After a successful start, let's continue our cooperation

By CAROL BROWNER

Enjoyment of outdoor experiences is one of the primary reasons for Americans spending millions of dollars on outdoor recreation. For more than 14 million Americans, golf provides this kind of enjoyment — and a solid connection to preserving and enhancing environmental quality.

What else would one expect from an activity whose goal is literally, "The Green"?

For that reason, it is important for us to remember that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the golfing community share the goal of a beautiful and healthy outdoors.

This message of cooperation and understanding is one that I conveyed three years ago, when I first wrote in Golf Course News. Since that time, I am proud to say that, working together, we have made a great deal of progress on our joint mission to build stronger ties, and to make them work for the benefit of both golfers and the public at large.

Let me recap some of our proudest joint accomplishments:

• The Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA) signed on as a full partner to the EPA Pesticide Environmental Stewardship Program (PESP), while the U.S. Golf Association has become a supporting partner. GCSAA has developed a pesticide safety training course for members under a grant from PESP.
• With GCSAA's support, EPA has launched a program of fast-track registration of reduced-risk pesticides. This program is already paying off for all parties by reducing environmental risks and product development costs for registrants and making new pesticides available for users.
• Three years ago, EPA joined with environmental and golfing organizations to convene the first-ever Golf Environment Summit Conference, which was held at Pebble Beach. This commitment continued through to the following year, when a second conference was held at Pinehurst. Those conferences produced an excellent joint message.

Wildlife Links begins to bear fruit

By JOHN TORSIELLO

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The firstfruits of the 3-year-old Wildlife Links program are expected this year, according to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, which has undertaken the program for the United States Golf Association (USGA).

Established to fund research, management and education projects to provide information on wildlife management issues on and around golf courses, Wildlife Links is funding several ongoing studies, including preparation of manuals on bird conservation and wetlands management for golf courses, both of which are due out this year.

Meanwhile, progress is reported on a study on amphibian conservation on golf courses; restoration of pollinator habitats on and around golf courses, and a managed lands database project. "We were funded $100,000 by the EPA," said John Torresillo, program director.

Turfgrass info goes on-line

Latest NTEP study findings on site

By MARK LESLIE

BELTSVILLE, Md. — No longer will golf course superintendents need to wait month on end to see progress reports on turfgrass tests from the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program (NTEP).

NTEP is on-line, with its own homepage: www.ntep.org/ntep or www.hort.unl.edu/ntep.

"It makes sense that we allow people easy access to the information we have," said NTEP National Director Kevin Morris from his office here. "We can post updates, corrections, etc. much quicker than in print. It is a way to circulate information accurately and quickly."

Gadgets can make jobs more efficient

By MARK LESLIE

EDWARDS, Colo. — Some of the most effective tools for golf course superintendents are found, not at the turf equipment supplier's, but at your friendly neighborhood electronics and hardware stores.

Kevin Ross, the Country Club (CC) of the Rockies superintendent who has gained a reputation for innovations that solve problems on the golf course, told a Public Golf Forum audience they can save time — and anxiety — with a few purchases from this unlikely source. Among

Taking advantage of GIS & GPS

By KEVIN P. CORBLEY

LAKEWOOD, Colo. — People are finding new uses for digital maps, on the other hand, are accurate, easy to update and gaining wider acceptance every day among golf course superintendents.

People are finding new uses for digital maps in maintenance, construction and daily operations at courses around the country.

Digital maps would have found their way into course superintendents’ offices by now...
Wildlife Links program’s firstfruits coming

Continued from page 19

USGA each of the first two years of the program and we moved up to $200,000 for 1998. I guess Tiger Woods has helped us out,” foundation spokesman Katie Distler said with a chuckle.

The non-profit foundation, devoted to the conservation of natural resources, has recommended that a study on the impact of pesticides and nutrients on ponds, streams and lakes associated with golf courses be funded in 1998. It will also recommend two additional projects this year, Distler said.

“The USGA has realized that the amount of land they are involved with is significant and that there are environmentally sensitive issues such as the effect pesticide and fertilizers have on runoff water. Wildlife Links goes one step beyond the USGA’s Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary program. That program is excellent, but Wildlife Links is designed to supply specific information to be used at the ground level by management at existing courses and at those that will be built in order to protect the environment.”

“For years,” Distler said, “there wasn’t much interaction between golf course managers and the environmental community — until this. These studies will answer questions that people have been grumbling about for years.”

For instance, she observed, the study on amphibian conservation on golf courses has involved construction of six experimental wetlands, 70 to 120 yards into the rough along the 15th fairway of a course under construction in the Baltimore, Md., area. Researchers will study the effect golf course chemicals have on tadpoles and frogs in the ponds. Frogs, because of their permeable skin, are especially susceptible to even the slightest environmental disturbance.

It is believed the study will lead to new pond design and knowledge about the overall effect of herbicides, insecticides and fungicides on the golf course environment.

Distler said a wetlands management manual, to be published this year, will not only be useful for golf course superintendents but for other land-use managers as well.

Dr. Kimberly Erusha, director of education for the USGA, said the Wildlife Links program is “an extension of our efforts to reach out to other groups and our long-standing commitment to the environment.”

“We are truly excited,” said Distler of the foundation’s partnership with golf. “The USGA is totally committed to Wildlife Links and we feel like we are going to be able to get the very best programs out there because of that commitment.”

We never said you wouldn’t see unattractive spots on your course. They just won’t be dollar spots.