

# Turf's Up in the Inland Empire

Summer 2025

*Thanks to Tarquin Huff & Horn Rapids Golf Course – 2025 Summer Outing Hosts*

## Experience Our Premier Turf Event

The Northwest GCSA TURFGRASS EXPO promises an exceptional lineup of speakers delivering insight and practical solutions to elevate your turf management skills! This will be the third time we have held this event – with the first being in 2017, then 2021, and now 2025.

Join us on Lake Coeur d'Alene and enjoy excellent hotel pricing at The Coeur d'Alene Resort, Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, October 13 & 14, 2025. Connecting with your peers and industry experts from chapters covering thousands of square miles is beneficial to all turf professionals. Our educational offerings can help strengthen a large range of necessary skills and will be beneficial regardless of experience or budget size.

## Why You Can't Miss This Event

### Education:

- Innovative Learning: From leveraging AI tools with Mike Richardson, Ph.D., to disease management and mastering snow mold control with Paul Koch, Ph.D., our sessions cover the latest trends and practical strategies.
- Leadership Development: Gain essential management insights with Jodie Cunningham, SPHR, SHRM-SCP's performance management workshop.
- Turf & Design Expertise: Explore golf course design evolution to assess golf holes on your course for contemporary play and learn about effective tee placements with Jan Bel Jan, ASGCA, a golf course designer with a focus on player retention.
- Inspiration to Lead: Discover leadership lessons from Mount Everest with GCSAA CEO Rhett Evans.

### Engage & Network:

- Bushwood Briefing: Kick off with a no-host casual meet-up at Coeur d'Alene Taphouse Unchained on October 12.
- Trade Show: Connect with top distributors showcasing the

continued page 7

## An Opportunity to Serve on the Inland Empire Board of Directors

Our association thrives because our board members are proactive in making decisions that align with our mission. They set the direction, advocate for our profession, and provide strategic oversight to ensure our association's continued success. Amazingly, our board members are able to accomplish their duties with a minimal time commitment!

Would you like to help guide your association and be included on the slate of directors for consideration? We have a superintendent and an allied position that will be brought to the membership for a vote at the upcoming business meeting held in conjunction with the Northwest Turfgrass Expo. If you are interested in serving, please contact our chairperson Mike Grilley, or Lori Russell, executive director.

## Preferred Course at Expo Based on Association Conference Participation

If you plan to golf on one of our fantastic golf courses during the Expo, please take a moment to review how play will be assigned. Check out the landing page of our calendar event on [iegcsa.org](http://iegcsa.org) for more information.

## Don't Wait Until Deadline for Turfgrass Expo Room Block

Enjoy a memorable stay at The Coeur d'Alene Resort for an incredible rate! We have our block within two towers at this upscale property, each offering a living space (Park Tower: mid-sized, Lake Tower: spacious), oversized windows, contemporary

continued page 6

**Inland Empire GCSA  
Board of Directors**

**Ivan Gibbs, President**  
Leavenworth Golf Club

**Brent Austin, Vice President**  
LaGrande Country Club

**Brandon Bubar  
Secretary/Treasurer**  
Avondale Golf Club

**Dan Frederiksen**  
The Golf Club at Black Rock

**Mitchell Larson**  
Yakima Country Club

**Shane Hughes**  
Planet Turf

**Tom Walker**  
Coeur d'Alene Resort

**Edward Wetherell**  
Circling Raven Golf Course

**Kalman Zaranec**  
Circling Raven Golf Course

**Past President  
Mike Grilley**  
The Links

**Assistant Liason  
Joe VanHoomissen**  
Kalispel Golf & Country Club

**Inland Empire GCSA**  
Lori Russell, Executive Dir.  
P.O. Box 5003  
Missoula, MT 59806  
(406) 273-7779  
iegcsa@iegcsa.org  
iegcsa.org

## Member Communication as a Core Responsibility

**Jacob Teaford, Director of Facilities  
Manito Country Club, Spokane, Wash.**

One of the most important responsibilities of golf course superintendents and their assistants is to clearly explain the reasoning behind the various tasks performed on the course. While most turf professionals excel in understanding the science behind cultural practices, integrated pest management (IPM) programs, irrigation, and environmental factors influencing their decisions, effectively communicating this information to members, greens committees, and leadership is often overlooked.

This communication can occur through simple conversations with individuals and small groups throughout the club, but I have found that the most effective and far-reaching method is through monthly newsletter articles. These articles can cover topics such as ongoing projects on the course, staff highlights, and issues that affect play. This channel serves to clarify any unusual occurrences golfers might notice and provides an opportunity to explain why the maintenance team is undertaking certain tasks that may not seem conducive to optimal playing conditions at the time, such as aeration or irrigation.

As we enter the warmer months when irrigation becomes necessary, a common topic of discussion is why the maintenance team must water the golf course. This presents a valuable opportunity to offer a behind-the-scenes look at the various factors that determine the daily water application for the course. For reference, below is an irrigation article I wrote for my membership during the 2024 season.

of-the-art computerized weather station that provides us with a wealth of weather data. Each day, we take an evapotranspiration (ET) reading, which serves as our baseline for determining how much water we need to apply in order to replenish what was lost in the past 24 hours. ET combines the water transpired from the vegetation with the water that evaporates from the soil and plant surfaces each day.

Perhaps our most exciting technology is the GreenSight drone we use. The drone is launched for its scheduled flight every Monday-Friday at 11 AM and takes approximately 15 minutes to fly over the entire property. During this flight, the drone takes hundreds of pictures, which are then stitched together to create one comprehensive image of the golf course. This image provides us with valuable information, including a high-resolution photo, thermal imagery that highlights wet and dry spots, and an NDVI image that measures plant health by assessing the amount of chlorophyll in the plant.

On the ground, our staff uses moisture meters to measure the volumetric water content (VWC) in the soil profile. This tool is primarily used on green surfaces to assist in managing soil moisture. When the probe is inserted into the soil profile, it provides a percentage of VWC. Depending on factors such as the season, weather conditions, and playability goals, the VWC percentage can range from 15% to 25%. Using this tool helps us maintain consistent moisture content from green to green.

At the heart of irrigating the golf course is the pumping system. Manito recently replaced the pumphouse, making a major investment. The pumphouse contains a Watertronics control system



### Precision Watering: The Science of Golf Course Irrigation

Looking back on the 2024 season, the theme of persistent heat waves put a strain on turf throughout the course and the maintenance staff. The above-average temperatures during the growing season resulted in several weather-related records being shattered. When we experience temperatures in the mid-to-high 90s for an extended period, it becomes more difficult to keep the course green without making it too soft for good playing conditions. The grass needs more water, but we must balance that need with keeping the playing areas relatively firm. Feedback from members indicates that the golf course is holding up quite well, which speaks volumes to our core maintenance philosophies of watering and cultural practices. Many people have asked me how much water goes out on the golf course in a single night and how we determine that amount. The process of deciding how much to water the golf course each night involves a lot of science, thought, and hard work, which I consider “watering with purpose to elevate golf course turf health and playing conditions.”

#### The Science:

At Manito, we utilize several technologies to aid in moisture management and efficiently apply water. This season, we have introduced a state-

continued page 4



# HIGH-PERFORMANCE GREENS NUTRITION

The combination of Contec DG® - Gen 3 dispersing granules and Foltec® SG soluble granules provides ideal premium nutrition for greens, tees, and other fine turf.

## Contec DG®

Featured on select Contec DG products, new Hi-Vis granules are easier to spread and easier to see, saving turf managers both time and money.

## Foltec SG

Each Foltec SG product contains a specific N-P-K ratio along with essential micronutrients, UltraMate® SG, and sea plant extract, simplifying sprayable nutrition programs.



### GOT CARBON?

Our diverse line of carbon-based humic acid products including HCU®, HCAS™, and Black Gypsum DG® is designed to improve fertilizer efficiency, provide a food source for soil microbes, and increase overall plant health.

For more information, contact your local authorized distributor or your territory manager from The Andersons, Darrin Johnson.

**Darrin Johnson | 515-249-8980 | [darrin\\_johnson@andersonsinc.com](mailto:darrin_johnson@andersonsinc.com)**

[AndersonsPro.com](http://AndersonsPro.com) | @TheAndersonsPro | AndersonsPro

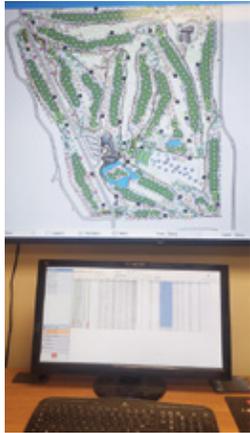


© 2025 The Andersons, Inc. All rights reserved. Black Gypsum DG, Contec DG, Foltec, HCU, and UltraMate are registered trademarks of The Andersons, Inc. HCAS is a trademark of The Andersons, Inc. F25

**Communication** continued from page 2

that operates two variable drive pumps (VFD), capable of pumping 1500 gallons of water per minute onto the golf course. The Toro central control system serves as the brain of the operation, controlling the sprinkler system.

With over 1,200 individually controlled sprinkler heads across the property, we can adjust each one to apply a specific amount of water according to the water needs in that particular area.



**The Thought**

With an overview of the irrigation technologies and tools, we carefully consider the water needs for each day. By compiling data from drone flights, ET readings, and soil moisture readings, we gain a good understanding of the water requirements for the night.

**Hard Work**

In my philosophy of "Precision Watering," hard work is the most crucial aspect of maintaining a golf course. Even with top-notch technologies and irrigation equipment, it is essential to put in the effort. I often say, "Boots need to be walking turf." My assistants, key staff, and I are constantly out on the course, observing and understanding what's happening. This is where the "art" of irrigation comes into play. Hand-watering greens during the summer months is a key practice in providing quality putting surfaces. You may notice staff members hand-watering greens in the morning and afternoon. While this may slightly slow down green speeds temporarily, it is done to protect the grass's health and minimize disruption to play.

This is just a brief overview of how we determine water needs for the golf course. Combined with good cultural practices and techniques, our main goal is to offer excellent playing conditions throughout the season. Additionally, being a responsible steward of the land and conserving our water resources is a top priority.

**Chris Concienne 509-795-9175**  
**conciennec@helenachemical.com**

**Life Lessons from the Fairway**

**Ryliann Bednar**  
 Palouse Ridge Golf Club - Pullman, WA  
 Tri County Golf Ranch - Cincinnati, OH



Growing up on a golf course is more than just chasing a small white ball across cut grass. It's an educational environment where life lessons are taught along the greens and against the hum of maintenance equipment. For me, it's been a lifelong learning experience that has shaped my perspective in many ways. My interest in golf runs deep, with the challenge of the game and the lessons learned from my dad, Mike Bednar. If it weren't for him, I wouldn't be where I am today. One of the biggest things I've learned from working at the golf course is how important it is to pay attention to the little things. Keeping a course in great shape takes a lot of careful work. I thought it would be easy to mow straight lines and fix footprints in a bunker, but no — you have to mow the grass just right, rake the sand perfectly, and make sure everything looks its best. When you learn to focus on details at the course, it helps in other parts of life too. Like when you're doing homework or working on a project, you're better at noticing things and making sure everything is just right. Plus, working at the course means waking up super early. It's not always easy to get out of

**BAER DESIGN GROUP, LLC**

**Greg Baer**  
 Principal Landscape Architect  
 Irrigation Consultant

10027 N. Palisades Wy.  
 Boise, ID 83714  
 Ph. 208.859.1980  
[greg@baerdg.com](mailto:greg@baerdg.com)  
[www.baerdg.com](http://www.baerdg.com)

**One Source For Your Entire Course.**

New ideas, real working solutions, and time management that puts YOU back in the driver's seat. At Horizon, we make your job a little easier.

Contact your local Golf Representative to learn how we can help you today.  
 Nick Newman..... 208-929-2522

**Your Local Horizon Stores:**  
 Hayden, ID      Spokane, WA  
 208-762-3399      509-467-6601

**Horizon**  
 800 PVC TURF  
[HorizonOnline.com](http://HorizonOnline.com)

bed before the sun comes up, but when you do it day after day, you learn commitment and discipline. It teaches you that if you want to be successful, you have to work hard — even when it's not fun.

Beyond those skills, the course has taught me valuable lessons about problem-solving and adaptability. Like any complex system, a golf course comes with its share of challenges. Equipment breaks down, weather shifts unexpectedly, and issues arise daily. I remember countless times when a crucial piece of machinery failed, threatening to derail the operation. But my dad, the superintendent, always had a backup plan. Whether it was a temporary fix or an alternative solution, he taught me that resourcefulness and quick thinking are essential for overcoming obstacles.

For the past couple of summers, while working in mainte-

nance, I've watched my dad prepare for tournaments. He's always on the phone, checking the weather, coordinating the crew, and making sure every detail is perfect. I've seen him lose sleep worrying about the greens, the fairways, and all the little things players never notice. But when the tournament day arrives, it's like all that stress melts away. The course looks incredible. Everything comes together, and it's all thanks to my dad and his team's hard work.

That's when I respect and appreciate what he does. It's not just about hitting a ball into a hole — it's about creating an experience for everyone who plays. Seeing golfers enjoy the scenery and challenges makes me proud. It's like, "Yeah, he did that," even if most don't realize the work put in.

I know all the stress and hard work was worth it in the end.

## Finding the Fairway Between Work and Life

Zach Strahlo | Assistant Golf Course Superintendent, Circling Raven Golf Course

As a turf manager who entered the industry young and rose quickly, the concept of work-life balance didn't hit home until I burned out hard at just 25 years old. I started in the business when I was 18 as a greenskeeper, completed the two-year certificate program through Penn State, and climbed the ladder from greenskeeper to superintendent in under five years. After spending a couple of years running a well-respected course in the Bay Area, the burnout finally caught up with me.

For seven years, I lived and breathed turf and crew management. I was proud of it, until I wasn't. Immersing myself entirely in work brought a sense of achievement, but I was all work and no life. I was missing out on a balance that I now realize many in our profession struggle to find. At the time, I endured 80-hour work weeks and 60-plus consecutive days on the job like a badge of honor. This is far too common in our industry.

Eventually, I made a drastic shift. I changed careers from golf course superintendent to fleet logistics because of the strain from poor work-life balance. I went from having work as my only focus to working just three days a week and taking four days off. It was a radical change, but it allowed me to rediscover personal interests like backpacking, which I could now accomplish up to 80 days a year.

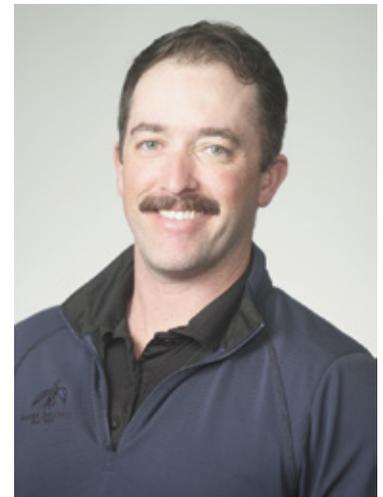
In our profession, we take great pride in pouring ourselves into our properties and delivering the best possible product to our clientele. But at what cost? How often do we find ourselves stressing about turf conditions both on the course and at home with our families? How do we separate the two and create space for a

healthier, more sustainable life?

Achieving balance is possible. Some factors are in our control, while others are not. Weather will always be a wild-card. The climate we choose to manage turf in can heavily influence how attainable balance really is. In California, we were constantly hoping for a "real" winter to catch our breath. More often than not, the drought dragged on. Now, working in the Pacific Northwest where the climate is more forgiving, I've found my way back into the business with a renewed sense of balance.

Another key to creating this balance is building the right team around you: people you trust. When I became a superintendent at a young age, it was difficult to step into a tight-knit crew and not feel like it was me against the world. That mindset made me feel like I had to shoulder everything myself. I succeeded at a property recovering from the 2008 downturn, working under new ownership that prioritized weddings and events over rounds. But in hindsight, if I had invested more energy into developing the team

continued page 6

A promotional graphic for Desert Green Turf. The background is a lush green golf course with a sand trap. The logo "Desert Green Turf" is in a stylized, bubbly font. Below it, the text "PREMIUM SAND BASED SPORTS TURF" is centered. At the bottom, there are two columns of contact information for Nathan Cox and Jazmin Orozco.

**Desert Green Turf**  
PREMIUM SAND BASED SPORTS TURF

**Nathan Cox**  
President, Golf and Sports Operations  
509-750-1614  
nathan@desertgreenturf.com

**Jazmin Orozco**  
Sales + Trucking Coordinator  
509-350-0707  
jazmin@desertgreenturf.com

A promotional graphic for Floratine Northwest. The background is white with a faint green silhouette of a plant. The logo "FLORATINE NORTHWEST" is in a green and orange oval. To the right, the name "Richard Strautman" and title "President" are listed. Below, the address, phone number, email, and website are provided.

**FLORATINE NORTHWEST**

**Richard Strautman**  
President

4651 Ann Court  
Bellingham, WA 98229

☎ : 3603057619  
✉ : stretch@floratinenw.com  
www.floratinenw.com

## Finding the Fairway

continued from page 5

instead of carrying the entire load, I would have avoided burnout altogether.

Being fortunate enough to join a team of strong, experienced managers at my current club has been incredibly enlightening. The value of a qualified and knowledgeable equipment manager and technician cannot be overstated. Having a superintendent team that shares the same goals and work ethic makes a huge difference in achieving a healthy work-life balance. Beyond management, the strength of our crew is just as important. We're lucky to have a team made up of both seasoned veterans and motivated new hires who understand our goals and put in the effort every day. That shared commitment across all levels of the team has made a real impact, not just on the quality of our work, but on the quality of our lives.

Technology has also come a long way in helping us achieve balance. Tools that didn't exist just 10 or 15 years ago now help us plan agronomic programs and grow healthier, more sustainable turf. Tracking applications and tools alike allow us not only to provide a superior product, but to go home with peace of mind, knowing we've done everything we can.

Ultimately, I love this industry. I'm grateful to be back after a much-needed hiatus. My time away helped me grow and understand just how important it is to prioritize balance. I'm lucky to be part of a team that truly believes family comes first, and when it's time to work, we get the job done.

## Hotel Reservations continued from page 1

decor, a pillow-top mattress with fine linens and down comforter, coffee maker, mini fridge and modern enhancements. In the Park Tower (\$155 plus surcharge and tax), the views are not guaranteed, but may include the marina, park, hills, or part of the resort. The Lake Tower offers a few more bells and whistles (\$199 plus surcharge and tax) with a lake, city, or mountain view (specific view not guaranteed). Parking is available in a paid lot nearby for a separate fee, or in valet, also for a separate fee.

Please reserve your hotel room at this time for this beautiful property — waiting until the block deadline of September 11 does not ensure we will still have availability. If we sell out early, we may have a chance to get more rooms added to the block. If it is nearer to the deadline we do not believe our price will be honored for any additional rooms! Rooms may be reserved through telephone or online link. Please see the calendar event on our website [idahogcsa.org](http://idahogcsa.org) for more information on how to reserve.

## Orlando Room Block Opens Soon

Our chapter room block for the 2026 GCSAA Conference and Show in Orlando will be open soon with two hotel options. We are returning to Homewood Suites. The location works well and attendees like the hot breakfast included daily.

Our second property, the Rosen Inn at Pointe Orlando continues to be an option within our chapter block as we have several attendees who return to this budget property for its proximity to Pointe Orlando and the Convention Center.



The advertisement features two photographs of turf equipment in use. On the left, a man in a dark jacket and cap operates a red Toro riding mower on a green lawn. A red square with the word "TORO" in white is overlaid on the image. On the right, a man in a red shirt operates a red and white Ventrac riding mower on a green lawn. The "VENTRAC" logo is overlaid on the image. In the center, there is a shield-shaped logo for "TURF STAR WESTERN" featuring a green pine tree on a grassy mound. Below the tree, the letters "TSW" are written in white, with "EST. 1922" in smaller text underneath. To the left of the shield, text reads: "Whether you're looking for turf equipment or irrigation solutions, let us help determine what best suits your needs. See our website to view all of our product lines." To the right of the shield, text reads: "We've got what you need to get the job done right. Contact us: 800-585-8001 sales@turfstar.com / www.turfstar.com"

# Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo

continued from page 1

◦ **Golf Challenge:** Enjoy the opportunity to play golf at either the CDA National Reserve or The Coeur d'Alene Resort Golf Course. **IMPORTANT** note to all golfers – please read the PDF found on our website calendar event to see how course location will be assigned.

## Important Dates:

◦ **Registrants with golf course preferences:** Due by September 1. Course preference will be based on points and in place until September 1. After September 1, first-come for preference if both properties are still available after all play is assigned to date.

## Presentations:

### Tees - The Long and The Short

By reviewing sample golf courses of various total distances and evaluating individual holes from the tees offered, attendees will be able to determine if additional back or more-forward tees may be necessary at their courses for present-day golfers. Assessment of holes relative to the club's range of handicaps and the orientation and elevations of tees, landing areas, hazards, and greens will enable thoughtful relocation or placement tees that can provide a positive ROI. Proper tee placement can improve the flow and speed of play and engage the strategic mindset of the competitive golfer and encourage success of the social golfer.

### Your Golf Course's Design and How It Affects Everyday Golfers

By learning the origins of golf course design and the evolution of design styles, attendees will be able to assess golf holes on their courses for contemporary play. They will be able to evaluate golf hole features and how they impact various players: long and short, precise and wayward, seasoned and youthful, skilled and novice. Appreciation of the era in which your course was designed can help in prioritizing golf course conditioning, planning for golf hole/course renovation, and upgrading or adding practice areas to encourage more rounds, increase golfer fun, improve pace of play and augment club revenue.

*Jan Bel Jan, ASGCA, Jan Bel Jan Golf Course Design, Jupiter, Florida*



### Giving Effective Feedback & Performance Management

You were promoted because you were good at doing the work. Now, your job is to lead the people who do the work. But that's no easy task! Call-outs, conflict, and poor performance are a few of many issues you likely deal with as a manager. The challenge: It takes skill and practice to navigate your people issues effectively. Anxiety, apprehension, uncertainty, insecurity, procrastination...likely you've experienced all of these when faced with giving tough feedback and addressing poor performance. That can change! Learn tips on performance management preparation and tangible ways to improve your team's performance and engagement through effective feedback.

*Jodie J. Cunningham, SPHR, SHRM-SCP*



### Leading Out

We all face unexpected challenges that feel like an uphill climb. GCSAA Chief Executive Officer Rhett Evans will share lessons he learned while successfully summiting the highest peak on earth, Mount Everest. Learn how these same principles of purpose, passion and perseverance can help you overcome difficulties you may encounter and lead to greater personal and professional growth.

*Rhett Evans, GCSAA CEO, Lawrence, Kansas*



- **Hotel Reservations:** Due by September 11
- **Early Meeting Registration:** Available until September 22

**Our offerings will benefit your facility, enhance your management skills, demonstrate how AI tools can assist, offer ways to improve your course conditions and control disease, and inspire you through the connections you will make.**

Register by visiting the calendar event of [idahogcsa.org](http://idahogcsa.org)

# Northwest GCSA Turfgrass Expo III, October 13 & 14, 2025



## Tech Meets Turf: Real-World AI Tools for Superintendents

Artificial intelligence (AI) has been described as the most important advancement in human history. It is already seamlessly integrated into many aspects of our daily lives, but how can golf course superintendents take advantage of AI to improve their operational efficiency? This seminar will cover a wide range of ways that AI can be used, including correspondence, mathematics, language translation, and equipment repair. It will also be interactive in that we will apply AI in real time to real problems.

*Mike Richardson, Ph.D, Professor, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville Ark.*



## Modern Strategies for Snow Mold Control in a Shifting Environment

Root-infecting diseases are some of the most frustrating and misunderstood diseases of golf course turfgrass. In this presentation we will list the primary root-infecting diseases of cool-season turf, identify the cultural and environmental conditions that lead to their development, and discuss strategies for effectively managing each disease.

## The Danger Lurking Beneath: Strategies to effectively manage root diseases on cool-season turf

Snow mold control is difficult under normal circumstances. But recent years have brought increased regulation of fungicides commonly used for snow mold control and warmer winters that make snow mold control more uncertain.

In this presentation, we will discuss how research on fungicide persistence and disease modeling can aid superintendents in managing snow mold in the future.



*Paul Koch, Ph.D, Professor, University of Wisconsin – Madison*



Jim Connolly- Distribution & International Sales  
509-951-0270  
Jim@planeturfusa.com

Jared Whitaker- Alaska, Central Washington, Wyoming  
509-977-1354  
Jared@planeturfusa.com

Jordan Anderson- Inland North West  
816-217-7363  
Jordan@planeturfusa.com

Aaron Stamper- Western Washington & Oregon  
509-301-4589  
Aaron@planeturfusa.com

Shane Hughes- Southeastern Washington, Eastern Oregon, Southern Idaho  
509-954-5773  
Shane@planeturfusa.com

<https://planeturfusa.com>



**FOR CONFERENCE  
INFORMATION  
visit [iegcsa.org](http://iegcsa.org)**

