

Report on California Water Meeting

By Gary K. Carls CGCS



On June 19th in Monterey, CGCSA Lobbyist George Steffes organized a meeting of several different groups from throughout the golf industry in California to begin discussing a proactive approach to dealing with future water issues that will be facing us in California in the coming years. Among the groups represented at the meeting were the CGCSA, NCGA, SCGA, NCPGA, SCPGA and the

CGGOA. Mike Huck also attended and offered valuable insight because of his extensive background with the USGA and in working on various irrigation issues in California. We also hope to include the USGA in the group.

This meeting was the first step in having the many groups that worked together on the Economic Impact Study work together in a similar fashion on water issues in California. The main outcomes of the meeting were:

1. The need to develop a unified positive message about golf course water use in California.
2. The need to deliver this message in as many ways as possible.
3. The need to focus on the positive aspects of our water use as identified by the Economic Impact Study.
4. The need to use positive water use stories from our courses and to send a positive environmental message.
5. The need to educate George Steffes about golf course water use so he can deliver the message to the legislators while fully comprehending the issues.

Another outcome of the meeting was that three main resource groups were formed. These groups are identified at this point as:

1. **Technical data group** – This group would provide the technical answers about the irrigation technology we use and how we manage our water resources on our courses. Obviously, this is an area in which the superintendents probably have the greatest input to offer.
2. **Communication group** – This would be the group that assembles our message for delivery to the media. This would include Emmy Moore Minister and the people who work on the communications for the NCGA and SCGA.
3. **Management Committee** – This would be the basic group that brings everyone together and keeps us working towards a common goal. At this point, it has not been decided what type of formal structure would be put in place. It would be my recommendation that Jim Husting, CGCS represent us in this role. Since Jim already works closely with George on many of these issues, he would be adept in implementing this advocacy group that has naturally evolved out of results generated from the Economic Impact Study.

Bob Costa CGCS has also agreed to join the group as a representative of golf course superintendents from throughout California. I have started to research similar efforts in a few other states including Georgia, Colorado and the Carolinas and it appears that these states have already done a lot of valuable work along these same lines. They have provided copies of a lot of great information for us to look at as we move forward with these efforts. I think this meeting was another great step forward in having all of the golf organizations in California working together for the common good. There is still a long way to go but I think we really need to keep this project moving forward. We hope to have this group meet again in the near future.

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Nominations are now being accepted for the 2004 GCSAA Excellence in Government Relations Awards. The EGR Awards recognize and honor outstanding individual and chapter efforts in government relations in the areas of advocacy and compliance. The awards reflect all government relations efforts, and are not limited to the previous year's activities. Do you know someone who has advocated on behalf of the industry before state or local policymakers? How about an individual who has served on a local or state board and provided a voice on issues important to the industry? Do you know someone who has helped fellow superintendents become educated on environmental or worker safety laws and regulations? If so, then nominate them or your chapter for the EGR Awards.

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