

2005 Project Abstract

For the Period Ending June 30, 2008

PROJECT TITLE: Development and Rehabilitation of Minnesota Shooting Ranges

PROJECT MANAGER: Chuck Niska

AFFILIATION: Division of Enforcement

MAILING ADDRESS: Minnesota DNR

CITY/STATE/ZIP: 500 Lafayette Road, Box 47, St. Paul, MN 55155-4047

PHONE: (651) 259-5050

FAX: (651) 259-5050

E-MAIL: chuck.niska@dnr.state.mn.us

FUNDING SOURCE: Environmental Trust Fund

LEGAL CITATION: ML 2005, First Special Session, Chap.1, Art. 2, Sec.11, Subd.6, (q).

APPROPRIATION AMOUNT: \$ 300,000

Overall Project Outcome and Results

The purpose of this project was to maintain and/or increase the numbers of both archery and firearm shooting ranges throughout Minnesota, thereby increasing the capacity for safely operating shooting venues throughout Minnesota. This work was part of an on-going project begun in 1999, following a number of years in which shooting facilities in the metropolitan Minneapolis-St. Paul area were shut down due to residential development surrounding specific ranges, zoning changes, increases in taxation or other circumstances. A number of shooting facility operators both within and outside the metropolitan area had expressed interest in receiving state funding for improving their shooting facilities using federal Pittman-Robertson funding. Because that funding source was not readily available and in limited supply, the LCCMR was approached as a funding source, in lieu of federal funding.

From 2005 through 2008, a total of 30 facilities received matching grants through this program. Three of these facilities were newly constructed, a number of grants provided funding to complete previously begun constructions, and other grants went toward the addition of new components to existing ranges. Another group of grants were given to improve the safety of and access to existing ranges. An important element of the grant to the Isanti Sportsmen's Club was that it provided funds to address sound abatement at that range. This is significant, in that the Shooting Range Protection Act, passed in 2005, addresses sound abatement as a key element of that legislation. Another project of note that was funded was a grant to the City of Shakopee to install a new archery range on a Wildlife Management Area, the first to be installed in Minnesota. When needed, DNR provided grant recipients with engineering assistance and other technical help in order to complete a project. Additional funding will be sought to continue this work, given that 400 ranges operate throughout the state.

Project Results Use and Dissemination

Information regarding each specific grant recipient has been posted on the Minnesota DNR website, so that the general public can find, contact and then use each specific range facility in Minnesota funded through this effort. Each recipient organization has been required to chronicle their project accomplishments, both to provide documentation to the DNR and to their local media outlets. Periodically there have been news announcements, stories written about the availability of the grant program's existence, and other correspondence provided to the major newspapers in Minnesota, such as the St. Paul Pioneer Press and Minneapolis Star-Tribune.

LCMR 2005 Work Program

Date of Report: January 31, 2009
Date of Next Status Report: June 30, 2008
Date of Work program Approval:
Project Completion Date: June 30, 2008

I. PROJECT TITLE: Development and Rehabilitation of Minnesota Shooting Ranges

Project Manager: Chuck Niska
Affiliation: Division of Enforcement
Mailing Address: Minnesota DNR
500 Lafayette Road, Box 47
City / State / Zip: St. Paul, MN 55155-4047
Telephone Number: (651) 259-5050
E-mail Address: chuck.niska@dnr.state.mn.us
FAX Number: (651) 297-3727
Web Page Address: www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/rangedev/html

Location: Statewide

Total Biennial LCMR Project Budget:	LCMR Appropriation:	\$300,000
	Minus Amount Spent:	\$235,312
	Equal Balance:	\$ 64,688

Legal Citation: ML 2005, First Special Session, Chap.1, Art. 2, Sec.11, Subd.6, (q).

Appropriation Language: \$150,000 the first year and \$150,000 the second year are from the trust fund to the commissioner of natural resources to provide technical assistance and matching grants to local communities and recreational shooting and archery clubs for the purpose of developing and rehabilitating shooting and archery facilities for public use. Recipient facilities must be open to the general public at reasonable times and for a reasonable fee on a walk-in basis. This appropriation is available until June 30, 2008, at which time the project must be completed and final products delivered, unless an earlier time is specified in the work program.

II. PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS: The Minnesota DNR Division of Enforcement will continue to work with firearms and archery shooting range operators, to address safe operation, renovation and new range construction, access improvements, noise abatement and other environmental concerns, by providing shooting range matching grants. In providing this assistance, the capacity of shooting sports in Minnesota will

be maintained if not significantly increased throughout the project period. Priority will be given to working with ranges that clearly show that, if they are funded, their project will result in an increased capacity to provide readily available shooting sports facilities to the residents of Minnesota. Another priority will be to work with ranges with community-relations issues that need to be addressed. These priorities are consistent with the directives of the LCMR.

III. SUMMARY OF PROGRESS AS OF 1/31/09: A total of 30 organizations completed projects that were funded through this project. Of those, 11 were for archery range projects, 14 were for firearms range projects, and 5 grants were given to organizations working on both firearms and archery ranges. A breakdown of how that funding was spent is shown on both Attachments A and B. An amendment to the work program budget was requested in 2007, in order to shift funding between results, based on the quality and nature of work to be done in the funded grant applications. Examples include, that priorities were given to sound abatement projects on firearm ranges, renovation of rifle and pistol ranges to increase shooting sports capacity, and the building of capacity for firearm and archery ranges.

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

Result 1&2: New rifle and pistol range construction, and rehab of existing ranges

Description: Result 1: New rifle and pistol range construction: involves installing new backstops, side berms, shooting stations, firing lines with sight line reducers to eliminate bullet escapement. A new range backstop with two side berms typically cost between \$18,000 and \$24,000 to install, with new firing lines and shooting stations between \$5,000 to \$10,000, dependent upon the number of stations installed (usually from 6 to 12, and up to 20), and whether or not more sophisticated sound abatement is needed. This funding is intended to go only to grant recipients, in turn passed on to contractors hired to do the various types of on-site construction. History has shown that this is the type of work most in demand to be funded. Estimates of numbers of ranges improved in a year vary, based on the specific project setting encountered at each site location for which an application is submitted.

Result 2: Renovation of existing rifle & pistol ranges: A number of the existing ranges are in need of renovation of side berms and backstops to maintain a minimum safety standard or level for operation. Side berm and firing line enclosure construction, along with backstop renovation are the main types of projects, with sound abatement being likely to become more prominent as suburban and exurban residential development occurs closer to existing ranges. Berms and enclosures will be built using these funds. Result 5 also lists sound abatement as an environmental concern to be addressed, but will specifically address installation of sound absorbing materials.

Summary Budget Information for Result 1&2:	LCMR Budget	\$ 93,527
	Balance	\$ 27,176

Completion Date: June 30, 2008

Final Report Summary: A total of nineteen groups received \$66,351 in funding. Of these, three were newly constructed facilities, one was to help complete the construction of a new range, and the rest were for renovating existing facilities.

Result 3: Trap and skeet rehab and new construction

Description: Result 3: Trap and skeet range new construction and renovation: This is intended to provide for constructing brand new trap and skeet platform construction, including high and low houses and automatic throwers. A number of ranges are interested in increasing their capacity to provide shotgun shooting opportunities, both for competitive shooting and to increase the hunting skills of people who hunt migratory waterfowl providing simulated practice settings through construction of five stand set ups. This activity will be for construction only, precluding purchase of automatic trap throwers.

Summary Budget Information for Result 3:	LCMR Budget	\$49,133
	Balance	\$ 5,322

Completion Date: June 30, 2008

Final Report Summary: Five groups completed projects in this category. Two groups of note were the Fairmont Trap Club's completion of their facility, which was the completion of a re-location from within the city limits (which included constructing a rifle range for local use), and the Northstar Sportsmen's Club completion of a new trap range on that facility.

Result 4: Archery Construction and Rehabilitation

Description: This result addresses working with the 60-plus archery facilities run by local organizations throughout the state, as well as those operated by local government agencies. Work included is to renovate or start new target ranges, and field target walking courses, which can also serve as 3-D target facilities. The local government operated ranges in the metropolitan area will be eligible for contributions from the Bowhunting Preservation Alliance, a foundation operated by the Archery Trade Association (ATA).

Completion Date: June 30, 2008

Summary Budget Information for Result 4:	LCMR Budget	\$76,840
	Balance	\$ 4,587

Final Report Summary: A total of 19 organizations received funding for archery range construction and improvements of existing facilities. Six of these grants were to local units of government, including a \$20,000 grant to the City of Shakopee to construct a new archery range on the Raquet Wildlife Management Area, leased from the DNR. This was part of a larger park improvement project, undertaken in the local area.

Result 5: Various Range Improvements

Description: This result has three component parts, shown here as Parts a, b and c. Part a regards only adding sound abatement/reduction materials to range enclosures that are in need of renovation, or addressing possible lead contamination investigation where use of lead shot on a range may have resulted in lead deposition into a wetland area. Sound abatement will only include installing plywood or other sound absorbing material to shooting enclosures on firing lines, since construction or installation of other measures is addressed in Results 1 and 2.

Summary Budget Information for Result 5:	LCMR Budget	\$40,500
	Balance	\$ 5,495

Completion Date: June 30, 2008

Deposition of lead at shooting ranges is a topic being addressed nationally by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, working in conjunction with the National Shooting Sports Foundation, which is a shooting sports industry-funded organization, working to promote this sport. They will be working with the EPA, and with states to ensure that voluntary lead cleanup is conducted to alleviate potential contamination. New information and techniques regarding lead management are expected to be forthcoming during this project period.

Part b addresses making range improvements including needs for walkways, paths and some road improvements, which will provide improved access for disabled shooters who want to participate in archery, pistol, rifle and shotgun shooting sports events. Grant recipients are required to work with the DNR Landscape Architect, to ensure that Americans with Disabilities Act compliance measures are understood and implemented prior to construction.

Part c is intended to provide new or improved electrical service for ranges, to make improvements such as improving ADA-standard bathrooms for disabled access, lighting improvements where necessary, to provide fencing and additional safety measures.

Final Report Summary: Six groups received funding. The two mentioned above (i.e., Minnewawa and Isanti) were the most significant, in that they addressed safety and sound abatement issues raised by their neighbors. One of the goals of DNR is to help to alleviate conflicts between parties, thereby keeping them from taking legal action against one another, which was threatened by both neighbors.

Result 6: Technical Assistance for Range Grants

Description: MN-DNR requests administrative funding of this project, to cover only the professional service charge covering the cost to provide an engineering assistant (i.e., a landscape architect), working to review project sites and work before and after range construction and installation take place. On-site visits by the Project Manager and Landscape Architect allow for review of proposed work, and recommendations to be made for project revisions or additional work to be done for improvement of safe range operation on each site.

Justification for this use of LCMR project funding can be given, in that a range operating organization would have to employ a professional engineering firm if DNR didn't provide this technical service. The majority of these firms no nothing about shooting ranges. The learning curve for an engineering firm to know about range operation and construction would then be paid for by the range operator, needlessly driving up an project's costs. With range development being a unique type of work, each local engineer would have to incur extra expenses while going through a learning curve regarding shooting range planning, design and construction, at an hourly rate well above the \$70 per hour professional service charges for services provided by the DNR Management Resources section.

Funding for engineering assistance pays the DNR Management Resources section of the DNR, which now includes the former Bureau of Engineering. They have previously been given a legislative directive to internally charge for their professional services devoted to projects where DNR disciplines (such as Enforcement) do not otherwise provide a set amount of funding in a blanket payment (such as from the Game and Fish Fund on behalf of the Division of Fish and Wildlife's engineering needs). DNR-Enforcement does not share in the provision of service from any blanket payment, since the nature of the division's mandate and work focuses on law enforcement.

Summary Budget Information for Result 8:	LCMR Budget	\$40,000
	Balance	\$22,108

Completion Date: June 30, 2008

Result Status as of March 6, 2006: The technical assistance work done to date includes site inspection, range design work and information dissemination to grant recipients.

Result Status as of May 20 2007: The same types of assistance are being provided to grant recipients, on an as-needed basis. The actual spending in this are will be below that approved in the original Work Plan. An amount sufficient to conduct site inspections during the current project period, and at the conclusion of the project period, will be kept available for use.

Result Status as of December 20, 2007: Work done to provide technical assistance has slowed somewhat, but the landscape architect's knowledge is proving invaluable to grant recipients, providing layout and design information to the individual groups receiving grants.

Result Status as of March 24, 2008: No changes to report.

Final Report Summary: The amount of technical assistance provided by to grant recipients by the DNR was significantly lower than anticipated, in large part due to other work responsibilities of the Management Resources staff person providing assistance. Since part of the funding for this portion paid for site reviews he could not participate in, the charges for this service were decreased.

V. TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET:

All Results: Personnel: \$40,000
All Results: Equipment: \$
All Results: Development: \$260,000
All Results: Acquisition: \$
All Results: Other: \$

TOTAL LCMR PROJECT BUDGET: \$300,000

VI. OTHER FUNDS & PARTNERS:

A. Project Partners: Eligible project partners will include local organizations participating in the grant program, as well as an advisory committee that assists in the review of all proposals received for funding consideration. Screening, review and comments from each advisor is provided for each grant application. The advisors contribute their time and review assistance free of charge. Whenever the advisors are called together to meet, all expenses incurred are covered through the DNR budget of the Project Manager. The advisors include:

**Ryan Bronson, Federal Cartridge
Mark Johnson, Minnesota Deer Hunters Association
Friends of the NRA Foundation (Position Currently Vacant)
Greg Larson, Gopher Rifle & Revolver Club, and MN-BWSR
Marilyn Odahlen-Hinz, Safari Club International
Michelle Doerr/Pat Ruble, Bowhunting Preservation Alliance*
Lester Fluegge, Izaak Walton League
Lee Murphy, MN Bowhunters, Inc.
Jason Peterson, MN DNR Management Resources
MAJ William Spence, MN DNR Division of Enforcement
Chuck Niska, MN DNR Division of Enforcement**

B. Other Funds being Spent during the Project Period: All participating organizations receiving a matching grant must provide an amount of local match funding equal to, or greater than the grant they receive through this program. In addition, the Bowhunting Preservation Alliance is intent to provide infrastructure-based equipment to metropolitan area archery ranges that agree to build or renovate archery facilities open to the public for programs such as the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP), as well as general archery shooting sports.

Minnesota DNR has recently signed both a memo of understanding with the BPA, along with an annual work plan wherein DNR is surveying archery range operators and municipalities across the state, to construct a directory of archery ranges, and determine what each provides in existing service, and what they intend to build in the near future. Minnesota DNR has also agreed to work through this grant program to build and renovate facilities in metropolitan areas of the state, working with the BPA.

Minnesota DNR provides funding to the Program Manager, in both salary and benefits, in the amount of \$70,000 annually. In addition, the services contributed by MAJ Thielen are also covered by the DNR. All travel costs, meals and expenses incurred by both related to carrying out the shooting range grant program and project are also paid for by the DNR Division of Enforcement.

C. Required Match (if applicable): A 1:1 funding match (or greater) is required of each participating organization. With \$260,000 in project funds budgeted, at least this amount will need to be provided by program participants, and/or the BPA.

D. Past Spending: During the current project period, \$220,000 has been made available in the form of matching grants. It is anticipated that, with the extra year of time provided to spend the archery grant funds, the full amount of LCMR monies will be used.

E. Time: An extra year of time is again requested, primarily in order to provide sufficient time for participants to raise the required local matching grant funding.

- VII. DISSEMINATION:** The Shooting Range Development and Rehabilitation Grant Program is posted in an informational page located on-line as a portion of the DNR Financial Assistance Directory. The grant application can also be accessed on-line, as well as a statewide shooting range directory, all of which are interlinked. In addition, announcements regarding grant program funding availability are periodically disseminated to local media outlets throughout Minnesota, by the Division of Enforcement's Information Officer. Articles highlighting the range grant program have appeared in the Minnesota DNR Conservation Volunteer, the St. Paul Pioneer Press, the Minneapolis Star-Tribune, and other media outlets across Minnesota. Most recently, the newly formed Bowhunting the North Country Spring 2005 edition published an article highlighting the archery grant portion of the grant program.
- VIII. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:** Periodic work program progress reports will be submitted not later than February 28, 2006, April 27, 2007, December 20, 2007, March 24, 2008, and June 30, 2008.

Attachment B.1. Shooting Range Grant Recipients: 2005-2008 (Updated 3/24/08)

Firearms Range Grants

Name of Organization/Location	Amount Of Grant	Amount Used	Type of Work/Comments
20 Rifle & Pistol Club (Owatonna)	\$10,395.00	\$ 10,395	Archery & firearms range grant improvements
Aitkin Archery Club (Aitkin)	\$ 615.00	\$ 315	Target purchases to complement a 2003-06 project
American Legion Post 435 (Rice County)	\$ 7,300.00	\$ 6,700	Rifle range improvements
Bald Eagle Sportsmens Assn (Hugo)	\$16,114.00	\$ 4,239	Firearms range safety improvements
Buffalo Gun Club (Buffalo)	\$ 1,900.00	\$ 1,900	Access improvements on a trap range
Carver (City of, Carver County)	\$ 3,088.00	\$ 2,994	Improvement of an existing archery range
Chatfield Fish & Game Club (Fillmore Cty)	\$ 6,093.00	\$ 6,093	Archery and trap range improvements
Cottage Grove (City of)	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000	Archery range safety improvements as part of a renovation
Delano Sportsmens Club (Delano)	\$13,500.00	\$ 13,500	Construction of a lead containment wall on a trap range
Duluth Archery Club	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 1,700	Purchase of new field archery target butts
Elm Creek Archery Range (Hennepin)	\$ 1,250.00	\$ 1,250	Archery target purchases for a Three River Park Reserve District Park
Fairmont Trap Club (Martin Cty)	\$16,500.00	\$ 16,499	On-going construction of a new outdoor trap range
Gopher Rifle & Revolver Club (Chisago)	\$19,818.00	\$ 19,818	Rebuilding a 1,000 yard rifle range target pit
Hardwood Country Sports Club (Rushford)	\$ 6,200.00	\$ 3,115	Archery & trap range improvements
Head of the Red Trap Club (Breckinridge)	\$10,580.00	\$ 10,088	Archery & trap range improvements
Isanti County Sportsmens Club (Chisago)	\$10,000.00	\$ 10,000	Sound abatement on rifle range
Key Cities Conservation (Mankato)	\$11,989.00	\$ 11,989	Trap range improvements, shooting range backstop improvements
Littlefork Gun Club (Koochiching Cty)	\$ 4,602.00	\$ 1,210	Providing a new firearms range with rifle/pistol range improvements
Minnewawa Sportsmens Club (Aitkin)	\$10,000.00	\$ 10,000	Sound abatement at an existing shooting range
Mountain Iron (City of) St. Louis Cty)	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 4,200	Renovating n existing archery range run by the City of Mountain Iron
New Prague (City of) Scott County	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000	New archery range construction
Northstar Sportsmens Club (Cass Cty)	\$10,210.00	\$ 9,881	Trap range improvements
Pine River Fish & Game Club (Pine River)	\$ 4,194.00	\$ 4,194	Various upgrades to an existing range, addressing safety & accessibility
Rapids Archery Club (Andover-Anoka Cty)	\$ 2,640.00	\$ 2,640	Replacement of indoor line target archery butts
Scott Wesch Learning Center (Goodhue)	\$10,000.00	\$ 10,000	Construction of a new .22 youth range, and a youth archery walking course
Shakopee Parks & Recreation	\$20,000.00	\$ 20,000	New outdoor archery range construction on Raquet WMA, near Shakopee
Swift Count Archery Club	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000	New indoor archery range placed in a renovated building
Warroad Sportsmens Club (Roseau Cty)	\$ 9,380.00	\$ 8,315	Firearms range improvements/expansion
Waseca Archery Club	\$ 4,625.00	\$ 4,524	Indoor archery range improvements
Worthington Gun Club (Worthington)	\$10,010.00	\$ 6,861	Shooting range improvements to an existing shotgun & rifle range

