

Browner looking to put the kibosh on regulation as usual?



Hal Phillips,
editor

Believe it or not, the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is bending over backwards to make points with the American business community. How else can we explain the spate of market-friendly directives spilling forth from the desk of Carol Browner, who has changed her stance somewhat? After storming into office as one of the more visible FOBs, running to the agency rooftop and shouting all the traditional liberal rallying cries for all to hear, Browner's office is now talking about softening its labeling restrictions (see page 39).

Could it be that Browner and her agency have been dragged into the Clinton Administration's headlong rush to the center? Does this sea change have anything to do with... Politics!?!?

Call it what you like, but a little birdie in Washington has informed me that Browner has also announced a new policy allowing small businesses, like golf courses, to right past environmental wrongs. The Common Sense Compliance Policy, detailed by Browner in a speech to the White House Conference on Small Business (WHCSB) last month, sets guidelines for the agency to reduce or waive penalties for small businesses that make "good-faith" efforts to correct past violations under most EPA statutes.

"With this new program of incentives for small business," Browner told her WHCSB audience, "the Clinton Administration makes a commitment to reward their good-faith efforts to find and fix environmental problems. We aren't interested in giving irresponsible polluters a break. We do want to help honest business owners comply with the law and run their business as cleanly and efficiently as possible."

Apparently, this policy is part of Clinton's Executive Memorandum on the Waiver of Penalties and Reduction of Reports, which gives federal agencies the ability to waive penalties for violations by small businesses, under certain conditions.

Do you believe her? I say, it doesn't matter. If your course has

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VIT bailed out on Audubon

I know my *New American College Dictionary* is 32 years old and that English is a living, evolving language. But something troubles me here.

My 1963 dictionary in part defines "commitment" this way: The act or state of giving in trust or charge; the act of committing, pledging or engaging oneself.

The modern revision of the word reads more like: "I will stay committed until it is no longer personally convenient."

Well, it looks like we have a case in point and, low and behold, it is right in golf's own camp. Virginia Investment Trust, the apparent buyer of the Ocean Course at Kiawah Island, S.C. (see story page 3), has apparently reneged on a commitment with the Audubon Society of New York (ASNY) that the Audubon would be involved if VIT ever bought the property. VIT and New York Audubon were partners in a winning bid on the course last year, but that purchase was nixed this winter by a bankruptcy court judge.

In the second go-around of the bidding process VIT dropped Audubon as a partner, won the bid and apparently plans to proceed with no outside environmental expertise.

"There will be no environmental organizations involved," said Beverly (Boody) Anderson, a spokesman for VIT which owns Hogan, ANS Sporting Goods and other Kiawah golf courses.

And although the Ocean Course had previously joined the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program, when asked if VIT would follow through with that commitment, Anderson replied: "No, I don't think there will be any plans either way in that regard."

This all despite a written agreement which states in part that if VIT's The Ocean Course (TOC) acquires an ownership interest in the course "either pursuant to the RTC's



Mark Leslie,
managing editor

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Letters

MOBILIZING THE INDUSTRY

To the editor:

Just a short note to thank you for running your article "Leslie Fund to Benefit Cleary Worker's Family" (May 1995) to publicize the Golf Course Superintendents Association of New Jersey's effort to solicit support for Bob Leslie's family after his tragic death. The emotional and financial assistance from turfgrass industry friends following tragic circumstances is very powerful when mobilized in such a fashion. As you know, our personal experience confirmed this. My family and I were strengthened immeasurably by similar industry support following our son's accident several years ago.

Once again, thanks for taking a supportive role.

Edward C. Horton
Vice President,
Resource Management
Pebble Beach Co.
Pebble Beach, Calif.

NETLON & TRAFFIC

To the editor:

In the article "Traffic control: Take your course to the next level, Otis urges", in your March, 1995 issue, the next-to-the-last paragraph mentions Netlawn fibers. It said Dr. Trey Rogers of Michigan State University states that he has found that using a mulched tire product as a soil amendment reduces traffic damage, as do Netlawn fibers.

While our product does indeed reduce traffic damage — along with providing a number of other benefits — the correct product name is "Netlon mesh elements". In Netlon Advanced Turf, the Netlon mesh elements are blended with a selected growing medium to form a stabilized turf rootzone.

The unique Netlon mesh elements act as "springs", with a flexing action that creates and maintains voids along the length of the mesh filaments. This "self-cultivating" action ensures that Netlon Advanced Turf root zones are healthier than those associated with ordinary turf, with a built-in resistance to soil compaction.

It is this combination of benefits that makes Netlon Advanced Turf an ideal solution for cart path and foot path wear, the heavy use of tees, spectator sites, surface parking areas and other problem areas of golf course turf.

Advanced Turf is well known and accepted in Europe. It has been used in many premier golf courses in England. Installation in the cart paths of St. Andrews is a prime example. Within the United States, Netlon Advanced Turf has undergone extensive successful testing by Dr. James Beard at Texas A & M.

Turf Management Specialist Noel Jackson of the University of Rhode Island is currently conducting testing in cart paths and tee boxes. In addition, the system is being installed in strate-

gic areas at golf courses across the country.

Stephen H. Guise
Sales representative
Netlon Ltd.
Fullerton, Calif.

Ed. We regret the error.

APPRAISE & CONSENT

To the editor:

I read with great interest the commentary in your May issue by Mr. James E. McLoughlin (p. 55) regarding the alleged shortage of qualified and credible consultants to perform feasibility analyses for golf course properties. As you can imagine, I strongly disagree and offer the following rebuttal:

It is my opinion that Mr. McLoughlin's opinion stems from the inability of many in the industry to consider appropriately designated and specifically qualified real-estate appraisers for feasibility assignments. As golf has become a "fad" industry to many, those with limited qualifications simply "hung a shingle" in search of feasibility consulting assignments. Real estate appraisers (good ones) perform the necessary detailed analysis on a regular basis. A comprehensive feasibility analysis is only part of a well done highest and best-use analysis done in every appraisal assignment.

Mr. McLoughlin should become familiar with my colleagues in the Society of Golf Appraisers (SGA). Those of us that are mem-

bers and have the SGA designation have submitted to rigorous qualifications and most of us have experience performing feasibility analyses, market studies, impact studies and highest and best-use analyses as well as appraisals. Each SGA member is an MAI member of the Appraisal Institute, which in itself identifies a high level of education and qualification in the real estate analysis profession. While there are "bad eggs" in any profession, I question Mr. McLoughlin's statement that there "may be fewer than five people across the country with the experience to generate a meaningful feasibility report." While the profession is a small one, I can immediately think of at least 10 individuals (not all of them SGA members) with considerable feasibility analysis experience.

I have not met with or spoken to Mr. McLoughlin and welcome the opportunity of doing so to see if I would qualify as one of the "fabulous five." Additionally, I welcome the opportunity to introduce him to SGA and its membership qualifications.

In a market where many users choose only the lowest fee, quality sometimes gets lost in the shuffle until it's too late. Like any quality product, professional and adequate consulting services take time and cost money. You can't buy a Cadillac for the price of a Chevy and you won't find one at the Chevy dealer's lot.

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THE NEWSPAPER FOR THE GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

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Phillips comment: EPA making nice?

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has a checkered environmental record, now is the time to cleanse your bill of health. In other words, it's time to use someone else's political ambition to achieve your own goals.

A quick glance at the *Golf Course News* masthead (turn back to page 8) indicates the move has been made. Publisher Charles von Brecht has arrived in Maine and can now be reached at GCN's Yarmouth, Maine, address.

As it happened, Charlie and his family didn't require a great deal of adjustment. Their first two days in Maine set records, as temperatures climbed into the high 90s. Just like St. Petersburg, huh Charlie?

What's the old saying about the sleeping bear? No, that's the wounded bear. They're quite dangerous, apparently... I believe one is often urged to let sleeping bears lie — no, wait: that applies to groggy dogs... Of course, there are sleeping giants, too, which may better describe the Chelsea, Mich.-based publishing house making its mark in the golf industry.

Of course, Sleeping Bear Press is hardly gigantic, but it was responsible for giving us *The Spirit of St. Andrews*, the lost manuscript of Dr. Alister Mackenzie, published this year and reviewed by Terry Buchen in the March '95 edition *Golf Course News*. We can also thank the publishing house for Tom Doak's controversial but honest book, *The Confidential Guide to Golf Courses*.

There, on the horizon, are two new Sleeping Bear offerings. Due out this fall are books from architect Dr. Michael Hurdzan, a member of GCN's Editorial Advisory Board, and photographer Mike Klemme.

For more information, call 313-475-4411.

Far be it for me to cry wolf, but no one seems to care very much that golf is watching the slow ebb of a playing population that once inspired awe and envy among those who organize competing pastimes.

The National Golf Foundation (NGF) is reporting that U.S. play declined 7 percent in 1994 to 465 million rounds — the lowest total for this traditional growth indicator in six years. The study was conducted by Chicago-based Market Facts, Inc., the same firm to conduct the NGF's surveys since 1985 (copies of the report, "Golf Participation in the U.S.," can be had by calling the NGF at 407-744-6006).

What are we to make of this? Course openings continue at record pace... A 24-hour golf programming channel has hit the airwaves... Equipment manufacturers continue to go public in attempts to expand — they wouldn't want to reinvest in a dying market, would they?... Are these signs of an industry in trouble?

I'd be interested to hear your thoughts on the matter. Write me at *Golf Course News*, P.O. Box 997, 38 Lafayette St., Yarmouth, Maine, 04096; or e-mail me at:

hphillip@gcn.biddeford.com.

Palmer, Nicklaus, Jones, Casper, others busy in Philippines

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now under [President Fidel] Ramos, is a good place to put your money."

While Mount Malarayat begins a new future of non-resort development providing golf for Filipinos, a number of other projects dot this Pacific paradise. Robert Trent Jones Sr., Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, Billy Casper, Benz, Nelson-Wright-Haworth, Andy Dye, Poellot... The list of golf course architects bustling about The Philippines goes on and on.

- Arnold Palmer Design opened two courses recently — The Legacy Golf Course at The Orchard G&CC in Dasmariñas, Cavite, and Banyan Tree Evercrest G&CC in Nasugbu, Batangas — and expects in late summer to begin construction on an 18-hole track, the Ayala-Cebu Golf Estates, in Cebu. It is being developed by Ayala Land Co. of The Philippines. The Legacy, whose grand opening in January was attended by Palmer and President Ramos, is a private members' course, while Banyan Tree is a combination resort and members' facility.

- Nicklaus is involved with Fil-Estate Golf and Development Inc. of Manila in three projects — one private, one resort and residential, and the third undecided. Antipolo, a private residential and resort development, will feature an 18-hole Nicklaus design that is under construction and should be completed next summer, with an opening in fall 1996.

- Looc Cove, an 18-hole private Nicklaus

Signature course in Batangas, Island of Luzan, will begin construction by November. Fil-Estate is undecided about housing or resort components.

In Kagayan de Oro, Mindano, construction should begin in November on another Nicklaus Signature track.

- Benz, who has worked in Asia-Pacific for two decades and is headquartered in Los Gatos, California, U.S.A., reports interest in three resort projects. The three include one 18-hole, one 27-hole and one 36-hole facility.

The time frame? "Two are imminent," he said.

Benz points to one, in particular, as a potential "destination of choice," sitting right on the ocean and boasting beautiful beach frontage.

"The scenic beauty in some of these projects is absolutely superlative," he said. "Much of the land is untouched. That's why we'd like to be part of it, to develop the idea of eco-tourism, preserving to the greatest extent what you possibly can. That has been my bent since Day One [of his career]."

- Santa Lucia, developer of The Orchard G&CC which hosted the 1995 Johnnie Walker Classic, plans to build Las Colinas on the outskirts of Manila. A 72-hole facility, it will boast 18-hole designs by Greg Norman, Nick Faldo, Isao Aoki and Andy Dye.

- Japan Air Resorts is still seeking financing for the 18-hole Billy Casper/Greg Nash-designed Billy Casper Ocean

Course on Camotes Island. Playing along the ocean, it is the first of four courses eventually planned for the resort.

- John Harvey of Robert Trent Jones Sr. reported: "We have some incredible leads." Included are a resort projects in Cebu City and Manila — both loaded with amenities.

- Nelson-Wright-Haworth (NWH) reportedly is drawing plans for a new 27 holes in Laguna, and a well-placed source says a Japanese firm is planning 36 holes or more on the former Clark Air Force Base property, where NWH recently completed the Mimosa Resort course.

A number of influential Filipino families have been able to get things done in spite of political instability in the past. Today, they are even more able to push projects ahead. Take, for instance, the Turalbas, owners of Turalba and Associates and its subsidiary, Active Realty and Development Corp. A large developer which has built residential developments is undertaking its first golf project with Mount Malarayat. Built partially on a pineapple plantation, it will include an integrated sports facility including an equestrian center and sports lodge along with golf.

The residences will be a mixed market, dominated by second homes. A two-year build-out of the golf course is projected, with as many of the 27 holes as possible opening by the end of 1996.

Poellot has a couple of other projects, including one in Cebu, they hope will get off the ground this year.

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