

Boulder County Recreational Sport Shooting Update
November 8, 2018

Beginning in 2013, Boulder County has been working with the U.S. Forest Service, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, and Larimer, Gilpin, and Clear Creek counties on the Northern Front Range Recreational Sport Shooting Management Partnership, or Sport Shooting Partners. The purpose of the Partnership is to develop a landscape-level, multi-jurisdictional strategy to provide safe, responsible, and accessible recreational sport shooting opportunities while addressing conflicts near residential areas and with other recreation users across the northern Colorado Front Range.

The Forest Service recently released its draft decision on the Recreational Sport Shooting (RSS) Management Project. View the full press release [here](#). There are three components to the draft decision:

1. Language amending the Forest Plan to address management of RSS;
2. A forest-wide map showing areas where RSS is unsuitable and will be restricted after shooting ranges are developed and opened; and
3. An adaptive management strategy that allows the Forest to quickly respond should new or unforeseen safety issues occur in the future.

Detailed information, including the draft decision and an interactive map, is available on the Forests' [website](#) - scroll to the bottom of the page and look under the "Decision" tab for the specific details. The draft decision will not affect lawful hunting with a firearm in areas where it is currently allowed.

In order to ensure that the public has access to areas where they can safely shoot, closures of unsuitable areas in the draft decision is contingent upon new public ranges being open. To meet this requirement, Boulder County will need to open two new shooting ranges. After investigating numerous sites over the past several years, two sites are currently being explored. The first option involves the expansion of the Boulder Rifle Club to enable public access, located northwest of Boulder. The county has provided a letter of support for the expansion and half of the 25% match for a range design grant Boulder Rifle Club successfully was awarded from Colorado Parks & Wildlife. The second site option is a privately owned quarry outside the Town of Lyons.

If either of these locations is deemed feasible, they will have to go through Boulder County's Special Use Review application process. This process requires public hearings before the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners. Boulder County's regulations for shooting ranges can be found online ([Land Use Code \(Article 4-510, page 4-116\)](#)).

With regard to the Lyons Quarry site, Boulder County is committed to working closely with the town; county staff has met with the Town of Lyons Board of Trustees on three occasions and have conducted several tours of the quarry site, which have included sound testing of different firearms at that location. Currently, Boulder County is in discussions with the property owner of the quarry site to determine if the owner would be interested in selling the property. In addition, Boulder County has been in conversations with a law enforcement organization that is looking to build and manage a shooting range for law enforcement training and public use. However, it should be noted that there is no formal agreement with the law enforcement entity and they are also exploring other locations for a range.

Given that Boulder County does not yet have an agreement on the quarry property and has not had the opportunity to do any specific range engineering at the quarry, we do not have any specific information about the design of the range, including sound mitigation or safety measures which could or would be used at this site.

After a letter of intent is signed by the property owner and the county, we can begin the process of developing a draft site plan. Once there is a draft plan to review, the county will convene a community meeting with the Town of Lyons to solicit feedback from residents. The meeting would occur before a land use application is submitted. To stay apprised of the project you can sign up for [email updates](#) from the Sport Shooting Partnership. For more information, contact Garry Sanfaçon, 720-564-2642 or gsanfacon@bouldercounty.org.