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Comments: As the Parks and Wild Life receives funding specifically from the Pittman-Robinson excise tax on firearms, I would think that providing access to the lands for firearm users would be necessary for future guarantee of funding. If not now immediately, sooner or later it will be noted that those specifically paying are those denied access. And with the recent increase in costs (particularly for occasional) users of State and National Parks, this will again impact the poorest members of society.

Having visited unmanned organized shooting sights, I find that just as trail heads become magnets for trash, so do unmanned shooting sights. And that by definition dispersed shooting areas, means dispersed impact. Where as a portable toilet soon becomes disgusting; burying fecal matter whilst wilderness camping allows the environment to cope and minimizes the impact. The smaller the number of sites, the greater the concentration of any impact.

Whilst I can understand the fear of "long range" shooting, to ensure any lanes of fire are not crossed (though I do wonder if the threat is perceived or actual). I might suggest preferred long range (300 yards upwards) backstops would solve this. Long range target shooters are a minority of shooters and generally have a much lower and slower rate of fire (and frequently collect their brass for reloading); thus will have less impact at organized sites.

For shorter range shooting (sub 200 yards), which probably makes for the majority of users I would state the following. There will be no doubt that firearms are in use in the area, thus the onus is on ensuring best practice guidelines are known and followed. Education on best practice guidelines will ensure all users get the best use of the land. Realistically irresponsible or illegal users are unlikely to follow new regulations; so a carte blanche closure will simply punish responsible users.

Finally, and I say this as someone who has spent many years overseas, firearms are an integral part of the identity of the Western United States. This is not east/west coast inner city living, nor European apartment living. Western values are a distinct culture and need to be respected. And just as restrictions on the Natives culture was done with the best of intentions the results were horrific; providing access to public lands for what is a traditional cultural use should be of paramount importance.