

**THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF GOLF TO  
THE STATE OF MICHIGAN**

# **2023 IMPACT REPORT**

**ECONOMIC AND QUALITY OF LIFE**

The Emerald Golf Course

**Executive  
Summary**





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION HIGHLIGHTS

In 2023, the size of **Michigan's direct golf economy** was approximately **\$2.997 billion**, while the NGF estimates that the industry **contributed just over \$6 billion** (direct, indirect and induced) to the wider Michigan economy in 2023. Golf supports more than **61,000 jobs** with **\$1.795 billion of wage and benefits income** and more than **\$821 million in state and local taxes**.



## Total Impact

# \$6.079B

## Total Contribution



Direct Impact

# \$2.997B



Employment

# 61,116 JOBS



Wages and Benefits

# \$1.795B



State & Local + Federal Taxes

# \$821.4M

\$413.0 - State & Local Taxes

\$408.4 - Federal Taxes

## CORE INDUSTRIES

A summary of the direct economic impact of golf on the State of Michigan is shown below



**\$1.24B** Total Consumer Spending

Total consumer spending at golf facilities for items including initiation fees, member/passholder dues, green fees, cart fees, range fees, golf shop merchandise and food/beverage sales, exceeded **\$1.24 billion in 2023**, an amount that is about 8.0% higher than the estimate in 2006 (\$1.15 billion), despite 156 fewer golf facilities (709 vs. 865 in the 2006 report). Golf facility operations supported more than **26,800 jobs** (both part-time and full-time).



**\$235.2M** Capital Investments

In 2023, Michigan golf facilities invested close to **\$235.2 million** in capital investments for golf course renovations, enhancements, structure replacements, new equipment and at least one brand new golf course (High Point GC in Williamsburg), supporting close to **2,875 additional jobs**. An estimated 67% of Michigan golf facilities began or continued large-scale capital projects in 2023 that were not included in regular operating expenses.



**\$419.7M** Gross Retail Sales

**353** Golf-related Companies

Michigan retailers earned a **\$183.0 million margin on \$419.7 million of gross retail sales** of golf balls, bags, gloves, clubs, shoes, apparel and other equipment in 2023. Of this volume of gross sales, \$320.2 million came from off-course retail outlets (including online). The remaining \$99.5+/- million came from on-course pro shops (included in total golf consumer facility spending noted above).

Michigan is also home to 353 other companies who provide golf products and services including development, turf, golf cart distribution, manufacturing, and other general services. One significant example is the putter grip-maker Super Stroke headquartered in Wixom. The direct economic contribution attributable to golf from **these companies totaled \$78.8 million in 2023, supporting at least 3,617 jobs in the state.**



**77** Golf Associations

**\$36.0M** Consumer Spending

Michigan is home to 77 separate golf associations and foundations, in addition to MGA associations (Greater MI Chapter of Club Management Association of America, Golf Association of Michigan, MI Chapter of GCSAA, MI Golf Course Association, MI Turfgrass Foundation and Michigan PGA) they also include foundations like Game of Your Life Foundation, Eagles for Children and the Midnight Golf Program. The total revenue generated from these Michigan golf associations and foundations was **\$16.8 million** in 2023.

In professional golf, Michigan hosted one PGA Tour event (Rocket Mortgage Classic), one PGA Champions Tour event (Ally Challenge) and two LPGA Tour events (Dow Great Lakes Bay and LPGA Meijer), plus LPGA's development tour event the Epon Tour FireKeepers Casino Hotel Championship, in 2023. These events generated just under **\$36.0 million in direct spending and raised \$4.3 million for charity.**



**\$110.1M** Raised for Charities

Golf facilities in Michigan raised as much as **\$104.3 million for charities** in 2023, hosting an estimated 4,880 charity golf events and other non-golf (clubhouse) fundraisers. The most significant of these included large events at American Dunes GC and Harbor Shores Resort that raised over \$1.5 million for charity. In addition, golf facilities donated \$4.9M in gift certificates to non-profit (charitable) organizations in 2023 of free rounds of golf, merchandise, free lessons, high school or college golf rounds/gifts, etc.). Professional golf events in MI raised another \$4.3 million in 2023 and other significant giving channeled through golf includes charitable foundations that raised an additional \$1.5 million in 2023. **Total charitable impact through golf is estimated at over \$110.1 million in 2023.**



**896,683**  
Individual Golfers

NGF estimates there are **approximately 896,700 individual golfers** over the age of 6 in Michigan, and these golfers played **approximately 16.42 million rounds** in 2023. Michigan hosted an **additional 2.58 million+ rounds played by visitors** to Michigan, many of whom come from the states (and provinces) that neighbor Michigan, like Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Ontario, Canada (total 19.0 million rounds played in Michigan in 2023).



**709**  
Golf Facilities

Michigan has a total of 709 golf facilities (604 public and 105 private), plus 45 stand-alone driving ranges and at least 81 other “golf entertainment” venues (mostly indoor simulators). There are 116 golf facilities connected to residential real estate and/or resorts with real estate in the state.

### Total Direct Economic Contribution of the Golf Sector State of Michigan (\$ Millions)

	Direct Impact 2023	Direct Impact 2006*
Golf Facility Operations**	\$1,240.8	\$1,149.0
Capital Investments	\$235.2	\$70.9
Golf-Related Supplies***	\$399.0	\$124.5
Tournaments & Associations	\$52.8	\$16.1
Charitable Impact****	\$110.1	\$118.1
<b>TOTAL CORE INDUSTRIES</b>	<b>\$2,037.9</b>	<b>\$1,478.6</b>

\* From The Michigan Golf Economy by SRI International, 2006.

\*\*Revenue from golf facility operations including on-course merchandise sold.

\*\*\*Includes total retail sales, but excludes merchandise sold at on-course pro shops (incl. in golf operations).

\*\*\*\*SRI did not include Charitable Impact in the economic impact estimations.

## ENABLED INDUSTRIES

In addition to the above, there are other golf-related economic impacts, including:



**756,000**  
Overnight Trips

Michigan Office of Tourism (MOT) A.K.A Travel Michigan, reported over 125 million total visitors to Michigan in 2022. NGF research indicates that about 756,000 overnight trips were made to Michigan in 2023 by visitors seeking to participate in golf, plus an additional 1.0 million trips of more than 50 miles made to the State during the year. These 1.85 million travelling golfers are estimated to have contributed **\$831.6 million** to the Michigan economy (excluding direct spending at golf facilities – already counted). When considering the total spend at golf facilities, the Michigan golf travel market was at least \$1.03 billion in 2023. These visitors added almost 19,216 jobs from induced and indirect activity such as transportation, lodging, meals, retail and other entertainment.

The presence of golf courses located within, or in immediate proximity to, residential communities add value to real estate in Michigan through: (1) construction of new homes in golf communities; (2) renovation of older homes in older golf communities; and (3) the net gain in property tax to local jurisdictions from a defined “golf premium.” The total impacts from these sources in 2023:



**\$91.9M** Golf-related Residential Construction

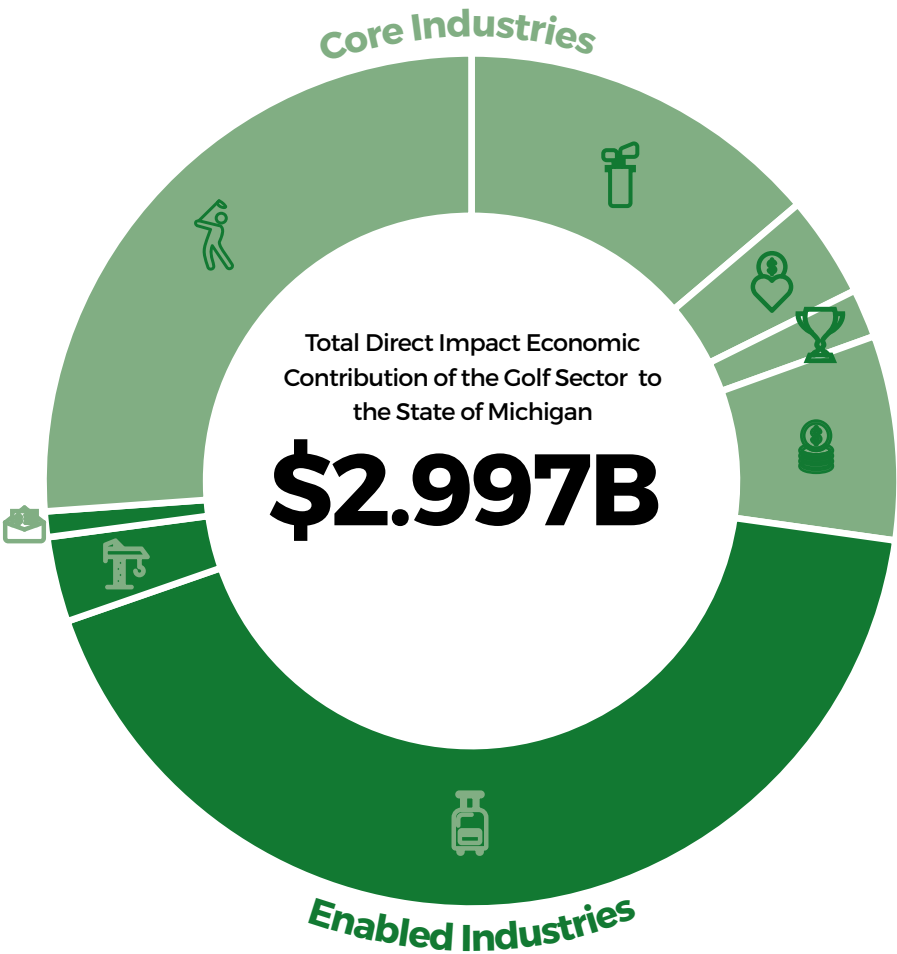
NGF counted 43 golf communities in Michigan that were active in building new homes in 2023, **generating \$91.9 million in construction activity**. NGF estimated that approximately two homes in each of the 20 golf communities built before 1970 have undergone a replacement or significant renovation in 2023, **generating \$7.9 million in construction activity**.



**\$27.8M** Property Tax

The NGF estimated the “golf premium” associated with all golf communities in the state to be upwards of \$1.72 billion, with a 2023 property tax impact of **\$27.8 million in net gain for local taxing authorities** to be used for education and other local initiatives funded by property tax revenue.

# SUMMARY OF ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION



**\$2,037.9M**

**\$1,240.8M**  
Golf Facility Revenue\*

**\$235.2M**  
Capital Investments

**\$399.0M**  
Golf-related Supplies\*\*

**\$52.8M**  
Tournaments & Associations

**\$110.1M**  
Charitable Impact



**\$959.3M**

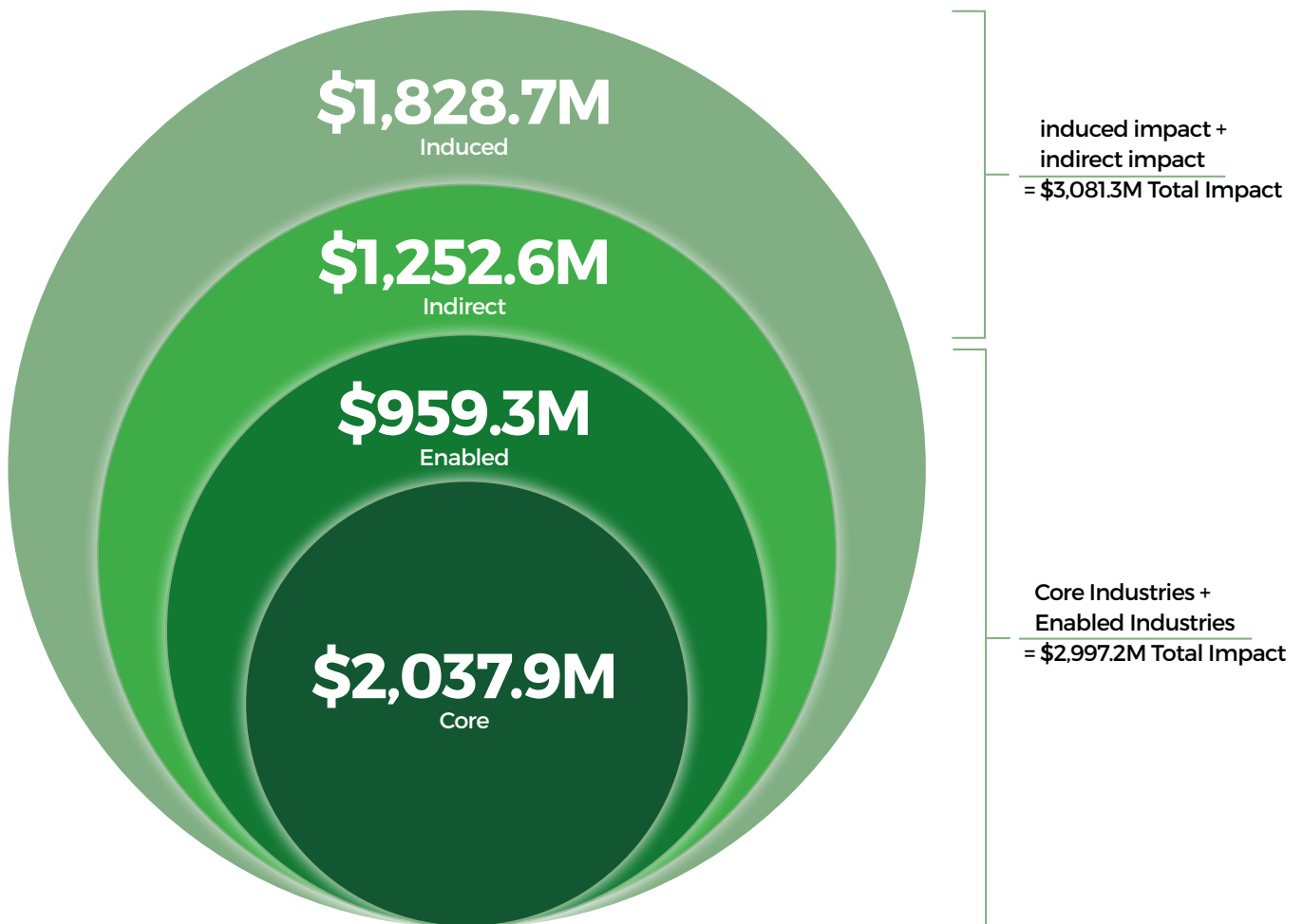
**\$831.6M**  
Golf Tourism

**\$99.8M**  
Golf-Related Residential Construction\*\*

**\$27.9M**  
Property Tax Impact\*\*\*

\*Revenue from golf facility operations including on-course merchandise sold.  
\*\*Total retail sales do not include on-course merchandise sold.  
\*\*\*Property tax impact of \$27.9 million is the net gain for local taxing authorities

**\$6,078,500,000**



TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

**61,116** Jobs

WAGES & BENEFITS

**\$1,795M**

STATE, LOCAL & FEDERAL TAXES

**\$821.1M**

## NON-ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION HIGHLIGHTS

Golf continues to be more than just an enjoyable pastime in Michigan, it is a key industry contributing to the overall economy and quality of life in Michigan. In addition to the economic contribution noted above, there are other impacts that golf has on the State of Michigan, including:

- ➔ Golf provides upwards of **92,200 acres of professionally managed green space** within the State and provides affordable outdoor recreation to nearly 896,000 Michigan residents. The vast majority of golf facilities in Michigan surveyed by NGF in 2023 (82%) participated in at least one program for fostering the growth of the game in 2023, with 79% offering some type of formal junior golf program. Michigan golf courses also report a high level of programs for disabled golfers, military & veteran golfers and specialized beginner programs like WELCOME2GOLF or Get Golf Ready. .
- ➔ Michigan has almost 90 separate locations that host an active First Tee program and 92 that offer a Youth on Course offering. Approximately 35,000 school-age children participated in various youth golf programs in schools, community centers and golf facilities in Michigan in 2023.
- ➔ Golf courses provide unique employment opportunities for a wide range of individuals of all ages and employment types (full-time / part-time). NGF has estimated that as many as 2,990 (13% of all part-time staff) persons under the age of 21, and as many as 4,140 (18% of part-time staff) citizens over the age of 65 were employed at golf facilities in 2023.
- ➔ Golf courses can elevate the quality of life in communities in which they are present by helping to improve the health and well-being of citizens and by providing additional social, youth/family activities and programming. As traditional golf is not an option for some, golf facilities have introduced other amenities and activities to their offerings, such as driving ranges, practice facilities, golf simulators, bike/walking trails, bird watching, space for snow/winter sports and public and/or non-profit meeting space availability.
- ➔ Only about 67% of the total golf course acreage in Michigan is irrigated, with the primary source of irrigation water coming from ground / well water (42%), surface or run-off (37%), reclaim (7%) and other (14%). Approximately 37% of Michigan golf courses have had an irrigation audit performed on the property, and of the facilities performing the audit, 52% have made adjustments within the last few years resulting in an estimated 14% savings in water use.
- ➔ Michigan golf courses have implemented the following environmental impact programs at their golf facility as of 2023 (top six responses):
  - ➔ Expanded natural “no mow” areas – 69%
  - ➔ Sprinkler upgrades to reduce water use – 60%
  - ➔ Added garden beds or honeybee hives – 50%
  - ➔ Added bat boxes or bird houses – 36%
  - ➔ Natural water algae controls – 32%
  - ➔ Wildlife sanctuary – 10%





## Top 2023 Golf Facilities Benefits

Michigan junior golf programs reached  
**35,000 KIDS**



**13%: <21**

of all golf facility part-time staff are under the age of 21



Charitable Impact thru golf  
**\$110.1 MILLION**



**18%: >65**

of all golf facility part-time staff are over the age of 65



**92%**

of golf facilities provided at least one program for fostering the growth of the game in 2023.



**90**

Locations that offer a First Tee Program thru four separate MI Chapters



**92**

Locations that offer Youth on Course



Golf Facilities in MI provide

**92,274 acres  
of green space**

**67%**

are actively maintained and irrigated



Golf courses can

**IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF CITIZENS**



# GOLF'S POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

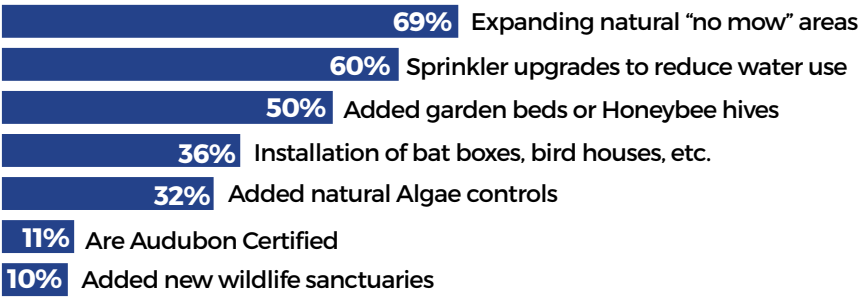
The NGF review shows that Michigan golf courses provide the following key environmental takeaways:


## Key Environmental Observations

<b>ACREAGE:</b> Michigan golf courses comprise a total of 92,274 acres (golf course playing area only), of which 61,932 acres are actively maintained and irrigated (67%).	<b>WATER:</b> Michigan golf courses are responsible users of water for irrigation, using predominantly ground/well water (42%) or surface / ponds / run-off water (37%) for irrigation. A growing number of courses (now 7%) are using reclaim water for irrigation.	<b>IRRIGATION:</b> Approximately 37% of Michigan golf courses have had an irrigation audit performed on the property. Of the facilities performing the audit, 52% made adjustments resulting in an estimated 14% savings in water use.	<b>ENERGY:</b> 17% of MI facilities reported having done an energy audit in the past five years with 86% of those facilities adopting energy-saving practices, resulting in 10% of energy saving per year on average.
--	--	--	---

## GCSAA BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Approximately 49% of Michigan golf courses are aware of the GCSAA's Michigan Golf Courses Planning Guide and the Best Management Practices. Of the facilities aware of the BMP guide, 42% have already adopted or plan to adopt practices contained in the guide.
- MI facilities were asked to indicate which GCSAA's Best Management Practices (BMP) they have adopted (or plan to adopt in the next year) as a result of reading the GCSAA's BMP for MA GC Planning Guide. The top four adopted practices were related to golf turf fertilization and nutrient management (41%), irrigation changes (39%), altering maintenance practices (36%), and enhanced pesticide management (35%).
- The top six environmental impact programs facilities have implemented include (does not sum to 100% as many facilities adopt multiple practices):

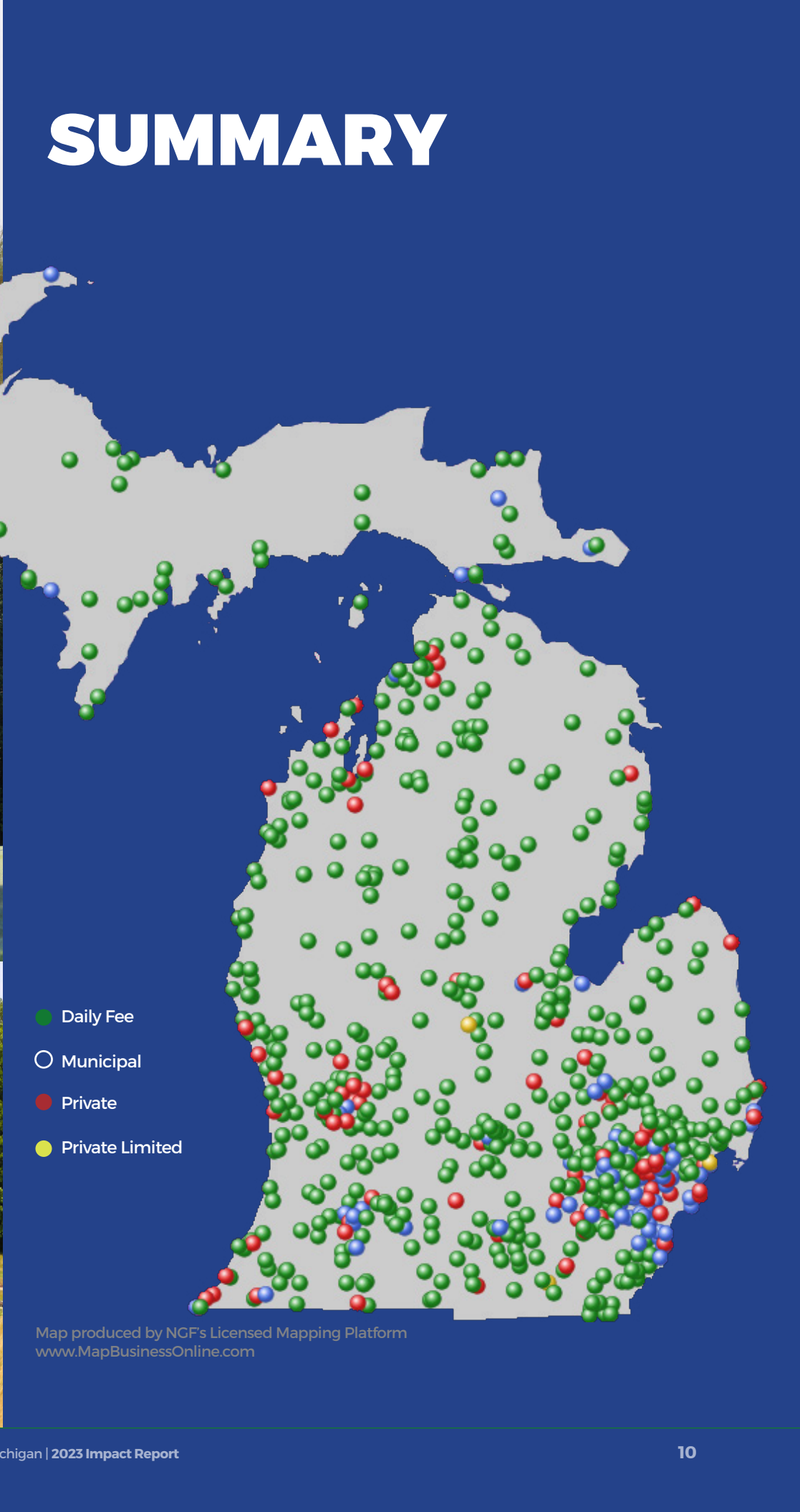


 The Michigan Turfgrass Environmental Stewardship Program (MTESP) was launched in 1998 to help turf managers comply with pesticide regulations and to protect groundwater. The 12 module online program consisting of Program Overview, Site Evaluation, Wellhead Protection, Pesticide and Fertilizer Storage, Pesticide Mixing and Loading Pad, Pesticide Handling and Application, Fuel Storage, Equipment Wash Pad, Emergency Response, Buffer Strips, Green Purchasing, Conservation & Waste Reduction and Irrigation is available at no cost to any turf manager in the state at [MTESP.org](http://MTESP.org). Currently there are 57 facilities registered under the program covering 26,792 acres.

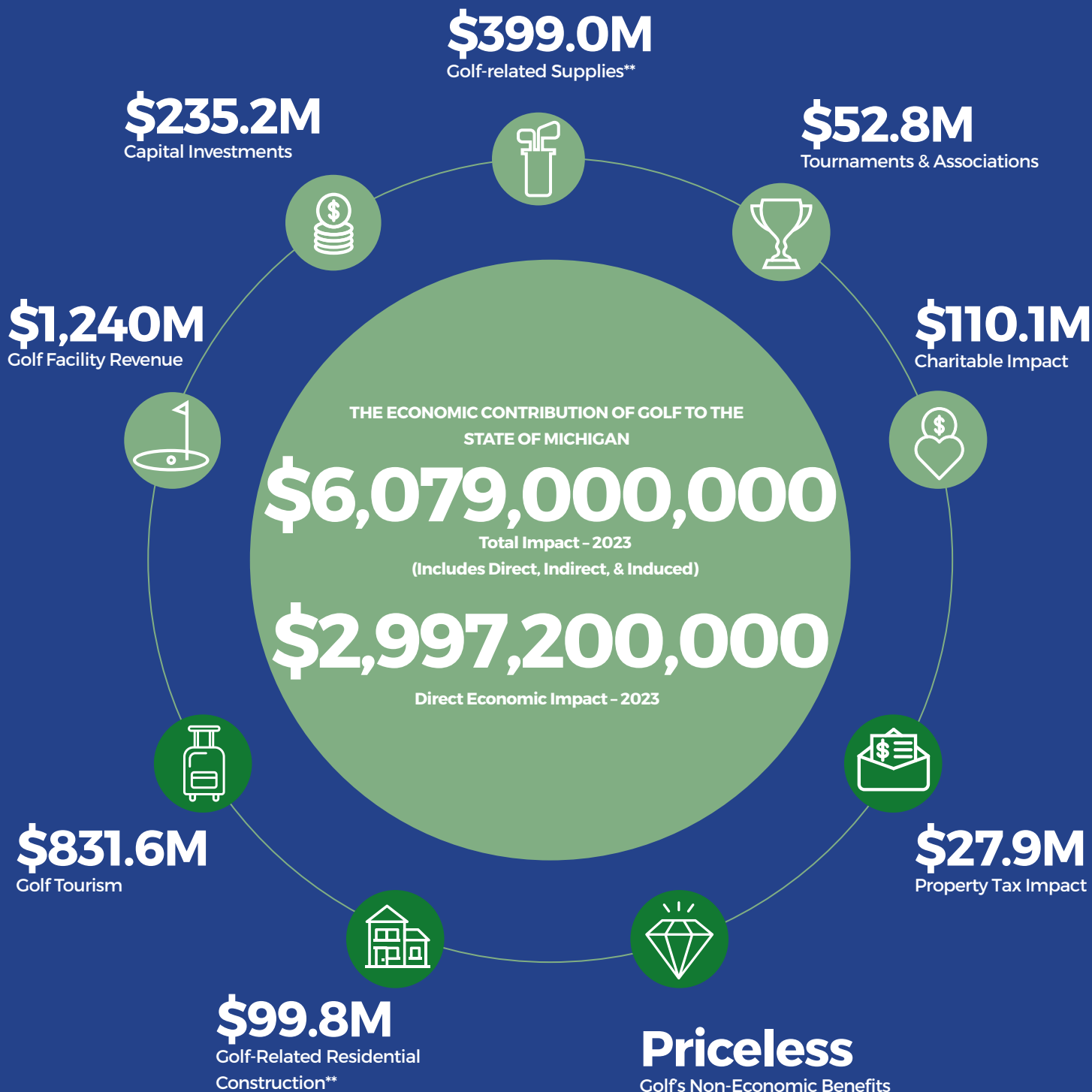
## Integrated Pest Management

Golf Course Superintendents utilize Integrated pest management (IPM) a science-based approach that combines chemical and non-chemical methods to manage pests. The goal of IPM is to regulate pests, not eradicate them, and to minimize economic, health, and environmental risks. Applications to golf courses are done at the direct expense to the bottom line and profitability of the operation. They are done at as low of a volume and frequency as possible to meet customer expectations while aligning with IPM and facility budget.

# SUMMARY



Map produced by NGF's Licensed Mapping Platform  
[www.MapBusinessOnline.com](http://www.MapBusinessOnline.com)







**THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF GOLF TO THE STATE OF MICHIGAN  
2023 IMPACT REPORT**