Why Artificial Turf is Not Rebated

The City of Healdsburg's Lawn Conversion Rebate Program improves landscape water use efficiency, reduces peak demand, and encourages holistic landscaping practices that will minimize environmental impact. A holistic approach to landscaping works in harmony with the natural conditions of the Russian River Watershed; fostering soil health, conserving water and other valuable resources, reducing waste and preventing pollution. Artificial turf is not consistent with a holistic landscaping approach and therefore, is not rebated through the Lawn Conversion Rebate Program for the following reasons:

1. Artificial turf does not support bio-diversity
   o A diverse landscape may resist disease and insect pests better than those with little variety, while providing a higher habitat value
2. Artificial turf does not foster soil health. Healthy living soil will:
   o Increase microbial activity which helps cycle nutrients and filter pollutants
   o Increase water holding capacity
   o Improve water quality
3. Production of (virgin) synthetic turf components are associated with significant greenhouse gas emissions
   o This is increased when considering the entire life cycle, due to related increases in processing and transportation needs
4. Artificial turf is not easily recycled
   o Cost and lack of infrastructure are an issue to end-of-life recycling of artificial turf
   o It ends up in the landfill
5. Artificial turf can be a contributor to the heat island effect
6. Artificial turf has no ability to sequester carbon
7. Without a built-in drainage system, artificial turf can lead to excessive runoff
o Any existing chemicals may runoff directly into storm drains and waterways without the beneficial filtration that live vegetation or mulch provides
8. Levels of zinc, selenium, lead and cadmium leaching into the groundwater from crumb rubber underlayment may be significant. More research needs to be done (report from Environment and Human Health, Inc: http://www.ehhi.org/reports/turf/)