



## NEWS RELEASE

### **Sustainable Landscape Organizations Agree to Merge**

BERKELEY AND SACRAMENTO, CA – November 7, 2017 – Two nonprofit organizations dedicated to educating and advocating for sustainable landscapes, EcoLandscape California and ReScape California, have formally agreed to merge their operations effective November 1, 2017. The merged organization will continue to train landscape professionals and home gardeners in the principles of River-Friendly and Bay-Friendly Landscaping, while leveraging the strengths of both organizations to reach more people and transform more landscapes throughout northern California.

“Each organization has been using similar methods to bring the benefits of healthier landscapes to our respective regions,” said Marian Bender, Executive Director of EcoLandscape CA, which is based in Sacramento. “This merger will allow us to unify our message and share infrastructure so that we can focus our resources on offering more education programs.”

“Our ultimate goal is to transform landscapes across our state to be healthier and more sustainable in the face of water shortages and climate change,” said Ann-Marie Benz, Executive Director of ReScape California, which is based in the Bay Area.

The merged organization will retain the name ReScape California, with headquarters in Berkeley. Benz will stay on as Executive Director of the merged organization. A Regional Program Manager is being hired to deliver training programs in the Sacramento region.

The organization’s training programs for landscape professionals, called Bay-Friendly Qualified Professional Training in the Bay Area and the Green Gardener Training Program in the Sacramento region, will continue in their current form for at least the next six months. A Program Committee, to be formed by the Board of Directors of the merged organization, will be working to align the curriculum of both professional training and home gardener training programs, with the goal of having consistent programs in both regions within a year. Regional referral programs for qualified landscapers will also be aligned and unified, and other programs scheduled for the coming year will continue as planned. Re-branding EcoLandscape materials and website will be implemented over the coming year as resources allow.

A key goal for both organizations has been to transform landscapes to improve the health of their respective watersheds, so curriculum has been somewhat regionalized to focus on “Bay-Friendly Landscaping” or “River-Friendly Landscaping.” This regionalization and these terms will be maintained in each region. “Our programs have much in common, but we will continue to meet the specific needs of our audience and our supporters in each region,” according to Benz.

“We’re also looking forward to continuing the tradition of the bi-annual conference for sustainable landscaping that EcoLandscape has offered in the past,” said Cheryl Buckwalter, President of the EcoLandscape Board of Directors.

###

Media Contact: Ann-Marie Benz, ReScape California, [annmarie@rescapeca.org](mailto:annmarie@rescapeca.org) (510) 859-8026