

## Oneida Nation promises to employ effluent at \$10M golf center in New York

ONEIDA, N.Y. — The Oneida Indian Nation has pledged to use recycled water from the city's treatment plant to irrigate its future \$10 million golf center.

According to an agreement set to be finalized between the city and Indian community, the Nation will lay a pipeline spanning 3.5 miles from the golf facility

to the treatment plant. The pipeline will intercept effluent that would otherwise flow into Oneida Creek.

The intercepted effluent will be discharged into a reservoir near the golf courses. The irrigation system will have temperature controls and weather systems that automatically extract water to

certain parts of the course. The system is modeled after similar systems used at Walt Disney World courses.

City and state environmental officials here are pleased that it will reduce the amount of material discharged into Oneida Creek. Lake Placid and Canton are the only other communities in New

York state that use effluent water.

The Oneida Indian Nation's golf center, which is scheduled to open in 1998, will feature an 18-hole golf course, a nine-hole par-3 course, a golf academy, a full-size driving range, a short-game center and a 40,000-square-foot putting area. Construction started earlier this spring.



## Pebble Beach

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to a higher salt concentration in the reclaimed water. The putting surfaces at the seven courses are annual bluegrass (*Poa annua*), which has proved to be the best turf to cope with the peninsula's cool, foggy climate. But *Poa annua* is also very sensitive to salt.

The project has been scaled back significantly from last fall, when the plan called for a technically sophisticated "replicated" field study that would have cost somewhere between \$300,000 and \$500,000 over a four- to five-year period.

But the scope and scale of the project shrunk during the winter. Questions were raised over whether there would be a predictable and constant supply of reclaimed water for the entire length of the proposed study. There were two occasions in 1996 when the golf courses were forced to use potable water because there wasn't enough reclaimed water available.

Any interruption in the supply of reclaimed water, according to Mahady, would ruin the scientific integrity of a study trying to determine how the grass will do while relying completely on reclaimed water.

"Although it's not a replicated field study," said Mahady, of the new version of the project, "and it's not as statistically substantial as what we originally planned, there's a great learning curve through this sort of work that is tremendously beneficial. If reclaimed water is used on the peninsula, and it is, we need to know how to use it properly."

With the demonstration trial plots at Pebble Beach, maintenance crews will maintain them as part of their daily routines. Once the grass grows in, they will simulate wear and tear, trying various mowing heights. Mahady will be the lead evaluator.

Mahady said one of the first things that he and others involved in the project will be watching closely in the short term is how water quality affects the germination of the grass type and the rate of that germination.

"We'll start learning from day one," he said.


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