



## For Immediate Release

Contact **Dee Ann Miller, DEP**  
**(850) 245-2112 or (850) 519-2898**

**Chris Smith, PGA TOUR**  
**(904) 273-3379**

### **FLORIDA DEP FORMS PARTNERSHIP WITH TPC SAWGRASS TO HELP FLORIDA GOLF COURSES IMPROVE THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL SCORECARDS**

**PONTE VEDRA BEACH, Fla. (February 23 , 2010)** – The Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) Northeast District Office will partner with the PGA TOUR’s TPC Sawgrass to host an environmental outreach seminar for golf course managers and superintendents on Wednesday, February 24 at the club. The seminar is designed to assist golf courses in the region with environmental stewardship, using many of the environmental practices initiated at TPC Sawgrass as a model.

“We are delighted to work in collaboration with TPC Sawgrass to help educate those who can really make a difference in protecting Florida’s natural resources,” said DEP Northeast District Director Greg Strong. “By adopting and applying the best management practices recommended in the seminar, the golf industry can help protect natural wildlife habitats, enhance the environmental benefits of golf courses, minimize any adverse impacts, and continue Florida’s commitment to sound environmental stewardship.”

One of the tools that will be used during the seminar will be “Best Management Practices (BMP) for Enhancement of Environmental Quality on Florida Golf Courses,” a free DEP publication covering all of the environmental aspects surrounding golf course design and operation, with environmental guidelines for conserving Florida’s precious land and water resources. The publication was developed by the Florida DEP in collaboration with the Florida Golf Course Superintendents Association, Florida’s Water Management Districts, the University of Florida, the Audubon Society, and many other public and private sector partners.

Several specialists will be on hand to discuss a broad range of topics including how to comply with DEP’s regulations regarding the proper management of solid and hazardous waste, wetland protection, stormwater protection, wastewater minimization, reclaimed water use, and proper management and use of storage tanks. Additionally, the seminar will highlight the variety of initiatives undertaken by TPC Sawgrass.

“Like the other clubs within the TPC Network, TPC Sawgrass prides itself on its environmental efforts,” said TPC Sawgrass Golf Course Superintendent Tom Vlach, CGCS. “We appreciate the opportunity to work in concert with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to share best practices with other golf course professionals on ways to protect and enhance the environment. At the same time, we aim to improve the quality of life for those who live and work in the community surrounding the golf course.”

One of the first golf courses in Florida to be certified as an official Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary golf course by Audubon International and winner of the Sustainable Florida Best Practice Award in the non-profit category by the Governor of Florida, TPC Sawgrass recently underscored its environmental efforts by constructing a new environmentally friendly maintenance equipment wash facility. In building the facility, TPC Sawgrass collaborated with the DEP, Southwest Florida Water Management District, St. Johns Utility Department and engineers to make sure it complied with all wastewater disposal regulations. The new facility is equipped with a pressure soap system and an air compressor for blow-off to minimize water use, and prevents contaminated wastewater discharges to the stormwater pond system located on the golf course by directing any wastewater into the existing on-site sanitary sewer. Additionally, only eco-friendly, biodegradable detergents are used to clean both the maintenance equipment and golf carts at the club.

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Other environmentally friendly agronomic practices undertaken by TPC Sawgrass include a system for micro feeding nutrients through the irrigation system; the refinement and recycling of 150 gallons of solvent and 400 gallons of oil annually; initiation of a water conservation program that resulted in an 87% reduction in ground water usage over the previous year; installation of bulk heads to protect against erosion; the use of double-walled, above-ground storage tanks to prevent ground contamination; and a club-wide “green” initiative that has led to significant reductions in water and energy usage throughout the club’s two golf courses as well as its 77,000 square-foot clubhouse.

TPC Sawgrass is located at 110 TPC Boulevard in Ponte Vedra Beach. For more information, visit [www.tpcawgrass.com](http://www.tpcawgrass.com) or call (904) 273-3235. For more information regarding the DEP’s non-profit best management practices manuals and programs, including the environmental seminar at TPC Sawgrass on February 24, please visit [www.dep.state.fl.us/WATER/nonpoint/pubs.htm](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/WATER/nonpoint/pubs.htm) or call (850) 245-2112.

### **About the Florida Department of Environmental Protection**

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) protects, conserves and manages Florida's natural resources and enforces the State's environmental laws.

DEP oversees and manages Florida's award-winning state parks and trails system. Since 1990, through its innovative land acquisition programs – *Preservation 2000* and *Florida Forever* – more than two million acres of valuable lands have been preserved, protecting habitat for 190 native and endangered animals and plants, while restoring ecosystems throughout the state.

The Department’s regulatory priorities include administering Florida’s air pollution control programs to best protect human health; protecting and restoring water quality; managing hazardous waste and cleanups; overseeing beach restorations; and reviewing applications for power plants, transmission lines and natural gas pipelines. In addition, DEP’s six District Offices ensure statewide compliance with department rules.

### **About the PGA TOUR**

The PGA TOUR is the world’s premier membership organization for touring professional golfers, co-sanctioning more than 100 tournaments on the PGA TOUR, Champions Tour and Nationwide Tour. The PGA TOUR’s mission is to entertain and inspire its fans, deliver substantial value to its partners, create outlets for volunteers to give back, generate significant charitable and economic impact in communities in which it plays, and provide financial opportunities for TOUR players.

In 2010, the three Tours collectively have tournaments in 34 states and in 12 countries outside of the U.S. PGA TOUR tournaments are broadcast to nearly 600 million households in 231 countries and 30 languages.

Virtually all tournaments are organized as nonprofit organizations in order to maximize charitable giving. In 2009, tournaments on the three Tours generated nearly \$109 million for local charitable organizations, bringing the TOUR’s all-time total of charitable contributions to nearly \$1.5 billion.

The PGA TOUR’s website is [PGATOUR.COM](http://PGATOUR.COM), the No. 1 site in golf, and the company is headquartered in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL.

### **About the TPC Network**

Licensed by the PGA TOUR, the TPC Network is comprised of 29 premier private, resort and daily fee golf properties designed by some of golf’s most elite architects. Twenty of the clubs are operated by affiliates of PGA TOUR Golf Course Properties, Inc., including three that are currently under construction. Each TPC has hosted or has been designed to host TOUR-sponsored golf tournaments. Since TPC Sawgrass first opened its world renowned PLAYERS Stadium Course in the fall of 1980, TPCs have provided the PGA TOUR with rent-free venues for tournaments, helping to boost championship golf purses and increasing charitable donations to grass roots non-profit organizations. At the same time, TPCs have provided recreational golfers with the unique opportunity to test their skills on the same layouts where the world’s best golfers compete.

Distinctive in character but consistent in quality, TPCs are known for their outstanding conditioning and amenities, as well as a commitment to environmental excellence. To date, nearly all TPCs are certified as Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Systems by Audubon International. The TPC Network is also distinguished by its unwavering commitment to further the PGA TOUR’s “Together, anything’s possible” giving back mission through support of charitable and community-based programs. For more information, please visit [www.tpc.com](http://www.tpc.com).

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