



Awards of Distinction

Category:

**Environmental
Excellence**

CARPD Awards of Distinction

CARPD Environmental Excellence - Nominee



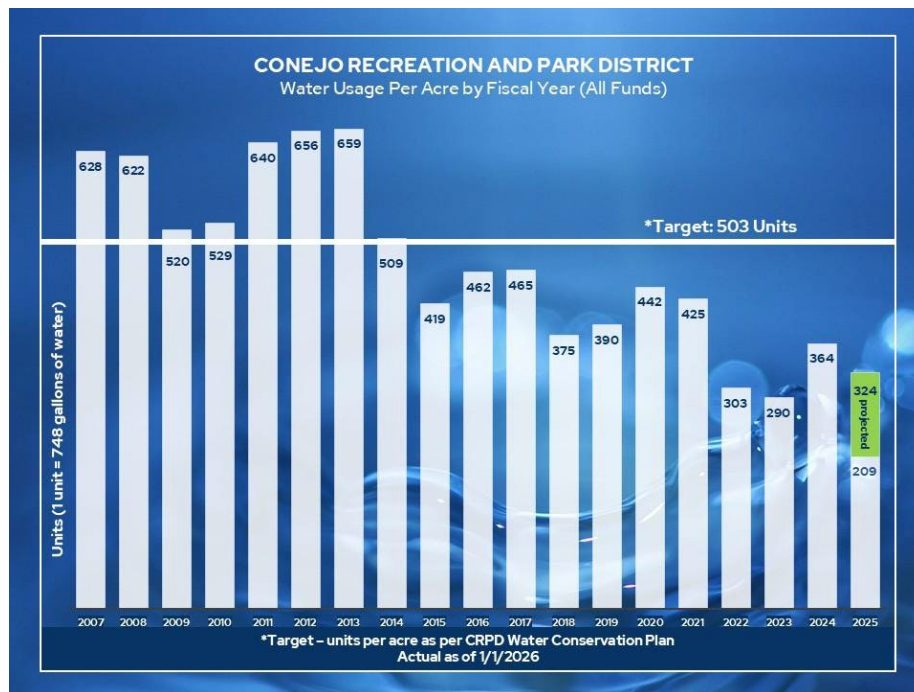
CARPD Environmental Excellence - Nominee

Criteria: Honors programming or planning that supports environmental sustainability in the operation and management of District facilities.

Nominee: CRPD Water Conservation Plan

District: Conejo Recreation and Park District

District Submission:



Summary of Nomination

Long-range climate modeling strongly indicates a hotter and drier southern California in the future. Without a strong commitment by the District to water conservation, the water resources in the Conejo Valley are jeopardized. Since the California legislature passed the Water Conservation Act of 2009, the District has been working to reduce its water consumption. Through the development of its own water conservation policy and annual updates to the, the District has implemented practices and a culture of conservation in its daily operations and long-term planning efforts.

The Water Conservation Plan discusses multiple issues related to water conservation. With each issue, achieving them. Since the implementation of the plan, the District has:

- Converted over **75+ acres of turf** to drought tolerant landscaping.

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- In 2024/2025 (the most recently completed year), the District was **27.63%** below its water target of 503 units per acre.
- The District has decreased its water use by **34.38%** when comparing water consumption in 2024/2025 (most recently completed year) to 2007/2008 units per acre.
- Since 2007/2008, because of the improvements, the District has saved approximately **1,470,227 units (over 1,099,729,796 gallons of water) and over \$10,020,966.**



Since 2013, CRPD has completed numerous waterwise Capital Projects totaling more than **\$5,500,000**, allocating **at least \$250,000 per year** for landscape resiliency projects. The District looks to continue this financial commitment for the foreseeable future. CRPD is dedicated to building upon its past efforts, moving forward, continuing to do its "fair share", and being a leader in the community with regard to water conservation.

The District's Water Conservation Plan can be found here [Water Conservation - Conejo Recreation and Park District](#).

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Criteria: Honors programming or planning that supports environmental sustainability in the operation and management of District facilities.

Nominee: CORE Recreation Center

District: Cosumnes Community Services District

District Submission:



Summary of Nomination

Opened in July 2025, the CORE Recreation Center is a 54,621-square-foot, multi-generational recreation and fitness facility serving 214,000 residents of the Cosumnes Community Services District. While developed to expand access to indoor recreation, CORE stands out for its integrated approach to environmental sustainability, embedding energy efficiency, lifecycle planning, and resource management directly into facility design and operations.

CORE was intentionally designed as an all-electric, high-performance building that exceeds California energy code by 15% under Cal Green Tier 2 standards. By eliminating reliance on fossil fuels, the facility reduces greenhouse gas emissions while insulating operations from long-term energy price volatility and regulatory risk. Sustainability at CORE is not an added feature, but a core operational strategy that supports both environmental and financial resilience.

Key infrastructure investments reinforce this approach. The facility includes 7,280 square feet of solar-ready rooftop capacity, allowing for future photovoltaic installation without costly retrofits. EV charging infrastructure is installed with expansion capability, supporting the transition to clean transportation while avoiding future site disruption. A high-efficiency

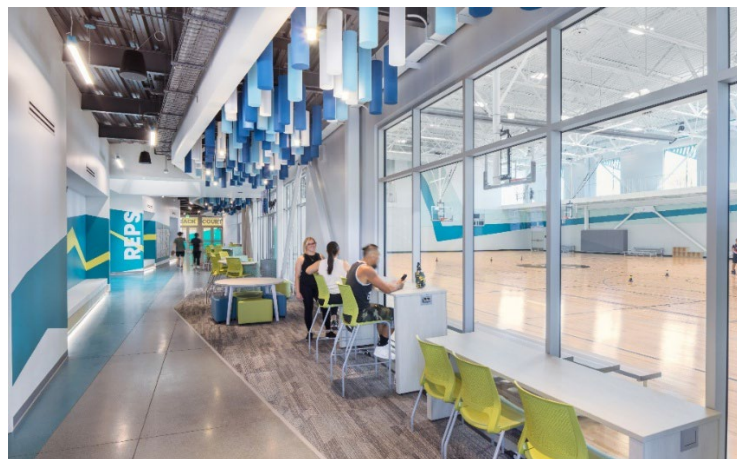
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building envelope and durable construction materials reduce energy demand, lower maintenance requirements, and extend the facility's useful life.

CORE's environmental performance is further strengthened through its operational efficiency. The building was designed to maximize programming density within a single footprint, allowing multiple activities to occur simultaneously. This reduces the need for additional facilities, minimizes land-use impacts, and concentrates energy consumption within a highly efficient structure. Flexible, multi-use spaces adapt to changing program demands without requiring future expansion, reducing long-term material use and capital investment.

Strategic site integration also contributes to sustainability outcomes. Located within Morse Community Park, CORE leverages existing infrastructure, utilities, and parking, avoiding the environmental and financial costs of new land development. This approach enhances the park's overall functionality and value while minimizing additional resource consumption.



Operationally, CORE aligns sustainability with fiscal stewardship. Reduced energy demand, efficient systems, and durable materials lower ongoing operating costs and stabilize long-term budgets. The facility was launched with a structured General Fund investment and is currently ahead of its three-year repayment plan, demonstrating how sustainable design can directly support financial performance.

By integrating environmental considerations into planning, design, and day-to-day operations, CORE reduces lifecycle impacts while maintaining high service levels for the community. Its approach reframes sustainability as a tool for long-term operational efficiency, cost containment, and infrastructure resilience. The CORE Recreation Center represents a best-practice model for environmentally sustainable public facilities.

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Through all-electric design, energy-efficient systems, adaptable spaces, and strategic site integration, the District has created a facility that reduces environmental impact while strengthening operational performance. CORE demonstrates how sustainability can be embedded into the management and operation of District facilities, delivering measurable environmental benefits alongside long-term community value.

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CARPD Environmental Excellence - Nominee



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Criteria: Honors programming or planning that supports environmental sustainability in the operation and management of District facilities.

Nominee: Community Camping Trips

District: Desert Recreation District

District Submission:



Summary of Nomination

Desert Recreation District's Community Camping Trips program exemplifies environmental excellence by making outdoor education, stewardship, and recreation accessible to residents who have historically faced barriers to these experiences. Designed for Coachella Valley residents ages 8 and older, with a focus on underserved communities including North Shore, Thermal, Mecca, Oasis, Thousand Palms, and Indio Hills, this barrier free program offers three day, two night immersive camping experiences that connect participants to nature in meaningful and lasting ways.

More than a camping trip, the program is an intergenerational environmental learning experience. Participants engage in hands on activities such as interpretive hikes, nature walks, plant and wildlife observation, journaling, campfire learning, and guided exploration of streams, meadows, trails, and coastal environments. Along the way, they learn about ecosystems, pollination, food chains, and the water cycle while practicing Leave No Trace principles that reinforce respect for the land and responsible outdoor recreation. These experiences help participants build environmental awareness, confidence, and a stronger personal connection to the natural world.

The program's impact is especially powerful because it brings youth, adults, and seniors

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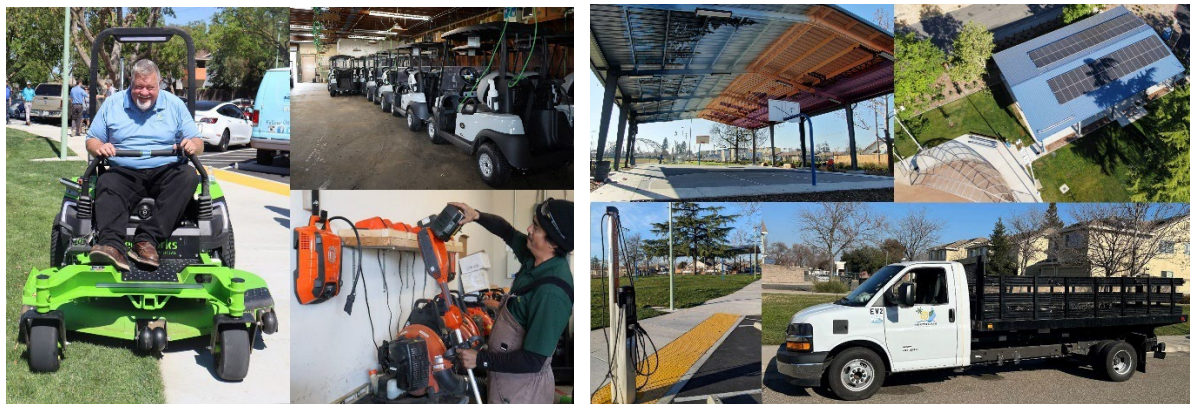
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Criteria: Honors programming or planning that supports environmental sustainability in the operation and management of District facilities.

Nominee: Electronic Vehicle, PhotoVoltaic Panels & Technology

District: Southgate Recreation and Park District

District Submission:



Summary of Nomination

Southgate Recreation & Park District's Electronic Vehicle, PhotoVoltaic & Technology (EVPV & Tech) upgrade initiative is a strong example of environmental excellence built through steady, practical action. Rather than treating sustainability as a one-time project, the District has approached it as an ongoing operational commitment across parks, facilities, and fleet planning. Through infrastructure upgrades, photovoltaic solar panels, EV chargers, electric vehicles, and battery-powered maintenance equipment, the District is reducing emissions, lowering noise, and decreasing reliance on fossil fuels. The District expects to save over \$40,000 per year in fuel costs.

The environmental benefits are clear and immediate. The District has identified those benefits are felt where they matter most: residents experience better air quality and less noise in parks, recreation spaces, and community facilities. Staff work with equipment that reduces exposure to harmful emissions and noise. Over time, these changes help create healthier conditions across the District as a whole.

This work is visible across multiple District sites. Nicholas Park has completed 39 kWDC photovoltaic solar panels and 4 EV chargers for the public. Pat O'Brien Community Center has completed 100 kWDC photovoltaic solar with 6 public EV chargers under construction. Fruitridge Park has 17 kWDC photovoltaic solar and 14 EV chargers under construction. The

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District Corporation Yards have 8 vehicle chargers and 64 additional outlets for electric hand tools in permitting. Additional EV chargers and related electrical infrastructure are in design at other District facilities. Together, these improvements show a coordinated, district-wide effort to support cleaner operations and long-term environmental care.

Nicholas Park Renovation Project provides a strong example of the District's approach. The project included a \$688,000 investment in infrastructure, EV chargers, and photovoltaic solar panels on a shade structure over a full basketball court. Partners include Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, California State Parks, Sacramento Metropolitan Utility District and \$25,000 in private funding. This is a clear example of environmental responsibility paired with partnerships and sound implementation. The District is not treating sustainability as separate from recreation. It integrated cleaner infrastructure into a public park setting, creating evident environmental benefits in a space residents use every day.

The District's approach to this initiative reflects strong resource management and demonstrates that environmental stewardship with grant funding can include support for electric hand tools (such as hedge trimmers, string trimmers, chain saws, pole saws and blowers), electric riding mowers, chargers, utility vehicles and truck purchases. The District has shown how a local agency can move toward cleaner operations in a way that is responsible, realistic, and scalable.

EVPV & Tech demonstrates that environmental excellence is most meaningful when it is built into everyday public service. By expanding infrastructure, solar panels, EV charging capacity, and replacing gas-powered equipment with cleaner alternatives, Southgate Recreation & Park District has taken measurable steps to reduce the use of fossil fuels, improve air quality, and strengthen stewardship of public spaces. It is a thoughtful, district-wide effort that reflects responsible leadership and a clear commitment to a cleaner future.

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