



ASGCA announces 2023 Environmental Excellence Awards honorees

BROOKFIELD, Wis. – The 2023 American Society of Golf Course Architects Environmental Excellence Awards honorees have been named. Projects from nine golf facilities have been cited for their work with ASGCA members in addressing unique environmental challenges. The program is presented by [Ewing Outdoor Supply](#).

The Environmental Excellence Awards program was introduced in 2019 to recognize innovative work being done at golf facilities to address their environmental needs. Golf course architects work with course owners, operators, managers and superintendents to positively impact the game and each facility's host community.

The submissions were 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.

The recognized courses are:

- Bobby Jones Golf Club, Sarasota, Fla./[Richard Mandell, ASGCA](#)
- Frear Park Golf Course, Troy, N.Y./[Mark Mungeam, ASGCA](#)
- Hampton Hall Club, Bluffton, S.C./[Nathan Crace, ASGCA](#)
- Mountain View Golf Club, Tucson, Ariz./[Mike Gogel, ASGCA](#)
- Old Bridge Golf Club at Rose-Lambertson, Matawan, N.J./[Stephen Kay, ASGCA](#)
- Palo Alto Hills Golf & Country Club, Palo Alto, Calif./[Brian Costello, ASGCA](#)
- Peninsula Papagayo, Guanacaste, Costa Rica/[Thad Layton, ASGCA](#)
- Settlers Hill Golf Course, Batavia, Ill./[Greg Martin, ASGCA](#)
- The Hills at Promontory, Park City, Utah/[Forrest Richardson, ASGCA](#)

“This is an impressive array of projects illustrating the good work being done for the benefit of golfers and the environment,” [ASGCA President Mike Benkusky](#) said. “The more than two dozen facilities that have been recognized since this program began are a testament to the combined efforts of architects, owners, course managers and superintendents. And Ewing Outdoor Supply has been there to support the program since the start.”

• **Bobby Jones Golf Club, Sarasota, Fla. – Richard Mandell, ASGCA**

The Donald Ross-designed course has had drainage issues with low-lying areas and canals for nearly 100 years. City runoff entered the property, making the site consistently vulnerable to upstream flooding. The solution included new canals shown on the Ross plan that connected a 21.92-acre created wetland east of the course to existing canals running through the property. A weir was installed along the primary canal to divert water back into the course if flood waters rise, providing detention rather than flooding downstream properties. The system essentially transfers water in both directions as needed to control water quantity for the golf course and the City as needed.

• **Frear Park Golf Course, Troy, N.Y. – Mark Mungeam, ASGCA**

Deferred maintenance on the course drainage system resulted in many days of course closure and lost cart use due to overly wet conditions. The wet ground made turf maintenance challenging. Drainage system upgrades involved the use of small diameter perforated pipe set with minimal slope and with sand or gravel backfill. The drainage system acts also as an infiltration system which will convey the excess water through the pipes when flows are heavy. The conversion of approximately 3.5 acres of primary rough was done through the overseeding of drought tolerant fescue and resulted in the reduction in mowing from twice a week to twice in the year.

• **Hampton Hall Club, Bluffton, S.C. – Nathan Crace, ASGCA**

This Pete Dye, ASGCA, signature course (and Audubon Signature Sanctuary course) faced a challenge when as little as 1” of rain would keep carts on path for a week. The solution could not increase watershed leaving the property, and the project needed be complete and the course re-opened in six months. The solution included using Golf Preservations, Inc. to install 2” micro slit pipe on 10’ centers and backfill that pipe with coarse sand and greens mix installed on more than 35 acres to drain fairways, primary rough and green surrounds. Existing drainage system was utilized with the micros slit system ensuring slow release of the water over time following a rain event. Greens and bunkers were also renovated while the course was closed.

• **Mountain View Golf Club, Tucson, Ariz. – Mike Gogel, ASGCA**

The course sits among a 3,000+ home, 55 and over community. Goal was to enhance the course, improve aging infrastructure and reduce maintenance while not diminishing the playing experience while recognizing the environmental impact and the course's access to allotted irrigation water. A turf reduction plan allowed for the removal of 10% of turf while not creating lengthy forced carries. Bunkers were also reduced in size and softened to allow for less hand work and tees were designed to improve mowing efficiency.

• **Old Bridge Golf Club at Rose-Lambertson, Matawan, N.J. – Stephen Kay, ASGCA**

The challenge was to design an 18-hole municipal course (on a farm with poor clay soil), which would protect hydrology and ecology. Whenever the clay soils were saturated, the stormwater would drain by surface run-off into the wetlands, causing soil erosion and carrying excess fertilizer, pesticide, and herbicide into wetland and offsite. The goal was to capture, filter and recharge all of the stormwater outside of the wetlands. A subsurface storm drainage system was built to direct all site stormwater to retention/detention areas. The constructed wetlands and bio-retention basins were seeded to create a dense mix of native vegetation that filters the stormwater before it infiltrates to groundwater.

• **Palo Alto Hills Golf & Country Club, Palo Alto, Calif. – Brian Costello, ASGCA**

The club was looking to upgrade all golf course features while also addressing a multitude of environmental challenges including the ongoing drought, hundreds of diseased pines, and an aging irrigation, drainage and storm retention infrastructure. Creativity and up-to-date technologies were implemented to provide improved turf conditions, playability and ecological function. A new irrigation system was installed featuring a subsurface drip at all bunker faces, creating 22 acres of native turf and a 15% reduction in water use. More than 125 non-native trees were removed and 135 native trees replanted.

• **Peninsula Papagayo, Guanacaste, Costa Rica – Thad Layton, ASGCA**

Peninsula Papagayo resides within the biologically diverse Guanacaste Conservation Area, a designated UNESCO World Heritage site stretching from the shores of the Pacific to the rainforests in the Caribbean basin. Sustainability was a major emphasis of the golf course renovation, with over 14 acres of maintained turf exchanged for drought tolerant native grasses. Greens were seeded with salt tolerant Pure Dynasty Paspalum and a new Rainbird IC irrigation system was installed, culminating in a 20% reduction in overall water consumption.

• **Settlers Hill Golf Course, Batavia, Ill. – Greg Martin, ASGCA**

Renovation of this 30-year-old course was unique as many existing holes reside on a landfill, while others border neighboring oak/hickory forests and landfill transition areas. All overland and underground drainage needs to be carried to specified locations off the landfill cap prior to release; and the approval of public and private entities needed to be met. A Master Plan included new irrigation, full underground and overland drainage, reconstructed greens, tees, bunkers, reshaped fairways and cart paths. 80,000 cubic yards of clean, free, offsite fill was imported to provide the cover to safely install drainage and irrigation improvements. Drainage was developed to be more comprehensive and considerate of water quality to surrounding landscapes.

• **The Hills at Promontory, Park City, Utah – Forrest Richardson, ASGCA**

Create a fun, challenging golf experience to complement two existing full-length, 18-hole layouts by Pete Dye, ASGCA and Jack Nicklaus, ASGCA, while meeting strict water conservation measures and preserving two natural canyons. The routing plan and design resulted in an 18-hole, all-par-3 course with each hole averaging 1 acre of managed turf. A 12-acre practice range academy, short game area and putting course creates just under 30 total acres. The facility uses an existing freshwater recreation lake and full-gravity delivery system requiring no electricity for pumping. Profile Ceramics were added to greens to retain moisture and allow less intensive irrigation of putting surfaces.

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