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Organization:

Title:

Comments: My wife & I thank Pike National Forest for the well-designed Management of Target Shooting Project. Our USFS permitted "Residential Residence" (including land, garage and cabin) is within 120 yards of a popular target shooting area. Our permitted gate and bridge are approximately 70 yards from the same area (photo 1). Frequently occupied campsites are even closer. The sound of gunfire is very loud and adversely impacts the quiet and safe enjoyment of our residence.

It's a fact that shooters are already violating current restrictions by shooting within 150 yards of a residence and of occupied campsites. We fear for our safety because we do not know the exact location or direction of any shooting. Also, the area is not posted and the shooters probably do not know our cabin is nearby.

Regarding the PSICC report, we have three primary concerns. Concern (1): Inconsistent terminology regarding land with improvements; Concern (2): the potential location of the proposed shooting site 376.A; Concern (3): management, control and enforcement.

Concern 1: (Photo 1)

Our cabin (Clyde Summer Home Group Lot L) is approximately 0.4 miles north of Gold Camp Road, west of NFSR 376 and west of Middle Beaver Creek. It is described, on our USFS Special Uses Permit PPK734, as a "Recreational Residence." While the permit does not allow us to make this our primary residence, we do occupy it frequently throughout the year, similar to cabins and residences on private land adjacent to National Forest System land.

Inconsistent terminology is used throughout the PSICC report when discussing improved land on USFS and private land. This causes confusion when we try to determine which buffer zone could be applied in the vicinity of our residence.

Dwelling terminologies for areas with improvements in the PSICC report are listed below:

- * Single home -- Pg. 9.
- * Recreation site (...developed...) -- Pg. 9; Table 2, Pg. 14; Table 3, Pg. 21
- * Residence(s) -- Table 2, Pg. 14, 15, 21 & Table 3, Pg. 21.
- * Building -- Table 2, Pg. 14 & Table 3, Pg. 21.

Figure 4 of the PSICC report indicates that our cabin, permitted as a "recreational residence", will be within a proposed closure area. We fear that if the closure areas were redefined, our cabin could be categorized as a developed "recreational site" having a ¼ mile shooting limitation rather than a 1/2 mile limitation for a "single home" or "residence". Because recreation residences are used more similarly to "dwellings" and "residences" than recreation sites, we believe the ½ mile buffer zone is most appropriate.

To eliminate confusion regarding any improvement that is intended for occupation, continuous or occasional, we suggest that the terminology be a single designation, such as "dwelling", and have a ½ mile target shooting exclusion.

Concern 2: (photos 2, 3, 4)

Page 6, Table 1 of the Project description lists potential locations for designated target shooting sites, including Site NFSR 376.A. For this site, a design document can be accessed from "Project Documents". This proposed range is in the Pikes Peak Ranger District at the intersection of NFSR 376 with closed NFSR 376A (See Photo 2).

The NFSR 376.A range site design, Notes: #2, states that the proposed range is "located adjacent to a reservoir (no public access) and steep hill slope". However, the shooters at this site will be only about 600' from, and shooting towards, the South Slope Recreation Area (Photo 3), including Mason Reservoir (Photo 4). There is a permanent residence located at this reservoir. During the summer as many as 150 people could be in this area, including employees and visitors with paid reservations. At that time of the year, the area is popular with visitors,

including families, for fishing, hiking and picnicking. It is also a migration and bed down area for many animals, including Big Horn Sheep, Moose, Elk, and Deer.

The "steep hill slope" is just west of the site. However, the terrain in the line of fire is a gentle slope and shooters would be shooting in the direction of the Recreation Area (Photo 4). The Mason Trail, is approximately 2300' away, 15° to the right of the firing line,. Directly in front of the shooters, it is about 2600' away. In both cases the Mason Trail is only about 100' higher than the elevation of the range (See photo 4). Because this is a range with longer shooting distances, one would assume it would attract shooters with rifles capable of shooting much further than the distance to occupied trails and sites. Even with safety berms this presents a hazard such that even a slight error could result in injury or death.

This site is also the trailhead for both the Bull Park Trail (closed NFSR 376A) and the Almagre Trail (NFSR 379), respectively shown on "Google Earth", the 2009 addition of the "Pikes Peak Atlas" and many other trail maps. The Almagre Trail is also designated as part of the Ring the Peak Trail. Both trails are used extensively by hikers and 4-wheelers all year (See Photos 3 & 4). While not necessarily maintained by the PSICC, these are frequently occupied social trails, and the conflict should be considered.

To be seriously considered, a very large berm would have to be built to ensure the safety of persons utilizing the South Slope Recreation Area. However, the sound of gunfire will likely spoil the outdoor experience visitors currently enjoy and result in a decrease in use and/or complaints. Several outfitters use the South Slope Recreation Area for guided, high country fly-fishing experiences and would likely suffer negative affect once the now-pristine designated recreation area is inundated with shooting noise from a very proximate shooting range. The sound of gunfire may also result in the currently abundant wildlife also avoiding all, or part, of the South Slope Recreation Area.

Access, for vehicles and parking for hikers using the Bull Park and Almagre trails, would have to be considered. For safety, this may have to be designed separate from the proposed range.

Concern 3:

A comprehensive management and enforcement plan, to be implemented when the proposed action has been approved and implemented, should be included in the Integrated Management Plan.

Currently, the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 36 CFR 262.10(d), concerning the discharging of fire arms on National Forest System Land, is not easily available to target potential shooters. When we have contacted target shooters within 150 yards of our cabin or nearby camp sites, they have been unaware of the coded limitations. They are also unaware there is even a cabin nearby, as there is no signage indicating the area is not suitable for shooting (Ref. CFR 262.10 (d)). It will be crucial for the success of the management of target shooting in Pike National Forest that the target shooting restrictions be readily visible, to even the most casual user, and that additional forms of education and enforcement be considered.

The USFS people work hard to enforce the current target shooting rules and guidance in spite of having limited personnel for this responsibility. To ensure compliance, we think it will be necessary to post target shooting restrictions on prominent, enduring signage throughout the appropriate areas and to enlist the cooperation and assistance of county, partners for enforcement.