Ariz. course hatches razorbacks

PAGE, Ariz. — The golf course as endangered fish hatchery? Why not.

The latest example of progressive working relationships between golf courses and environmental groups is unfolding at the Lake Powell National Golf Course, where more than 100 endangered razorback suckers are being raised in two ponds on the picturesque course. Scientists are gauging fish growth in the ponds and releasing some of them into the San Juan Arm of Lake Powell.

The entire Colorado River basin has fewer than 500 razorbacks, according to Richard Mueller, a fisheries biologist with the U.S. Geological Survey. That places the fish on an endangered list for the Colorado River area with up to four other fish. The razorback’s natural habitat has been disturbed by dams and the introduction of non-native predator fish that are consuming the razorback spawn.

Last March, hundreds of six-inch-long razorbacks from the Ouray National Fish Hatchery in Utah were stocked in two ponds at the golf course as part of a program funded by the National Parks Foundation and Arizona Community Grant Foundation. The razorbacks can grow up to 30 inches in length and weigh 10 to 12 pounds. In May, the six-inch razorbacks had grown to 16 inches and many of them were released into Castle Creek on the San Juan Arm of Lake Powell.

In another plus for the golf course, the fish feed on algae and invertebrates and keep the surface of the ponds clear at the two-year-old golf course. Students from Page High School have also been contributing to the project with mapping, water testing and other research projects.

Norman’s Wente to open in April

LIVERMORE, Calif. — The Greg Norman-designed 18-hole layout at the Course at Wente is scheduled to open in April 1998.

The hilly, 18-hole upscale daily-fee course is set among the vineyards of owner Phil Wente. Wente, Livermore’s leading vintner, said of the course, “For scenery and playability, I’m really excited about it... I think this course can be set up for U.S. Open play.”

One of the more memorable of many great views at the Course at Wente comes from the 12th green, where golfers can soak in a panorama that includes the Del Valle Dam, the Veterans Administration compound and Sycamore Grove Park, Mount Diablo and the hazy San Ramon Valley, the Livermore Valley and Brushy Peak. More than 100 feet almost directly underfoot stretches a carpet of vineyards and six of the course’s holes.

Smyth Systems teams With TeetimeNet

NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. — Smyth Systems, Inc., a subsidiary of Bristol Retail Solutions, Inc., and TeetimeNet have formed TeetimeNet+, an online golf tee-time reservation system.

Participating courses will be able to make tee-time schedules available to the public 24 hours a day. Customers, via Internet terminals will select the state, city and course where they wish to play. TeetimeNet+ will enable a golfer to check availability, make a reservation and remit payment via credit card.

Bob Smyth, Smyth Systems president and chief executive officer, said the Internet offers courses the largest market at the lowest cost and the most scheduling flexibility, while effectively serving the needs of golfers.