



Community Value Valued Community

24 September 2008

Introduction

Snoqualmie Valley Rifle Club is a 600+-member asset to citizens and a value to communities of Snoqualmie Valley and the Central Puget Sound region. Its members represent all walks of life and support the interests, needs and skill levels of juniors to adults in safe, responsible firearm use. The club has an honored history of depth and breadth of service to communities near and far in Snoqualmie Valley: <http://www.svrifle.com>

SVRC's roots date from the close of the Great War, its incorporation as a non-profit, member-supported organization from 1946. SVRC is an historic and present day treasure of King County, its citizens, law enforcement agencies and communities.

Here is a copy of minutes from the City of Snoqualmie Council Meeting of January 24, 1927 referencing support for the Snoqualmie Valley Rifle Club: <http://www.svrifle.com/documents/Snoqualmie-Council-24JAN1927.pdf>

There are 46,398 Concealed Pistol Licenses (CPLs) in King County as of 16JUN08. At the same time, Snohomish County has 22,259 CPLs, Kitsap County has 11,491, Thurston County has 10,184 and Pierce County has

31,825 CPLs. That is 122,157 CPLs in the Central Puget Sound Region. SVRC is a a major resource and support for CPL holders and law enforcement agencies in King County and the Central Puget Sound region to develop and maintain proficiency in safe, responsible firearm ownership.

Vital Service

SVRC fulfills a vital service to the central King County region. Without it there would be a significant, risky lack of shooting facilities in central King County.

King County now has 11 ranges, down from 33 ranges a few years ago. The phenomenon that threatens ranges is not guns but land use. Counties, cities and developers want land to develop. Law enforcement agencies and forest products companies are known to want ranges of sufficient number in King County to prevent shooting in forests.

The other ranges in the region are near capacity and many of them are too remote to encourage people from Seattle and the Eastside to attend them. The Seattle Rifle and Pistol Club maintains a range at Machias near Lake Stevens. Membership is currently capped and there is something like a two year wait for new applicants.

Cascade Rifle and Pistol Club has approximately 800 members on a range that has roughly three times the facilities that SVRC maintains, but is a long drive from Seattle and North King County. Also, Cascade is talking about capping the membership because many of the 5 ranges are scheduled for organized shooting events and use by police organizations which can impact the member's ability to use the range at peak periods. Cascade leases their range from King County so there is certainly a precedent for the County supporting shooting.

Nature And Purpose Of This Presentation

This presentation explores data on usage of the SVRC range with a view to demonstrating the value of SVRC and its range to local and regional communities.

SVRC has been informed by Weyerhaeuser, from whom the club leases the land on which the range stands, that the range must shut down within three years. We are trying to think through the best thing to do in this situation and the best approach for doing it. We earnestly welcome and entreat participation with Weyerhaeuser and King County in this regard.

Two possible outcomes of the hand-back of the SVRC range to Weyerhaeuser are envisioned by the club so far, and it is emphasized that these are thoughts about possibilities, not proposals and certainly not plans.

A - a way can be found to allow the SVRC range to remain in place, such as by inclusion in the King County Parks System under SVRC environmental and community value stewardship

B - other land in the Snoqualmie-Fall City area of the SnoValley can designated/purchased with Washington State and/or King County assistance

Philosophy Of Operations

SVRC actively encourages safe, responsible gun use because the shooting occurs in a controlled environment where safe and legal gun usage is constantly emphasized. Without adequate range facilities many people will be tempted to shoot in the forests, which can be legally but not always safely, or illegally and a danger or nuisance to others. They will also lack sufficient opportunity for exposure to knowledgeable and experienced participants which provides social conditioning that discourages injudicious

or criminal gun use. SVRC provides that exposure through the presence of its many members, activities and sponsored events.

The current or other future SVRC range is a shared natural habitat for humans, birds, animals, fish and native plants. SVRC is committed to wetland and wildlife habitat preservation and restoration. The range as currently located is inclusive, supporting all life forms excepting noxious weeds (although these exist there) and unsafe, irresponsible firearms owners. The SVRC range is an outstanding example of multi-use community value.

Overview

Here is the [SVRC Website](http://www.svrifle.com/): <http://www.svrifle.com/>

SVRC has over 700 members and membership is growing strongly, particularly with younger citizens of King County. Approximately 30 people are joining the club every month as of June 2008. Commitment to and gratitude for the club and its range grows constantly. The range is a strong public do-good.

All SVRC members are members of the NRA and over the age of 18. The membership includes homemakers, lawyers, musicians, tradesmen, doctors, technicians, parents, small business owners, environmentalists, clergymen, engineers, teachers, software engineers, self-employed entrepreneurs, small business owners, government employees, business executives, service industry workers, active, former and retired military personnel, etc. -- a strong representation of the diversity of American life.

SVRC hosts a minimum of 200 people per week and 800 people per month at its range near Snoqualmie, WA. A variable 20 to 50 people use the range every day and sometimes more than 50. The range is open daily from 7am through 9pm weekdays and from 9am through 9pm weekends.

Users come from the entire Central Puget Sound region. Some come from Eastern Washington and British Columbia. King County residents comprise the majority of club members and their guests who use the range. Some groups of specialty participants or [Disciplines](#) who use the range under SVRC sponsorship welcome participants who are not members of SVRC but are from King County and beyond.

Sponsored [Disciplines](#) include:

[Action Pistol](#)

[Black Powder](#)

[CMP/High-power](#)

[Cowboy](#)

[Juniors](#)

Periodically, SVRC members offer [Classes](#) in the safe, skilled and legal use of firearms. At this time, a regular [Class](#) in [Hunter Education](#) is led by our club president.

SVRC is proud to sponsor the [Juniors Marksmanship Program](#). This program teaches boys and girls the skills of rifle marksmanship in a supervised environment that instills a safe, positive, and respectful attitude about firearms. The kids have a great time while they are at it. Thanks to the generosity of club members and grants from the NRA Foundation, SVRC supplies equipment for the Juniors Marksmanship Program.

Law Enforcement agencies are a principal user of the SVRC range, which conveniently enables them to gain and maintain certifications with the Department of Homeland Security and other agencies. Local law enforcement agencies periodically request a set-aside of regular time at the range. Already a set-aside of five times a year for law enforcement training is in the range calendar. Numerous members -- including SOT/SWAT team

members -- of surrounding law enforcement agencies have expressed their appreciation of the range and keen interest in seeing it maintained.

Data: The Community Value Of The SVRC Range

The following data reveal the high value of the SVRC range to communities of King County and beyond. They also reveal the benefit brought to these communities by the skill and dedication of members of Snoqualmie Valley Rifle Club. Their labors of love maintain the range, optimize its use and enrich the community.

Work parties for weed control, building maintenance and other upkeep tasks are scheduled three times a year. If volunteers are insufficient to accomplish the clean-up needs, a contractor is hired to do it. The grass of the rifle range is mowed once a month during the growing season. About 50 pounds of brass are recovered from the pistol pit each month and about 1500 pounds of lead are recovered from the berm of the pistol pit once a year or more often. Two porta-potties are cleaned every week.

The following figures show types, numbers and frequency of use and the resulting drawing power of the range for [Disciplines](#) and [Classes](#). SVRC is a dedicated steward of these facilities and the people and groups who use them.

[Disciplines](#)

[Black Powder](#)

http://www.svrifle.com/black_powder.htm

A significant community value of this **Discipline** is the encouragement and maintenance of the gunsmith's art and of wood and metallurgical engineering and craftsmanship generally.

2007 and earlier

Usage: 12 - 15 participants
25 - 30 participants in October for a night shoot

Frequency: once a month (first Sunday)

Drawing Power: King, Pierce, Snohomish Counties, Eastern Washington and, once a year, Arizona

2008

Usage: 12 - 15 participants
25 - 30 participants in October for a night shoot

Frequency: once a month (first Sunday)

Drawing Power: King, Pierce, Snohomish Counties, Eastern Washington and, once a year, Arizona

Action Pistol

http://www.svrifle.com/action_pistol.htm

2007 and earlier

Usage: 20 - 25 participants

Frequency: once a month (second Saturday)

Drawing Power: King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties

2008

Usage: 40 + participants and growing monthly

Frequency: once a month (second Saturday)

Drawing Power: King, Pierce, Snohomish and Kitsap Counties

Cowboy Action

<http://www.svrifle.com/cowboy.htm>

2007 and earlier

Usage:

- March 2006 - 22 participants
- April 2007 - 37
- May - 22
- June - 34
- July - 28
- August - 17
- September - 25
- October - 26
- November - 32

Frequency: once a month for nine months (third Sunday)

Drawing Power: King, Pierce, Snohomish, Kitsap Counties and BC

2008

Usage: May - 35 participants
June - 29

Frequency: once a month for nine months (third Sunday)

Drawing Power: King, Pierce, Snohomish, Kitsap Counties and BC

CMP/High Power Rifle

<http://www.svrifle.com/cmp.htm>

All participants sign an Affidavit of Eligibility and Liability Agreement which is derived from standards set by the Civilian Marksmanship Program ([CMP](#)), a non-profit corporation created by the US Congress in 1996 after having been administered since 1916 by the Department of the Army as the Department of Civilian Marksmanship. In line with the CMP goals, this [Discipline](#) helps citizens gain and maintain proficiency in marksmanship.

2007 and earlier

Usage: 15 - 20 participants

Frequency: once a month (last Sunday)

Drawing Power: King, (15 cities) Pierce (2 cities), Snohomish (4 cities), Lewis (1 city) and Thurston (2 cities) Counties

2008

Usage: 15 - 20 participants

Frequency: once a month (last Sunday)

Drawing Power: King, (15 cities) Pierce (2 cities), Snohomish (4 cities), Lewis (1 city) and Thurston (2 cities) Counties

Juniors

<http://www.svrifle.com/juniors.htm>

For many decades SVRC has provided a program for youth to shoot rifles with the guidance of NRA-certified instructors. The program is currently (2008) run by a team of four instructors who have been offering area youth their time and firearm expertise since 1996.

The ages of young participants has ranged from 8 to 18 with most youth between 10 and 18 years old. Participation is open to all youth in that age class regardless of range membership, area of domicile or personal handicap. Some youth satisfy their firearm curiosity with only one or two evenings shooting with us while others come back year after year.

To this point we have had two youth earn the Distinguished Expert medal, which is the highest level of NRA achievement award programs. This has taken those participants four to five years to achieve.

Participation in our program is totally unsolicited and is provided as a service to the community. We typically operate near our optimum nightly attendance, which is 14 to 16 participants, though we have had as many as 24 attend on a single evening. Our highest enrollments have been 2008 (with 44), 2002 (with 42) and 2004 (with 41). Typically, less than 50% of the participants return from the previous year so we are able to pass on safe firearm handling to lots of new participants each year.

Most years we also assist two to five area Boy Scouts earn their shooting merit badge. This service is in addition to that offered the other participants listed here.

2007 and earlier

Usage: 10 - 15 junior and 9 - 12 adult participants/week

Frequency: Thursday evenings, April - August

2008

Usage: 10 - 15 junior and 9 - 12 adult participants/week

Frequency: Thursday evenings, April - August

Juniors: Recent Aggregate Attendance By Area Of Domicile				
Town	2008	2007	2006	2005
Carnation	5	4	6	3

Juniors: Recent Aggregate Attendance By Area Of Domicile

Duvall	4	4	3	2
Fall City	8	3	6	6
Graham	2			
Italy			1	
Kent				1
Kirkland	1			
North Bend	14	12	9	13
Ravensdale				1
Redmond	2	4	3	6
Renton	1			
Sammamish	1			1
Seattle		1	2	1
Snoqualmie	6	2	8	5
Unknown		1		
Totals	44	31	38	39
Total Girls	11	5	8	9
Total Boys	33	26	30	30

Rimfire Rifle

<http://www.svrifle.com/rimfire.htm>

2007 and earlier

Usage: 12 - 20 participants ages 20s to 60s

Frequency: Wednesday evenings, May - September

Drawing Power: King, Pierce, Snohomish, ... Counties

2008

Usage: 12 - 20 participants ages 20s to 60s

Frequency: Wednesday evenings, May - September

Drawing Power: King, Pierce, Snohomish, ... Counties

Classes

Hunter Education

<http://www.svrifle.com/huntered.htm>

2008 and earlier

Usage: About 400 participants over several years, usual class size is 18 students and 10 helpers who are SVRC members, a 1/2 teacher/student ratio

Frequency: three classes per years, each of five weekdays and one weekend day; all sessions must be attended

Drawing Power: Snoqualmie Valley, Auburn, Seattle, Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, etc.

More Details:

A class completes with a True/False/Multiple Choice test on the weekday sessions and grading on each of five activities (see below) at the range on the weekend session. All must be passed for the student to receive certification.

The club maintains firearms of sufficient number dedicated to use by this and other classes. These firearms are donated over the years by individuals, organizations and businesses.

The five range activities are:

- 1- 22 Rifle
- 2- Muzzle-Loader/Black Powder
- 3- Archery
- 4- Field Course / Trail Hike
- 5- High-Power Rifle

Skill levels on each of these activities are graded and the grades of all students are archived.

Each participant receives careful, individual attention, a hallmark of [Classes](#) offered by SVRC.

Concealed Pistol License Data for WA

Research by Tom Felker:

Corresponding with the Department of Licensing (Bill Forth and Christine Anthony): their preliminary response was that up-to-date figures are not available because of a big backlog in entering permits into the database. I have since asked them to provide the most recent reliable numbers. I have located some dated figures that are described below.

Preliminary Answers:

(1) Per October 11, 2006 Seattle Times article: “Statewide, there are about 239,000 active concealed pistol licenses. King County has slightly more than 48,000.

(2) Per <http://blogostuff.blogspot.com/2004/12/percentage-of-adults-with-carry.html>: 5.12% of adults in Washington have a CPL. Per <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/53000.html>: 2006 population estimate was 6,395,798. This includes those who would not be eligible for a CPL. Population estimate for persons under 18 years old is 23.9% of the total population. Therefore, persons eligible for CPL in 2006 could not possibly be greater than 4,867,202. 5.12% of that figure would equate to 249,200.

(3) Note: per Bill Forth, Department of Licensing: “Washington has seen a 10% increase in the number of concealed pistol licenses (CPL) being issued by local law enforcement agencies during the first four months of 2008, as compared with the same period in 2007. Because of this, we currently have 12,768 licenses not yet entered into the database.”

State and Local Governments Owning and Supporting Shooting Ranges

Research by Tom Felker:

- 1) Plantation Range in Bellingham is owned by Whatcom County.
- 2) Kitsap Rifle and Revolver Club in Bremerton is on land leased from the Department of Natural Resources.
- 3) Boyd Mordhorst Memorial Shooting Range in Ephrata is owned by the City of Ephrata and managed by the Ephrata Sportsmen's Association.
- 4) Jefferson County Sportsmen's Association in Port Townsend is "operated by special license with Jefferson County." This may just be a special use permit.
- 5) Cascade Rifle and Pistol Club and Seattle Skeet & Trap have a 30-year lease from King County Parks Department. In FY 2006, Cascade Rifle and Pistol Club received a \$50,000 grant from Washington State.
- 6) Roger Dahl Rifle Training Range in Seattle is owned by City Parks Department and operated by West Seattle Sportsman's Club.
- 7) Spokane Rifle Club is located in Riverside State Park.
- 8) Vancouver-Clark County Gun Club in Vancouver is owned by Clark County and overseen by the Clark County Parks and Recreation Department.
- 9) Cowlitz Game & Anglers has leased 80 acres from Cowlitz County for a shooting range near Castle Rock. "They must still get a special-use permit, and perhaps other approvals, before it can build the range." Construction of the range is being opposed by more than a dozen homeowners, who have hired an attorney. The staff of the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Funding Board –has recommended that the proposed range receive a \$100,000 grant in fiscal 2008 through the Firearms and Archery

Range Recreation Program. This program is funded by a \$3 portion of the fee from issuance of each concealed pistol license.

10) Per 12/14/05 Seattle Times article, Snohomish County has been trying to build a shooting range in Sultan Basin for over 10 years. At that time, the project was stalled by environmental concerns, including habitat issues over the marbled murrelet, a seabird that nests deep in forests. Initially, the range was to be used by Law enforcement, too, but a police range has been built elsewhere. The county plans to hire an operator for the range because the parks and recreation department has no experience with gun ranges. The Snohomish County 2008-2013 Capital Improvement Program includes over \$1 million for the range, including \$108,000 in 2008 and \$250,000 per year during 2009-2011. The description of the project in the 2008-2013 budget reads: "Snohomish County Shooting Range Development. Funds will be accumulated to support the development of a publicly owned and operated shooting range. Property in the Sultan Basin is currently in the re-conveyance process through the Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

11) Per 5/11/08 and 5/12/08 articles in Peninsula Daily News, the Pacific Northwest Shooting Park Association and Clallam County have been trying to build a rifle range in the North Olympic Peninsula for 40 years. A new site has been selected after others have been rejected, but environmental activists are fighting it, claiming that lead pollution will be harmful.

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