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NEWS RELEASE

October 4, 2016

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Granite Bay Couple Wins Grand Prize in #RethinkYourYard Photo Contest

Will be featured on digital billboards in Sacramento region in October

SACRAMENTO—Julie and David Long of Granite Bay are the grand prize winners in the #RethinkYourYard photo contest sponsored by the Regional Water Authority (RWA) and local water providers.

The contest invited Sacramento-area residents to take a selfie in their water-wise landscape and submit the photo online at facebook.com/BeWaterSmart for a chance to be featured on digital billboards throughout the Sacramento region in October.

Selection committee members praised the Longs for creating a “pollinator paradise” in their landscape, filled with beautiful, low-water plants that attract beneficial insects and pollinators. Their landscape also incorporates different elevations to add interest, a nice mix of materials and a dry riverbed to capture stormwater runoff to replenish groundwater.

The Longs took many steps on their path to rethink their yard. Last November, they

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began the process by first sheet-mulching their front lawn, laying compost,



cardboard and mulch to smother the grass and then creating an angled dry creek bed across the yard to serve as a focal point and catch rain water. They replanted the yard with all drought tolerant plants, many of which are California natives, with a focus on creating a healthy habitat for pollinators.

“We wanted to create a landscape that would be water-wise and allow us to observe the constant activity of birds, bees, butterflies and other native fauna, and be a way to appreciate the quiet wonder and rhythm of nature,” Julie Long said.

The #RethinkYourYard photo contest is part of the Regional Water Authority’s #RethinkYourYard outreach campaign, which is aimed at continuing the momentum created by the drought to use water wisely and encourages people to take a fresh look at their landscape to determine if it’s time to change from thirsty to water thrifty. The campaign—running on billboards, online and on radio in October—features people from throughout the Sacramento region who have embraced a water-wise lifestyle and decided to make permanent, long-term changes in the way they use water every day.

Learn more about the Longs’ landscape and ways to #Rethink Your Yard at [BeWaterSmart.info](https://www.bewater-smart.info).

About the Regional Water Authority: RWA is a joint powers authority representing two dozen water providers and affiliates in the greater Sacramento area. Its primary mission is to help its members protect and enhance the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources.

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