



Channel Islands

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY

Jose Chanes

Email: jose.chanes@csuci.edu

April 23, 2015

Dear AASHE STARS Program Staff,

This letter serves as affirmation that California State University Channel Island's Urban Forest Management Plan meets the criteria for the AASHE STARS Innovation Credit. This practice we are adopting will allow us to maintain and continually improve the atmosphere of our campus both aesthetically and environmentally.

Our grounds department has undertaken a program to formally track and plan the Urban Forest within the campus boundaries. Since our campus lies within surrounding agricultural property, the maintenance of vegetation appearances is particularly important. Being in such an atmosphere can be one of the benefits of our campus. Maintaining the health and appearance of our plants will help stimulate such an environment.

In addition to providing aesthetic benefits, the preservation and propagation of the Urban Forest will have sustainable environmental impacts. Mature trees will help improve air quality, reduce heat island effects, and provide habitat for wildlife. Our campus is relatively young - being established in 2002- and will continue to grow. Estimated enrollment will double from 2015 to 2025. During this expansion, it will be critical to keep a control on the impact of construction work and ever increasing presence of student, staff, and faculty on campus grounds. Maintaining documentation and formal planning with regards to our Urban Forest will allow us to stay on top of the desired appearances of the campus while minimizing costs and impacts on personnel efforts.

All efforts in considering and choosing plants and trees that will be used in campus plans also give consideration to water usage. Being in an area that consistently exists in drought conditions, evaluation of the types of plants used is critical. First in the choice of the plant and how it fits in to native landscapes and will thrive in the given conditions. But then also, as the plants - especially trees in our Urban Forest - mature, they must be monitored for growing conditions. If they are not thriving, they should be either relocated if possible, or removed. Keeping an Urban Forest database facilitates these efforts. Records of what worked and where will make future efforts more fruitful and efficient. The campus is especially sensitive to proper placement of drought-tolerant, native species in its efforts to reduce water consumption while maintaining a beautiful appearance.

CSU Channel Islands is committed to improving sustainable practices throughout the campus and community, while minimizing our impact on the environment. Thank you for this consideration of an innovation credit in the STARS program.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jose Chanes'.

Jose Chanes

Associate Director of Infrastructure and Energy