



March 01, 2017

Dear AASHE STARS Reviewers,

I am writing this letter of affirmation on the deployment of the Hydrogel system at the University of California Merced (UC Merced) campus.

Water conservation has been a priority for UC Merced since its founding. The implementation of low-flow hardware in housing, sprinkler heads with directed streams, as well as several ongoing water conservation strategies have led to reductions in water consumption for the campus.

In July of 2016 the university deployed a Hydrogel system into four event and recreational landscapes to include, the Bowl, the Amphitheater, the Soccer Field, and the Quad landscape. The Hydrogel system increases moisture-retention capabilities and acts as a water and nutrient reservoir, allowing a slow release of water into the soil and roots reducing water usage. The Hydrogel is environmentally sound, non-toxic, and biodegradable. Since its deployment it has saved a total of 2.3 million gallons of water while maintaining the integrity of the turf.

The Hydrogel is innovative because:

1. It utilizes environmentally sound technology to reduce water consumption
2. It has not been deployed on a large scale at other campuses
3. It is uncommon at universities
4. The product maintains the integrity of the landscape with less water

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rodney Trevathan".

Rodney Trevathan  
General Services Manager, Facilities Management  
University of California Merced