

CASE STUDY:

BUILDING / ENHANCING SHOOTING RANGES WITH PR EXCISE TAX FUNDS



Arizona: Second Knoll Target Range

State Agency: Arizona Game and Fish Department

Project/Range Name: Second Knoll Target Range (SKTR)

Range Location: Forest Service Road 206 X US 60, Show Low AZ 85902

Project Leaders: Matt Schwartzkopf, Mike Raum

Contact information:

Matt Schwartzkopf, Statewide Shooting Range Administrator
Arizona Game and Fish Department (623) 236-7395
mschwartzkopf@azgfd.gov
www.azgfd.gov 5000 West Carefree Highway, Phoenix, AZ 85086

Mike Raum, Shooting Sports Branch Chief
Arizona Game and Fish Department (623) 236-7229
mraum@azgfd.gov
www.azgfd.gov 5000 West Carefree Highway, Phoenix, AZ 85086

Project Type: The Second Knoll Target range is a new construction.

Project Status: As of May 2024, the SKTR is 75% completed. The range is being completed in phases as the grant money and time permit.

Intended Use: The intended use of the SKTR is for rifle and handgun target shooting.

Number of Shooting Lanes/Fields: The SKTR features the following shooting ranges: For Rifle they offer 20, 100-Yard multi-use lanes. These lanes can be used for handgun as needed. In future construction, the SKTR will offer 12 to 15, 300-Yard lanes. For Handgun the SKTR offers four 25-Yard bays with no distinguished lanes, but that can hold approximately 10 lanes in each bay or 1 action shooting stage (USPSA, SASS, IDPA, and etc.). And 15, 50-Yard lanes that can be used for rifle shooting as needed.

Intended User(s): The intended users of the SKTR are hunters, target and competitive shooters. The SKTR is also designed to facilitate hunter education and firearms safety classes.

How is the range staffed/managed:

The Second Knoll Target Range is located on the Apache Sitgreaves National Forest. The Arizona Game and Fish Department holds a Special Use Agreement for the property to operate a target range. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission issued a license agreement to the White Mountain Shooters Association to operate, maintain and develop the Second Knoll Target Range.

Volunteers of the non-profit Club operate the range including the administration, management and range safety. The volunteer hours from the Club members are recorded and used to match the Arizona Game and Fish Department's PR grant.

Funding Sources: To Date (May 2024)

Agency funds- Approx. \$100,000

PR Funds - Approx. \$1,000,000

Partner contributions:

- NRA Grant - \$25,000
- White Mountain Shooter Association Funds - N/A

Anticipated Time to Completion (start to finish): The planning of the SKTR began in 2013. As of 2024 the range is 75% complete.

Estimated Completion Date: The management team of the SKTR is estimating that the range will be fully completed by 2026.

Actual Time to Completion (if operational): Phase I which included construction of a 100-yard, a 50-yard, and 4, 25-yard ranges were completed and opened in August 2016. Additional construction has included canopies, an office and a storage shed. Currently under construction is a host site and the 300-yard range will be constructed in 2025.

Biggest Obstacles: The team at SKTR and The White Mountain Shooters Association were driven to find a location to have a shooting range. The biggest challenge was finding a suitable location.

How Were Those Obstacles Overcome? Collaboration and partnering with the Forest Service on a location and opportunity for a special use permit to construct a shooting range. One of the goals for the new range was to provide recreational shooters in the Forest a safe and convenient location to recreate.

What portion of the project took more time than expected? Obtaining the special use permit and completing all of the required environmental surveys/processes took much more time than expected.

What Range Development Resources Were Most Helpful: The Arizona Game and Fish Department constructed three new shooting ranges between 2010 and 2016. The

Department's Shooting Sports Program and Engineer Staff attended the NRA's Range Development program and worked with the engineering firm for all three facilities. The [NRA Range Source Book](#) and the [EPA's Best Management Practices for Lead at Outdoor Shooting Ranges](#) were instrumental resources for these projects.

What Information/Knowledge Do You Know Now That You Wish Knew Earlier: While this is not relative to the project we are highlighting, we have learned when partnering with organizations for the development of a shooting range, it is much more successful when the third-party organization has identified the need and is the driving force behind it. These organizations have demonstrated their commitment pays off in the overall success of the range.

What Additional Resources Would Have Made the Task Easier/Cheaper/Quicker:

The topography of the property of a shooting range is a huge factor into the design of a shooting range. There are many resources and guidelines available for shooting range design, but there is no one correct standard for range design. When designing ranges, it is imperative to understand all range development resources and guidelines in order to design a range that best fits the topography and uses the topography to limit or reduce the surface danger zone. To do this one might have to incorporate the guidelines from several different resources.

Understanding the shooting sports that are prevalent in the community. Each shooting sport has its own specific rules, range needs, and requirements. Competitors of the shooting sports are very passionate about their sport and have a vested interest in seeing that the range is designed to accommodate their sport. Having knowledge of the shooting sports and their range needs is important to range design, and tapping into those local competitors as volunteers and stakeholders will ensure success.

For additional information on Arizona shooting ranges, visit: [Where to Shoot - Arizona Game & Fish Department \(azgfd.com\)](#)

