Florida’s water ‘disappearing,’
governor warns parched state

By JOEL JOYNER

TAMPA, Fla. — Even as Florida rolls through its rainy summer season, water officials continue to press for conservation as drought concerns escalate. The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), for example, has introduced a new, hard-hitting campaign with their “Wasting water is a crime” slogan.

Concerns have reached the highest level. “One of Florida’s most vital resources – water – is disappearing,” warns Gov. Jeb Bush in TV announcements broadcast around the state.

According to weather experts, wet-season rainfalls are just a “drop in the bucket” in recovering Florida’s water supply. Barrage major hurricanes, normal rainfalls from June to October will be insufficient to erase the water deficit at Lake Okeechobee, a vital reservoir, before next winter’s dry season.

District-wide enforcement against water use violators has generated more than $250,000 in fines.

‘DRY AS A BONE’

Golf course superintendents, relieved that the wet season has arrived, are still suffering from three years of drought. “It’s getting worse,” said Norman Carmouche, superintendent here at the Palma Ceia Country Club. “We’re still under the phase three category for restrictions.”

 Allowed to irrigate fairways only once a week and greens and tees thrice weekly, Carmouche doesn’t anticipate any change. “It’s been dry as a bone here for a long time,” he said.

“We’re an older, more established course, built in 1914,” said Carmouche. “We’ve fared better than most courses in the area because of our shade trees and very little mounding. I played at the TPC at Tampa Bay the other day and, with their mounding, they were really burning up there.”

‘DOWN TO THE BOTTOMS’

Pond levels at Carmouche’s course are down six to eight feet. “They’re down to the bottoms,” he said. “When you see a duck walking across the bottom of a pond, you know they’re low.”

Hand-watering has increased for many courses here. “We do quite a bit of it on the greens, trying to hit the hot spots,”

Continued on page 11

In addition, facilities owned or controlled an average of 100,3 acres of wildlife habitat.

• The most common form of habitat consists of freshwater bodies (found on 78.8 percent of golf courses), deciduous woodlands (47.9 percent), wetlands (51.9 percent), and streams or rivers (48.9 percent).

• Median golf course irrigation water covers 78 acres, or 70 percent of managed turf areas. The national irrigation median is the equivalent of 2,537 inches applied to irrigated areas per year.

• 85.4 percent of golf courses have at least one certified pesticide applicator, with an average of two certified applicators per course.

The GCSAA volunteers surveyed its members as part of a collaborative effort to build a national database of environmental data for golf courses.

This is an important step in collecting objective data that both the golf industry and the environmental community can use to evaluate environmental conditions on golf courses,” said Paul Parker, executive vice president of the Center for Resource Management.
Poa annua
Continued from page 8

winter damage, and its diversity complicates the uniformity in growth and color demanded for golf course greens.

"We're looking to eliminate those types of weaknesses," said Huff. "We do have a variety that's resistant to several strains of anthracnose. One Poa strain also has a very good field resistance to dollar spot. The tests this year will be a key factor. We're also focusing on color."

SEED PRODUCTION
For those who have Poa and rely on it, Huff hopes to offer a tool so they can continue to manage their courses the way they would like. "I've had one guy say, 'More superintendents have kept their jobs because of Poa rather than have lost their jobs because of Poa,'" he said.

Building a market with an abundant supply of Poa products could prove challenging. "It may be quite some time before we solve all the problems with the plant," said Huff. "Probably not in my lifetime. But the biggest single thing holding us back from the marketplace is seed production.

"You just can't go out and harvest the seed with a combine," he said. "That's what all the seed producers use. They're huge operations, and I don't imagine most would want to harvest Poa as a sort of specialty."

HANDLING NATIVE STRAINS
Kevin Morris, executive director of the National Turfgrass Evaluation Program, in Beltsville, Md., sees other complications. "Poa is unique because there are so many locally adaptive eco-types that it would be difficult for someone to market," he said.

"The problem is marketing a variety that can overcome and withstand the native varieties of Poa," Morris added. "It would be hard to obtain a uniform green that's not invaded by a local Poa with a different strain. Native types may move in and create a splotchy, non-uniform green, just like they do with bentgrass."

That hasn't stopped Colin Boyd. He has been growing Poa annua for the past five years, doing green extensions on as many as 60 golf courses.

"We're doing this because the older-style golf courses - the Oak Hills and the Aroniminks of the world - have Poa annua greens," said Boyd, president of Colin Boyd Turf Industries in New Wilmington, Pa. "We focus on the golf course industry, and strictly greens and tees.

"Our approach is to make it so that the golfer can't tell that we were there, as opposed to using straight bentgrass," he added. "The sod we grow, we hope, helps make our extensions match up well and flow with the rest of the green." •

PENN STATE STUDENTS RECEIVE GCSAA SCHOLARSHIPS
UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — Eight students at Penn State's Golf Course Turfgrass Management Program were awarded scholarships by the GCSAA. The scholars are: Daniel J Brickley, R. Geoffrey Brunner, Sean R. Jordan, Toby J. Kiggins, Joshua J. Laughridge and Joseph Maloney. Merit award winners were Aaron J. Baker and Steven T. Craig.

If the label's on it, the best is in it.

Now it's easy to know whether you have the best turfgrass mixtures and blends available. Just look for the Jacklin Quality label.

The Jacklin Quality label on the bag says you're planting turfgrass varieties with:

• the industry's leading private research and breeding program behind them
• a wealth of innovation that has led the world in turfgrass development for nearly seven decades
• proven performance that combines unsurpassed color, turf quality and disease resistance

You never have to wonder if the best is in the bag when the Jacklin name is on it.

So the next time you order seed, ask for Jacklin Quality inside. You'll forever be labeled as somebody who knows how to grow great turfgrass.