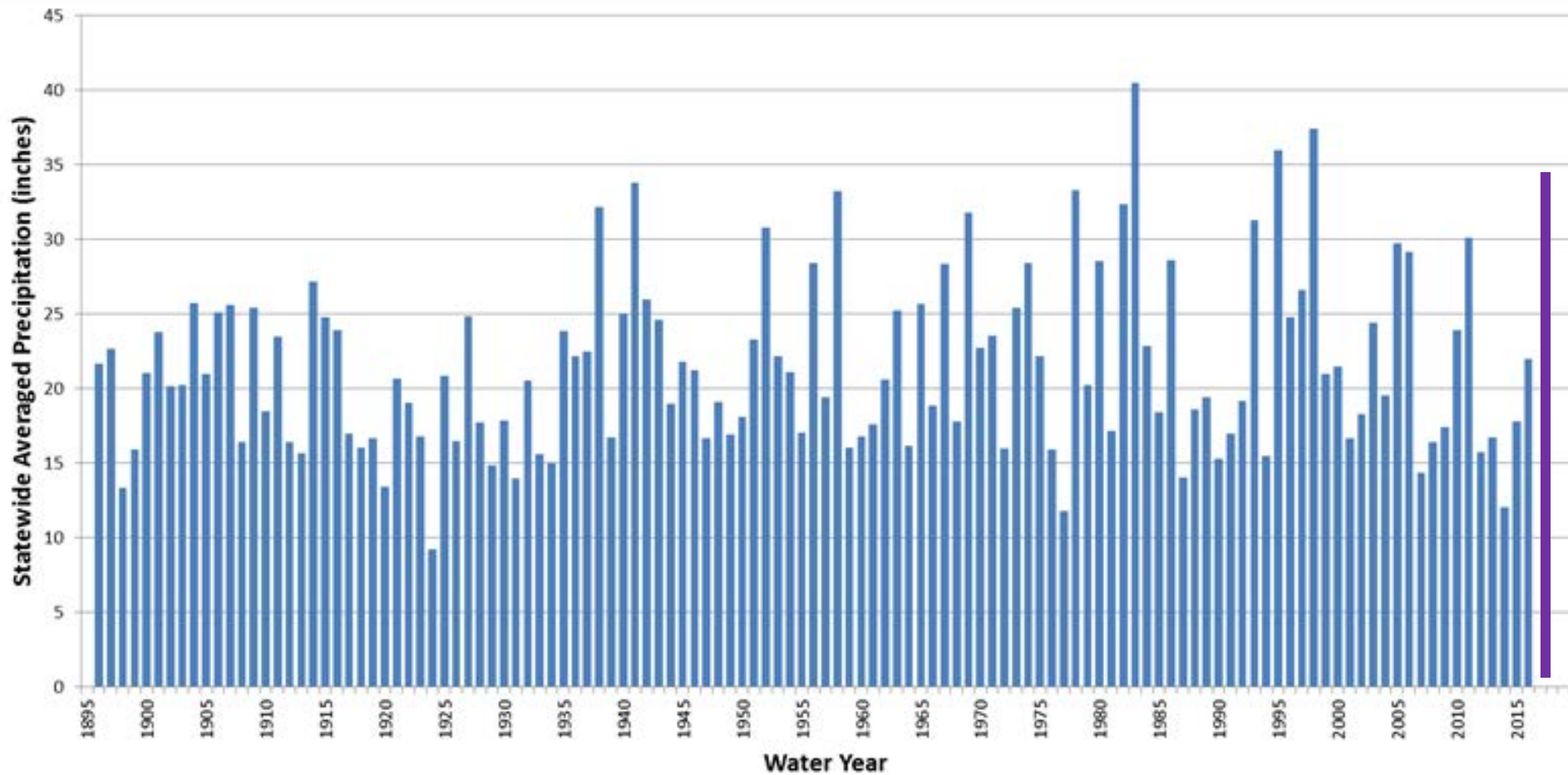
Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance

What's Behind the Regulation

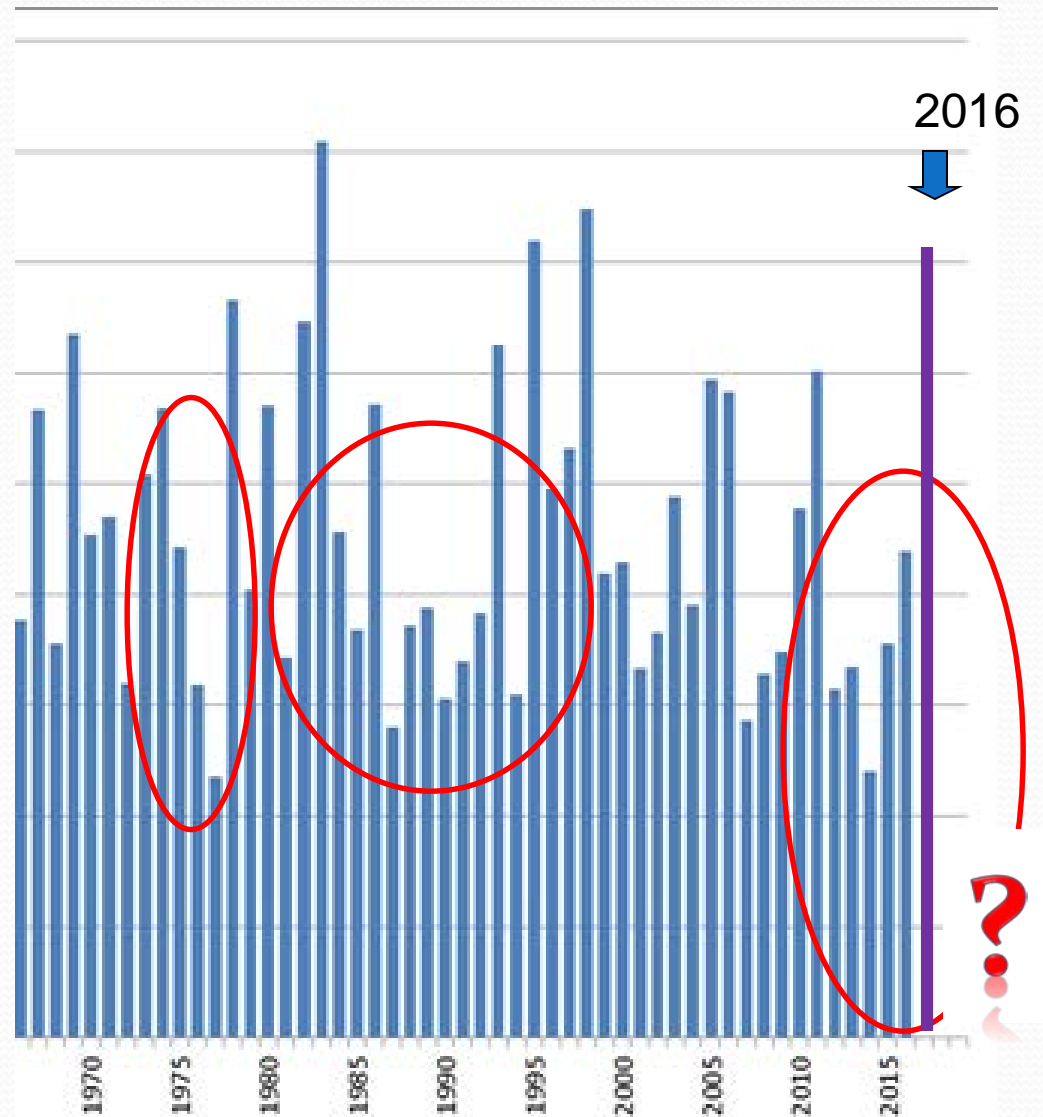
Julie Saare-Edmonds

DWR

CA Annual average rainfall 1895-2016



Since 1965



Current Drought Restrictions

- Drought declaration rescinded on 4/7/17
- Except: Fresno County, Kings County, Tulare County and Tuolumne County
- Groundwater depletion and subsidence in south San Joaquin Valley
- Check with local water suppliers for local restrictions
- Special programs continue

Permanent Prohibitions

- Using potable water to wash sidewalks and driveways;
- Allowing runoff when irrigating with potable water;
- Using hoses with no shutoff nozzles to wash cars;
- Using potable water in decorative water features that do not recirculate the water;

Permanent prohibitions

- Irrigating outdoors during and within 48 hours following measureable rainfall;
- Irrigation with potable water of ornamental turf on public street medians; and
- Irrigation with potable water outside of newly constructed homes and buildings that is inconsistent with regulations or other requirements established by the California Building Standards Commission and the Department of Housing and Community Development.

History of MWELO

- Droughts of late 70's and 89-91
- 1990 Water Conservation In Landscaping Act
 - Stakeholder group formed of cities, counties, NGO, water suppliers and the **landscape industry**
 - MWELO into effect in 1993
 - some cities adopted, many ignored it or exempted themselves
 - Charter cities (Sacramento) were exempt
- Updated again in 2010

The Future is Now

- AB 2515 passed fall 2016
- DWR must update the MWLEO in synch with Cal Green cycle (every 18 months)
- DWR must re-write MWLEO by mid- 2018
- Landscape Stakeholder group is formed to work on issues- to make next update the best version
- New stakeholders are welcome
 - Give me your card or email me

MWELO 2015-current code

- During a very severe drought
- Governor issues Executive Order for DWR to update MWELO
- Reduction in water budget
 - Allows enough water to establish plants with local water restrictions in place
 - Minimalizes high water use, cool season turf grasses
- Cal Green Building code refers to MWELO as the authority on landscape building code

Purpose of MWELO

- A model for local agencies to follow in order to enforce minimum building standards in landscape design and construction.
- Comes from AB 325 (1990) and AB 1881 (2006) Water Conservation in Landscaping Act



But wait!



- MWELO goes beyond water conservation
- Addressing other resource issues solves water issues too
- Acknowledging and working WITH California's climate
- Drought survival, protect the investment of landscapes

what we (Californians) want

- Water conservation
 - Alternative waters
- Energy conservation
 - Mike talked about water/energy nexus
 - That includes fertilizers and trips to the landfill
- Good Water quality-in creeks, rivers and aquifers
 - That's the water we drink
- Healthy Plants
- Less Pests
- Healthy Soils
- Fire protection



We also want

- Clean Air
- Urban heat island dissipation
 - Yeah shade!
- Habitat for birds and other good things
- Outdoor recreation
- Food
- Biodiversity-in all situations

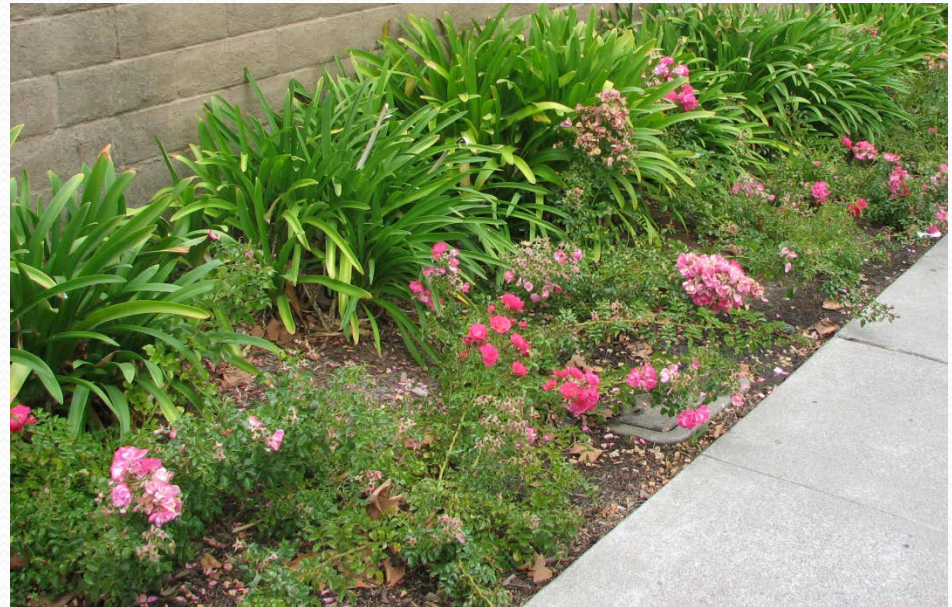


The Legislature values water *and* landscaping

- Water is limited
- Economic prosperity is tied to water
- State policy is conservation and avoid waste
- promote the values and benefits of best landscaping practices
- establish a structure for planning, designing, installing, maintaining and managing water efficient landscapes

What it really means

- achieve the many benefits possible
- use water efficiently without waste
- promote the benefits of working together
 - Industry
 - Government
 - Property owners
- encourage local agencies to work together



Most important to us here today:

- that landscapes are essential to the quality of life in California by providing areas for active and passive recreation and as an enhancement to the environment by cleaning air and water, preventing erosion, offering fire protection, and replacing ecosystems lost to development; and
- that landscape design, installation, maintenance and management can and should be water efficient

The watershed approach

- Rain is a resource
- Living soils
- Right plants, right place
 - Natives and other climate adapted
 - Mediterranean climate
 - Deserts
 - Montane
 - Coastal sage
 - Chaparral



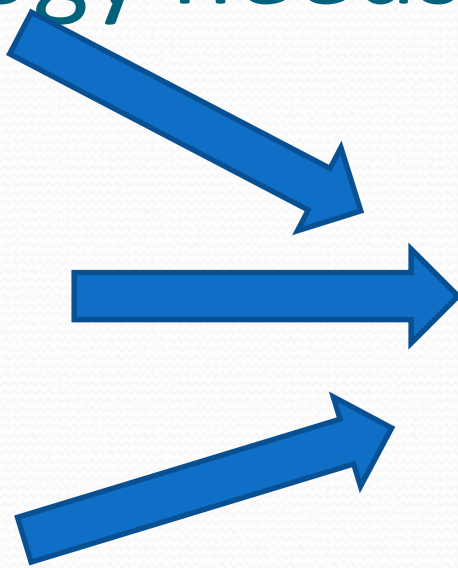
Biology needs Biological Solutions

Air

Water

Soil

Life



Issues

- Stormwater capture
 - Done wrong or not at all
 - Over-engineered
- Grading
 - Compaction
- Push back on Flow Sensors, Master Valves
- Low Volume irrigation
- Range used in plant factors

Issues

- Invasive plants
- Irrigation efficiency
- Turf irrigation
 - Warm season vs. cool season
- **Existing Landscapes**
- Local agency
 - No inspections
 - No checking



issues

- Install other than approved design
- Auditing
- Hardscape and artificial turf and its role in the water budget (none at present)
- SLA water budgets
- Pools, and splash pads in the water budget
- Trees
 - Irrigation valves
 - Canopy hydrozone

What's Happening Now

- AB2515 Update MWELO in synch with Cal Green
- Effective Date 1/1/2020
- Need to update by 2018
- Public process
- Stakeholder group



LSAG-Landscape Stakeholder Advisory Group

- Open to anyone
- Informal
- Met in January in Pomona, Sacramento in April
- Next meeting probably early September –Central CA
- Webinar –always
- Sign up to join



Julie Saare-Edmonds

Julie.saare-edmonds@water.ca.gov