

USERY MOUNTAIN SHOOTING RANGE FIVE-YEAR MASTER DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2025

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 the Cell Tower Road and west of and adjacent to Usery Pass Road. As of January 1, 2024, RSSC has approximately 5,600 memberships that include 6,500 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 terms of 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 will consist 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, 48 new shooting benches have been installed in 2024 replacing the previously existing concrete benches. These benches were fabricated onsite and installed by the RSSC Maintenance team headed up by Tom Hogan, manager and chief welder Bob, plus maintenance personnel. The public range firing line is now safer and more aesthetically pleasing. 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 a safety video for all new shooters to view. A friendly Kids Zone 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 office and public restrooms are also located at the Public Range.
2. A forty-position Small Bore Range (110 yards in depth) with 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 2002-04 and now provides a facility for use by seven different shooting disciplines. Additional lighting has been installed and improved to more effectively enhance visibility of targets during night shooting events including Monday Night Bullseye, .22 Tactical, BlackPowder, and the Jr. 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 target positions 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 the Usery Mountain Shooting Range for their training programs.
5. The High Power Range also has 10 concrete tables for benchrest shooting and a Match Director's tower with P.A. system. This range is used for a variety of shooting events and is our most used and most versatile facility. In 2021 the range was improved by adding a concrete firing line apron, 2 handicap parking spaces, and ramp access to the firing line, and 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 supports these activities. Major wiring improvements were made in 2024 to the Practical garage/shed including a panel of switches attached to the outside wall adjacent to the overhead door. Lights at pistol bays 1-4 can now be more easily accessed to facilitate visibility for night shooting events. Additional Pistol Bays were constructed on the 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 pits to expand the versatility of the High Power range facilities.
7. The Range Safety Officers office and restrooms are located at the Main Public Range.
8. A gunsmith shop, restrooms, a Junior Program Classroom, and a large maintenance support facility are 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 main range is busy.
10. The Shotgun Range consists of a 13 station Sporting Clays course, a lighted combination Trap, Wobble Trap, and 5-Stand field, and to the east, 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 there a year. RSSC hosts two Scholastic Clay Target Program teams.
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 an 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, restrooms, an integrated audio visual system, and tables and chairs capable of seating up to 299 people. In addition to Airgun competition, it will be used as a vendor display area during large competitions and for a variety of club events. This building is air conditioned to allow year round use.
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 expanded or new infrastructure to cover planned future facilities. This plan is divided into three parts: 1. Safety Enhancements. 2. Infrastructure Improvements designed to maintain current facilities and equipment, and to enhance member/shooter satisfaction and comfort, and 3. New Range Facilities. Recent and future improvements are listed in Part IV.

PART IV - Master Plan

A. Safety

1. Safety is of utmost importance at the Usery 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 their impact berms raised to 20+ feet per NRA and Arizona Game and Fish Department requirements.
2. The berms at the Small Bore Range have been improved. Specifically, the Small Bore Range has dirt safety berms on the north (down range), west and east sides. These berms now met the NRA requirements. This was accomplished in 2008.
3. Additional lighting has been installed in 2014, 2021, and 2023 to Pistol Bays 1-4 to improve safety and visibility during night time 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. New, additional, and improved lights were installed at the Small Bore range in 2022 greatly improving visibility for all nighttime shooting activities.
6. New lights were installed in 2022 at the Shotgun Range "combo" field and the "introductory" stations greatly improving nighttime target visibility leading to improved shooter satisfaction and an increase in the number of nighttime shooting events. The shotgun range is now used nightly Monday through Friday.
7. The Club has installed and improved communications 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.
8. Lights were installed in 2020 at the Training Center Building and at the Outdoor Education/Airgun Building that light up the parking lot and entry/exit areas.
9. Parking lot lights located south of Pistol Bays 1 through 4 have been installed for added night time safety and visibility.
10. A new security gate was installed at the main entrance to RSSC in 2023. This gate is a rolling on track gate that replaced the swing open/close gate that is more rigid and secure than previous gate.
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tSISNItdsdS9nYiU66vQtrFQid-loi303Jfj8F0aIhlo/edit?usp=sharing>

B. Infrastructure

1. The Main Range was improved over the 2011-2016 period. There is now a new, larger Main Range Office to facilitate shooter check in. The Main Range check-in building has received additional improvements in 2024, including a double-check-in line that accommodates non-member and member shooters. The office also has an additional room used to display a safety video for newcomers to the range. This larger facility improves the working conditions for our staff and allows them more storage area for the necessary items they need to run their operation 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 parking spaces. Signs, ramps, and concrete parking dividers have been installed to clearly improve handicap accommodations.
4. Parking areas at the Main Public Range, Pistol Bays, and High Power Range have been reconfigured and concrete parking bumpers have been installed to improve traffic flow and increase parking space.
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 were installed. A separate golf cart/ATV parking lot was constructed east of and adjacent to the new vehicle parking lot that accommodates secure parking for 36 golf cart/ATVs owned by Club members for use on the Shotgun Sporting Clays Course.
7. RFID chips are now implanted in members' badges and RFID readers installed at all shooting ranges. Members will now have a quicker and easier way to check in at all member shooting ranges and members qualified to shoot at Pistol Bays, High Power, Small Bore, and Training Bays can check in without going to the Public Range.
8. The new AT&T cell phone tower located at the west end of the RSSC property is now completed. It technically is not a part of the RSSC infrastructure but clearly is a distinctive landmark.
9. Lead recovery was again completed on the Shotgun Range in 2024 adding additional funds to support other projects.
10. The entry/exit paved road was repaired and resurfaced in September, resulting in an aesthetically pleasing and necessary maintenance project.

PROPOSED NEW RANGE FACILITIES and INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

The following are considered to be in the One Year Plan Phase:

1. Acquiring and stockpiling asphalt millings to be spread and packaged into the existing heavy traffic areas that are currently gravel covered. This will improve the road surface and cut down on the dust pollution.
2. Repair and renovation of the existing pole berms that delineate shooting bays and provide safety for shooters and R.O.s during daily use and Match Events.
3. Eliminate unnecessary wiring and organize necessary wiring in the Pistol Bay Shop Bldg #205.

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 Game and Fish Engineering.
2. Installation of shade structures in the equipment storage area behind Pistol Bay #4 to protect range equipment.
3. Installation of shade structures at the downrange bays on the High Power Range.

The following are considered to be in the One to Five Year Plan Phase, and beyond, due to the complexity and scope of work required:

1. The club membership is growing faster than ever and demands on the club to provide additional and better use of existing facilities to accommodate the popularity of shooting sports. This unprecedented growth is a good thing but requires that RSSC look at 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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Attachment A:

