



Against the Odds: Golf and the Sonoran Desert

[Scottsdale](#) is known worldwide as The World's Finest Golf Destination. The quality and diversity of its golf courses, along with the incredible natural beauty of the Sonoran Desert, play a huge role in enabling Scottsdale to successfully compete for premier events and tourism dollars against other top destinations.

Scottsdale's golf operators are dedicated to preserving the health and integrity of the Sonoran Desert and are among the industry leaders in environmental stewardship.

Water Use

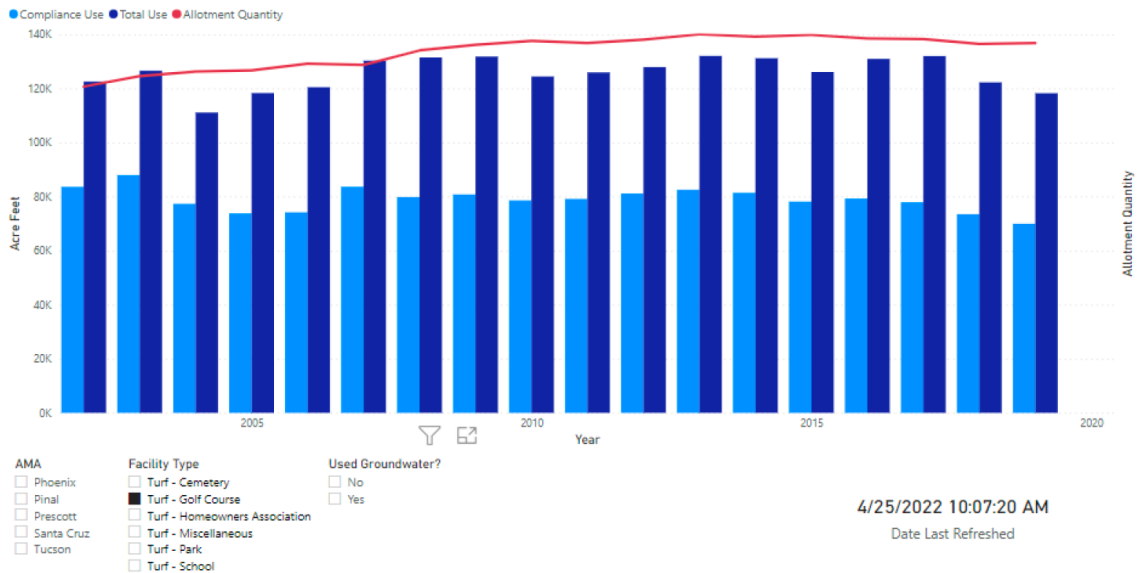
From a statewide perspective, Arizona golf is often put in the spotlight for its water use. And yes, golf uses water. But it's a lot less than you think. According to a study conducted by the Rounds Consulting Group:

- Golf accounts for 2 percent of Arizona's water consumption
- Golf uses just 1.3 percent of the state's Colorado River allotment
- Reclaimed effluent is the primary source of irrigation for many if not most Scottsdale golf courses

Additionally, according to Arizona Department Water Resources (ADWR), for decades Arizona's golf courses, overall, have consistently used less water than their legal allotments (see chart below).

Turf Facility Demand and Allotment Over Time

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Over the next two years, Scottsdale golf courses will further reduce their water consumption by 4 percent under the terms of a new water management agreement with ADWR. In preparation, Scottsdale courses have been working to:

- Reduce turf grass acreage and irrigation requirements throughout the golf courses
- Maximize irrigation efficiency by installing state-of-the-art weather stations and irrigation technology
- Minimize irrigation requirements during overseeding by using less rye grass seed and shortening the grow-in window
- Explore the use of new low-water-use grass types

Natural Area Open Space

Another often overlooked benefit of golf courses in Scottsdale is that they provide important Natural Area Open Spaces (NAOS) within the city limits. For example, Troon North Golf Club has more than 300 acres of NOAS on its property and Grayhawk Golf Club has more than 100 acres. These are areas that must be preserved as natural habitat with no development and limited maintenance allowed. They attract hundreds of species, ranging from migratory birds, quail, owls and hawks to rabbits, raccoons and larger mammals such as deer, coyote, bobcats and javelina. In some areas of the city, golf courses are the largest remaining pockets of wildlife habitat in the city.

Urban Heat Island Mitigation

Finally, golf courses play an important role in mitigating the so-called urban heat island effect of development. Streets and buildings absorb heat during the day and radiate it back into the environment increasing the ambient temperature to varying degrees. Golf courses help reduce the level of heating thanks to the shade and evaporative cooling that comes from their trees, turf grass, and native plants.

These are just a few of the ways golf and the Sonoran Desert thrive in Scottsdale. To learn more about the more than 200 courses in the greater Scottsdale area, plus the accommodations and activities for rounding out the perfect golf vacation, check out experiencescottsdalegolf.com.

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