



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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“Green” course is setting for CBF’s Akridge Save the Bay Classic

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF), a conservation group that has worked to protect and restore the Bay since 1967, has chosen sustainably designed golf courses as one way to spread its message to decision makers.

“We wanted to find a way to talk with business leaders and decision makers about protecting the Bay and developing the economy of our region in a sustainable way,” said Kim Coble, CBF’s Maryland Executive Director. “What better place than a golf course? But not just any golf course.”

CBF worked with Akridge, the tournament’s title sponsor and a major Washington area real estate developer, and the Brick Companies, the owners of Atlantic Golf, to host the Akridge Save the Bay Classic at Queenstown Harbor golf course on May 8th. The day will bring together business leaders and decision makers from around the mid-Atlantic for a day of environmentally friendly golf and discussion at the Queenstown, Maryland, course.

Akridge, the tournament’s title sponsor, is a major real estate developer in the Washington, D.C. area that stresses sustainability in its projects.

The course, located on the shore of the scenic Chester River, has received certification in Environmental Planning from the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses, a program administered by Audubon International (AI). In addition to the tournament, the course will be the site of an upcoming workshop on sustainably managing golf courses for mid-Atlantic course superintendents. CBF and AI will jointly sponsor the program.

“In order to have healthier streams and rivers for our children, all of us – individuals, businesses, governments equally – must take action today,” Coble said. “CBF encourages land uses that improve water quality and habitat, and that in the long run better their communities and are economically sound. Queenstown Harbor embodies these ideas,” Coble said.

She said a CBF review found that the course captures 80 percent of the rainfall and stores it in ponds. This water is used to irrigate the course, conserving water and reducing runoff. In addition, the course incorporates wide buffers of no-mow zones around ponds and streams and along the riverside. These buffers take up nutrient and chemical pollution that would otherwise run into the river or leach into shallow groundwater.

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SAVE THE BAY



Course managers control insects and plant diseases using integrated pest management, which helps them reduce their use of pesticides. For example, to prevent fungus from attacking the vulnerable greens, air circulation is improved, sometimes with fans. In the ponds, fish eat the algae, eliminating the need for algaecides. The course uses locally manufactured fertilizer based on chicken manure. Because the course has large areas of natural vegetation, fertilizer use is curtailed.

Coble noted the Queenstown course with its careful management has lowered the nitrates and nitrogen in its groundwater compared to the farm that preceded it. Keeping nitrogen out of streams and rivers is a key to protecting the Bay. In addition, the careful use of pesticides protects wildlife on the course and the long roughs and no cut zones create wildlife habitat.

“When we redevelop property we can make decisions that improve on the current conditions, and it’s our responsibility to do that,” Coble said. She noted another example in another context – the redevelopment of the landmark Homer Building in Washington, D.C. Akridge redeveloped the building into a trophy-class, energy star rated office building that has bolstered its neighborhood.

“Lessening the human impact on the environment is a ‘must’ and our efforts should be collective,” said John E. “Chip” Akridge, III, Chairman of Akridge. “In our business, we work with our investors, vendors, brokers and building clients to share sustainable practices, and we are pleased to stand with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and the other ‘Save the Bay Classic’ sponsors who also share these goals.”

The tournament has attracted top rank corporate sponsors, many of whom have demonstrated sustainable approaches in their business practices, Coble said.

The Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program for Golf Courses (ACSP), which has certified Queenstown Harbor’s environmental planning practices, is an award winning education and certification program that helps golf course managers enhance the natural areas and wildlife habitats that golf courses provide, improve efficiency, and minimize potentially harmful impacts of golf operations, said Joellen Zeh, ACSP Program Manager for Audubon International. She noted that membership in the Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary Program is open to private, public and municipal golf courses in the United States and internationally.

Lex Birney, CEO of The Brick Companies which owns Queenstown Harbor, said “As a CBF partner it is our long term commitment to increase awareness of environmental issues and engage people at every level, including our employees, guests, tenants, members and stakeholders.”

He said that golfers can use the same kinds of environmentally friendly techniques that certified golf courses use as they work on their yards, build new homes, or operate their businesses.

Coble noted that “sustainable landscape design involves retaining rainwater on the site, using native vegetation, and reducing the use of chemicals.”

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For more information, go to CBF's website,
www.cbf.org/site/PageServer?pagename=act_sub_yourpart_yard .

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) has been educating students and adults and fighting for strong, effective, and consistent laws, regulations, and enforcement to restore and protect the Bay's water quality, plants, and animals. CBF also works cooperatively with government, business, and citizens in partnerships to protect and restore the Bay. Since its founding in 1967, CBF has achieved significant milestones to arrest the Bay system's decline and to begin to restore its health. From the landmark EPA study of the Chesapeake Bay in the 1970s to the first interstate Chesapeake Bay Agreement in 1983 to Maryland's historic sewage treatment bond bill in the 2004 and Virginia's comparable legislative commitment in 2005, CBF has been saving the Bay. Learn more about [CBF's programs](#) at cbf.org.

Audubon International is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) environmental education organization dedicated to providing people with the education and assistance they need to practice responsible management of land, water, wildlife, and natural resources. Headquartered in Selkirk, NY, Audubon International engages individuals, organizations, and communities through a set of award-winning education and certification programs. Sustainable community efforts and collaborative strategic planning allow Audubon International to work with local governments, developers, planners, and architects to design and build new developments in concert with the regional natural environment. Partnership with the golf industry has allowed the improvement of the nature of the game while also serving as a model for meaningful environmental change in other sectors of society. For more information visit: auduboninternational.org

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