

# This presentation premiered at WaterSmart Innovations

[watersmartinnovations.com](http://watersmartinnovations.com)



# Where are the applications?

Changing characteristics of  
rebate program participants in  
Austin over 10 years

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Conservation Program Specialists



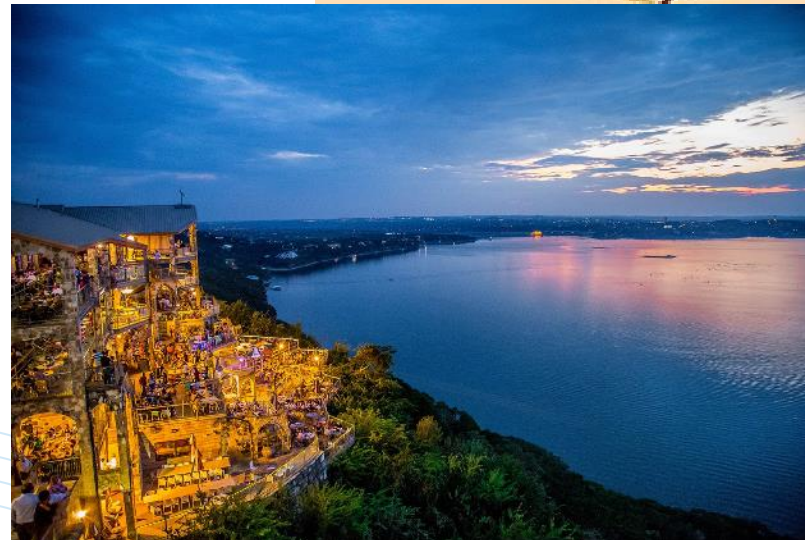
October 6, 2021





# Austin's Water Supply

Lake Travis and Lake Buchanan





# Drought of 2011-2016



# Water Conservation Team Efforts During Drought

- Enforcement
  - Watering restrictions
  - 24-hour patrol
  - Code changes (pressure washing, misters, etc.)
- Rebate Programs
  - Washing Machines
  - Efficient Toilets
  - Outdoor Landscape (**Landscape conversion, rainbarrels/cisterns** landscape maintenance)
  - Irrigation





# Public Information Team Efforts During Drought



- Media Blasts
  - Radio
  - TV
  - Internet (social media, adverts, etc.)
- Signs and Publications
  - Neighborhood Newsletters
  - City Newsletters and Bill Inserts
  - City Wide Newspapers
  - Bus Wraps

# Studied Rebate Programs



- The WaterWise Landscape Rebate Program
  - Convert turf grass to low-water use plant beds
  - Use xeriscaping techniques to ensure supplemental watering is kept to a minimum
  - \$25 (now \$35) for every 100 square feet converted

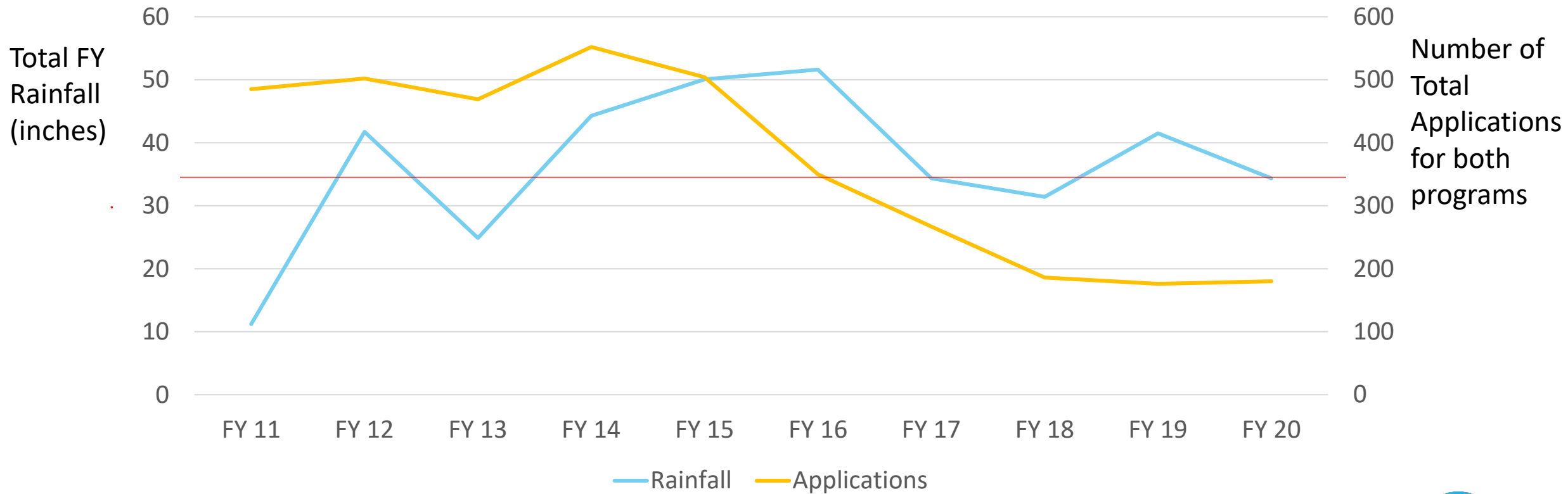
# Studied Rebate Programs



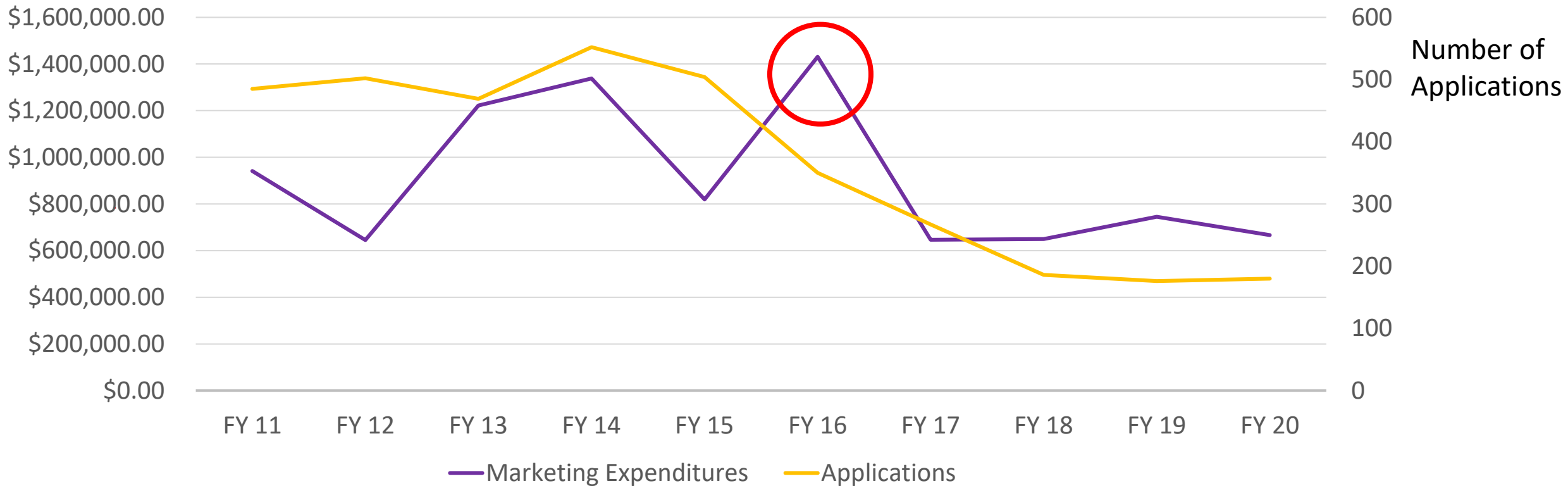
- The Rainwater Harvesting Program
  - \$.50/gallon for gravity release tanks
  - \$1.00/gallon for pressurized systems
    - RPZ Requirement
    - Even if not connected to city supply line



# Rainfall and Applications

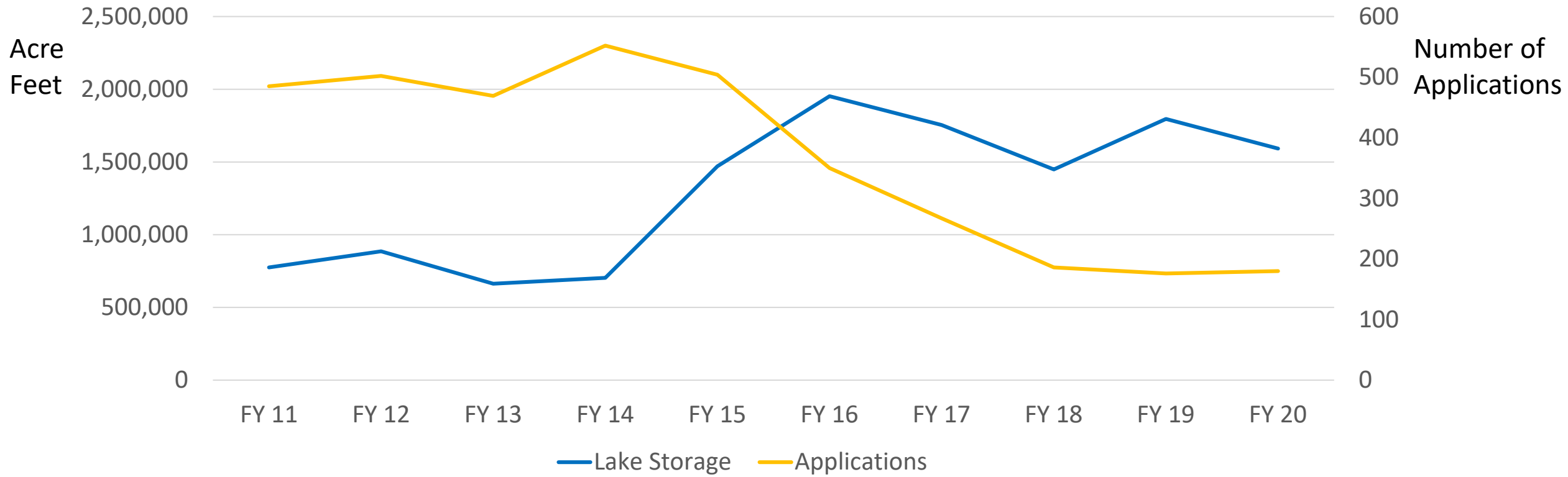


# Marketing Expenditures and Applications

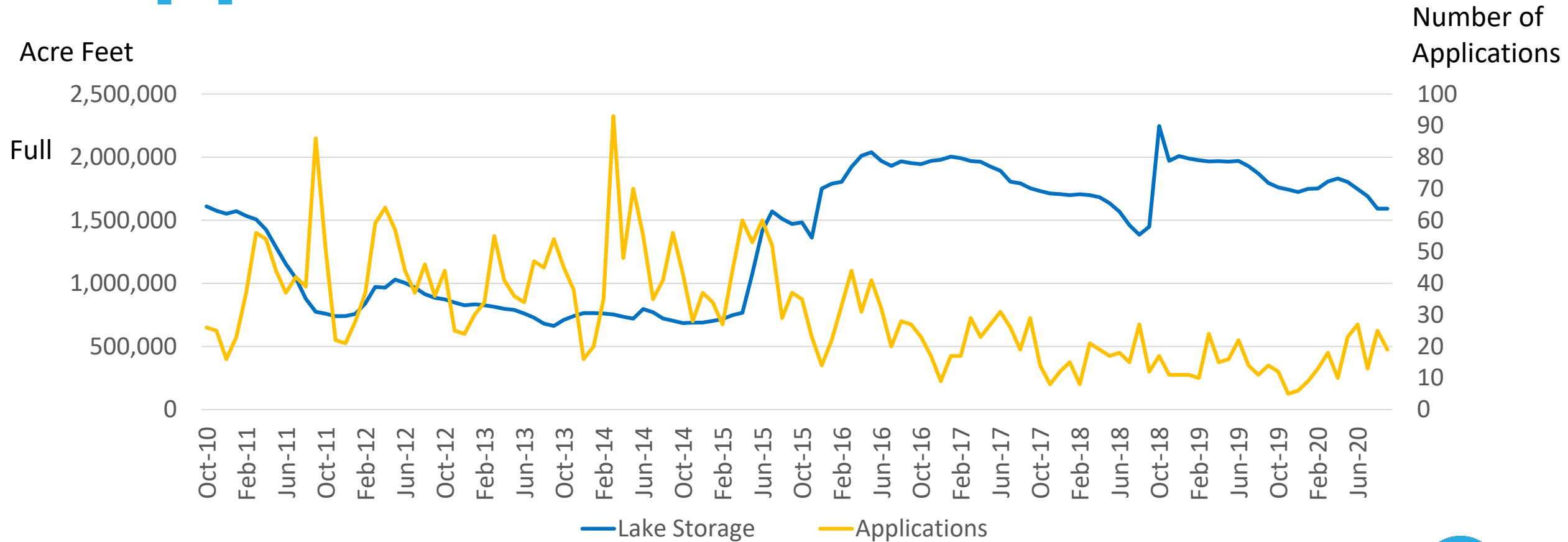




# Lake levels and Applications

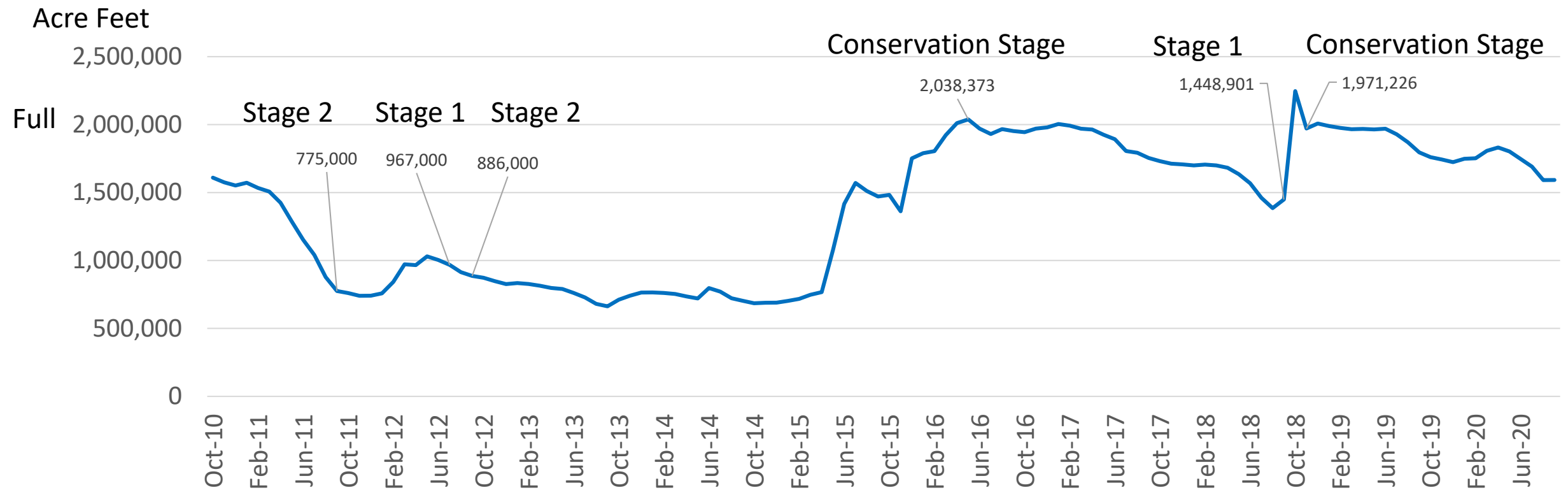


# Monthly Lake Levels and Applications





# Monthly Lake Levels and Watering Restrictions



# Other Possible Factors

RESIDENTIAL		COMMERCIAL		PUBLIC SCHOOLS	
Hose-End Sprinklers BEFORE 10 AM or AFTER 7 PM	Automatic Irrigation BEFORE 5 AM or AFTER 7 PM	Hose-End Sprinklers BEFORE 10 AM or AFTER 7 PM	Automatic Irrigation BEFORE 5 AM or AFTER 7 PM	Hose-End Sprinklers BEFORE 10 AM or AFTER 7 PM	Automatic Irrigation BEFORE 5 AM or AFTER 7 PM
Even Address Sunday	Even Address Thursday	Even Address Tuesday		Monday	
Odd Address Saturday	Odd Address Wednesday	Odd Address Friday			

**STAGE 2 WATER RESTRICTIONS**  
**WATERING ONE DAY PER WEEK**

- “Stage 2” fear increased participation
- Market Saturation
  - Similar to indoor rebates
  - We have reached everybody who is interested/has the resources
- Rebate amount too small considering:
  - Time
  - Money
  - Requirements

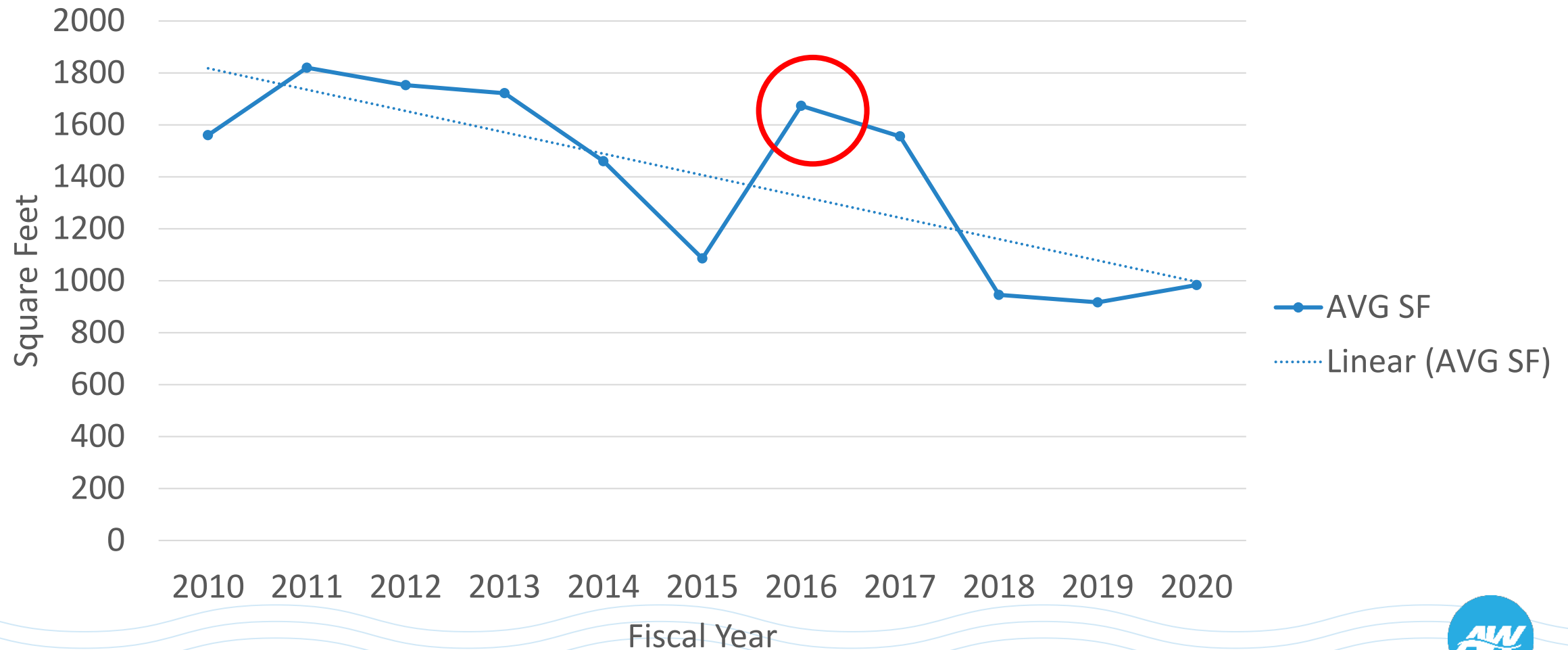




# Quantitative Trends

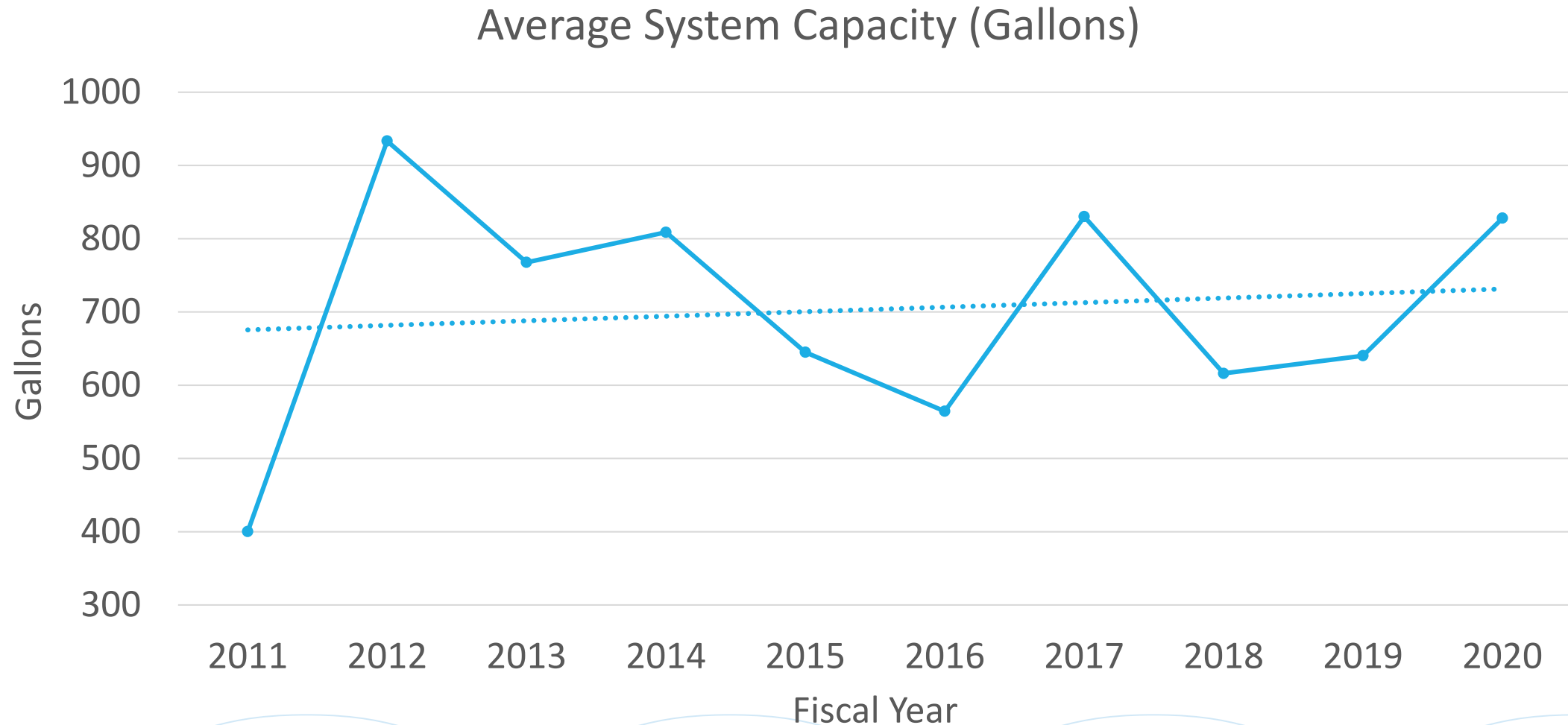
## WaterWise Landscape Program Average Conversion Area

Average Conversion Area (SF)



# Quantitative Trends

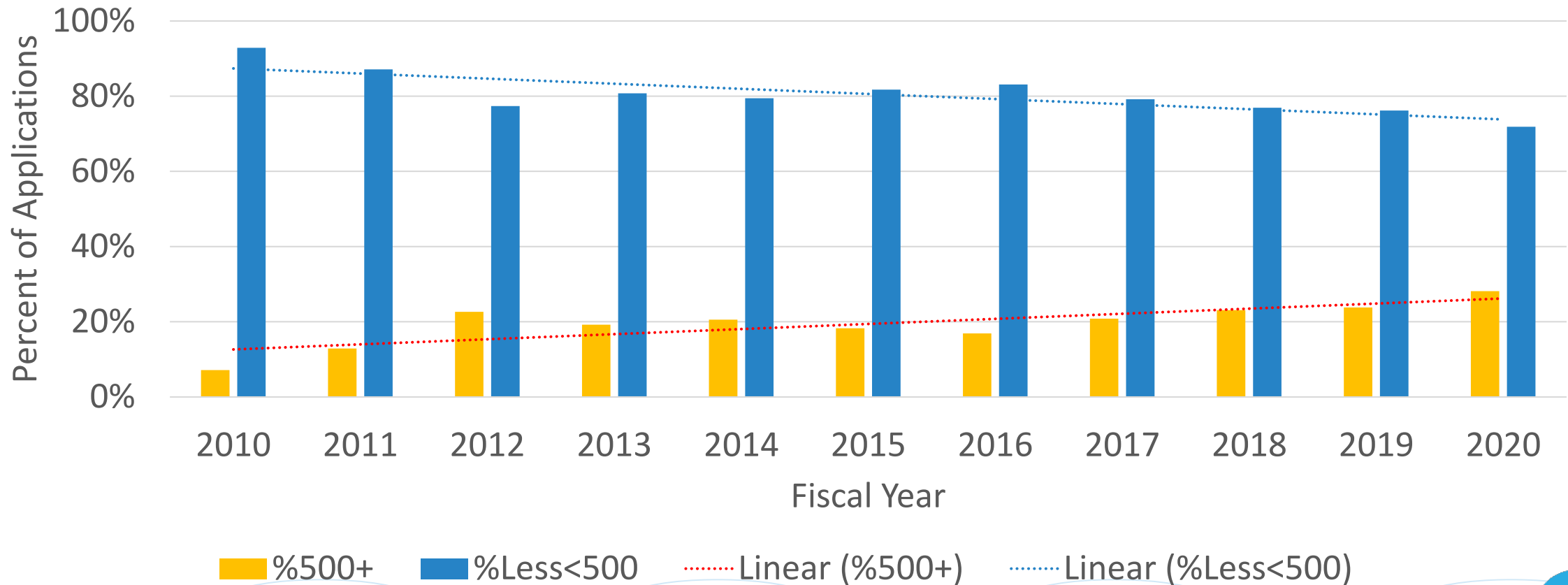
## ◆ Rainwater Harvesting Program Average Capacity



# Quantitative Trends

💧 Rainwater Harvesting Program  
500gal and above vs below 500gal

Small Systems vs Large Systems





# In Conclusion



- Rainfall had little effect on application submittals
- Marketing expenditures were closely related to application submittals but does not explain 2016 decrease
- Lake levels showed closest relation to application submittals
  - Customers are not concerned about conservation when levels are normal
- An increase in rainwater harvesting capacity makes up for low application numbers

# Moving Forward



- Revisions to Rebates?
  - Increase rebate amounts
  - Create new rebates
  - Current lake level graphics on Water Conservation Rebates webpage
- Create Residential Landscape Ordinance
  - Soil Requirements
  - Limited turf area
  - Limited Irrigation area

# Thank you

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