

Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission

STAFF REPORT

DATE: July 28, 2016

TO: Chairman and Members, Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission

FROM: Chris Wessel, Water Management Planner
Pam Bedard, Certified Landscape Technician Program Administrator

SUBJECT: Review and possible approval of a scope of work and budget, not to exceed \$12,500 per year for two years from the Regional Water Management Fund ("RWMF"), for the Nevada Landscape Association ("NLA") Certified Landscape Technician program; and, if approved, authorize the Program Manager to execute an agreement with the NLA for that purpose; possible direction to staff

SUMMARY

The NLA is submitting the attached proposal to partially fund the Certified Landscape Technician ("CLT") testing program for fiscal years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018. The testing program has historically been funded, in part, through the RWMF. The CLT program is described in the 2011-2030 Regional Water Management Plan, Chapter 7 -Water Conservation Plan - Efficient Use of Water; Table 7-5 under *Ongoing Measures in Addition to Base Case*, Public Education element.

BACKGROUND

The NLA brought the CLT exam to the region in 2003, through its association with the Professional Landscape Network (formerly Associated Landscape Contractors of America), as a way to raise the standards of the local landscape industry. The multi-module, practical exam is administered in a number of states and internationally. The program is widely accepted by the local industry as shown by the long list of individuals and companies that have donated time and funding to support the program.

On December 4, 2013 the NLA sought, and the Commission approved, funding in the amount of \$25,000 to support the CLT program for fiscal years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. RWMF support for the program began in 2005 based on a recommendation from the Regional Water Planning Commission's Advisory Committee on Conservation. The amount of the request is based on a two-year budget that reflects past program expenses since 2004

FISCAL IMPACT

Funding for the CLT program was included in the RWMF budget for FY 2016-2017. Budget authority is located in Fund 7066, Account Number 710100, (WP310103).

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of the request for \$25,000 from the RWMF to support the CLT program in fiscal years 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, and authorization for the Program Manager to execute a contract with the NLA for that purpose.

CW

Attachments: Nevada Landscape Association Proposal

EXHIBIT “A”

Landscape Industry Certified- Technician Exam Nevada Landscape Association Scope of Work

The Landscape Industry Certified- Technician exam is a hands-on testing program administered in Nevada by the Nevada Landscape Association (NLA). NLA has joined forces with the Professional Landcare Network (PLANET) to offer the Certification exam in Nevada. The exam was initially developed and organized by the California Landscape Contractors Association Certification Committee, and first administered in 1983. In 1984, PLANET’s predecessor, the Associated Landscape Contractors of America, purchased the rights to the exam and offered it to state associations. NLA purchased the rights to administer the exam in 2002 and conducted its first exam in 2003.

A critical component of the Certification exam is the Irrigation Module. This comprehensive module covers plan reading, automatic controller programming (including Evapotranspiration and water budgeting), troubleshooting and wiring, automatic and mechanical valve assembly, proper piping selection and fitting, drip systems, sprinkler selection and adjustment and more.

Certification ensures that industry personnel understand water use and efficiency, water conservation and proper techniques for installation and maintenance of irrigation components with an emphasis on responsible water resource management.

Objectives:

The objectives of the Landscape Industry Certified- Technician exam are to:

1. Promote responsible resource management including water conservation. **According to Truckee Meadows Water Authority, irrigation accounts for 53% of ALL water use from their customers.**
2. Enhance and recognize proficiency in the landscape professional workforce.
3. Provide the public a means of identifying qualified landscape professionals.

Project Evaluation:

Post-exam critique with Certification Committee and review of PLANET Test Evaluator report.

Deliverables:

Prepare and deliver post-exam reports to Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission (NNWPC) by September 30, 2016. NLA will provide the NNWPC with a report and budget accounting for the 2016 Certification exam, and projections for the 2017 exam. This would include budget figures and give detail on what NNWPC Funds were used for and the number of candidates that tested, retested, passed or failed. A list of committee members, judges and sponsors will also be included for each test.

2016 - 2017 Exam Timeline and Activities:

December 2015

Prepare 2016 brochure and test application. Register test dates with Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC), our test site, and PLANET.

January 2016 – Training Seminars every Saturday

Classroom seminar to help potential Candidates prepare for the written portions of the exam. Practice test will allow potential Candidates to familiarize themselves with the hands- on exam components. Administer written exams.

February 25- NLA Conference and Trade Show / Written Test

Administrator will present an educational seminar at the Conference outlining the values of Certification and how to best prepare for the exam. Display booth at the Trade Show will display promotional videos, literature and test applications.

March

Continue advertising campaign by distributing brochure and videos via email and fax. Initial contact with test sponsors. Meet with TMCC staff to plan practice test and deliver Liability Insurance form. Contact re-test Candidates.

April

April/ May edition of Landscape Nevada will include Certification stories as well as the brochure and application. Promotional videos will continue via email.

May / June– Certification Test Planning

Contact and secure sponsors, judges and volunteers. Order supplies, equipment, arrange for services (security, first aid, etc.) for test day. Continue advertising campaign.

July 30– Field Test offered

August 6 & 20– Training Seminar/ Written Test

Classroom seminar to help potential Candidates prepare for the written portions of the exam. Practice test will allow potential Candidates to familiarize themselves with the hands- on exam components. Administer written exams.

August 26- Test Site set- up

Certification trailer, rental units, equipment and refreshment area are delivered. Judge and Candidates Orientation held. Committee and Judges set up Hands- on testing modules to guarantee all the proper tools and materials are available. Candidates take written exam.

August 27– TEST DAY and test follow up

Committee arrives at 5:30 A.M., Judges 6:00 A.M. Candidate Registration begins at 6:15 A.M. Testing begins when all Candidates are registered and Judges are ready at their problems; normally 7:00 A.M. Testing continues through the day until Candidates have completed all of their assigned problems. Several breaks are provided, along with refreshments and lunch. Test Evaluation forms filled out by Candidates and Judges. Committee debriefs. Record and verify test scores, notify candidates, mail certification cards, etc. Prepare and send report to PLANET. Announce new Landscape Industry Certified- Technicians in association newsletter, invite to award event. Thank sponsors, judges, volunteers and committee.

September

Debrief with Certification Committee, determine if an additional test will be offered in 2016, and begin planning for 2017. Review budget changes, select new committee members, evaluate and report problems that would require test revision by PLANET. Prepare deliverables for NNWPC.

October

Administrator attends PLANET Certification Meeting.

November

New Certificates will be presented at the NLA Awards Banquet.

December

Prepare 2017 brochure and application.

**EXHIBIT “B”
Expenses/ Budget**

**Landscape Industry Certified- Technician Exam
Nevada Landscape Association**

Northern Nevada Water Planning Commission Funds will assist with overall expenses in the following program categories;

- Module supplies will need some increase; the test site needs some repairs.
- Additional training classes and a practice test, effectively doubling our costs for meals, supplies, rentals and staff.

Income	Projected 2016	Projected 2017
Candidates and Study Guides	\$ 6,500	\$ 7,000
Sponsorships and Donations	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,815
NNWPC Funding	\$ 12,500	\$ 12,500
Total Income	\$ 29,000	\$ 30,315
Expenses	\$ 29,000	\$ 31,315
Overall Total	\$ 0	\$ 0