

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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Digital Mapping

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IN DEMAND

Whether captaining the U.S. Ryder Cup team, or working with design partner Bill Coore, left, Ben Crenshaw has been in high demand. And he will not back down in his "classics" philosophy of course architecture. See Q&A with Crenshaw & Coore, page 27.

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NEWSPAPER

New wetlands regs could stifle development

By MARK LESLIE

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is implementing a new cadre of wetlands regulations in early 2000 that is expected to impact a far greater number of residential and commercial developments, including golf courses.

Public comment on the proposed Nation Wide Permits (NWP) expires Oct. 6, making the way for the new rules which affect jurisdictional waters of the United States — wetlands, streams, lakes, etc.

Although the new NWPs have not been officially confirmed, experts in the field anticipate few changes before the

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Assistants often underappreciated

By PETER BLAIS

While head superintendents are seeking increased recognition and money for themselves, they are also encouraging course owners and members to upgrade the salaries and benefits of their assistants.

Nationally, the mean salary paid superintendents is \$53,205, almost double the \$27,981 average salary of assistants, according to 1998 figures provided by the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA).

Why pay assistants more?

Continued on page 19



The 8th hole on the Creek 9 at Aliso Viejo (Calif.) Golf Club displays Jack Nicklaus and son Jack II's personal touch. They designed the Ridge, Creek and Valley nines at the new public facility in Orange County.

Nicklauses collaborate for AMH

ALISO VIEJO, Calif. — Jack Nicklaus and Jack Nicklaus II have opened their latest creation, Aliso Viejo Golf Club here, a 27-hole public facility midway between Los Angeles and San Diego.

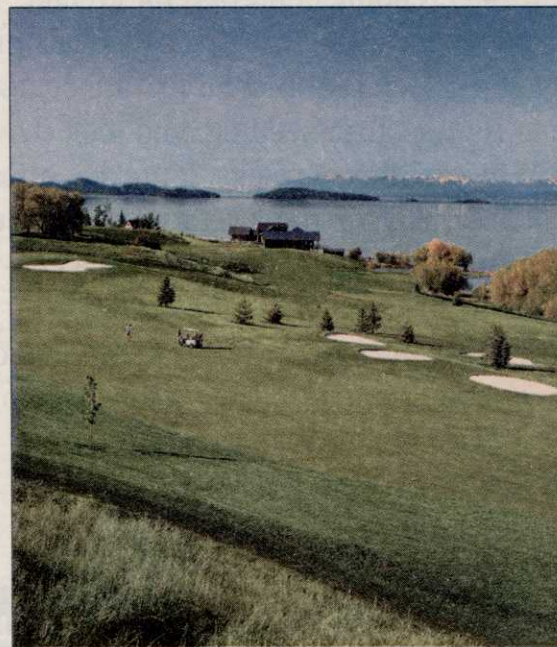
The ninth Jack-Jack II co-design and the first in California, the project is under the auspices of ClubCorp. USA, Inc. and AMH Golf Corp., a Newport Beach-based land-development company specializing in golf, recreation and hospitality properties.

Carved from a dramatic site offering panoramic views of the Saddleback

Mountains, Aliso Viejo is laid out in three distinctive nines — Ridge, Creek and Valley — and features more than 100 feet of elevation change.

"As I get older, the desire to do a lot of golf courses on my own is diminishing," said Nicklaus. "But the desire to continue what I've built with my family is getting greater. So the opportunity to work with Jack (II) ... is something I look forward to a great deal. We have a good relationship;

Continued on page 11



STEIDEL'S PRETTIEST AT POLSON

Polson Country Club's 6th hole may be the best par-5 John Steidel has ever designed. It is certainly the prettiest, he said. For more on the new 9, which brings Polson to 27 holes to the Montana facility, see story on page 33.

Machine takes overseeding to next level

By A. OVERBECK

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Turf Solutions has developed the Dry Sprayer, a machine using new overseeding technology that dramatically increases the speed, accuracy and germination time over standard overseeding techniques. Adapting air-blast technology commonly found in agricultural equipment, the Dry Sprayer blows seed directly into the turf canopy.

"We have modified this ag-based small crop machine into one suitable for

Continued on page 26

TREE MANAGEMENT, PAGES 21-25

10 years anniversary

New wetlands regs could have major impact

Continued from page 1

current NWP 26 expires at midnight Dec. 30.

"There may be minor tweaking, but nothing major," said Dr. Richard W. Whiteside of Wetland and Ecological Consultants in Woodstock, Ga. "But the Army Corps of Engineers [USACE] is encouraging all its districts to

modify them [NWPs] to meet their specific needs. Every district I know has published their own add-ons to this headquarters program, and they are all even more restrictive."

But Carol Sanders of the USACE public affairs office said: "We are still accepting comments. After Oct. 7, we will decide what is

appropriate. The schedule calls for us to issue the final NWPs in early November, with implementation 60 days later."

Whiteside, who deals with a number of golf-related developments, predicted the new NWPs will affect more than half the new golf projects.

According to plans, NWP 26

will be replaced by five new NWPs, but a USACE statement reported: "Permittees will have up to 12 months to complete activities authorized under NWP 26, provided construction activities commence, or are under contract to commence, before the existing NWP 26 expires."

"NWP 26 was perceived as too broad," said Sanders. "With the NWPs you are trying to look at activities that are similar and

have similar effects, such as recreational activities."

"A lot of the courses we're working on are in low-lying areas," Whiteside said. "Stand-alone courses normally don't have many problems [with NWPs] because they don't need to go so low. But courses associated with residential or ancillary development are usually forcing architects down into flood-plain areas. That's when these NWPs come into effect."

NWP 26 was last revised in January 1997, reducing the number of acres a project could affect. Before then, a developer could impact 1 to 10 acres of isolated wetlands or stream headwaters. One acre could be affected without seeking permits. Under the 1997 revision, permits were required for any impact of more than 1/3 acre. The 10-acre maximum of wetlands that could be affected was reduced to 3 acres.

NWP 39, the major revision expected to take effect in January, will reduce that 1/3 acre to 1/4 acre. The 3-acre maximum would remain in place but may often not be met because the limit on any project will be 1/4 acre plus 2 percent of the total project acreage. For example, a 100-acre project site may have a maximum impact acreage of 2-1/4 acres — 1/4 acre plus 100 acres times .02. The 3-acre cap would be achieved when the size of the project site reaches 137-1/2 acres.

Under the anticipated new regulations, mitigation is going to be required for even the smallest of impacts — anything exceeding 1/4 acre," Whiteside said. "And you'd better be in-tuned to your local district restrictions."

The relatively recent cottage industry, land banks — wetlands people have bought and set aside for mitigation — should be in high demand.

According to USACE, NWP 39 will be joined by NWPs 41, 42, 43 and 44. NWP 39 is intended for residential, commercial, and institutional development activities, including construction or expansion of building foundations or pads, as well as attendant features such as roads, utilities, sidewalks, and other similar infrastructure, as well as playgrounds, ballfields, golf courses, and nature trails.

If the proposal remains intact, a pre-construction notification submitted to the USACE "will be required for wetland impacts exceeding 1/4 acre, or for any impact to open waters such as intermittent and perennial stream and lakes."

The regulation, Whiteside said, may be more applicable to clubhouse and maintenance building construction than the course for many developers.

Another new rule, NWP 42, authorizes construction or expansion of recreational facilities,

Continued on next page

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Polson CC expands with Steidel-designed 9

POLSON, Mont. — The city celebrated the expansion of its Polson Country Club to 27 holes with grand opening festivities on July 30. Located on the south shore of Flathead Lake, the project was built on land donated by developers of the Mission Bay Golf Community, with cooperation from the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

The newest nine holes will join with nine built 10 years ago to form the Championship Eighteen that will play at around 7,000 yards from the blue tees. The scenic original nine holes, built in the 1930s, will be operated as a nine-hole course.

The new nine was designed by John Steidel of Kennewick, Wash., who said he designed the course to accommodate members and resort play, as well as challenging tournament golfers.

The new nine is highlighted by the 155-yard, par-3 4th that plays into a 60-foot-deep glacier crater, and the 558-yard par-5 6th hole, which doglegs left along the shore of Flathead Lake.

After playing the 6th hole, Steidel remarked: "If Polson's 6th hole is not the best par-5 I've ever designed, I know it's the prettiest."

JOHNSTON SIGNS S.C. DESIGN DEAL

FORT MILL, S.C. — Clyde Johnston has been retained to design an 18-hole daily-fee golf course here, called Springfield Golf Course. The course is owned and will be managed by Leroy Springs & Co., Inc., which has three other courses within a 30-mile radius of Springfield. Clear Springs Development Co. is making available the land for the course. Both companies are located in Fort Mill. In designing Springfield, Johnston will work along the banks of Sugar Creek, a swiftly moving, 70-foot-wide waterway that drains rainwater from much of the metro-Charlotte area.

Wetlands regs

Continued from previous page

which could include golf courses and ski areas, "provided substantial grading and filling is not required."

NWP 43 might also affect golf development. It authorizes construction of new stormwater management facilities and maintenance of existing stormwater ponds and basins. A 2-acre maximum impact for new construction is expected under this NWP, but excludes impacts to perennial streams. A pre-construction notification must be submitted to and approved by the USACE for construction or maintenance of existing facilities if impacts exceed 1/4 acre of wetlands or 500 linear feet of intermittent stream.

These various pre-construction notifications usually must include such items as a stormwater facility maintenance plan, a delineation of streams and wetlands, mitigation for new construction impacts, and measures taken to avoid and minimize stream and wetland impacts.

When the new regulations take effect, Sanders said, "We're not anticipating it slowing things down. By their very nature, NWPs speed up the process. This will probably make the process more efficient because you won't need more analysis." ▶

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