

Water Conservation in Action - City Hall Lawn Goes Green



Terra BIRDS leads Lawn Conversion Pilot Project

The City Hall landscaping is becoming more *green*, with less lawn. Flagstaff Water Services partnered with Terra BIRDS, a local non-profit focused on sustainable gardens and native landscapes, to convert a segment of the lawn at City Hall to a low-water landscape, with native grass and wildflowers to support pollinator habitat. Best of all, this landscape will rely mostly on rainwater.



Beginning in June, Terra BIRDS enlisted twelve at-risk youth from Ponderosa High School and the Juvenile Detention Center to complete the first stage of the project. Terra BIRDS' program to "empower youth through gardening" provides jobs and inspiration for at-risk youth in a positive setting; a chance to improve themselves while caring for the environment. As a key partner in the project, Ponderosa High School primarily funded this paid internship program for the participating students. There were community work-days, along with several workshops to demonstrate how to succeed with similar landscaping efforts at home. The project was 100% human-powered. No motorized equipment was used.

Converting to Natural Landscapes

The first step was to dig up a designated section of grass on the south side of City Hall. The old grass was composted, then planted with native grass plugs, perennial wildflowers, and additional seeds. Natural landscape elements were incorporated, such as logs and rock borders. To view the progression of the Lawn Conversion Project, view this [story map](#). This is the first step toward a vision of sustainable and economical lawn conversions, tying to the City's [Climate Action and Adaptation Plan](#) and the [Water Conservation Strategic Plan](#). Design for the rest of the space at City Hall is still underway, but could include rainwater catchment, Flagstaff Urban Trail System (FUTS) connectivity and additional Flagstaff native plants; while still keeping a large patch of green grass for public use.

Terra BIRDS Recognized by City Council

On September 3rd, 2019, City Council recognized Terra BIRDS for their tremendous effort to use less water, provide habitat for pollinators and proper urban wildlife, and for being models of sustainable land stewardship practices. In total, 2,000 square feet of lawn were converted to native shrubs and grasses, helping to celebrate 30 years of conservation action and support by City Council. To view the video of the City Council recognition, click [here](#). This project serves as an excellent example of ways we can all save water. Way to go, Terra BIRDS!



FLAGSTAFF CITY HALL