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Michigan Golf Provides \$6.1 Billion Impact, Study Reveals

LANSING – The Michigan golf industry’s total economic impact is \$6.1 billion, yes billion, in part because the state is home to 859 courses, including the most public golf courses in the nation, stands as the top winter-interrupted golf tourism destination in the country and provides 61,000 jobs according to a recently completed study by the National Golf Foundation (NGF).

The study, commissioned by the Michigan Golf Alliance, a collection of the leading golf organizations in the state, confirmed the message the state’s golf industry leaders plan to share with state legislators when the 17th Michigan Golf Day at the Capitol event is presented Thursday, June 6, on the state capitol lawn.

“Speaking on behalf of the Michigan Golf Alliance, we are excited to have the latest data to share with our state legislators and media outlets, and are thrilled that it reflects and confirms what we see Michigan golf courses working so hard at providing each and every day,” Jada Paisley, the executive director of the Michigan Golf Course Association, said of the first NGF study of Michigan golf since 2006.

Among the NGF study’s notable findings:

- The Michigan golf industry contributed almost \$6.1 billion to the state’s economy in 2023 and supports 61,000 jobs with \$1.795 billion of wage and benefits income and more than \$821 million in state and local taxes.
- Michigan has 859 golf courses that are part of 709 facilities, almost all of which are classified as small businesses. Of those 709 facilities, 604 are public and 105 are private.
- The NGF said outside of the coastal, warm weather states of Florida and California, it can be argued that no U.S. state has a more substantial footprint in the world of recreational golf. Michigan is 10th in the U.S. in size and 11th in population but ranks third in the total number of golf courses.
- More than 1.85 million golfers travel to Michigan for golf and spend more than \$1 billion annually with non-residents playing about three of every 10 rounds in the state each year. Only a handful of states have a larger proportion of annual rounds played by

visitors like the Sunbelt states of Arizona, Florida, and South Carolina and the world-wide tourist destination Hawaii.

- Only Florida, California and Texas with golf facilities open the year around have a higher volume of annual rounds played than Michigan, which had approximately 16.42 million rounds played in 2023.
- Approximately 896,700 residents play traditional, green-grass golf. Only seven U.S. states have more golfers.
- Michigan golf provides 92,200 professionally managed acres of green space in Michigan serving as wildlife sanctuaries and the facilities practice environmental impact programs like expanding natural areas, reduction of water usage, using natural algae controls and providing garden beds and bee and bird houses.
- Golf facilities in Michigan had a charitable impact of \$104.3 million in 2023 by hosting an estimated 4,880 dedicated charity events with 467,400 participants.

The Michigan Golf Course Association (MGCA), the Michigan Golf Course Superintendents Association (MiGCSA), the Michigan Section PGA, the Michigan Turfgrass Foundation (MTF), the Golf Association of Michigan (GAM) and the Greater Michigan Club Management Association (GMCMA) form the Michigan Golf Alliance.

Paisley said the data provides welcome updated information to each of the Alliance associations that serve and impact the industry in diverse ways.

“The data reinforces not only golf’s economic impact, but the role in outdoor tourism, golf as a group of small businesses that provides community impact with jobs, tax revenue, greenspace for environmental impact, quality of life and more,” she said. “Michigan is an incredible state with an incredible golf industry and this study reinforces that completely.”

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Contact Jada Paisley of the MGCA at 517-482-4312. See more about the study at michiangolfalliance.com