



Flood Control District of Maricopa County

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FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT WATER CONSERVATION AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Helps to Safeguard Residents, District Dams and Structures



Front of FCD Administration Building prior to start of water conservation demonstration project. Stormwater runs off mounded planters.

PHOENIX (January 2018) – The persistent drought in the Southwest has put Arizona’s residents and farmlands at risk of water shortage. While Arizona is known for its proactive approach, there’s still a chance of it occurring with Arizona and Nevada being the first to feel the effects. During rainy seasons, the Flood Control District (FCD) of Maricopa County redirects large amounts of stormwater into dams, channels and basins to limit flooding risk and damage to property, homes, businesses and public infrastructure.

However, given the scarcity of water as a resource, FCD is researching innovative ways to conserve water

and demonstrate alternative stormwater management techniques.

“The District’s ability to demonstrate alternative stormwater management techniques on a small scale not only reduces water use and energy,” explained **Chairman Steve Chucuri, Maricopa County Board of Supervisors**, “This saves money and shows how the community can do their part in water conservation.”

Three major goals of the District Durango Master Plan are to: 1) Reduce the amount of potable (safe to drink) water used for irrigation, 2) Better manage on-site stormwater through alternative stormwater management techniques and 3) Provide educational opportunities to the public and District staff.

This December, FCD completed its third water conservation, landscape project at its Durango Complex as a way to demonstrate the benefits of low-water use environments and to reduce the demand on potable water for irrigation. Like many landscapes in the valley, the front entrance of the administration building featured mounded planters that allowed stormwater to runoff and plant species that were dependent upon irrigation year-round. The District has traded the old design in for one that leverages stormwater as a resource by collecting it in basins and bioswales (landscape elements designed to remove silt and pollution from surface runoff water) and selecting native plants that will greatly reduce the need for irrigation. Two other small demonstration projects were at the front entrance of its Operations and

Maintenance building and in the nearby parking lot medians. Each demonstration area serves as a component of the larger FCD Durango Campus Water Conservation Master Plan developed in 2017.

“The intersection of flood control, water conservation and stormwater management is a cross-disciplinary effort,” said **Bill Wiley, FCD Chief Engineer and General Manager**. “The District will play a significant role in helping to mitigate water shortage in Arizona as we implement new ways to redirect and make stormwater available through new and modified flood control projects.”



Demonstration of low-water use landscape environment upon project completion, front of FCD Administration Building.

Most if not all of rain that falls in Maricopa County comes in contact with a District facility providing ample opportunities for water conservation.

Stormwater management is a viable tool in flood

control for several reasons. The most relevant to the District’ mission is that it helps protect the functionality of over 83 structures the District maintains. The largest threat to the integrity of these structures is land subsidence (or sinking of land), which is caused by excessive groundwater pumping. Ensuring the integrity of FCD structures from land subsidence-related damage can result in costly repairs as well as increased design and construction cost.

“District staff is continually researching opportunities to incorporate all these measures into District design standards, policies and projects,” explained **Harry Cooper, FCD Landscape Architect & Water Branch Manager**. “FCD recognizes that stormwater is public water so by conserving it in a responsible manner, the District is providing a meaningful service to the community.”

To learn more about the FCD visit <http://www.FCD.Maricopa.gov>.

The Flood Control District of Maricopa County reduces risk from flooding so that property damage and loss of life is minimized, economic development is supported in a safe and responsible manner and stormwater is recognized as a resource for the long-term benefit of the community and environment. Learn more by visiting [FCD.Maricopa.gov](http://www.FCD.Maricopa.gov).