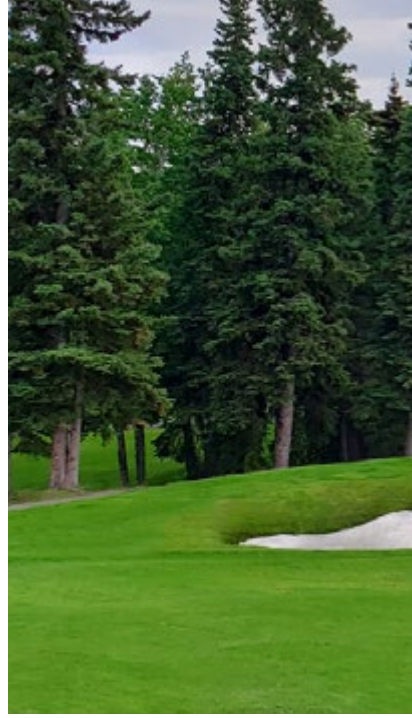
Sustainable landscapes



By Design looks at the three golf course projects recognized in the 2021 ASGCA Environmental Excellence Awards.

The Environmental Excellence Awards program, presented by Ewing Irrigation & Landscape Supply, was introduced by the ASGCA in 2019 to recognize innovative work being done at golf facilities to address their environmental needs.

Submissions are reviewed by a panel of golf industry and environmental leaders, including representatives of GEO Foundation, Golf Course Superintendents Association of America and National Golf Course Owners Association. These projects in Alaska, Florida and Michigan were selected in 2021.

"It's great to see the unique projects recognized through the Environmental Excellence program each year," says ASGCA President Jason Straka. "I congratulate these facilities and the cooperative efforts from operators and golf course architects to improve the environmental landscape. The long-term prospects for each to remain sustainable and profitable is increased by this work." ●



Club: Sailfish Sands, Florida
Golf course architect: ASGCA Past President John Sandford

Florida's Martin County sought to reduce the 18-hole footprint of its municipal golf facility in the city of Stuart. It wanted to remove golf holes from the adjacent airport's Runway Protection Zone and reduce inputs required to maintain the course. The solution was a nine-hole reversible course that has 18 unique holes. Native trees and palms were preserved while nuisance vegetation was eradicated. The new reversible nine-hole course reduced overall area requiring maintenance inputs such as fertilizers, chemicals and mowing by 40 percent. Site drainage was improved by raising low areas and removing nuisance vegetation that was preventing runoff from reaching critical outfall points. Twenty acres of unirrigated native areas were preserved to further reduce the actively maintained area.







Club: Anchorage Golf Course, Alaska
Golf course architect: Forrest Richardson and Jeff Danner, ASGCA

Preparations for Anchorage Golf Course hosting the 2022 USGA Women's Senior Amateur Championship involved the development of a non-traditional construction plan to achieve less carbon emissions. Using local equipment, available supplies and regional labor, the Municipality of Anchorage, in cooperation with their operating lessee, completed a bunker renovation program, turf reduction and drainage plan designed to conform to the Anchorage Climate Action Plan. The combined efforts are resulting in a recharged aquifer, reduced turf footprint and carbon emissions, habitat restoration, and improved drainage.



Club: Crystal Mountain Resort, Michigan
Golf course architect: A. John Harvey, ASGCA

A forestry management program on the 1,400-acre property was completed to open up playing corridors and encourage healthy woodland development. The first step in the project was the development of a course improvement master plan. This included measures to protect and encourage healthy tree growth, considering species desirability, health and vigor, as well as balancing and recouping costs for vegetation management and renovations with logging monetary values, and managing golf and property impacts and constrains. The team also put forward imaginative visual and strategic treatment of the ground plain by creating sand waste areas and reshaping several tee complexes. Planning and implementation of the renovations focused on making the course more enjoyable for all players with new aesthetic, strategic and functional features.