

Judge delays construction of Texas course

LAKE JACKSON, Texas — After eight years since the land was purchased and spending more than \$835,000, this city's permit for a golf course has been revoked pending further environmental studies by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

U.S. District Judge Sam Kent ruled in favor of four of the 21

arguments put forth by environmentalists and halted the start of construction on the 208-acre course until closer scrutiny of how the links could impact the surrounding forest, migratory songbirds and other wildlife. Studies could take several months.

City officials do not know how

much they will have to spend, but total costs of the project are likely to exceed the \$6 million golf course bond issue approved last year. The city has already spent more than \$835,000 on land fees, permits, designs and surveys for the proposed facility, according to Lake Jackson City Manager Bill Yenne. The city

was originally granted a permit in February 1996. The lawsuit was filed by environmentalists in May 1996, he said.

Key points in the court ruling included:

- alternative sites outside the city did not have to be considered and eight other locations inside Lake Jackson's jurisdiction were rejected on legitimate grounds.

- the Corps' conclusions were not arbitrary, capricious or an abuse of discretion.

- dismissal of the argument that many wetland soils on the golf course are peder clay exhibiting wetland characteristics.

The corps has several options it could take including reissuing the Lake Jackson permit, ordering an environmental impact study, or outright denying the city a second permit, according to *The Facts* newspaper. Because Lake Jackson has already provided the agency with volumes of documentation, the necessary information may already be on hand. Or, a study can be done through a joint effort by the corps and the city. Ultimately, the city will have to bear the costs for any additional research or for an environmental impact statement, and conduct the majority of the research, according to newspaper.

This is only the second time a permit has been recalled, according to engineering officials. The first was for a housing development 15 years ago. The permit was later granted with conditions.

City officials and environmentalists have been clashing over the construction of the course for nearly six years.

Kirchdorfer inks Kentucky deal

LEXINGTON, Ky. — Kirchdorfer & Cunningham, Golf Course Management has been awarded the construction and operations management contract for a new layout here.

The course will be named The Bull at Boone's Trace. Scheduled to open in the spring of 1999, it will be a championship layout featuring bentgrass fairways, tees and greens. Gold Construction of Louisville will construct the course. Ground-breaking took place April 22.

Kirchdorfer & Cunningham is a rapidly growing golf management firm that operates Hidden Creek Golf Club in Sellersburg, Ind., and MayWood Golf Club in Bardstown, Ky. Future plans are to become a major player in the rapidly consolidating golf industry. Plans for Louisville are to acquire existing facilities rather than construct new ones.

"We think the Louisville market is very, very saturated at this point in time; therefore, acquiring existing courses and driving ranges seems to make the best business sense," said President Jim Kirchdorfer. "We plan to look to other markets for construction opportunities as we have done in Lexington." Plans in 1998-99 are to build or acquire three to five additional facilities.



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