

August 9, 2011

Location & Extent Review
Larimer County Planning
RE: Estes Park Gun & Archery Club
Common Point Shooting Range
970 Noels Draw, Drake, CO

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED PROJECT:

Shot Barrier Curtain to be installed on 11- 50ft poles to reduce the shot fall zone and increase the shot reclamation of trap shooting. Located on US Dept of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation parcels: #25230-00-911, #25233-00-926, & #25262-00-905 of which the only parcel effected is #25262-00-905 where the Estes Park Gun & Archery Club established a trap range in 1980. This land is leased by the Estes Valley Recreation and Park District to provide a recreational shooting area. Common Point Shooting Range, since 1970, has been operated and managed under contract by the renter, Estes Park Gun & Archery Club, a non-profit corporation. (Currently the three parcels are in a land transfer negotiation with Federal Lands to Parks and Estes Valley Recreation & Park District.)

- Trapshooting, a clay target is hurled forward into the air, away from the firing line. In order to simulate the unpredictable flight patterns of birds taking wing, the targets are sprung out of the trap house at various angles and in various directions.

The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) through their manual, "Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Range" developed by EPA Region 2 with other agencies are providing a view of how lead shot is regulated. This manual refers to chapter III (3) article 3.1.2 Shot Containment page 4 refers to Reducing the Shot fall Zone. On page III-5 it lists Shot Curtains as an effective tool to keep lead shot out of selected areas of the range, reducing the size of the shot fall zone and corresponding cost of reclamation. (The Club is quite aware of the lead component to the Shooting Range. Okie Consulting Services, Charles Sever who also wrote the directive for Bureau of Reclamation Shooting Ranges, in 2004, evaluated the environmental risk at this range. Soil samples were taken with a reading of pH 7.0 and 7.3 with moderate clay content. Lead should not migrate into groundwater through soils testing pH between 6.5 and 8.5. This document can be found with other Club history presented to Larimer County Planning.)

To further explain the location of the Shot Barrier Curtain & poles, one can reference the "white page" study done at Dartmouth using the Hope Global curtain product. The poles will be installed, 80 yards from the front trap shooting station. Clays are noted to be falling 50 yards from the trap house.

The Common Point Shooting Range has only one trap field to consider for the containment of shot and recycling. As to the recreational opportunities that can be provided to the Estes Valley and surrounding areas, the re-establishment of trap shooting will offer a well rounded public shooting range; Archery, Pistol, Rifle, Tactical and Trap. The Club is also ready to develop youth or beginner trap shooters as was

done in the '80's with the Park R-3 School District. Programs discontinued for one reason or another, but the Club has maintained its' supply of Remington 12 gauge shotguns and outside trap facilities to be ready for that next Trap Instructional Program.

By using the Land Use maps from the Larimer County Master Plan, the parcels are located in the Rural Land category with 35.902 acres more or less. The development is to enhance the shooting range venue. Access is made through road easements contracted before 1950 as the US Department of Interior, Bureau of Reclamation worked on the mountain underground tunnels to bring water from the Western side of the Rockies to the Eastern side (refer to Colorado-Big Thompson Project). Common Point is the area where Olympus underground water tunnel connects with the Pole Hill tunnel as the water continues its route to the Eastern slope.

To reach the Common Point Shooting Range, access is made through a locked gate with padlocks for the Estes Park Gun & Archery Club members, Arapaho/Roosevelt National Forest, Estes Park Utility, Fire Department, Bureau of Reclamation, Cooper property owners to each side of road and Gen. Wise and the Selfs', who own property two miles beyond the shooting range. The locked gate was an agreeable alternative to the landowners (summer residents) to control the casual sightseer to access the private property and provided a controlled safety factor for the shooting range.

This range is considered to be quite rustic as there is no running water or electricity provided. In 2009, the Club with the help of grants from the Bureau of Reclamation and Estes Valley Recreation & Park District, installed a CXT ADA compliant vaulted restroom. During the summer months in previous years, the Club rented WM port-a-lets for a convenience facility. The only water seen is from the snowmelt and spring rains that drain the area by using Solitude Creek and Noel's Draw creek that meet about a mile and a half with the Big Thompson at Highway 34. The creeks tend to be dry from July until the next year's spring runoff.

In the Bureau of Reclamation Environmental Assessment and Resource Management Plan study for 2008, the following excerpts can be found: Common Point is a narrow valley at an elevation of approximately 7,400 feet. Topography on either side of the draw rises sharply as steep-sided mountains. Slopes along the valley are at a 2-to-3 percent grade, while side slopes are at a 50-to-80 percent grade. Rock outcroppings are common on the steep-sided mountain slopes. Soils on these slopes are typically coarse-textured and shallow. Soils along the valley, excluding the stream channel, are primarily composed of spoil material from construction of the tunnels. This material is coarse-textured and well-drained. Forested slopes on Common Point are dominated by ponderosa pine, with an understory of shrubs and herbaceous plants. Vegetation in the valley where the shooting facilities are located is comprised of mixed grasses and forbs. Noels Draw supports a narrow riparian corridor of willows and other riparian plants. This property is not listed on, nor is eligible, for the National Register of Historic Places. (Just for Historical reference, in 1976, Highway 34 experienced a 100 year flood from a huge cloud burst that started from Loveland Heights just below Estes Park effecting Loveland residents as well. In its break, lives were lost, cabins & homes destroyed with

the Highway impassible for approximately two years. Many tons of the 'spoil material' or tunnel shot rock from the Common Point area was used has the road base to rebuild Highway 34.)

Environmental stewardship and general maintenance for Common Point Outdoor Shooting Range is implemented as clean-up days preformed six times a year. Each member of the Gun Club is required to volunteer and attend one clean-up day annually or be assessed an additional \$50 for their right to use the facilities. Clean-up operations have been going on for several years but keeping record of the volunteer hours was started in 2007.

- 2007 – 614 volunteer hours
- 2008 – 641 volunteer hours
- 2009 – 792 volunteer hours
- 2010 – 602 volunteer hours

The duties included reclaiming lead from backstops, policing spent cartridges, mowing, repair of target stands, maintenance of storage sheds, trash pick-up of entire range, etc.

Projects the Estes Park Gun & Archery Club for the immediate five years include:

- 2011-2012 Shot Barrier Curtains installed for trap range
- 2012- Lead Sedimentation Trap installed in Noels Draw creek
- 2013-25yard Pistol Range roof shelter over firing line
- 2014-2015- Increase Rifle Range shooting stations and redirect access road
- 2015-Study possibility of using Recreation District 10 acres to build another rifle range or develop a skeet range

Propose in the next 5 years:

- 2016- Second CXT ADA compliant vaulted restroom
- 2017-Build a self-defense tactical range
- 2018-2019-2020- Due to a volunteer Gun Club Board with no paid employees and the amount of land to pursue new or improved facilities, projects may need to be found within these limits.

For this review, the Club would welcome anyone to contact the president for a tour of the Common Point Outdoor Range. Just call Sharyn Gartner, 970-586-2426 or email president@epgunarchery.com and/or view the Club's website www.epgunarchery.com.

Sharyn Gartner
President, Estes Park Gun & Archery Club
2008-2011

Location and Extent Hearing Held September 21, 2011

ITEM #1 Estes Park Gun & Archery, Location and Extent #11-Z1858: Mr. Helmick provided background information on the request for the Estes Park Gun and Archery Club for the facility at Common Point located on Noels Draw Lane at Common Point south of Highway 34, 2.5 miles east of Estes Park. The request includes construction of shot curtains for the trap range and future shelters.

Commissioner Wallace asked how the gun shells would be discarded/picked up in order to help with the possible lead contamination to the environment.

Doug Ryan, Health Department, explained that when the gun shells reached the end of the range the curtain stopped the pellets, and fell to the ground. He noted that the pellets would have to be periodically picked up to recycle.

Mr. Helmick explained that they would have a tarp under the curtains along with other methods to collect the shot.

Discussion:

Commissioner Cox moved that the Planning Commission adopt the following Resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Planning Commission approve the Estes Park Gun & Archery Location and Extent, file #11-Z1858, subject to the following conditions:

1. Adequate water and sanitation shall be provided at all times for individuals at the site. This is provided by the use of a vaulted toilet and bottled water.
2. The Club or the District shall obtain all necessary permits and approvals for the facilities identified in this review. This may include building permits and variances to the zoning height limits.
3. This approval is for the shot curtains and other improvements identified in the application materials, including sedimentation trap, shelter roofs, shooting station increase and road redirection, additional vaulted toilets, a tactical range and the study of increasing the area use to additional adjacent District lands.

Commissioner Hart seconded the Motion.

Commissioners' Cox, Dougherty, Gerrard, Hart, Jensen, Wallace, Zitti, and Chairman Glick voted in favor of the Motion.

Motion Passed: 8-0

These minutes constitute the Resolution of the Larimer County Planning Commission for the recommendations contained herein which are hereby certified to the Larimer County Board of Commissioners.

Scott Glick, Chairman

Nancy Wallace, Secretary