



Trunkline



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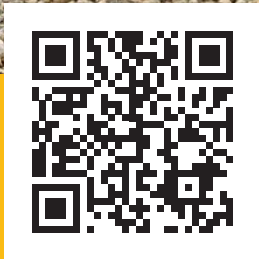


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2026 Southern Utah Green Conference Keynote: Lisa Ortega

We are pleased to feature **Lisa Ortega**, a respected consulting arborist with extensive experience in both municipal and private sector arboriculture. With a career spanning decades and a strong commitment to urban forestry and community stewardship, Lisa brings deep expertise and a practical perspective to her work.



Lisa Ortega is the owner and principal consulting arborist of Great Basin Sage Consulting, LLC. She is an ASCA Registered Consulting Arborist (#675) and an ISA Master Arborist (WE6662BM), with decades of professional experience in municipal and private sector arboriculture throughout the State of Nevada. Her experience includes tree risk assessment, tree appraisal, tree preservation plans,

urban forest management, policy development, and preparation of written reports for property owners, municipalities, insurance representatives, and attorneys.

Lisa also founded Nevada Plants, a tree planting 501(c)(3) established in 2021, which has planted more than 2,500 trees in communities across Nevada.

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Trunkline is published four times each year as a membership benefit to inform UNLA members of the opportunities and actions of the association and its members.


Send submissions to:
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Phone 801-424-9223

INTERNET RESOURCES
UNLA
www.utahgreen.org

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2026 Southern Utah Green Conference Schedule

Dixie Convention Center • 1835 S Convention Center Dr
 St. George, UT 84790
 Tuesday, October 27, 2026

Updated 5/21/2026 schedule is subject to change



Elite Conference
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TIME	ROOM	CLASS TITLE	PRESENTER	CEUs
7:00 am				
REGISTRATION				
7:00 – 7:30 am				
CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST – Ballroom, Sponsored by:				
7:30 - 8:35 am	Keynote Speaker	People + Trees: Inspiring Community Ownership of Urban Trees	Lisa Ortega Nevada Plants	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 ISA, 1 UCNP
8:50 - 9:40 am	Tree Care Track Sunbrook A	Tree Law	Brent Bateman Dentons Durham Jones Pinegar	1 DOPL-Core, 1 ISA, 1 UCNP
	Landscape Track Sunbrook B	Using AI to Create Compelling Landscape Renderings	Doug Bennett WCWCD	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 ISA, 1 UCNP
	Irrigation Track Ballroom	Smart Controllers vs. Conventional Controllers	Andy Belingheri Husqvarna	1 DOPL- Pro, 1 IA, 1 QWEL, 1 UCNP
	Pesticide Track Sunbrook C	Tree Pest Updates for Southern Utah	Marion Murray USU	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 ISA, 1 Pest-USE, 1 UCNP
9:45 am				
BALLROOM GIVE AWAY				
9:55 - 10:45 am	Tree Care Track Sunbrook A	Tree Establishment & Aftercare in the First 3-5 Years	Lisa Ortega Nevada Plants	1 DOPL- Pro, 1 ISA, 1 Pest- USE, 1 IA, 1 QWEL, 1 UCNP
	Landscape Track Sunbrook B	Cooler Roots Happier Plants: Organic vs. Rock Mulch	Judy Mielke Logan Simpson	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 UCNP
	Irrigation Track Ballroom	Backflow Part 1	Paul Wait Zurn Industries	1 DOPL-Core, 1 IA, 1 QWEL, 1 UCNP
	Pesticide Track Sunbrook C	Pesticide Legislation: Recent Updates and Impacts	Henry Nahalewski UDAF	1 DOPL-Core, 1 PEST-LAW, 1 UCNP
10:50 am				
BALLROOM GIVE AWAY				
11:00 - 11:50 am	Tree Care Track Sunbrook A	How to Protect Trees During a Turf Conversion	Andy Belingheri Husqvarna	1 DOPL- Pro, 1 ISA, 1 IA, 1 QWEL, 1 UCNP
	Landscape Track Sunbrook B	The Best Plant Deals: Tried-and-True Species That Cover More for Less	Wendy Proud, Mountain States Wholesale Nursery	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 ISA, 1 UCNP
	Irrigation Track Ballroom	Backflow Part 2	Paul Wait Zurn Industries	1 DOPL-Core, 1 IA, 1 QWEL, 1 UCNP
	Pesticide Track Sunbrook C	Diagnosing Abiotic vs. Biotic Plant Disorders: Avoiding Misuse of Pesticide in Southwest Landscapes	JayDee Gunnell USU	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 Pest- USE, 1 UCNP
11:50 am - 12:50 pm				
LUNCH				
Ballroom – Sponsored by: Rain Bird				
1:00 - 1:50 pm	Tree Care Track Sunbrook A	Optimizing Your Gear: Techniques That Cut Costs and Improve Workflow	Mark Malmstrom Arbor Aide/USU	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 ISA, 1 UCNP
	Landscape & Irrigation Track – Sunbrook B	Hydro Zoning Real Life vs Ideal Scenarios	Ryan White WCWCD	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 IA, 1 QWEL, 1 UCNP
	Pesticide Track Sunbrook C	Agave Snout Weevil: Updated Prevention & Treatment Strategies	Ben Scow USU	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 Pest- USE, 1 UCNP
2:00 - 2:50 pm	Tree Care Track Sunbrook A	Fire Blight: A Brief History, and it's Management	Joe Boffa Rainbow Ecoscience	1 DOPL- Pro, 1 ISA, 1 Pest-USE, 1 UCNP
	Landscape & Irrigation Track – Sunbrook B	Lessons Learned: Updates on Waterless Landscapes	Joseph Rawlinson Ivins City	1 DOPL- Pro, 1 IA, 1 QWEL, 1 UCNP
	Pesticide Track Sunbrook C	Drift, Runoff, and Residuals: Navigating Utah R68-7 and Federal Standards	Amy Davidson UDAF	1 DOPL- Core, 1 Pest-SAFETY, 1 UCNP
2:55 pm				
BALLROOM GIVE AWAY				
3:05 - 3:55 pm	Tree Care Track Sunbrook A	Pruning Techniques and Timing for Healthier Trees	Miles Becker USU	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 ISA, 1 UCNP
	Landscape & Irrigation Track – Sunbrook B	Navigating the New Water Efficiency Standards: How & Where the Ultra-Efficient Rules Apply	Doug Bennett WCWCD	1 DOPL-Core, 1 IA, 1 QWEL, 1 UCNP
	Pesticide Track Sunbrook C	Arundo Donax	Jake Powell USU	1 DOPL-Pro, 1 Pest- USE, 1 UCNP

Celebrating Excellence: 2027 UNLA Awards

The Utah Nursery & Landscape Association (UNLA) proudly invites members to participate in the **2027 UNLA Awards**, an annual tradition recognizing the individuals, companies, and public partners whose leadership and dedication strengthen Utah's green industry.

The UNLA Industry Awards Program honors professionals who go above and beyond through service, innovation, advocacy, and exceptional project work. Nominations are open **April 1 through October 9, 2026**, and members are encouraged to nominate deserving colleagues—or themselves. Award recipients will be notified in **November 2026**.

All winners will be recognized at the **UNLA Awards Reception on January 25, 2027**, held during the Utah Green Conference & Trade Show. Honorees will also be featured in **Trunkline Magazine (Vol. 1, 2027)** and promoted through UNLA's website and social media platforms.

The UNLA Awards program includes a variety of categories that recognize leadership, service, and professional achievement across the industry:

Distinguished Contribution Award

Recognizes outstanding contributions to the nursery and landscape industry by a UNLA member. Judges consider industry longevity, service, and the overall impact of the nominee's work.

Public Service Award (*Municipalities, Water Districts, and Educators*)

Honors a non elected public servant who has advanced professional innovation through policies, standards, or programs that positively affect the green industry.

Women in the Green Industry Award

Celebrates a UNLA member whose achievements, leadership, and dedication have significantly con-

tributed to the success and advancement of Utah's green industry.

Outstanding Merit Award

Selected by the UNLA Executive Board, this award recognizes a member who has selflessly given time, talent, and resources in service to the Association and its mission.

Commercial Landscape Installation Excellence Award

Awarded to a company for outstanding achievement in commercial landscape installation, with judges evaluating aesthetics, functionality, craftsmanship, and owner satisfaction. Submissions require photo documentation, and selected projects may be featured through UNLA promotional media.

Residential Landscape Excellence Award

Recognizes UNLA member companies for outstanding residential landscape installations completed in Utah. This award honors projects that demonstrate exceptional design, craftsmanship, plant selection, and overall quality, resulting in beautiful, functional landscapes that meet client needs and reflect industry best practices.

(continued next page)



UTAH GREEN CONFERENCE

2027

UNLA TRADESHOW




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memberservices@utahgreen.org

(2027 Awards continued)

Landscape Management & Maintenance Award

Honors UNLA member companies that exhibit excellence in the ongoing care and management of landscaped properties in Utah. This award recognizes consistent, high quality maintenance practices that promote plant health, sustainability, and longterm landscape performance through professional expertise and attention to detail.

UNLA also recognizes excellence in landscape projects completed in Utah. Landscape awards are open to compliant UNLA member companies and honor outstanding craftsmanship, design, and execution. Projects may include plantings, hardscapes, structures, water features, and lighting, with select projects highlighted through UNLA promotional media.

The UNLA Awards are an opportunity to celebrate the people and projects that elevate our profession.



**Click to view past winners
or submit a nomination**

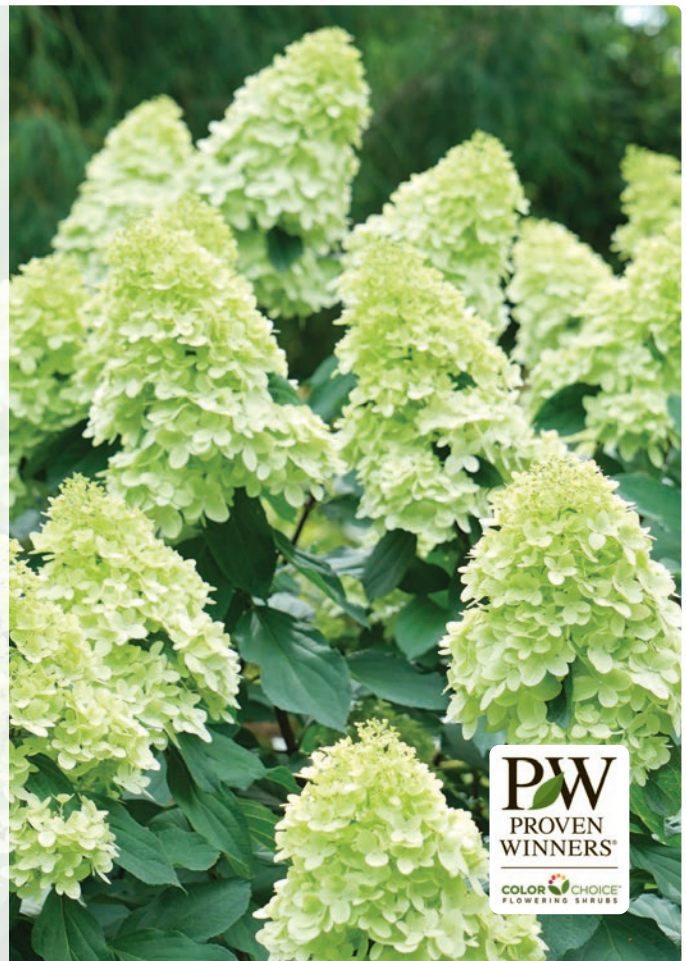


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2026 Utah Legislative Session: What It Means for Our Industry

The 2026 Utah Legislative Session was a busy one — over 1,000 bills were considered and about half were passed. Several touch our industry directly or indirectly, with water conservation a major part of the action. Here are two bills you should know about:

House Bill 313 – Landscaper Certification Amendments This one could have been a headache. As originally written, it would have required all landscapers to complete six hours of annual Water-Wise Landscaping certification on top of existing professional development. UNLA stepped in and worked with bill sponsor Representative John Arthur to bring that down to just one hour, focused on water conservation and fire risk management principles. Our main concerns were the mandating of specific learning areas and restrictions on design flexibility — and we made sure those were heard. We'll keep watching this bill to make sure the requirements don't creep back up.

Senate Bill 176 – Landscaping Procurement Amendments This bill would have required landscapers managing maintenance procurement to

buy electric equipment any time they replaced a gas-powered machine — with zero financial incentives to offset the cost. Some exemptions for impractical or cost-prohibitive situations were added along the way, but ultimately the bill didn't pass the House. Don't consider it gone for good, though — we expect it to resurface in a future session.

Looking Ahead Most water conservation bills this session focused on protecting agricultural water rights to boost flow to the Great Salt Lake, but several were infringing on our operations in the Nursery and Landscape Industry. UNLA will stay on top of interim studies and give you a heads-up when reaching out to your local legislators could make a real difference. To browse bills from this session yourself, visit le.utah.gov → Bills → Keyword Search → try "water conservation" or "homes."

Thanks for all you do to conserve water and keep Utah green!



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Strengthening Community Through Student Connections at Copper Hills High School

On February 9, the UNLA hosted a Student Connections event at Copper Hills High School, bringing students and industry professionals together to explore career pathways and real world opportunities within the green industry. The event created an engaging space for students to learn about sustainability, landscaping, horticulture, and environmental careers while gaining insight into workforce expectations.

Guest speakers shared their professional experiences, discussed current industry trends, and outlined the skills and education needed to succeed in their respective fields. Their perspectives gave students a well rounded view of career possibilities and the next practical steps.



Student Connections continues to serve as an impactful platform for connecting students with industry leaders and inspiring the next generation of green industry professionals. We are grateful to the educators at Copper Hills High School and all participating speakers for their support in making this event a success.

Bryce Ward, *ASLA Utah Chapter*

Mike Lorenc, *Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District*

Nikki Wyman, *Sandy City Public Utilities*

Cameron Passey, *The Toro Company*

Erica Schoenefeld, *Glover Nursery*

Shaun Moser, *Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District*



USU Landscape Design & Construction Students Shine at National Competition

Utah State University students made an impressive showing at the 2026 National Collegiate Landscape Competition (NCLC), earning several high-ranking finishes against a very competitive national field. Competing against 726 students from 54 universities, USU's team brought home three third-place finishes and two additional competitors placed in the top 10 of their events—a remarkable achievement for a program participating in the event for just the second year.

USU's team includes students in the S.J. & Jessie E. Quinney College of Agriculture & Natural Resources Landscape Design and Construction Program, some at the university's Logan campus and some at USU Distance Education sites.

Hosted annually, NCLC is the largest collegiate landscaping competition in the country, bringing together students, faculty, and industry leaders for hands-on contests, professional development workshops, and networking opportunities in the landscape and horticulture industries.

Student Award Highlights

USU students excelled across individual and team events:

- Scott Morley earned 3rd place in the Compact Excavator Competition. Notably, Morley and two



others tied for the top score in executing the required tasks, so award rankings came down to completion time.

- Lydia Thurgood earned 3rd place in Exterior Landscape Design and placed 6th in the Sales Presentation Competition.
- Elyse Reilly earned 3rd place in Construction Cost Estimating.
- Scott Morley and Danielle Carlson placed 7th in Irrigation Troubleshooting, a team-based competition.

Other USU students in USU's Residential Landscape Design and Construction (RLDC) program who competed include Molli Murri, Lily Matsen, Theresa Lara, Sterling Brinkerhoff, and Sophia Christensen, who are at USU's Logan campus, and team members Anika Davis, Scott Morley, and Danielle Carlson are students in the distance education program.

Faculty members Lance Stott, Rachel Broadbent, and Pamela George helped students prepare for their events in the competition and accompanied them to the week-long event.

A Launchpad for Professional Development

According to George, professional practice assistant professor in the RLDC program, competitions like NCLC play a vital role in preparing students for careers in the landscape industry.

(continued next page)



(USU Landscape Design continued)

“The number one reason NCLC is so valuable for students is professional development,” George said.

Preparation for NCLC requires students to commit weeks or even months of independent practice, often going far beyond classroom instruction. Students select competitions based on their interests and prior experience from coursework or internships, then deepen their technical skills through focused preparation. Many competitions are team-based, giving students valuable experience collaborating under pressure.

Beyond the contests themselves, students participate in hands-on workshops led by industry professionals, attend a national career fair, and connect directly with leading landscape companies. These connections often translate into internships, job offers, and long-term professional networks. In fact, during her competition, Thurgood was encouraged by industry judges to apply for a position with their company.

Students also toured Proven Winners nurseries, gaining behind-the-scenes exposure to large-scale operations and leaving with direct contacts for future employment or industry partnerships.

“As a faculty member, I enjoy connecting with other professors across the nation and finding out what’s working and what’s not working in their programs,” George added. *“It helps me reevaluate what we’re doing and see how we can continue to improve our program.”*

George and her fellow faculty mentors are enthusiastic about the team’s strong finishes across multiple events, increasing participation from both main campus and distance education students, and the growing Residential Landscape Design and Construction program.

New UNLA Stickers Available for Members

The UNLA is excited to offer **new industry branded stickers** exclusively for UNLA members! These stickers are a great way to promote Utah’s green industry, highlight your professionalism, and show your support for UNLA—whether they’re placed on equipment, vehicles, retail products, jobsite signage, or storefront windows.

Designed with our members in mind, these stickers help reinforce consistent messaging across the nursery and landscape industry while increasing visibility for UNLA and its commitment to quality, education, and advocacy. We’re offering free to our members to showcase your connection to Utah’s green industry and to spark conversations with customers about the value of working with UNLA members.

How to Order

Ordering is quick and easy. UNLA members can request stickers by completing the online order form at the link below:

→ **Order here:**



Availability may be limited, so we encourage members to place their orders soon. Stickers will be distributed on a first come, first served basis while supplies last.

If you have questions about the stickers or your membership, please contact Hayley at **memberservices@utahgreen.org**. Thank you for helping promote Utah’s nursery and landscape industry—one sticker at a time!

UNLA LAGOON DAY



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Calendar 2026

JUNE

22-24 Weber Basin Water Conservancy District
QWEL Seminar and Test

JULY

8 **UNLA Lagoon Day**

AUGUST

4 Jordan Valley Water Conservancy District Education
Building **UCNP Testing** (10:00 am - 2:30 pm)

OCTOBER

19-21 Central Utah Water Conservancy District
QWEL Seminar and Test

27 **2026 Southern Utah Green Conference**

For more information go to www.utahgreen.org/events