



PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
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LOVELAND GOLF ADVISORY BOARD
Wednesday, August 26, 2015 – 5:15 p.m.
Parks and Recreation Conference Room
500 E. 3rd Street, Loveland

Notice of Meeting Posted

Call to Order at 5:15 p.m.

Citizen Comments

Approval of 06/24/2015 Minutes

Non-Action Items – Information

1. USGA Site Visit Report/Findings	Steve Southard
2. NGF Report: Golf and the Millennial Generation	Steve Southard
3. Cattail Creek Operations Review	Steve Southard

Discussion/Action

4. Operational Changes at The Olde Course at Loveland Pro Shop Operations	Robert Walkowicz
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Reports/Correspondence

5. Financial Report	Andrea Sheldon
6. Council Liaison Report	Troy Krenning
7. Golf Operations Report	Steve Southard

Board Member Comments

Next Regular Meeting Date **09/23/15 – Parks and Recreation Conference Room**

The City of Loveland is committed to providing an equal opportunity for citizens and does not discriminate on the basis of disability, race, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or gender. The City will make reasonable accommodations for citizens in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. For more information, please contact the City's ADA Coordinator at bettie.greenberg@cityofloveland.org or 970-962-3319.

LOVELAND GOLF ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES

06/24/15

Parks and Recreation Conference Room

PRESENT: Robert Walkowicz, Tom O'Gorman, Jerry Weitzel, Chuck Weirauch, Jim Whitenight, Joe Lopo, Charlie Dyer, Hope Chrisman, Julie Nelson, Jan Wall

ABSENT:

STAFF: Steve Southard, Andrea Sheldon

COUNCIL: Absent

CITIZENS: Gregory Koch, Rick Fischer, Gene Pielin

Notice of meeting posted.

Chair Robert Walkowicz called the regular meeting of the Loveland Golf Advisory Board to order Wednesday, June 24, 2015 at 5:15 pm.

Minutes

The minutes for the 05/27/2015 meeting were approved as submitted.

Citizen Comments

Gregory Koch and Gene Pielin spoke to the Board about customer service concerns they felt were not being addressed by the current independent contractor at The Olde Course at Loveland. A copy of a letter, sent to the Director of Parks and Recreation, was distributed to Board members. Chair Robert Walkowicz directed staff to add a further discussion, regarding this topic, as an agenda item for the August meeting.

NON-ACTION/INFORMATION ITEMS

Pace of Play at the City of Loveland golf courses

Steve Southard presented the topic of Pace of Play at the Loveland golf courses. Steve highlighted 3 areas that can be evaluated for Pace of Play and what is being done to address the areas in Loveland.

1. Average Hole Exit Times; managing the time it takes for golfers to exit holes; staff looks for ways to maintain an even flow of hole exit times. Sometimes it is necessary to make the "exit" of a hole more difficult.
2. Pauses in play; how long should a golfer have to wait during a round – what are expectations vs reality. All golfers will have to "pause play" during their golf round up to 30 minutes. This should not be considered slow play.
3. Proven strategies that work at golf courses; e.g. at the Loveland golf courses the tee sheets are not static at one time interval but change based on day of week and even

time of day; beverage carts are stationary and not roaming at certain times of year.
Board discussion included ideas about ways to communicate “pause” expectations to golfers and ideas for additional signage.

REPORTS/CORRESPONDENCE None

Golf Operations Report Andrea Sheldon reminded the Board that the July meeting is cancelled..

Board Member Comments

Julie: So impressed with conditions of the golf courses. Fantastic
Hope: Quite a traffic problem at MBGC with carts moving out of the staging area for play; perhaps changing the direction the carts are facing. At OCAL; is it possible to fill the holes and control the dust on the maintenance road?
Jan: Received inquiries from customers who were told that 3 lessons at The Olde Course would cost \$110 and then after first lesson taken were told that cost would be \$135
Tom: Urinal on #5 at MBGC still not working; is enjoying that MBGC is moving towards more natural areas between tees and greens (e.g. 4 and 12) but need to make sure and mow a path for walkers.
Charlie: Played OCAL in 4 hours and was really being pressed by group behind them.
Robert: The S.W.I.N.G. group played the Games on the Range at Mariana Butte and had a great time. Hope other Board members encouraged friends and family to try the new venue. A reminder that the operations at The Olde Course will be put onto the August agenda.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea Sheldon

March 27th, 2015

To: Elizabeth Anderson, City of Loveland Parks and Recreation Director
CC: Bill Cahill, City Manager
CC: Steve Southard, Golf Operations Manager

Dear Elizabeth,

Welcome to Loveland and congratulations on being selected as the Director of Parks and Recreation. Loveland is a wonderful community and we hope you enjoy it as much as we do. We are not only reaching out to welcome you to Loveland, but to create an open dialogue to discuss the golf operations in Loveland, and specifically the Olde Course.

We believe that the operations at the Olde Course of Loveland can be greatly improved. We have seen a steady decline in recent years in the customer service and professionalism of management (with the exception of Brad Erlich). Pace of play is not properly managed which results in wait times at tees and frustration experienced by all golfers. The pro shop merchandise offered leaves much to be desired!! There is very little that is offered that is appealing and many of the items are not priced competitively or affordably. The front desk is often understaffed which results in long lines to check in at peak times. Golf tournaments are not promoted, professionally run, or staffed which has resulted in decreased participation.

For Example, March 21, 2015, "Get Aquainted Scramble" known to be one of the most participated in tournament's of the year (A tournament inviting new golfer's to come out and enjoy the Olde Course of Loveland) Only 1 person behind desk (Brad), 3 types of soda, 2 types of Sandwiches or a deep fried Hot Dog available in the snack bar, No cart service on the golf course and when there is... the cart drives in the wrong direction? only 1 water container filled per 9 holes... We could go on but you get the picture. We have the potential to once again be a well regarded, classy, friendly place to play in Northern Colorado.

If you look back at a time when the Olde Course had a Golf Professional or PGA representation, the course had identity. We had one the most sought after, well respected and greatest attended Pro/Am's in Colorado with the Loveland Invitational. An experienced, dedicated, friendly Head Golf Professional (PGA) would be a giant step in the right direction. Many of us golfers have expressed their concerns and complaints to the City of Loveland Golf Advisory Committee and /or the Director of Golf Operations, but we feel like it is falling on deaf ears and our concerns are not being addressed. We believe that changes are needed and a large number of fellow golfers agree. Many of us have lived here our entire lives and consider The Olde Course of Loveland our 2nd home. We are hoping that you will elevate the systems and staffing and make a change for the positive.

The group listed below are available to meet with you to discuss the issues outlined in this letter at your convenience. We represent over a hundred local golfers and can provide signatures if desired and or required. Thanks for your time and we look forward to hearing from you.

Signed,

Course Consulting Service
ON-SITE VISIT REPORT



**Mariana Butte Golf Course/The Olde Course at Loveland
Loveland, Colorado**

Visit Date: July 16, 2015

Present:

Mr. Charlie Hicks, Assistant Superintendent, The Olde Course
Mr. Dennis Kling, Superintendent, The Olde Course
Mr. Paul Mason, Assistant Superintendent, Mariana Butte
Mr. Jordan McCormick, Superintendent, Mariana Butte
Mr. Steve Southard, Director of Golf Operations
Mr. Blake Meentemeyer, USGA
Mr. Larry Gilhuly, USGA

United States Golf Association

Larry Gilhuly, Agronomist | Green Section | Northwest Region
5610 Old Stump Drive | Gig Harbor, WA 98332 | (O) 253 858 2266 (C) 253 278 2766 | lgilhuly@usga.org

USGA Green Section Mission: The USGA Green Section develops and disseminates sustainable management practices that produce better playing conditions for better golf.

It was a pleasure to visit the City of Loveland golf courses on July 16, 2015, on behalf of the USGA Green Section. The City of Loveland is truly blessed with three very unique operations and ways to play the game that are not seen at any towns or cities of similar size. The Cattail Creek short course and SNAG course, along with an exceptional practice facility, should be a model for virtually every municipal operation that wishes to introduce the game to players of all different ages and skill levels. In addition, the introduction of different ways of practicing is unique. Your ability to break down the barrier of intimidation the sport can sometimes provide while introducing fun through the nine-hole SNAG golf course is to be commended. Hopefully this model will be followed by many others.

In addition to the unique nature of the Cattail Creek course, the two main golf courses are divergently different, both in location and architectural style. However, both were in exceptional agronomic condition at the time of this visit. The purpose of this report is to discuss further improvements, current programs that could be "tweaked," and other topics that will assist in your agronomic and playing conditions in the future. Should you have any questions concerning this visit or report, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following brief summary provides a non-explanatory list of topics discussed that can be found within the main framework of this report in the same order. Each topic is discussed in greater detail including observations and recommendations.

Greens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Increase light topdressing amounts.- Solid tine vs. open tine aeration – which is preferred?- Upgrade ability to move sand off the surface.- Putting green speeds are appropriate for both courses.- Do wetting agents have a place in greens management?
Green surrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Increase approach topdressing and minimize thatch.- Eliminate collar dams using two techniques.- Consider the "Aussie" method of bunker raking.
Tees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Analyze both courses and continue adding forward tees where needed.
Fairways	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Upgrade the fairways mowers with reverse rotation groomers and brushes.
Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Continue the process of removing trees causing shade issues.- Raise the limb canopies at Mariana Butte.- Consider more tree removal using the following criteria.
Misc. topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Flood control upgrades are needed at Mariana Butte.- Continue the constant harassment of geese as much as possible.

GREENS

Observations and recommendations. While Mariana Butte and The Olde Course are distinctly different in regard to architecture, the upper profiles were similar. Turf found on the surfaces was dominated by *Poa annua* with some creeping bentgrass, with slightly more noted at The Olde Course. Since both of the golf courses are similar in regard to overall firmness and turf content, the following recommendations are made for both courses, unless otherwise specified:

- **Increase light topdressing amounts.** It was good to learn that both golf courses are practicing biweekly topdressing, with good results noted in regard to overall consistency and the lack of layers. However, one of the tendencies noted at most courses has been a reduction in the amount of sand applied for various reasons. In some cases, mechanics are overrun with fixing bedknives, players simply don't like playing on sand, and sand applied at lighter rates moves into the turf canopy at a faster rate. Rates can become too low, as discussed in the article [Quit Fooling Yourself](#).

In regard to both courses, the change from old-style drop spreaders (primarily Mete-R-Matic II) to spin spreaders may have changed the amount of sand being applied. Specifically, the standard rate recommended for light sand topdressing for the past three decades has been approximately 1/3 cu. yd. per 5,000 sq. ft. on a two- to four-week scheduled based on turf growth. The old drop spreaders held approximately 2/3 cu. yd. thus they would precisely place sand on average-sized greens, with two greens completed per hopper. The new spin spreaders hold slightly more material when "heaped," yet due to the nature of how these machines operate, a significant amount of sand is spread on the collars and approaches to make sure the sand covers the putting surfaces. This larger square footage compensates for the slightly higher amount of sand, thus no more than two greens should be completed if they are approximately 5,000 sq. ft. With a 5,000 sq. ft. average, it was recommended to complete no more than two greens per load, with possibly less when approach topdressing is included.

- **Solid tine vs. open tine aeration – which is preferred?** Since the time putting greens have been topdressed with sand, one of the most common practices has been aerating putting surfaces twice annually (spring and fall) with open tines. However, many are beginning to see positive results by using solid tines with monthly "venting" and more sand applications during these operations. Aeration is defined as any operation that places holes in the green, and impacts ball roll. This is generally conducted with aeration tines (solid or open) that are 1/2 inch or larger. Venting is the same operation that generally uses solid tines, but can be done with open spoon tines. Venting does not impact ball roll and is generally done with 1/4- to 3/8-inch tines.

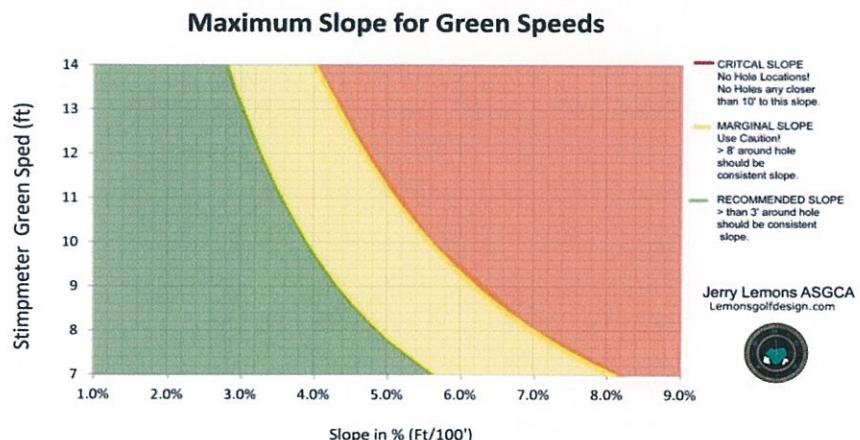
Should you decide to go to a solid tine approach, it will be critically important that the greens be vented monthly, with enough sand added to fill the holes and more sand added on a regular basis to compensate for the lack of organic removal of open tine aeration.

The importance of adding extra sand during the venting operation cannot be overstated, as the amount of organic material near the surface at this time is slightly high using open tine aeration.

The bottom line is, both techniques can work. The advantages of solid tine aeration are faster recovery time for players to improve overall course revenues, and far less labor for the maintenance staff. However, both courses should have open tine aeration leading into the

winter due to the need for exceptional surface drainage during your potentially harsh winter months.

- **Upgrade ability to move sand off the surface.** Both golf courses are currently using a passive method of dragging sand with a coco brush. While this unit is certainly effective, it does not have the ability to physically move sand into the profile in a rapid manner. During a visit earlier in the week to Denver Country Club, the [Sweep-N-Fill](#) unit was viewed with very positive results as noted in the right photo. This unit can be used in a circular manner starting in the center of the green, with two circular passes doing an exceptional job of cleaning sand and pushing it into the profile without abuse to the turf. This unit is also extremely effective when venting and following aeration practices in spring and fall. Many have reported very positive results with moist sand, as it will physically force the sand into the aeration holes, rather than bridging the holes as often occurs following aeration. Finally, the unit can be used to remove grain on collars, approaches and fairways, if desired. Many in the Pacific Northwest use these brushes frequently to assist in mowing operations to remove grain and improve ball lie.
- **Putting green speeds are appropriate for both courses.** One of the most positive aspects of this visit was to learn that both golf courses are operating with the proper green speeds for the contours of the greens. This is especially true at The Olde Course, where the putting surfaces provide the players of Loveland some of the best and most unique architectural features seen at any public golf course in the western United States. To maintain these greens above the current green speeds would be a major mistake as there are so many great hole locations found within the various contours of the greens. To further illustrate this point, the article [Putting Greens, Slopes and Non-Conforming Hole Locations](#) discusses and shows in the graph the connection between green speed and slope.



As noted, a green speed of 9'6" can easily use a 4% slope without major issues. However, once the speed is increased dramatically, the amount of usable hole locations is reduced. Also, if you truly wish to slow down pace of play for any golf course, and especially The Olde Course, ramping up the green speeds would be completely counterproductive. It was highly recommended to retain the 9- to 9.5-foot speed on both courses to maximize your surface contours.

- **Do wetting agents have a place in greens management?** A healthy discussion ensued concerning the use of wetting agents and their place in golf course management. While there is no question that a properly spaced irrigation system is the fundamentally most important portion of the golf course and can dramatically minimize hand watering requirements, wetting agents have proven very helpful at most golf courses due to the irregularity associated with green profiles caused by a myriad of factors. While it was agreed that both golf courses were in good condition without the use of wetting agents and hand watering has been greatly reduced, it was still suggested to demonstrate whether any products have a positive impact through experimentation. Specifically, you may wish to obtain a small amount of one of the new chemistries that have proven effective for testing on very small areas that are historically prone to localized dry spots or hand watering requirements. Another way would be to simply use the wetting agent on a single green, with a piece of plywood put down in the same location for comparative purposes to see if the product actually helps. The bottom line is, there are numerous golf courses that report significant reductions on overall water use in every type of climate when certain products have been utilized. There are many products that have produced very questionable results ([Understanding the Different Wetting Agent Chemistries](#)). There are, however, some products that are worthy of testing to see if they might play a small part in your operation to further reduce hand watering requirements.

GREEN SURROUNDS

Observations and recommendations. While the putting surfaces always demand the highest priority for maintenance and focus, the areas around the greens are the second highest priority. Specifically, these include the approaches, collars, bunkers and nearby rough. With this in mind, the following recommendations were made for the green surrounds for both courses, unless otherwise specified:

- **Increase approach topdressing and minimize thatch.** The second generation of the USGA TruFirm ([Affirming Firmness](#)) was used to test putting green surface and approach firmness. Perhaps the most difficult shot in golf is a forward hole location on a firm green with a soft approach. For this reason, it is important to firm the ten-yard area in front of greens to give average players the opportunity to play "bump-and-run" shots. As mentioned in the greens section of this report, this requires regular sand applications at the time of putting green topdressing, thus completing two greens may be difficult with a single hopper. This is especially true if you wish to immediately have an impact through regular sand topdressing on the approaches. Those who have had the best results make a second pass in front of the greens since the mowing height allows the sand to penetrate the canopy without damage to mowers. When completed with a Sweep-N-Fill, any damage to mowers on the approaches, chipping areas and collars will be greatly reduced.

- **Eliminate collar dams using two techniques.** Collar dams can result in severe ice damage following winter or impact daily play by creating three distinctly different slopes that impact ball reaction as shown in the right photo at the Olde Course. For this reason, it was good to learn that collar dams have been addressed periodically on both courses through stripping of sod, removal of excess material and replacing the sod back on the surface. This is the best way to take care of this issue; however, it does take time and requires constant vigilance to not allow the sod to become too dry.



The other technique that has shown great success and can be completed in a very rapid manner is to use a putting green aeration unit. Essentially, the unit aerates with open or solid tines on the portion that is elevated and causing the change in surface contour. The use of an aeration unit followed by heavy watering and the use of a heavy roller or vibratory plate compactor can reduce this problem. Golf courses have been viewed where this issue has been completely eliminated by completing this method two times annually.

In addition, when completing aeration/topdressing operations, the simple use of a blower (right photo) has shown very good preventative results at Bell Nob Golf Course in Gillette, Wyoming. Regardless of how it is done, this is an area that needs constant vigilance and can lead to localized dry spots despite the best irrigation coverage possible.



- **Consider the “Aussie” method of bunker raking.** As can be noted in the photo at the top of the next page, many high-end courses have opted to begin raking their bunkers in a manner that is often referred to as the “Aussie” method. This same type of raking technique was used at the US Open for the past two years and is recommended for many courses to minimize labor for use in other portions of the operation. The only negatives associated with this type of raking are an increase in weed and algae growth. Regardless, it was suggested to consider using this raking technique by raking the bottoms only and flat smoothing the edges to minimize potential plugged ball lies. The best results have been achieved with

squeegees or brooms. This will also have the added benefit of keeping more sand in the bunkers since balls will roll more to the centers.

TEES

Observations and recommendations.

teeing surfaces at both courses have adequate size (excluding some of the par 3s) and turf health, this is one area that is a weakness for both operations.

The weakness is not agronomic, but rather, the ability to allow

players of all skill levels to have more fun and further improve pace of play by having players play the courses at the appropriate length for their ability. Specifically, there is a need to address the overall length from the forward tees, with the following recommendations made:

- **Analyze both courses and continue adding forward tees where needed.** In the article [Move Forward, Not Back](#), a simple formula is used when comparing distances for male and female players. The average woman player hits a ball 75% as far as the average male. With this as a starting point, any distance (individual hole or overall) can be calculated to provide a comparative distance for those with less length. For example, the overall distance at Mariana Butte for the forward tees is 5,192 yards, or equivalent to 6,923 yards at sea level. Even with 10% reduced for your altitude, the comparative distance is still much longer than the average male plays from their normal teeing surfaces. With this as a starting point, and understanding that a 300-yard hole for women is equal to a 400-yard hole for men, the following recommendations for shortening specific holes at Mariana Butte are offered:

Mariana Butte Golf Course		
Hole	Women's Distance (in yards)	Men's Comparative Distance (in yards)
No. 1	445	593
No. 2	315	420
No. 5	455	607
No. 12	324	432
No. 13	456	608
No. 15	315	420
No. 16	450	600



As can be noted, there are only seven holes that need to be addressed to shorten the overall length for the forward tees at Mariana Butte. It should also be noted that all of the par 5s are extremely long and all approximately the same distance. You may wish to consider having one long par 5, two medium-length, and one shorter as you look at forward tee additions.

While the overall distance at Mariana Butte requires minor changes on a few holes, it was good to see that The Olde Course has already started to be addressed through tee additions on several holes. The current red course provides a whopping 7,175-yard comparative distance course. The yellow course has been shortened to still provide a 6,952-yard comparative distance course. As you move forward, keep in mind the following distances for some of the longer holes that still need to be addressed:

The Olde Course		
Hole	Women's Distance (in yards)	Men's Comparative Distance (in yards)
No. 5	439	585
No. 6	311	415
No. 7	421	561
No. 12	332	443
No. 13	341	455
No. 16	340	453
No. 17	465	620

A good start has been made on moving players forward at The Olde Course to produce a length appropriate to the skill set. There is a definite trend throughout the entire golf industry of adding more forward tees as players age and lose their distance. This is truly not a gender issue, as senior male players will often not play the tees appropriate to their distance due to various reasons. One of these is simply the avoidance of the red color, thus many clubs have eliminated this color from their rotation. In some cases, the forward tees have become the black tees, with the red color moved to the back tees. Regardless, this is another minor change you may consider. Another idea has been viewed at several courses in your area where colors have been completely removed and replaced with numerical values for the marker system.

FAIRWAYS

Observations and recommendations. In over three decades of visiting golf courses in the western United States, the very best fairways viewed have generally been those that receive regular aeration, fairway topdressing and quality irrigation coverage. While recent rainfall has certainly helped turf growth and color of the fairways, the fairways at both courses were some of the finest municipal golf course fairways ever seen. This is primarily due to the quality of cut, stand density, and a lack of thatch noted at both courses. Only one recommendation was made for the fairways:

- **Upgrade the fairways mowers with reverse rotation groomers and brushes.** This same recommendation was made for the putting surfaces as you upgrade your mowing fleet. Putting green mowers, trim mowers and fairway mowers can now be equipped with reverse rotation capabilities for a tremendous difference in all areas. On the putting surfaces, they can dramatically reduce the amount of *Poa annua* removed and minimize the negative aspects of grain. Many report much smoother putting surfaces when using this new technology. The approach, tee and fairway mowers will benefit primarily by the reduction or elimination of grain in these areas.

TREES

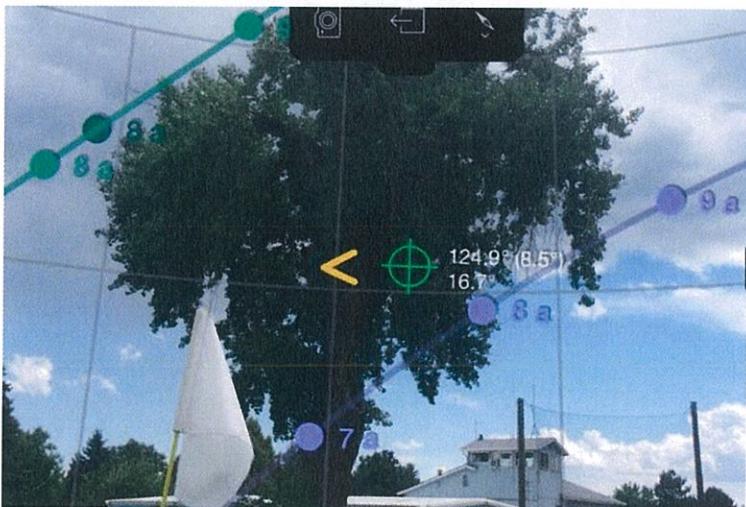
Observations and recommendations. There is no question that trees are an important component of every golf course to provide safety, fairway delineation, and backdrops and dictate how some holes are played. On the opposite side of each of these points, trees can become safety issues, grow into each other and cause weakened species, and block vistas in the distance or throughout the golf course. With this in mind, the following was recommended for both courses unless otherwise specified:

- **Continue the process of removing trees causing shade issues.** It was good to learn of the many trees causing shade issues that have already been removed on both courses. The Sun Surveyor app was used to follow up on those greens that still require tree removal, including the following:

- **No. 11 green, Mariana Butte.** The photo to the right shows a purple line denoting the sun track during the winter solstice (December 21) and a green line denoting the sun track during the spring and fall equinox (March 21/September 21). The six-month sun angle in between indicates the large cottonwoods to the back, right of No. 11 should be given serious consideration for removal as they shade this pocketed putting surface.



- **No. 11 green, the Olde Course.** It was good to learn that this large cottonwood is scheduled for removal, as the photo shows just how impactful this tree is during the winter months when blocking morning sunlight.



It was recommended to purchase one of the apps available (Sun Surveyor, Sun Seeker) for assisting in limb and tree removal on both golf courses. This simple method provides sound information on specific limb and tree removal in other areas where shade may be an issue such as tees and landing zones.

- **Raise the limb canopies at Mariana Butte.** A significant amount of time has been spent addressing damage from the severe flooding that occurred two years ago. In the meantime, many of the trees at the golf course were not addressed, resulting in limbs that are hanging too low to the ground. Specifically, most of the spruce trees need to be addressed by raising them high enough to allow players under the trees without causing them physical harm and providing a “punch-out” shot to get the ball back into play. This will also improve staff efficiency for mowing, while possibly improving irrigation distribution as many of these trees are a problem for water distribution in the roughs.

In addition to raising the canopies of trees, some trees that are causing major irrigation issues can be removed. A good example is the tree to the back, left of No. 12 green shown in the right photo. Tree removal should be considered in situations such as these – especially when safety, playability and visual characteristics are not compromised.

- **Consider more tree removal using the following criteria.** As discussed during the visit, the three primary criteria to consider prior to starting a chainsaw should include the following:
 - **Safety.** Trees that are providing safety between fairways or for adjacent properties should not be considered for removal. At



the same time, trees that are producing safety issues need to be carefully removed, especially those that are brittle or nearing the end of their lifecycle. A perfect example of this occurred the day before this visit when a large cottonwood fell over to the rear of the green as shown in the photo at the bottom of the previous page. While the remaining tree should be pruned to show off the base of this tree, older trees must be watched carefully to avoid potential injury.

- **Playability.** Trees that are important to the play of a hole are generally not removed unless they have become so large that they severely change how a hole or shot is played. At the same time, in many cases, multiple trees in a single location can cause poor turf growth and result in misshaped or unhealthy trees due to competition between the trees for light and water.
- **Visual characteristics.** The impact on visual characteristics by trees can cut in two directions. Trees can be extremely important to line fairways, provide definition between holes, and often to frame a putting surface to produce spectacular “cathedral” settings. At the same time, the overplanting of trees can block vistas and many great views on a golf course.

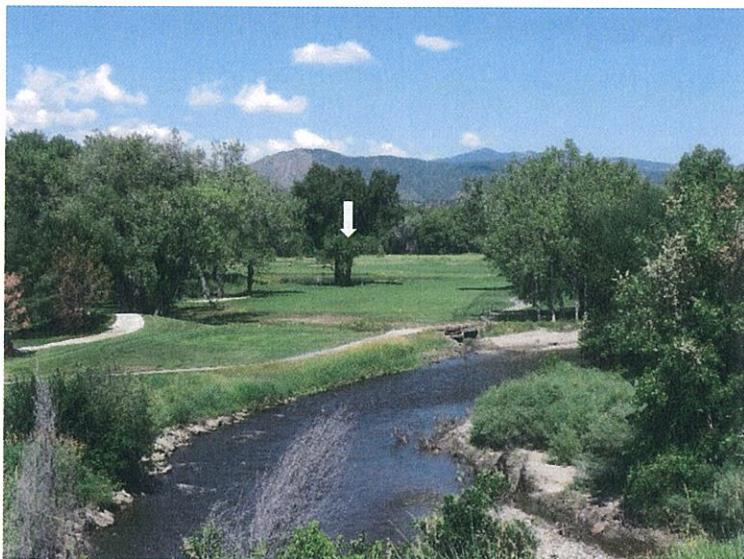
With the above in mind, the following pruning and/or removals and additions were recommended to improve both courses:

- **No. 12, Mariana Butte.** In addition to removing the tree to the back, left of this green, the idea of removing the fairway bunker on the right side and replacing it with three properly spaced elms was discussed. In some cases, trees need to be removed. In others, it makes sense to add trees. This would also eliminate the need to remove the blue spruce (note arrow) shown in the photo that currently provides an unnecessary double hazard for those playing from this bunker.
- **No. 14, Mariana Butte.** As can be noted in the photo, the creek that runs next to the golf course is partially blocked by the blue spruce (note arrow). The removal of this tree and other shrubby



trees in the area will show off the creek that is a beautiful feature of this stunning par-3 hole.

- **No. 15, Mariana Butte.** The tree on the left side is important in that it forces play to the right and away from potential future homes. However, the lower limbs on this tree were suggested for removal to provide a view of the putting surface from the teeing surface.



- **No. 16, Mariana Butte.** This outstanding par 5 would truly benefit from tree removal on the right side; however, the need to keep the trees for bank stabilization is understood. The willow directly in front of the large cottonwood was recommended for removal to provide a complete view of the cottonwood.



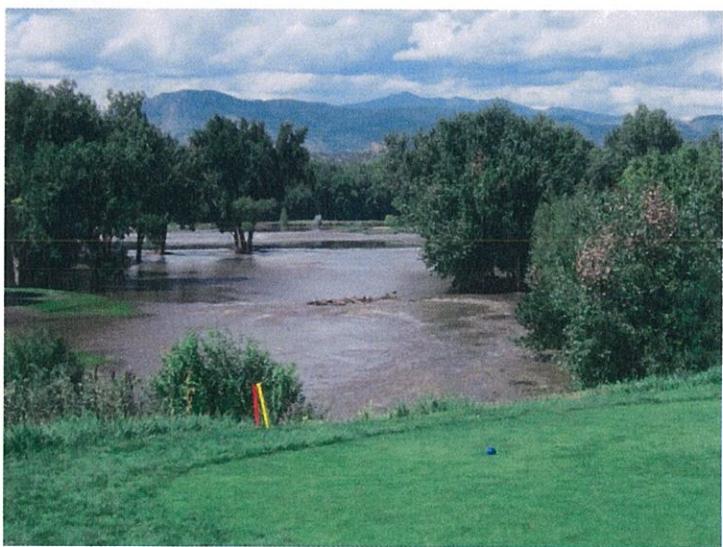
- **No. 10, The Olde Course.** One of the most common questions asked when golf courses have trees placed directly in line of play is, "If the tree were not there, would you plant one in the exact same spot?" This is the case for the large tree directly in front of the No. 10 green. The answer, of course, is that trees are not planted in the middle of fairways, thus the removal of this tree was highly recommended. The Olde Course has spectacular putting surfaces with great fairways, and has improved dramatically with the selective removal of trees for healthier turf. This single tree will make players remember the golf course, but not in a positive way. The course should be remembered for its spectacular greens, not a single tree that most players cannot hit over and misdirects well-struck shots.
- **No. 18, The Olde Course.** It was good to learn that plans are underway to dramatically change the finishing hole at The Olde Course. Specifically, a large tree found to the right of the tee next to the irrigation canal will need to be removed to allow the entire tee to be moved to the right to change the view and allow players to avoid the bridge over the

canal. You may also wish to consider adding an additional tee on the opposite side of the canal to change the angle for this finishing hole. Finally, the use of your golf course architect would be helpful to improve the bunkering for this green since it is the last hole and final impression of the golf course.

MISCELLANEOUS TOPICS

Flood control upgrades are needed at Mariana Butte. Mr. Southard mentioned that serious flooding has occurred on the lower portion of this course that needs to be addressed. Specifically, the six box culverts responsible for allowing excess flow through the course during high water incidents are simply too small and need to be increased in size. To put this in perspective, note the small size of the culvert connecting hole No. 8. The bridge in the background was built for a 100-year flood; however, the number and size of floods that have occurred in the past decade has resulted in extensive closure of the golf course due to the small size of the box culverts. It was highly recommended to give this a high priority due to the regularity of course closure that is primarily due to the small size of these culverts.

Continue the constant harassment of geese as much as possible. The resident goose populations on both golf courses were deemed unacceptable despite all the measures being taken. Perhaps the best harassment technique you have found is with the Buffalo blower that serves the dual purpose of cleaning the feces while bothering the birds. Regardless of how it is done, there is



a constant need to harass these birds from sunup until sundown to minimize the negative aspects they provide.

Thank you again for the opportunity to visit the City of Loveland municipal golf courses as part of our Course Consulting Service. With the type of quality and service being provided, it is understandable why you have a profitable operation. The players using these facilities are fortunate and definitely getting their money's worth on all of these unique properties. Should you have any questions regarding this visit or report, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

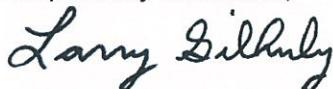
As a final comment, would you like to receive the Green Section's electronic version of the Green Section Record? It's free, informative, and short. All you have to do is click the link:



You may also visit [USGA Regional Updates](#) for current findings from the West and all the Green Section Regions.

Thank you again for your support of the USGA Green Section, and I look forward to working with you in the coming years.

Respectfully submitted;

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry Gilhuly".

Larry Gilhuly, Agronomist
USGA Green Section

Distribution:

Mr. Steve Southard, Director of Golf Operations



#GOLF

AND THE MILLENNIAL GENERATION

MAKING THE TURN: REAL WORLD EXAMPLES

In addition to enhancing the golf experience, OB Sports uses golfer data for marketing. In addition to the social media usage mentioned above, OB actively uses email to communicate with customers. Much of the golfer data is collected through their card member programs. To sign up for the program, a golfer must pay a nominal fee and provide additional information about themselves. In exchange, the loyalty program gives them discounts off green fees, pro shop merchandise and other perks.

PALMETTO DUNES GOLF RESORT

WALK, RIDE OR PEDAL

Palmetto Dunes Golf Resort became the first resort along the East Coast to offer the new Golf Bike at its three courses midway through 2015. Built from the ground up to play golf, the Golf Bike holds up to 14 clubs and supplies are integrated into its frame, making it easy and stable to balance. The bike also features six different speeds, for easier navigation of elevation changes and its step-thru frame allows golfers to easily get on and off.

Nine bikes were put into use across the three courses at Palmetto Dunes, joining Segways as alternative forms of getting around the golf course for the more adventurous golfers, many of whom are millennials. There is no additional cost to reserving the bikes and they are provided first come, first serve to resort guests and members.

Clark Sinclair, director of golf at the Fazio Golf Course at Palmetto Dunes, said attracting millennial golfers to the resort wasn't the only consideration in investing in the Golf Bikes, but it was a factor. "Absolutely we expect the bikes to be popular to the more fitness-minded younger generation of golfers," Sinclair said. "The bikes allow golfers to enjoy a round of golf and get in a good workout at the same time. There's also a spot for a cooler and the bike is very course friendly."

Usage has been limited given that the bikes were introduced after the prime spring season on Hilton Head Island, but expectations are that they will be very popular when the fall golf season comes around. During May and June, Sinclair estimates about 40-plus golfers had taken the bikes onto the

course, and their addition has generated media and marketing buzz that has benefited the resort.

Steve Cury, a member of the management team at Higher Ground, maker of the Golf Bike, said the bike was originally marketed as an alternative to golfers who typically walked the course for exercise. Cury, however, can see it appealing to millennials looking to add adventure and fitness elements to a typical round of golf. The Golf Bike, Cury said, is currently in use at about 20 courses, more than half of which are in Colorado. The first shipment of bikes didn't go out until this past May (about 80), so their popularity with golfers - millennials or otherwise - remains to be seen.

"Our goal was to add an element of fitness to the game of golf that also addresses speed of play," said Cury. "We think those things will certainly have an appeal among millennials."

CITY OF LOVELAND, CO PUTTING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

Steve Southard, Golf Operations Director for the City of Loveland, is putting his knowledge of the golf learning process into practice at Loveland's three golf facilities. Southard says that, regardless of age, a beginner's motivation to play golf is either self-directed or encouraged by a parent or friend.

As a result, Southard has set up various types of golf experiences for the ways in which people are introduced to the game. For those who are encouraged by a parent, they built a SNAG (Starting New at Golf) course. For beginners whose learning is self-directed, the facilities are transforming their driving ranges by adding targets, obstacles and training material. Southard also understands the importance of friends teaching other friends to play golf, so they created a Topgolf-like experience at their resort course.

That Topgolf-like experience, dubbed "Games on the Range," is the most recent addition to Loveland's Mariana Butte course practice facility. On weekend evenings between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m., various targets are set up on the range and players of all abilities can challenge one another to games of tic-tac-toe, climb the ladder and first to 11.

None of the targets, which vary in size, are more than 100 yards away. Food and beverage service enhances the social experience. The difference between Topgolf and what they're doing, according to Southard, is that the City of Loveland really wants people to become golfers.

The programs in Loveland appeal to all ages, but they afford beginners the opportunity to choose a pathway to the game that is most appealing to them. They also want to remove the perception that golf is intimidating and unwelcoming. By welcoming people with these various golf programs, the City of Loveland is not only connecting with millennials, but they're building a good base of golfers across multiple generations.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GOLF ASSOCIATION WORKING TOGETHER TO ACTIVATE MILLENNIALS

Golf facilities may well be the epicenter of the effort to motivate more millennials into the game of golf, but they are not alone in the cause. Take for instance the Southern California Golf Association (SCGA), which has recently increased its efforts to recruit more college-aged adults and young professionals into the game.

The SCGA is among the largest golf associations in the country, with 150,000 member golfers and facilities. For the past several years, the organization itself has seen a worrisome drop in membership among 18- to 34-year-olds compared to previous generations. The association maintains strong support among junior golfers and older adults and seniors, but has grown increasingly concerned by the lack of involvement among millennials.

"We enjoy a lot of junior participation, but it seems like when they reach 18 we're losing touch with many of them," said Kevin Heaney, SCGA's executive director. "We're not sure if it's because they're not playing or aren't interested in posting scores. But there's definitely a gap there that is concerning to us."

That concern has translated into action on two fronts – to increase millennial play on Southern California

golf courses, and to increase the number of millennial members of their association.

Craig Kessler, SCGA's director of governmental affairs, recognizes there are several issues keeping millennials away from the course, but believes the most significant is the financial stress many young adults face today. Kessler points to the nearly 12 million non-golfers between the ages of 18 and 34 that are interested in playing golf now as proof the game remains popular among millennials. Affordable access, he said, could motivate many of those from the sidelines to the tee box.

To bring more millennials to Southern California's golf courses, the SCGA is using its influence to unite municipalities and golf courses to find a solution that might alleviate the cost burden for millennials. They recently hosted a forum on golf participation among young adults where golf fees and policies were at the core of the discussion. From that meeting, Kessler said he expects the creation of specialized rates and incentives for young adults to be developed among municipal courses in the region, which make up a good portion of daily-fee golf. The effort would include a special rate for young adults similar to junior and senior rates, and potentially implement dynamic pricing that would provide off-peak incentives for collegians with flexible schedules.

"We've seen universal buy in on the idea, especially among management companies in the region," Kessler said. "We realize there has to be a focus on this issue, and there also has to be a re-investment if we are going to attract young golfers and keep them long term."

On the membership side, the SCGA has developed two new programs designed to attract college age adults and young professionals. The membership programs focus on recruiting interested but inactive millennials by granting access to exclusive courses, providing discounted greens and range fees and offering game improvement programs.

The programs will also offer members access to social and competitive events intended to reach young adults. These events include "Nine and Wine" events and Glow Ball tournaments in multiple locations across Southern California. The association also stages a Summer Golf Series that offer events free of rules and handicaps, which create a fun and inviting atmosphere for players of all skill levels.