



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
1ST SPECIAL OPERATIONS WING (AFSOC)
HURLBURT FIELD FLORIDA

21 May 2008

OPEN LETTER TO GATOR LAKES CUSTOMERS

FROM: 1 SOSVS/SVBG

SUBJECT: Summer Course Conditions

As we start to get into the prime golf season I want you to be aware of a couple things you will see around the golf course this summer.

Both items I want to bring your attention to are areas that you will see us not maintaining. In an effort to make the golf course more environmentally sensitive we are embarking on a new approach to maintaining areas that are not typically in play.

The first is the banks of lakes. Everyone knows that golf courses use herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers to maintain the facility. If those chemicals run off into bodies of water the effect on natural plant and animal life can be detrimental. In an effort to minimize our impact on these areas we are going to allow those areas to grow naturally. The increased plant life along the edges of these bodies of water will be a natural buffer for absorbing those chemicals. We realize that weed eating these areas makes for a cleaner golf course. However, we are trying to be responsible stewards of this great area; one of our responsibilities is to care for these areas and ensure that they will be better off tomorrow because of our decisions today.

The second area you will see a difference in our maintenance practices are in the areas outside of the fairways. We have identified some areas that we feel we can stop maintaining with minimal impact to play. These areas are known as "no mow" areas. The benefits of this are two fold. The first is that it is an effort to reclaim natural areas that the golf course has overtaken. Allowing these areas to return to their natural state minimizes our footprint and allows natural plant life to flourish. The second benefit is that it reduces our use of fuel and chemicals to maintain these areas. By reducing labor and supply expense on these areas we can better focus maintenance labor hours at higher traffic areas, like greens, tees, bunkers and fairways.

Bottom line is that we are tasked with a responsibility. We need to maintain Gator Lakes in the most environmentally sensitive manner possible. The benefit to the golfer is not just the positive impact we will make to the environment. By focusing our efforts on high traffic areas the quality of those areas should improve. Also, by reducing the amount of fuel and chemicals being used we can effectively manage our maintenance dollars in an effort to maintain fees level despite the rising cost of doing business.


JEFFREY L. GUTIERREZ
PGA General Manager

Any Time...Any Place