

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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