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Questions about the accreditation process should be directed to The American Association for Laboratory Accreditation, 656 Quince Orchard Road, Gaithersburg, MD 20878; (301) 670-1377 or FAX (301) 869-1495. Attn: Roxanne Robinson or Ron Bell.

WILDLIFE LINKS GRANTS ANNOUNCED

The United States Golf Association (USGA) has awarded three grants totaling approximately \$100,000 to initiate Wildlife Links, golf's first comprehensive program to investigate its relationship with wildlife and its habitat. The program is coordinated by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), based in Washington, D.C.

The Colorado Bird Observatory, headquartered in Brighton, Colo., received the first grant. It will be used to create a manual that will provide golf course architects and superintendents with practical information about how to enhance golf course habitat for bird species. The working title of the publication is *Golf Courses and Bird Conservation: A Management Manual*, and it will appear next spring.

Donald F. Harker and Gary W. Libby, environmental researchers located in Frankfort, Ky., were awarded a grant to underwrite production of a publication with the tentative title *Wetlands Management Manual for Golf Courses* that is expected to appear in early 1997. This illustrated booklet will contain narrative, drawings, case studies, and key restoration techniques to help golf course superintendents understand wetlands and create programs to create, conserve, and manage them.

The final grant has been given to Audubon International, headquartered

in Selkirk, N.Y. It will be used to help computerize Audubon International's substantial database of statistical information about golf courses that it has gathered through its involvement over the past six years in managing the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses.

Complete information about each of these grants may be obtained by contacting either Dr. Peter Stangel, NFWF, 1120 Connecticut Avenue N.W., Suite 900, Washington, DC, (202) 857-5676; or Dr. Kimberly Erusha or Marty Parkes of the USGA Green Section, P.O. Box 708, Far Hills, NJ 07931, (908) 234-2300.

PINE NEEDLES NOW A SAFE HARBOR

"This program is not about regulations. It's about partnerships. It's not about mandates. It's about incentives; architects, developers, golfers, and wildlife experts working together."

With these words, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt summarized an agreement, known as the Safe

Harbor Program, signed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Pine Needles Lodge & Golf Club during the recent U.S. Women's Open held at the facility. This initiative, officially known as the Sandhills Conservation Plan, guarantees that private landowners such as golf courses will not be subject to restrictions under the Endangered Species Act after they succeed in attracting threatened species to their land and later decide to convert the property to alternative uses.

The federally endangered species in question in the Sandhills of North Carolina, where Pine Needles is located, is a bird called the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker (RCW). This seven-inch-long bird excavates nesting cavities in live pine trees usually more than a century old. RCWs thrive in a golf-course environment because they prefer the open pines often found on golf courses throughout the area compared to dense forests with significant underbrush. More than a dozen of the approximately 40 golf courses in the Pinehurst area have enrolled to date, with the Pinehurst Resort leading the way by enrolling last year (*Green Section Record*, July/August 1995). In

U.S. Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt (far right) confers with Mark Cantrell of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service about the Safe Harbor Program operating in the Pinehurst region.





Secretary Babbitt with USGA President Judy Bell during the signing ceremony at the 1996 U.S. Women's Open.

excess of 20,000 acres of privately owned land, much of it golf-course acreage, now fall under the Safe Harbor Program.

"What I'd like to do is talk about two of my favorite subjects, woodpeckers and golfers, and the very happy conjunction of the two and the partnership that is now emerging between the owners and managers of golf courses and the surrounding natural values of the land," Babbitt said during the signing ceremony.

"Golf courses, at their best, are very closely designed and related to the natural environment and the landscape. And indeed the extraordinary draw of the golf course is a function both of its challenge to the player and the way that it reveals and relates to the landscape," Babbitt continued. "And what we have found here in the Sandhills of North Carolina means that good golf courses are also excellent woodpecker habitat. It ought to be possible to design and operate golf courses in a way that actually enhances wildlife values. That's an important lesson that I think every person who's interested in the game of golf can take all over this United States of America is that the presence of golf courses can actually increase the amount of wildlife."

ENVIRONMENTAL PRINCIPLES ADOPTED

Consider this scenario: Delegates from various entities throughout the nation meet periodically in extended discussions, attempting to forge a compromise among seemingly disparate interests and goals. These gatherings extend over 12 months and involve countless written revisions. Finally, a document is endorsed that articulates the much-thought-out principles.

The reference in this case is not the Continental Congress and its activities leading to ratification of the Declaration of Independence. Instead, it represents more recent activities of a myriad of golf and environmental interests, and an innovative document called *Environmental Principles for Golf Courses in the United States*. Unveiled during the second Golf and The Environment Conference, held in Pinehurst, N.C., in mid-March, it offers a framework under which environmental excellence is stressed in all aspects of golf course planning and siting, design, construction, maintenance, and facility operations.

The principles are envisioned as a tool for national use while keeping in mind that any assessment of the environmental compatibility of an indi-

vidual course site is a decision that must be made by local communities. The principles are voluntary and are not intended for use in making judgments about socio-economic issues. They assume that regulatory compliance has been achieved and are designed to provide opportunities for those involved in the golf industry to go beyond minimum standards required by law.

The document appears in its entirety on the USGA's Internet site on the World Wide Web at <http://www.usga.org>. Copies may also be obtained through the USGA Green Section at (908) 234-2300.

USGA RESEARCH SUMMARIES AVAILABLE

The 1995 Turfgrass and Environmental Research Summary is now available from the USGA.

The Turfgrass and Environmental Research Program, sponsored by the USGA, has three primary goals: develop turfgrasses for golf courses that substantially reduce water use, pesticide applications, and maintenance costs; develop management practices for new and established turfs that protect the environment while providing quality playing surfaces for the game of golf; and encourage young scientists to become leaders in turfgrass research. The accomplishments of the 41 current research projects funded through the USGA Turfgrass and Environmental Research Program are summarized in the 1995 research summary.

Also included in the document is a list of the ten research projects to be conducted on the construction and maintenance of greens. The goal of this research is to identify the best combinations of construction, grow-in procedures, and post-construction maintenance practices that prevent long-term problems, reduce environmental impacts, and produce high-quality playing surfaces. Beginning in 1996, this is a five-year research effort.

The 84-page research summary is available free of charge by leaving your postal mailing address on the USGA Internet site (<http://www.usga.org>), contacting Mary Jane Kymer at the USGA Green Section (908-234-2300), or by writing to the USGA Green Section, P.O. Box 708, Far Hills, NJ 07931. In the near future, the entire research summary will be available on the USGA Internet site.