

2019 Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational

Midland Country Club, MI



GREAT LAKES BAY INVITATIONAL



GEO Certified® Tournament Report

December 2019



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1. Introduction

GEO Foundation is delighted to confirm that the 2019 Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational (Dow GLBI) has achieved the status of GEO Certified® Tournament.

The tournament was held from the 17th to the 20th of July at Midland Country Club, Michigan, and was hosted by title sponsor Dow, the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA), and Midland Country Club.

Following concerted team effort from all the tournament's organisers and delivery partners, and with concrete commitments to the future, the 2019 Dow GLBI has:

- Successfully passed through the official verification process undertaken by the Council for Responsible Sport (CRS)
- Met all the required criteria of golf's voluntary standard for sustainable golf tournaments
- Successfully passed the GEO Certified® evaluation

GEO concurs with the Council for Responsible Sport's verification assessment that, having achieved 45 out of the 47 credits sought, and with Continual Improvement Points set for the future, the 2019 Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational has earned the award of GEO Certified® Tournament status.

This certification demonstrates credible and important leadership in advancing sustainability - in and through golf - helping foster nature, conserve resources, strengthen communities and address climate concerns. The Dow GLBI has also helped to raise awareness about sustainability amongst a large audience.

"First year certification is an outstanding achievement and speaks to the levels of commitment, action and results generated, and the strength of the continual improvement plan going into the forthcoming tournament."

Jonathan Smith
Executive Director
GEO Foundation

This official GEO Certified® Tournament Report summarises the commitments made, actions undertaken, results generated, and continual improvement points accepted for future editions of the tournament.

2. Verification process

The official tournament audit was carried out by the independent verification body, The Council for Responsible Sport, accredited by GEO Foundation for golf tournament verification in North America.

Verification involved the following activities, using the International Sustainable Tournament Standard as the guide to ensure comprehensive and consistent evaluation of performance.

- Pre-event assessment of submitted tournament documents
- On-site, event-time verification of policies in practice and results
- Post-event evaluation of 2019 tournament data and results

The Council then submitted a full verification report for evaluation by GEO Foundation.

About the Council for Responsible Sport

The Council's vision is a world where responsibly produced sports events are the norm and its mission is to provide objective, independent verification of the socially and environmentally responsible work event organisers are doing, and to actively support event organizers who strive to make a difference in their communities.

The Council first offered third-party certification of event production practices according to a stakeholder-reviewed collection of sport-industry best practice standards in 2007. As of October 2019, 175 individual events have achieved certification in eight countries and 27 U.S. States.

"What an encouraging example the Dow Great Lakes Bay Invitational has provided to the entire golf and broader sport sectors - to have established a new event and woven sustainability principles into all aspects of the production from the start shows great prescience. Further, to have earned this distinguished certification in its premiere edition shows great capacity for careful consideration and follow through, qualities that will serve it well henceforth."

Shelley Villalobos
Managing Director
Council for Responsible Sport

Find out more about the Council at <http://www.councilforresponsiblesport.org>

GEO certification review

GEO undertook a full review of all tournament and verification materials and evidence, ensuring:

- **Comprehensiveness** – that activities undertaken touched on all elements of the Tournaments Standard
- **Consistency** – that the verification approach was balanced, well weighted and with consistent depth of evaluation across criteria
- **Accuracy** - matching the verification report with evidence submitted by the tournament to ensure statements and claims were accurate.

3. Best practices and highlights

Sustainability was implemented in a planned and coordinated way across all key elements of event staging, and in line with the GEO tournament certification criteria.

A wide range of actions spanned the following sustainability action areas:

1. Planning
2. Site protection
3. Procurement
4. Resource management
5. Access and equity
6. Communications
7. Legacy

3.1 Planning

The tournament leadership demonstrated a high-level of commitment to sustainability, formalised in the Sustainability Commitment and Action Plan. It includes both an implementation plan for short-term actions and priorities, and a longer-term vision and plan to achieve 'the highest possible net positive impact' over the coming five years.

The Dow GLBI Sustainability Commitment and Action Plan reflects a sustainability vision that goes well beyond the direct operational boundaries of the event, aiming at three 'spheres of influence': event staging, local community, and other LPGA events.

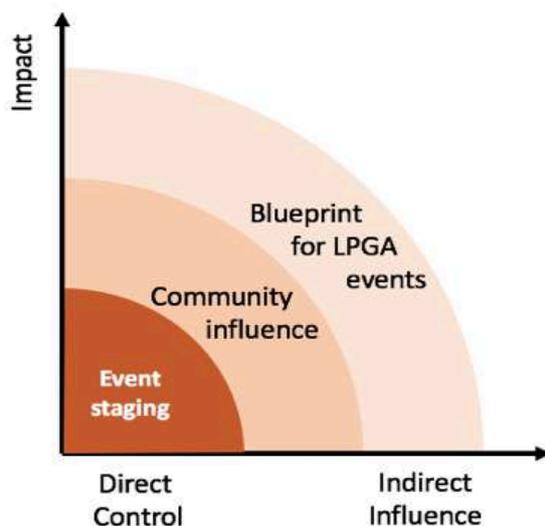
It addresses all key sustainability themes and defines three primary objectives:

- ✓ **Minimize and credibly compensate any adverse impacts**
- ✓ **Increase influence and direct support for action and legacies within the community**
- ✓ **Provide a blueprint for other golf events across the LPGA tour and internationally.**

"Our goal is to deliver a world-class tournament that delivers significant net positive impacts for people and the environment."

Chris Chandler
Dow GLBI Executive Director
Dow

Sphere of influence:



Key themes:

Nature Protection and Enhancement
Sustainable Procurement
Resource Efficiency
Access & Equity
Communications and Legacy

The high-level commitment meant that sustainability was integrated throughout all aspects of the planning and staging of the tournament, not just in tournament leadership, but across all delivery partners, including:

- Dow, the title sponsor and lead organiser
- The LPGA
- Midland Country Club, the host venue and GEO Certified facility
- Local stakeholders, involved in committee and community meetings
- Suppliers and vendors, engaged through the sustainable procurement code.

3.2 Site protection

Midland Country Club, host venue of the 2019 Dow GLBI, has strong sustainability credentials, demonstrated by its commitment to become a GEO Certified® facility in preparation for the event - a goal that was achieved in June 2019.

Prior to the tournament, a third-party environmental assessment was carried out by Chippewa Nature Center, to ensure that event staging would not disrupt sensitive areas. The assessment concluded that the event would have a minimal negative impact, thanks to the measures put in place.

Measures taken to minimise impact on the site:

- Traffic flow planned to avoid environmentally sensitive areas
- High-use areas located to avoid environmentally sensitive areas
- Construction waste reused or recycled wherever feasible
- Protection mats used to reduce the impact of equipment
- Where an alternative route was not possible, a walking bridge was installed to avoid spectators damaging native plant species.



Midland Country Club has sophisticated pollution prevention infrastructure in place around the golf course maintenance facility and recycling / waste management areas.

3.3 Procurement

A strong effort was made to integrate environmental and social responsibly across the procurement of product, materials, and services for the tournament.

A Procurement Code was put in place covering energy, water, materials, diversity and inclusion, contracting, compliance, sub-contracting, tracking and reporting, contact, employee engagement and communications. Vendors were asked to provide information about how they would meet the Sustainable Procurement Code and were also requested to fill in a Vendor Diversity Information Form.

Sustainable Procurement Highlights:

- ✓ All serveware in hospitality areas, including plates, bowls, spoons, forks, knives, napkins, and cups, was made from compostable material
- ✓ Staff and volunteer shirts made from recycled material
- ✓ Local food and drink supported through the 'Eat Great Hospitality Trail', showcasing the best of local restaurants
- ✓ Development of a tournament app reduced the need for paper procurement and waste
- ✓ Tournament signage omitted dates to allow reuse
- ✓ Left-over food was donated to Midland County Emergency Food Pantry Network.



3.4 Resource management

Any major event attracting large numbers of spectators has potential negative impacts that can arise through the range of activities undertaken to present the event, including the use and consumption of resources. At the 2019 Dow GLBI a comprehensive plan was in place to reduce the impacts to a minimum and ensure the responsible and efficient use of all resources, including materials, energy, and water. Here are some of the best practices undertaken during the 2019 event:

Waste

A Waste Management Plan for the tournament was put in place to coordinate efforts, keep waste generation to a minimum, and divert waste from landfill as much as possible. Initiatives to achieve these goals included:

- ✓ **Sorting bins placed across the course, both in spectator and player areas**
- ✓ **'Green Team' volunteers helped spectators to understand recycling**
- ✓ **Back-of-house operations ensured all waste streams were dealt with correctly**
- ✓ **Left-over materials will be reused where possible, including carpet, pallet, mesh, rope, signage and uniforms.**
- ✓ **All waste was tracked and recorded, broken down by material stream.**



Overall, a 68% diversion from landfill rate was achieved for all waste (not accounting for waste that was avoided through the food donation programme or reuse). As this was the inaugural edition of the tournaments, the results form a baseline to be improved in consequent editions.

Energy and Carbon

A comprehensive year-one carbon footprint inventory was carried out at the 2019 Dow GLBI, identifying and quantifying all major energy inputs of the tournament. This covers vendor staff and equipment travel, tournament staff travel, waste emissions, energy and water emissions, transportation, player and spectator travel, and procurement/supply chain.

Initiatives taken to reduce the carbon footprint of the 2019 Dow GLBI include:

- ✓ Hybrid-power generators used onsite solar panels
- ✓ Low-carbon travel options were provided in the form of shuttle buses and a bike valet service
- ✓ Spectators were encouraged to cycle to the tournament in communications and social media posts
- ✓ Use of shading and open-air structures to minimise air conditioning.



Water

Total water consumption for the 2019 Dow GLBI was measured and serves as a baseline for improvement in future editions of the event.

Responsible water consumption was encouraged amongst spectators. Furthermore, Midland Country Club uses a smart irrigation system with individual sprinkler head controls to prevent water waste.

Highlights

- ✓ Free water fountains were available onsite for spectators, to reduce the demand for bottled water
- ✓ Branded refillable Dow GLBI water pouches were on sale at concessions stands during the event
- ✓ Irrigation of the course at Midland Country Club is minimised using technology, such as smart water sensors
- ✓ The club uses the closed-loop water system 'Waste2Water' to wash all equipment.



3.5 Access and equity

A strong effort was made to make the 2019 Dow GLBI an event that was accessible and engaging for the entire local community, including under privileged and under-represented groups.

Initiatives included:

- ✓ **Spectators with access disabilities were accommodated through for example elevators, accessible portable toilets, and available mobility scooters**
- ✓ **To reduce barriers to attendance, entrance was free on Monday and Tuesday. An estimated 6,000 people attended on those days**
- ✓ **Local students were given the opportunity to be standard bearers during the tournament or caddies during the pro-am event**
- ✓ **A 'lactation station' was available to breastfeeding mothers**
- ✓ **Current military personnel and veterans were granted free access to the tournament and could enjoy a special veterans' hospitality area.**



Highlight

The onsite STEM in Sports Center provided youth with engaging, hands-on experience of how science, technology, engineering, and math relate to sports. The STEM area included contributions from various local professional sports teams, such as the Great Lake Loons (baseball), Saginaw Spirit (Ice Hockey), and the Greater Midland Tennis Center.



The center was open to the general public in the afternoons of the tournament, but was reserved for field trips from local YMCAs, Boys and Girls clubs, and Parks and Rec programs in the morning. These full-day field trips for local youths included a structured experience at the STEM in Sports Center, lunch, and additional educational experience in the afternoon at the Midland Center for the Arts.

3.6 Communications

Large golf tournaments like the Dow GLBI have the potential to reach and influence a large audience, both onsite spectators and fans around the world. Sustainability was widely incorporated in the Dow GLBI's communication activities.

The Dow GLBI's sustainability plans, commitments, and information were publicly communicated through a range of media, including onsite signage, social media, official websites, videos played on shuttle buses, and press releases.

Highlights

- ✓ Dow hosted an 'early birdie breakfast' during the event to discuss sustainability with regional business and community leaders, Dow leaders, and state and local politicians
- ✓ 'Green team' volunteers were active on-site to educate spectators about sustainability and help them understand proper separation of waste.



3.7 Legacy

The organisers of the Dow GLBI are committed to ensuring that the event has a positive lasting legacy for the community the Great Lakes Bay Region and the surrounding area.

The tournament had a significant economic impact on its locality, with direct spending of \$2.4 million. A comprehensive economic impact study was commissioned from local Northwood University, which estimated the indirect total impact to be \$12.4 million.

Besides the economic impact for the region, the 2019 Dow GLBI ran a Charitable Impact Program consisting of multiple legacy projects. Overall, \$500,000 was contributed and a total of 59 local charities and community organisations were involved. For example:

- ✓ 'TeamUp for a Cause': 36 local community organisations were paired with teams competing in the Dow GLBI. Donations were based on their team's performance, ranging from \$4,000 to \$15,000
- ✓ Daily Community Giveback Program, benefitting a different local community organisation or charity each day of the tournament
- ✓ 40 Girls ages 13-18 received an invitation to participate in the 2-day, LPGA Leadership Academy at Midland Country Club
- ✓ Over 600 kids participated in a 'First Tee Junior Clinic', learning sportsmanship, life, and leadership skills, while over 2,000 kids experienced the educational onsite STEM in Sports Center
- ✓ 'Fore our Future' program gave students an opportunity to operate a concession stand at the tournament, with profits generated utilized to create and support future initiatives as well as charities identified by the participating student teams
- ✓ Dow employees had free access to the tournament and enjoyed an Employee Appreciation Day on the Thursday.



Highlights

Local artists were supported by showcasing giant golf ball sculptures throughout Midland. Artists were also invited to submit a design for the tournament's trophy, with the winning design coming from a local artist.

Ten local restaurants participated in the 'Eat Great Trail', allowing spectators to sample food and drinks from the area at various points across the course.

To encourage health and wellbeing the 2019 Dow GLBI partnered with Mid Michigan Health for the 'step tracking challenge'. Each participant spectator contributed to the 20 million total steps required for a donation of \$10,000 to the new 'Mid Michigan Heart and Vascular Center.'



A 'canopy walk' through nature areas surrounding the venue, allowed 1,000 local kids to experience nature first-hand and learn about the value of protecting the environment.

4. Continual Improvement Points

The concept of continual improvement, ongoing innovation and setting new and higher targets is an important aspect of GEO Certified® Tournaments.

The following **Continual Improvement Points (CIP's)** were identified during certification of the 2019 tournament, and their agreement with the tournament partners as priority areas for delivery and review in 2020 reflects the tournament's highly credible commitment to continue to extend on a year by year basis.

CIP's from 2019 for 2020 are:

Credit 1.1 — Sustainability Plan

In future iterations of the Sustainability Strategy Plan, include a section explaining how previous efforts will be expanded upon in the upcoming year's event, such as using the key performance indicators from 2019 as a baseline for future goals.

Credit 1.4 — Consult with Stakeholders

Potential to include a submission box inside the tournament app that allows users to submit concerns, questions, and/or ideas for improvement.

Credit 2.1 — Site Protection & Restoration Plan

Next year (2020), the environmental assessment walk-through should include golf club superintendent and other relevant club staff and maintenance crew managers/members.

Credit 2.2 — Safeguard Habitats and Ecologically Sensitive Areas

Take steps to carry out the recommendations provided in the environmental assessment of the site. Consider whether the recommendations provided by the assessment group can be presented to key decision-makers at the facility. If they already have been presented, please confirm and indicate any forward actions, if applicable.

Credit 3.5 — Sustainable Food and Drinks Programme

Consider establishing a sustainable food charter for the food policy at the tournament, focussing not only on local but also health, affordability, vegetarian/vegan options, accommodating allergies and intolerances, and eco-certified products. Ideas for this can be generated and established through stakeholder engagement meetings (re: Credit 1.4).

Credit 4.5 — Water Conservation Plan

Consider creating a Water Conservation Plan that points out all water sources, sets conservation targets, and works with partners and suppliers to reduce water usage. When creating this document, bear in mind water usage from toilets, food tents, and irrigation practices, while including total water usage metrics (re: Credit 4.6) from 2019 as a baseline for continual future water usage reduction.

Credit 4.7 — Conserve Water / Energy Impacts Associated with Water

Build upon the great idea of implementing free water stations and providing reusable water bottles to patrons by considering improved water conservation methods among catering/food providers and other amenities.

Credit 4.9 — Energy & Carbon Management Plan

The next iteration of the Energy & Carbon Management Plan should include explicitly outlined strategies for reducing carbon footprint in the future, such as ideas related to the use of energy on-site and in the supply chain, such as deliveries/route efficiency/regional sourcing.

Credit 4.11— Renewable and Alternative Energy Sources

While renewable energy was used, measurement of how much of total event energy consumption was generated from renewable sources is required to earn credit. Additionally, set a goal to reach 40% renewable energy by a specific event year.

Credit 4.13 — Mitigate Carbon Footprint

Consider mitigating carbon emissions by contributing to local reforestation projects or forest restoration efforts in nearby parks or protected lands. Additional efforts include purchasing carbon offsets with partners or stakeholders.

Credit 5.1 — Access & Equity Plan

Include the following in the Access & Equity plan: efforts outside of town hall meetings that allow members of the community to make requests for specific accommodations. This can include a form on the event website or a contact email that will help update the accessibility of the event.

Credit 5.4 — Outreach to Under-Represented Groups

Potential to expand outreach by advertising efforts (e.g. lactation station, free admission days, explanation of Charitable Impact Program, veterans' access, bussing system) on website (in easy to access way) and on social media in days leading up to event so people can be informed before they enter the event.

Credit 6.2 — Lasting Legacy for the Host Community

Perhaps advertise the outcomes of various initiatives (e.g. STEM center for kids, Fore Our Future) on the website, including first-hand accounts of participants to show others the benefits their fellow community members experience.

Credit 6.4 — Promote Golf Health & Wellbeing

Encourage increased participation in Healthy Living Step Calculator initiative by setting a goal to surpass the 2019 total.

5. About sustainability, in and through golf

GEO Foundation is an international non-profit, entirely dedicated to advancing sustainability in and through golf, collaborating widely to:

- ✓ Strengthen the social and environmental contribution of golf
- ✓ Help the sport credibly communicate its commitment and value
- ✓ Champion sustainability in front of a large audience.



GEO manages and assures the OnCourse® programs for facility and course management, new golf development and tournaments – currently used in 76 countries worldwide.

In addition to the delivery of programs and solutions, GEO's wider activities include research and innovation, communications and reporting, and support for strategy and policy.

GEO also administers GEO Certified®, the international mark of credible and comprehensive sustainability in golf, and part of an elite group of well-known ecolabels which include Fairtrade, Rainforest Alliance, and Forest Stewardship Council. After completing OnCourse®, a golf facility, development or tournament can apply for this international distinction.

All clubs and tournaments are invited to Join OnCourse® ... for sustainability, climate action and golf's future.



Leadership in sustainability and golf