

*Are seeds of  
common sense  
sprouting in  
government?*

**Mark  
My  
Words**



*Mark Jarrell*

Mark Jarrell, CGCS

**T**he more I learn about the eco-radicals running what is now considered the “mainstream” environmental movement, the more diabolical and calculating they seem, rather than naive and ignorant about the real world as I once thought most of them to be.

“Naive” best describes the rest of us — the legions of Americans who have financially supported these environmental organizations and believed that we were really helping to save the planet. Saving it for whom, or for what, seems today’s most relevant question.

It was downright chilling to listen to Dr. Coffman’s tapes from a meeting of the Environmental Grantmaker’s Association and hear what low regard they have for people and their problems, and their utter disdain for “wise use” strategies.

As Dr. Coffman puts it, the “Unholy Trinity” to radical environmental leadership is risk analysis, unfunded mandates, and property rights. For those of you who missed Dr. Coffman’s seminar last May at the Poa Annua in Naples, I highly recommend you purchase his book, *Saviors of the Earth?*.

These people are the bad news, and they are not going to go away. They are persistent and well-funded, and hold positions of great power (one of them even got elected to the vice-presidency of the United States).

There is, however, some good news, which I would like to share with you.

First and foremost, some members of Congress seem to finally be getting the message that unnecessary environmental regulation is strangling this country’s economy.

Last year the Senate passed an amendment which would require EPA to utilize “risk assessment” to quantify the relationship between environmental risks and regulatory costs.

All this means is that each potential environmental regulation would be thoroughly analyzed so that we would know what all the costs were expected to be for enactment of the regulation, as well as an explanation given of the anticipated benefits.

Led by freshman Rep. John Mica of Florida, a similar amendment was presented to the House of Representatives in February, but was rejected by a vote of 227 to 191 on technical points and sent back to the Rules Committee.

EPA Director Carol Browner and Vice President Al Gore lobbied hard for its defeat, so it can be considered a small victory that the amendment still has a chance of getting passed. Though risk assessment seems like just plain old common sense and sound economics, it is opposed by the hard-core environmentalists who fear the American public just might reconsider their priorities if a legitimate price tag is assigned to their environmental conscience.

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## Jarrell: Seeds of sense seem to be sprouting

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To quote Rep. Mica: "The Rules Committee is now scrambling to issue a new rule to bring the EPA bill to the floor. Beware. The power brokers are working behind the scenes to concoct substitute language for real risk and cost analysis. I hope the taxpayers — and my colleagues — see through these brazen attempts to misdirect reform."

It is extremely encouraging to read Rep. Mica's words, and we should open up a dialogue between his office and our association and encourage his efforts.

Another promising development is the nomination of Stephen Breyer to the Supreme Court. Judge Breyer has the reputation of being critical of government's mismanagement of risk. His confirmation may turn out to help balance some of President Clinton's other extreme green appointments.

We all have been concerned, and some even directly affected, in recent years, about individuals claiming "chemical sen-

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sitivity."

With no clear medical guidelines, and plenty of extremists willing to use any means to halt pesticide use, this issue has had the potential of becoming a nightmare for all of us in the golf industry.

The good news here is that a blue ribbon panel of scientist recently concluded in Dallas that reproducible studies are needed to determine whether exposure to chemicals actually causes multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS), and many of those doctors don't even acknowledge the exist-

ence of MCS as a human ailment. Getting declared "chemically sensitive" should be a little harder than getting an excuse to miss a phys ed. class.

The rest of the good news is about our own industry organizations to bring golf's positive environmental story to the public. The USGA, the GCSAA, the FTGA, and our own FGCSA all have significant projects in progress that demonstrate our good stewardship. The level of support from manufacturers and distributors continues to grow.

And Tim Hiers has won the first-ever John James Audubon Steward Award from the New York Audubon Society! There is no more deserving individual, and all superintendents can take pride in Tim's accomplishment and the fact that a golf course superintendent has earned such a high honor. Congratulations Tim!

Let's hope these optimistic developments spur us on to grander accomplishments on behalf of our industry, rather than lull us into a false sense of security.

## Joel Jackson: The mole cricket chronicles

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"We bring you the technology of Envirotron to help Earth live in harmony with the universe. Our presence on your planet will provide you with natural alternative pest management tools. You may

integrate us with selective chemical programs necessary to maintain levels of mole cricket activity acceptable to your species.

"We will gladly join forces with our cousins, the Red Eyed Flies of Antar and the Parasitic Wasps of Patagonia in a coalition of natural mole cricket deterrents that you

humans call bio-controls." . . . End of message.

Bio-controls are just one of many areas of scientific research funded by golf course superintendents and other allied groups that support the wise use and preservation of the earth's natural resources.

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