



Audubon Proposes Partner Chapter Initiative

Background

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System would like to partner with GC-SAA-affiliated chapters on a project to create greater awareness, participation, and stewardship action in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses within each chapter.

Currently, about 15 percent of the golf courses in the U.S. are registered in the ACSP for Golf Courses and approximately 25 percent of those are certified in at least one of the six categories, mainly environmental planning.

It is believed that much greater participation can occur if:

- superintendents are properly informed about the program,
- they have a structured step-by-step approach;
- they have a comfortable time frame to work with, and have the support and dedication of their local GCSA chapters, GCSAA and the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System.

Goals

To increase the percentage of golf courses in the U.S. registered in the ACSP for Golf Courses; to increase the percentage of golf courses working towards becoming a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary; to recognize GCSA chapters for outstanding environmental stewardship commitment, to certify a large number of courses simultaneously.

Policy & Procedures

The ACSS will assist and recognize chapters that cooperate in this initiative. To become an Audubon Partner, a chapter must have at least 50 percent of its members registered in the ACSP, and be committed to following the guidelines of this initiative.

Workshops will be conducted by the ACSS and hosted by others, such as ACSP member courses within the chapter.

Objectives

- Establish step-by-step approach for the certification process through workshops.
- Develop timely workshops so golf courses can achieve full certification within a three-year period. Each workshop will give the participants the opportunity to fulfill the requirements for certification in at least one certification category during the workshop.
- Identify potential golf courses and superintendents to participate.
- Develop an environmental stewardship work ethic within the chapter.
- Establish the most effective and smoothest approach to the certification process for certifying many golf courses simultaneously. Recognize the chapter that participates through certificates, press releases, and listings in GCSAA and , Audubon International publications and its web site.

Workshop Format

Each workshop will be a half-day event and primarily focus on one of the certification categories. Two workshops will be conducted each year, one in the fall and one in late winter. This provides the best opportunity for the superintendent to attend and participate. The workshops and their topics will be scheduled so the participating courses can become fully certified by the end of the last workshop.

Workshops will generally begin with a short lecture covering the topic, having participants fill out the Request for Certification with the assistance of an ACSS staff member, and prepare the participant for the next scheduled workshop.

Workshop Schedule and Events

First Year

- Environmental Planning is for courses that have not received certification in this category. Includes a two-hour lecture covering EP and the scope of the entire certification and workshop process.
- Water Conservation

Second Year

- Integrated Pest Management

- Wildlife Habitat Management

Third Year

- Water Quality Management
- Outreach and Education

Two-year Plan (Optional)

Depends on the status of the participants - Three all-day workshops.

First Year

- Environmental Planning
- Integrated Pest Management
- Water Conservation .

Second Year

- Wildlife Habitat Management
- Water Quality Management
- Outreach and Education

ACSS will provide an instructor along with the usual membership materials at the workshops. The participating chapter must cover ACSS traveling expenses.

PGA St. Lucie West Attains Certification

PGA St. Lucie West Country Club has achieved designation as a Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary by the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary System, the educational division of Audubon International endorsed by the U.S. Golf Association. PGA St. Lucie West Country Club is the 21st in Florida and the 144th course in the world to receive the honor.

“PGA St. Lucie West C.C. has shown a strong commitment to its environmental program. They are to be commended for their efforts to provide for wildlife on the golf course property,” said Joellen Zeh, staff ecologist for the Cooperative Sanctuary System.

Rick Wise, CGCS, director of golf operations for PGA Golf Properties of Florida says, “PGA St. Lucie West’s commitment to the preservation of wildlife habitats, as well as water quality and conservation is now and will remain a priority. Perpetuation of natural conditions will always be our primary goal. This accomplishment falls in line with the PGA’s environmental commitment.”