



CALIFORNIA ALLIANCE FOR GOLF

May 27, 2008

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From the Gallery
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RE: "How Green is Golf" from the May 2008 Edition of *Golf Digest*

Thank you for reviewing the environmental challenges facing golf. I commend *Golf Digest* for its research and segmented commentaries on this topic. John Barton's article "How Green is Golf" confirms there's been plenty of dialogue over recent years surrounding the subject of golf and the environment. I too, remember the inaugural meeting in 1995 (Golf & The Environment Conference-Pebble Beach, CA) when a variety of interest groups came to the table, each with their own agenda.

By the time we held another major summit (over a decade later) some progress was made. Most participants knew each other on a first-name basis, and we began to focus on commonalities as opposed to the differences surrounding golf and its community. As mentioned in the article, when it comes to the future viability of golf (with reference to environmental practices/standards) we can't just talk about it...we need to do address it, and preferably through agencies and communities both regionally and locally.

In California we are not burying our heads to the subject. We are forging forward in a proactive way, through the recent formation of the California Alliance for Golf (CAG). The alliance is comprised of nearly every leading golf entity within the state, and together we are tackling some of the critical issues addressed in your feature article (May 2008). For starters, CAG and the Northern California Golf Association (NCGA) have commissioned a \$700,000 research study to investigate whether golf course turf can degrade personal hygiene and pharmaceutical compounds when recycled water is applied as irrigation on golf courses.

Regarding potential recycled water projects, we are submitting comments/suggestions to state and local agencies specifically relating to policies and permits. Additionally, we are working closely with elected officials and community leaders in hope of securing sufficient funding for related projects. CAG is also developing a comprehensive stewardship program for golf courses to certify the use of best practices. Finally, our organization is working with California's energy leaders on an urban forest program with significant potential for reducing greenhouse gases.

The California golf industry has typically approached environmental issues (along with other concerns, i.e. economic-related, security and safety, growth of the game) on a course-by-course basis. Now, through the formation of a strong trade organization (an alliance for golf) it allows us to have a "united voice" at the state, regional and local level, too.

In closing, thanks again to *Golf Digest* for its ability to dissect data and communicate varying perspectives while heightening awareness for golf and the environment.

Sincerely,

Ted Horton, CGCS
President
California Alliance for Golf

cc: John Barton

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