

Local environmental groups file suit against proposed Texas muni

LAKE JACKSON, Texas — A long-expected lawsuit aimed at stopping Lake Jackson's golf course project has been filed against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the city.

The lawsuit was filed in federal district court in Galveston by a local environmentalist, Sharron Stewart, the Houston Audubon Society and the Sierra Club. The defendants named include the Corps' Galveston district, the city of Lake Jackson and Mayor Jim Martin.

The lawsuit was filed after the Corps is-

sued Lake Jackson a wetlands permit last February for its long-awaited 18-hole course on land containing wetlands. The permit allows Lake Jackson to fill wetlands with a forested area known as the Columbia Bottomlands.

The suit seeks to suspend or revoke the permit and to halt any construction or awarding of contracts.

The city's proposed course is part of a contiguous 1,600-acre forest that is one of the largest mature hardwood tracts remaining in Texas, according to the suit. The suit also states direct losses through wetlands

filling and clearing forests will adversely affect birds as well as numerous native amphibian, reptile and mammal species. It further says that additional development will take place around the course.

The lawsuit also claims that U.S. Rep. Tom DeLay wrongly tried to influence the outcome of the permit process. DeLay inserted a provision into a recently-signed appropriations bill that prohibited the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service from delaying or impeding the issuance of the wetlands permit to Lake Jackson.

Miller to craft links on Hearst family property

SAN SIMEON, Calif. — Johnny Miller may get a chance to design a golf course on the Hearst family's San Simeon Ranch, a spectacular coastal site that is comparable to Pebble Beach or Cypress Point.

Miller has done a preliminary design plan for 27 holes at the proposed San Simeon Ranch resort. The resort and 27 holes are part of an overall development plan for Hearst property on the North Coast.

Miller has called the property the kind of land where the Alister MacKenzies and Jack Nevilles were able to design golf courses earlier in the century. MacKenzie designed Cypress Point and Neville designed Pebble Beach, both among the most scenically dramatic courses in the world.

Miller said if a course is built, it would have potential to host a major golf tournament.

Whether the course and the rest of the proposed resort get built in the near future is another question. The golf layout and the accompanying luxury resort are the most controversial aspect of the Hearst proposals. The plan will be debated by county planning commissions in a process that could take years.

Irrigation experts to hold conclave in mid-September

PLEASANTON, Calif. — The American Society of Irrigation Consultants (ASIC) will hold their 1996 conference here Sept. 12-15. The conference will kick off with an 18-hole ASIC/Bob Cloud Memorial Golf Tournament the afternoon of Sept. 12.

On Sept. 13, a series of educational presentations will explore working relationships between irrigation consultants and developers, landscape architects, installation and maintenance contractors and other industry members. The all-day program for Sept. 14 will focus on technical topics. A reception and banquet will be held the evening of Sept. 14 at a historic Livermore Valley winery.

For more information on the program and registration forms, contact Wanda Sarsfield of the ASIC at P.O. Box 426, Byron, CA, 94514, or by phone at 510-516-1124, or by fax at 510-516-1301.

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on course costs

By MARK LESLIE
Worried the cost of golf is starting to drive people from the game, the incoming and outgoing presidents of the American Society of Golf Course Architects have presented arguments that would lead developers to make harsh choices about their projects.
Picking sides in a point-counterpoint atmosphere, Past President Jeff Brauer of Golfscapes in Houston and new President Denis Griffiths of Braselton, Ga., agreed construction costs have escalated too high but disagreed over the cure.
"Ten years ago there were few upscale daily-fee projects," Griffiths said. "Everyone today is doing
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