JOBTALK

Sprucing up a roost for the Goose

How do you landscape the world's largest nest? Landscape Architect Ron Sidell was faced with that question when he was hired as a consultant to the \$200,000 landscape renovation project for the Queen Mary/Spruce Goose display in Long Beach, CA.

Howard Hughes' plywood plane was given a new home last spring when the Wrather Corp. erected a dome to display the mammoth aircraft. As part of a 10-year development improvement plan, the landscaping surrounding the dome, the Queen Mary dock and the English village setting was renovated.

The 20,000 square feet of turf at the site was bluegrass, but "We wanted to make it (the turf) public so people could picnic and relax under shade trees," Sidell says. "With the anticipated increase in traffic, we needed a hardier turfgrass than bluegrass."

Another consideration along the Pacific waterfront site was high winds coming inland. "These daily winds are so severe that we had to devise a special layout for our irrigation sys-



The Spruce Goose display at Long Beach CA. opened last May. A \$200,000 landscape renovation job complimented the "nest."

tem" to offset the drying out, Sidell recalls.

To meet those requirements he chose Southland Sod Farms' Marathon Sod for the new turf. Marathon has an extensive deep root system, Sidell notes, which complimented the irrigation system installed to offset those drying winds.

Sidell also incorporated a year-

round color program for the foliage installed at the site.

Although the Spruce Goose flew only once, with the eccentric millionaire at the controls, its presence in Long Beach has brought 5-6,000 tourists in on an average weekday. Before the new 'nest' was built, the Queen Mary received that number of visitors on weekends. WTT

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