

Usery Mountain Shooting Range

Five – Year Master Development Plan

2023

PART 1 – Background

The Rio Salado Sportsman’s Club, Inc. (RSSC) is a 501c4 entity that currently operates the Usery Mountain Shooting Range and has done so since 1978. Previously, between 1958 and 1978, the range was operated by the Mesa Gun Club. The Range occupies approximately 140 acres of land belonging to the Arizona Game and Fish Department, located north of Cell Tower Road and west of and adjacent to Usery Pass Road. As of January 1, 2022, RSSC has approximately 7,700 individual and family members. RSSC hosted over 100,000 shooter days for the general public, over the past 12 months. This Five Year Development Plan is required by the lease agreement between the Arizona Game and Fish Commission and the Rio Salado Sportsman’s Club Inc. The purpose of the Plan is to provide an overall view of enhancing the range’s facilities and operations to provide a safer, more enjoyable and varied shooting experience for members and the general public. The plan consists of 1, 3 and 5 year goals that are subject to change as circumstances and needs change. The Plan is a living document that will be evaluated and updated annually.

Part II – Existing Facilities

Currently, the Usery Mountain Shooting Range has the following facilities as shown on Appendix A:

1. A main (public) shooting range with 48 tables and firing lanes, with target stands at 25 , 50 , and 100 yards. The range is covered and has a concrete pad , concrete block shooting benches , and target frames available. Additionally there are (8) target stands at 200 yards and steel target gongs at 300 yards. This range is supervised by Certified Range Officers, who provide shooter education in safe gun handling in addition to ensuring that all safety rules are followed. Handicap parking is available and the range is handicap accessible. The public range office, was enlarged in 2011 and equipment was installed to provide new shooters with a safety video to view. A kid friendly area was added in 2021 at the east end of the firing line to encourage youth shooters and their parents to come and enjoy the range. The Range Safety Officers also have an office at the main range as well as public restrooms
2. A forty- position Small Bore Range (110 yards in depth) with a cover, concrete pad, retaining wall with guardrail, stairs, and handicap access is situated at the east side of the range area. This range was improved in 2002 to 2004 and now provides a facility for use by seven different shooting disciplines. Additional lighting has been installed and improved to enhance visibility of targets more effectively during nighttime shooting events, including Monday Night Bullseye, .22 Tactical, Black Powder, and the Junior Rifle Program.
3. A fifteen-position High Power Rifle Range with target pits at 200 and 500 yards. The 200-yard pit was constructed in 2010 to address safety requirements.
4. A High-Power Rifle Silhouette Range with targets positioned at 200, 300 and 500 meters.

Note: The majority of the East Valley Police Departments use this range to provide SWAT Team tactical training. More than 20 area Police Departments and Law enforcement groups use the facilities at Utery Mountain Shooting Range for their training programs.

5. The High-Power Range also has 10 concrete tables for benchrest shooting and a Match Directors tower with a P.A system. This range is used for a variety of shooting events and is out most used and most versatile. In 2021 the range was improved by adding a concrete firing line, apron, 2 handicapped parking spaces and a ramp with access to the firing line, along with safety railing.
6. There are four Pistol Bays that are used for Practical Pistol, Cowboy Action, and Cowboy Fast Draw, shooting matches. A building combining a classroom, maintenance bay, and statistical office to support these activities. Additional Pistol Bays were constructed on High Power range for special events; such as the USPSA Desert Classic and the Superstition 3 Gun tournament. These bays were created during the construction of the 200 yard pit to expand the versatility of the High Power Range facilities.
7. An Activity Center is located across from the west end of the Small-Bore Range. The main room is used for meetings and a variety of small events.
8. A gunsmith shop, restrooms, a Junior program classroom, and a large maintenance support facility are also located in the area near the Activity Center.
9. Two Training Bays are located adjacent to the shotgun range. These are 25-yard pistol training bays which are reserved for Law Enforcement and commercial class instruction, as well as member overflow use, if the Pistol Bays are occupied.
10. The Shotgun Range consists of 12 station Sporting Clay course, a lighted combination Trap, Wobble Trap, and 5 Stand Field and to the east as well as a Trap Field with two introductory stations, overlaid. The Shotgun Range sees extensive use as it is the only shotgun sports facility in the East Valley. Over two million targets are thrown a year at the Shotgun Range. RSSC also hosts two Scholastic Clay Target Programs.
11. A Training Center Classroom is located to the Southeast of the Main (public) Range. This facility was built in 2012
12. The most recent facility to be constructed is a 11,000 square foot, multi-use, Outdoor Education and Airgun building. This facility contains a 24 lane, 10-meter Airgun range with electronic target carriers for air rifle and air pistol competitions. It also includes restrooms, an integrated audio-visual system, as well as tables and chair capable of seating 299 people. In addition to Airgun competitions, it also is used for a vendor display area during large competitions during a variety of club events. This building is air conditioned and allows it to be used year-round.
13. A Field Airgun course was constructed downhill (east) of the new Outdoor Education building.

Part III- Description of the Master Plan

The Master Development Plan provides for the infrastructure to support present activities, as well as expand new infrastructure to cover planned future facilities. This plan is divided into three parts:

Safety Enhancements

Infrastructure Improvements designed to maintain the current facilities and equipment, and to enhance member/shooter satisfaction as well as comfort.

New Range Facilities. Recent and future improvements are listed in the corresponding categories

PART VI – Master Plan

A. Safety:

1. Safety is of the upmost importance at the Utery Mountain Shooting Range. Game and Fish personnel conducted a safety inspection of the facility on March 13, 2007 and provided a list of safety improvements. Essentially, the four Practical Pistol Bays have had the impact berms raised to 20+ feet per NRA and Arizona Game and Fish Department requirements.
2. The berms at Small Bore Range have been improved. Specifically, the Small-Bore Range has dirt safety berms north (down range), west and east sides. These berms have now met the NRA requirements, this was accomplished in 2008.
3. Additional lighting has been installed in 2014 and 2020 to the Pistol Bays 1-4 to improve safety and visibility during nighttime events.
4. Lights were also installed on the High-Power range in 2013. This was originally done to accommodate a planned expansion of the Junior Rifle Program. That expansion has not been necessary. The primary beneficiary of the new lighting has been various Law Enforcement agencies who use the facility after hours
5. The Club has installed and improved communication systems between the Range Manager's office and all ranges for use in emergency and daily operations. Surveillance cameras have been installed at both entry /exit gates and at all key locations on the range to improve safety and oversight.
6. Lights have been installed 2020 at the Training Center Building and at the Outdoor Education / Airgun Building that light up the parking lot and entry / exit areas.
7. Parking lot lights located south of the Pistol Bays have been installed for added for nighttime safety and visibility.
8. Security cameras have been installed at all the shooting ranges, pistol bays, training bays, and range entrances and exits. They have also been added at the administration building, activity center, OETC building, training center, shotgun office building, maintenance building and areas where sensitive items are stored.

B. Infrastructure

1. The Main Range has been improved over the 2011-2016 period. There is now a newer, larger Range Office, where shooters check in and new shooters watch a safety video before shooting. This larger facility improves the working condition for our staff and allows them more storage area for the necessary items they need to run operations safely and efficiently.
2. Benches, stools, stands, tables, and all other range equipment are maintained as needed to ensure safe and efficient operation throughout the entire facility.
3. The area around the Activity Center has been graded to increase the amount of parking spaces. Signs, ramps, and concrete parking dividers have been installed to clearly improve the handicapped parking accommodations.
4. Parking areas at the Main Range, Pistol Range, and High-Power Range have been reconfigured and 85 concrete parking bumpers have been installed to improve traffic flow and increase parking spaces.

5. All roadways and parking areas are maintained continuously.

6. A new parking lot was constructed in 2020, located south of the existing parking lot at the Shotgun Facility and north of the, North Gate access road. The previously existing parking lot was also improved, approximately 60 additional vehicle parking spaces with curbs were added and signs directing the proper directional flow of traffic. A separate golf cart/ATV parking lot was constructed east of and adjacent to the new parking lot that accommodates secure parking for 36 golf carts/ATVs, that Club members own to use on the Sporting Clay Course.

7. RFID cards are currently replacing the old member ID Cards and RFID readers have been installed at all the shooting ranges. Members now have a quicker, easier, more convenient way of checking into the ranges to shoot. Members that are qualified to use the Pistol Bay, High Power, Small Bore, and Training Bays can now check in using the RFID cards, and no longer need to go to the Main Range.

C. Proposed New Range Facilities & Infrastructure Improvements

The following is considered to in the One Year Plan phase:

1. We will once again harvest/reclaim the lead that has accumulated on the Shotgun Range, and bullets accumulated in the rifle and pistol berms as deemed worthwhile.
2. New / Replacement lighting will be installed at Pistol Bays 1-4, by the end of the first quarter in 2023.

The following projects are currently on hold and considered to be in the One to Three Year phase:

1. Improvements to the Small-Bore Range include having concrete added adjacent to the existing concrete at the firing line, at the east side of the range and extending south to the block retention wall already in place. Improving and adding 2 ADA parking spaces and access to the existing firing positions. This project has been approved and is awaiting the Game and Fish Engineering.
2. Installation of shade structures in the equipment and storage area behind Pistol Bay 4 to protect range equipment.
3. Installation of shade structures at the down range bays on the High-Power Range.

The following projects are in the One to Five Year Plane phase:

1. Installation of an AT&T cell phone tower and supporting structures on Arizona Game and Fish/RSSC property to be located near the west boundary of the property. The cell phone tower is anticipated to be completed and operational by the end of the first quarter in 2023.
2. The Club membership is growing faster than ever and the demands n the club provide additional and better use of the existing facilities to accommodate the popularity of shooting sports. This unprecedented growth is a good thing, but also requires that RSSC looks at to developing a long term plan by working in conjunction with professionals like the NRA Range Development Team, NSSF consultants, and other range development sources.

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