



CHAPTER 4

Environmental certification for military golf courses

The environmental stewardship program outlined in this guidebook includes a certification process as a logical extension of implementing the environmental plan for the course. The purpose of certification is to provide a set of consistent environmental benchmarks for all military courses that can be objectively reviewed and recognized by DoD and each branch of the military. Certification provides a level playing field upon which to evaluate progress and performance in achieving environmental stewardship. The certification criteria provides a common framework for each branch of the military to recognize and reward outstanding performance.

The criteria for certification include all eight program areas included in the course environmental plan and are organized into three tiers: one star, two stars, and three stars. A course can be certified at any of the three levels with each level becoming progressively more difficult and inclusive of all requirements at the lower levels. This approach is aimed at raising all courses to a higher level of environmental stewardship not just recognizing a few select “winners.” The lowest level, one star, is thought to be easily within reach of the vast majority of courses. This first level may require adjustments in the maintenance program or initiating some new projects, but will not demand significant cost outlays or a tremendous amount of time. Some costs such as erecting bird houses may be offset by cost savings in other areas. **Figure 1** shows the rating or certification criteria.

The certification/award process is simple and can be initiated at any time the superintendent feels he/she has fulfilled the necessary criteria. The logical process would be to first complete the environmental plan as outlined in this guidebook, implement the priority actions, and then submit the certification application if the criteria have been met. Upon receipt of the application, a review committee established within each branch of the military would evaluate it. Applicants will then be notified of their results of the review and certification awards would be made according to the appropriate procedures of each military branch. **Figure 2** is a diagram of the planning process combined with the certification/award process.

Green Star Golf Course Rating Criteria

	One Star	Two Stars	Three Stars
Environmental Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> read and adopt the "Environmental Principles" inventory and map course features, habitats, and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conduct environmental assessment or audit written environmental stewardship plan with annual goals and strategies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> maintain record system to measure and document environmental improvements apply for GCSAA "Leaders in Golf Award"
Safety, Training & Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MSDS are maintained and available pesticide applicators are certified all maintenance workers trained in IPM and OSHA regulations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> golfers notified of pesticide applications approved chemical storage facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide continuing education opportunities for employees superintendent is GCSAA member
Pollution Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2' unmowed buffer strip at water's edge spill containment kit available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4' unmowed buffer strip at water's edge approved fuel storage facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6' natural vegetation no-spray zone left beside water approved wash-down facility annual water quality monitoring and reporting
Plant Protection & Nutrition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conduct soil tests to determine nutritional requirements map "hot spots" requiring special care maintain treatment records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> written IPM plan with pest thresholds, profiles, and scouting procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> slow release fertilizer, organic products used use pesticides on a curative basis only provide a log of pesticide/fertilizer applications
Wildlife Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> map of wildlife habitat bird houses erected and maintained 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> forest floors left natural cavity trees & brush piles left as habitat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> minimum of 30 acres habitat per 18 holes native trees, shrubs and other vegetation established written inventory of wildlife species
Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> install flow meter with monthly monitoring inspect and repair irrigation leaks daily 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> set conservation targets water quality tests annually (pH, nitrate, dissolved O₂) create no-mow zones with no irrigation chemical inputs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> irrigate only greens, tees, and fairways native and drought tolerant plant materials used use computerized, efficient irrigation system
Conservation/Waste Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> leave grass clippings in place in fairways and tees dispose of packaging, motor oil, solvents, etc. according to local laws 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> operate composting program for organic waste use energy efficient pumps for irrigation system operate recycling program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> operate energy efficiency program for clubhouse, maintenance facility use renewable energy or off-peak electricity for cart recharging
Education/Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> post course resource map in clubhouse provide copy of "Environmental Principles" and "What Golfers Can Do" in clubhouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> form environmental advisory committee place environmental resource signs on course post environmental goals, policies, and plans in clubhouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> conduct open houses, seminars, school tours about environmental stewardship provide nature trails and available times for community use of course

Figure 1



ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

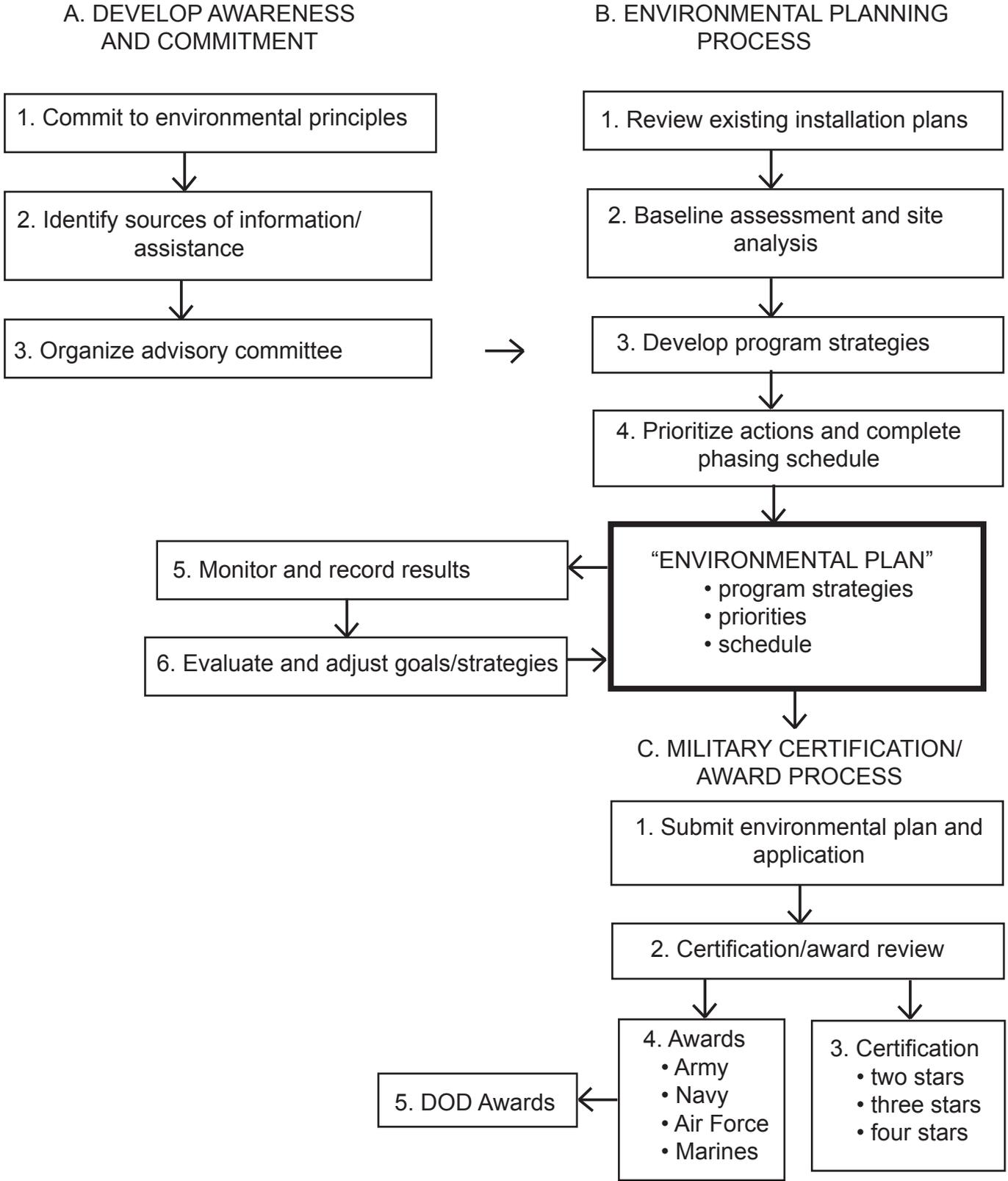


Figure 2

The “Application for Environmental Stewardship Certification” requires the applicant to provide some general information about the course, a check-off of the rating criteria for the different levels of certification, and a statement of affirmation signed by the superintendent, general manager, and base environmental officer. Accordingly the application form that is found in appendix E includes the following items:

1. General information (course, name installation, etc.)
2. Course information (superintendent, number of rounds, budget, etc.)
3. Environmental stewardship summary (short essay on goals and accomplishments)
4. Environmental plan (as completed through the guidebook)
5. Golf course map (as prepared for the environmental plan)
6. IPM plan
7. Photographs (chemical storage facility, buffer strips, etc.)
8. Green Star Golf Course Rating Criteria (check-off list for each of three levels)
9. Statement of Affirmation

Certification is a clear and tangible verification of environmental stewardship. The certification recognizing this achievement should be framed and on display in each clubhouse.



Ray Meredith receiving demonstration project award from Paul Parker

