



CHAPTER 6

Connecting with non-military environmental stewardships efforts

The linkages between military golf courses and various programs within the golf industry, state and local governments, or other non-military organizations varies greatly depending on the location and visibility of the course and the interests and resources of military golf personnel. Military golf general managers and golf professionals seem to be more connected to the larger golf industry through their association with the PGA of America than are the military golf course superintendents. However, some military superintendents participate actively in GCSAA programs and in other efforts such as the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program. In some cases the military golf course and its personnel are well connected with local community interests, while others are somewhat isolated within the military establishment.

Benefits of Connecting with Other Efforts

Although it requires some effort and initiative on the part of the course superintendent to become active in non-military programs or become connected with outside organizations there are definite benefits to be gained. Some of the more obvious benefits include the following:

- Increased awareness of new trends, products, and technologies for better management.
- Personal networks with peers who can provide advice, technical assistance, and professional guidance.
- Increased recognition and support for environmental stewardship.
- Greater job satisfaction through positive feedback and peer support.
- Increased awareness of environmental issues, problems, and possible solutions.

As the military superintendent prepares and implements an environmental plan for his course he will find that it has provided a solid foundation upon which he can become involved in non-military stewardship efforts. For example, the various steps outlined in this guidebook can provide the basic framework to apply for GCSAA stewardship awards or continuing education credits (CEU's). Also by completing an environmental plan for the course the superintendent will be better prepared to deal with possible regulatory issues or requirements associated with local, state, or federal agencies. A brief summary of non-military stewardship and environmental programs that relate to golf courses is listed below:

Non-Military Golf Environmental Stewardship Efforts

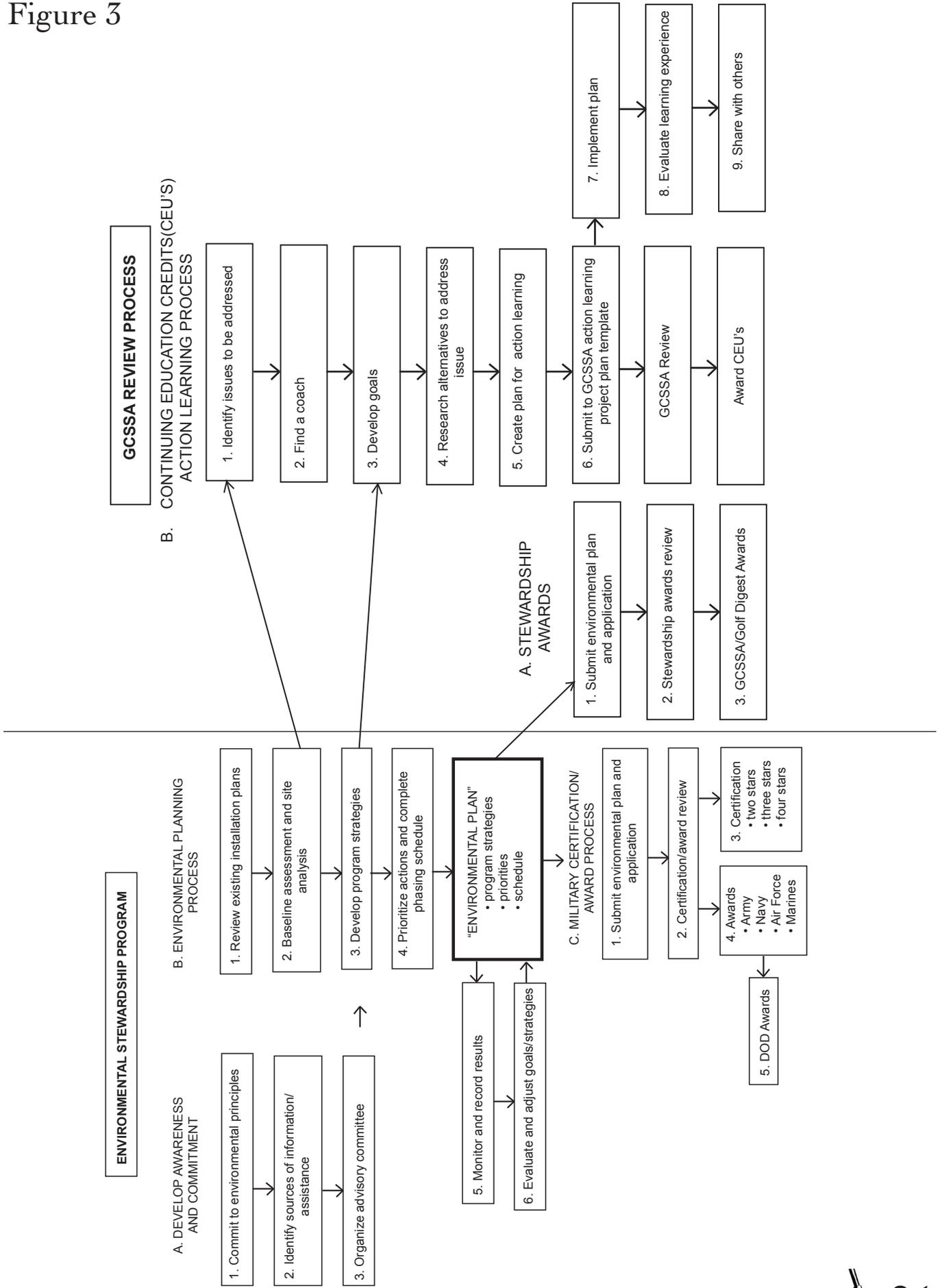
- The Golf and the Environment Initiative (G&E) – The Golf and the Environment Initiative is a cooperative partnership between the golf industry, the environmental community, EPA, and other organizations. The mission of the initiative is “to enhance golf course environmental responsibility and performance through cooperation in environmental stewardship and public education.” The coalition of over 25 national organizations have worked together since 1995 in convening national G&E conferences, publishing voluntary environmental standards, and promoting demonstration projects and education materials. The “*Environmental Principles for Golf Courses in the United States*” is a prime example of setting voluntary standards through collaboration and consensus-building between the industry and the environmental community. The Principles have been referenced throughout this guidebook and can be found in appendix A. As part of the planning process military superintendents are asked to read the Principles and commit to follow them in the management of their course (Step One, page 16). Military superintendents can become actively involved in G&E beyond applying the Principles by participating in G&E conferences, demonstration projects, or other activities. See appendix B for contact information at the Center for Resource Management (CRM).
- GCSAA/Golf Digest Environmental Leaders in Golf Awards – Presented by GCSAA and Golf Digest to recognize golf course superintendents around the world for their commitment to environmental stewardship efforts on the golf course. Applicants from the US must be members in good standing of GCSAA and of an affiliated GCSAA Chapter. Outside the US applicants must be members of similar organizations.

Award selection is handled by an independent panel of judges representing environmental groups and the golf industry. Applicants are evaluated in five categories including: Resource Conservation, Water Quality Management, Integrated Pest Management, Wildlife/Habitat Management, and Education/Outreach. Winners of the award receive recognition in Golf Digest and GCSAA publications and at the annual GCSAA Conference and Show, a personalized certificate or trophy and national, regional, and local publicity. A copy of the 2002 Application Form is included in Appendix G

The flow chart on the next page (figure 3) depicts the various steps contained in the planning process outlined in this guidebook and how they relate to or can connect with the GCSAA process for both the “Leaders in Golf Awards” and the GCSAA Continuing Education Credits (CEU’s) valid for GCSAA superintendent certification. Contact information for GCSAA can be found in appendix B.



Figure 3



- GCSAA Continuing Education Credits (CEU's) – Through a process called “action learning” GCSAA members can learn new skills and gain new knowledge while accomplishing real work at their job on their golf course. By following the steps outlined in the “action learning process” superintendents can also obtain CEU's necessary for becoming a certified golf course superintendent. The development of environmental goals, plans, and implementation actions outlined in this guidebook may qualify as an acceptable action learning project. (See figure 3 for linkages between the environmental planning process and the GCSAA action learning process.) The following steps define what a superintendent must do in action learning leading to CEU credits.* (See appendix F for more information).

1. identify an issue you want to address on your golf course
2. find a coach who will help you address your issue
3. write goals for what you want to learn in this process
4. research various alternatives that could address your issue
5. create a plan that will help you complete your action learning project
6. submit your plan to GCSAA for CEU notification
7. implement your action learning plan
8. evaluate your action learning experience
9. share what you learned with others
10. obtain your CEU's

*Action Learning Guidebook, GCSAA

- Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program (ACSP) for Golf Courses – ACSP for golf courses is a nationwide membership and certification system administered by Audubon International, a non-profit environmental organization that manages different programs to promote environmental stewardship and sustainability. The program, which began in 1991 receives funding support from the USGA, membership dues, and other donations. The certification program for golf courses includes six components: environmental planning, wildlife and habitat management, chemical use reduction and safety, water conservation water quality management, and outreach/education. Several military golf courses have participated in the program and have reported positive results although some industry representatives have complained about the amount of time involved to receive certification in each of the six separate components. Contact information for Audubon International can be found appendix B



Regulatory and Other Government Programs that Relate to Golf Course Environmental Stewardship

A number of state and local jurisdictions have developed environmental guidelines or programs for golf course development and maintenance. For example, Worcester County, Maryland adapted the *Environmental Principles for Golf Courses in the United States* to their local issues and circumstances and developed their own local guidebook. The city of San Antonio, Texas is developing a golf course program that emphasizes water conservation and water quality standards. At a state level Colorado, New Jersey, and Michigan among others have developed specific guidelines and standards for golf courses. In the case of Michigan, the Department of Natural Resources and Michigan State University administer a joint program of education and certification that emphasizes water quality measures. Military golf course superintendents should determine if the local or state jurisdiction in which their course lies is included in such programs and contact the appropriate organization for information.

Golf courses are also subject to a variety of environmental regulations. These include areas such as pesticide use, turf irrigation, fuel storage, disposal of used oil, and golf course construction activity. In 2000 the GCSAA published the *Environmental Desk Reference: A Guide to Significant Environmental Laws and Regulation Affecting Golf Courses*. The reference document describes the significant environmental regulation and programs that apply to typical golf course activities. It includes helpful references to allow the superintendent to determine the precise requirements that may apply to his/her golf course. However, since regulations are constantly changing it is always best to consult with the appropriate agencies or military personnel for current regulations and how they will affect golf course operations. The “*Environmental Desk Reference*” published by GCSAA is included in appendix D.



Golf Course at Ft. Leavenworth