

LIBERTY CORNER, N.J. (April 1, 2022) – The United States Golf Association (USGA) has invested \$1.9 million in grants to fund more than 80 research projects in 2022 through the Mike Davis Program for Advancing Golf Course Management – the largest private turfgrass and environmental research effort in golf’s history.

The USGA’s commitment to the program has totaled nearly \$47 million since 1983, and the resulting sustainable management practices have contributed to a 20 percent decrease in water usage and a nearly 40 percent decrease in nutrient usage by golf courses in the last decade.

Overall, the USGA’s investment in golf course sustainability saves the industry an estimated \$1.92 billion annually, including:

- \$201 million from advancing irrigation with estimates of turfgrass water use
- \$530 million from advancing irrigation scheduling with soil-moisture meters
- \$295 million from more efficient fertilizer and pesticide use

“A core focus of the USGA is to ensure golf is not only thriving today, but is also growing in the next 20, 30, and 50 years. To ensure future success, we need to continually invest in efforts that can address challenges that our game will face long-term – like water scarcity, the cost of labor/resources, and the availability of land,” said Mike Whan, CEO of the USGA. “We are making significant investments in research projects that will create an even more sustainable and resource-friendly game. These advances are critically important steps to ensure that golf remains nimble and innovative in its approach to long-term sustainability – so that our kids, and their kids, inherit an even stronger game.”

The [2022 grant recipients](#) include more than a dozen universities in the U.S. and represent both short- and long-term projects that focus on science-based management practices, turfgrass innovation and environmental stewardship. Applicants for a USGA Davis Grant must demonstrate how their work will achieve one or more of the three main USGA strategic program objectives: 1 – optimizing sustainable golf course management and playing conditions; 2 – protecting and conserving water resources; or 3 – identifying and developing novel plant materials.

Notable projects being funded in 2022 include: a national, multi-university evaluation of drought tolerance and water use of grasses commonly used for fairways; a Texas A&M project that aims to reduce fertilizer use with site-specific, digital estimates of nutrient requirements; and turfgrass breeding programs at several universities that are improving the quality, stress tolerance, and resource-use characteristics of important turfgrasses.

Formerly the Turfgrass Environmental Research Program, the initiative was renamed for Mike Davis in 2021 to honor his consistent positive impact on the game during his 31 years of service to the association, including 10 as executive director/CEO. Davis joined the USGA as the assistant manager of championship relations in 1990 and served as senior director of Rules and Competitions before becoming the organization’s seventh executive director in 2011.

About the USGA

The USGA is a nonprofit organization that celebrates, serves and advances the game of golf. Founded in 1894, we conduct many of golf’s premier professional and amateur championships, including the U.S. Open and U.S. Women’s Open Presented by ProMedica. With The R&A, we govern the sport via a global set of playing, equipment, handicapping and amateur status rules. The USGA campus in Liberty Corner, New Jersey, is home to the Association’s Research and Test Center, where science and innovation are fueling a healthy and sustainable game for the future. The campus is also home to the USGA Golf Museum & Library, where we honor the game by curating the world’s most comprehensive archive of golf artifacts. To learn more, visit usga.org.

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