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First name: Jeff

Last name: Scott

Organization:

Title:

Comments: We live on almost 80 acres that back to the Pike National Forest. Our home has been here since 2004, and the national forest fence is approximately 80 yards from our home. The current regulations on target shooting state that people must be at least 150 yds from a residence or OCCUPIED area. For reference and a reminder to those who know, a 22 caliber bullet can travel up to 2000 yds and has the ability to kill people.

Since living here, the amount of people who visit the Manchester Creek Trailhead has increased dramatically, due in part to the parking lot improvements and modifications to support ATV use. This area or parking lot is only several hundred yards from our property.

Our concern for our personal safety is at an alarming level due to the multiple weekly encounters with shooters close to our home, or worse, shooting at targets nailed into trees facing our home. People generally have no idea where they are exactly with regard to personal properties or homes from my experiences in speaking with them. Presently, my family and friends are fearful to be outside on our own property due to the extremely unsafe forest service shooting regulations. Many times I am compelled to wear blaze orange while I'm outside on my property to increase my safety. I have had many encounters with people about shooting so close to our home, which as you can probably imagine, creates an unsafe confrontation at times. With only one Law Enforcement Officer for our forest service district, it's unlikely and unreasonable that they can respond fast enough to deal with shooters who are abusing the regulations before they're gone, and that's true for the Sheriff's department as well. In addition to our safety concerns, the trash these shooters often leave behind is terrible, and makes the forest look awful. I have cleaned up several bags worth myself. As I write this note, we presently have the public cutting Christmas trees with permit in the forest not far from us with target shooters in the same surrounding areas. This shows the disregard for safety that is presently supported by the forest service.

I am in full support of a designated shooting area/range in areas of the forest for people to enjoy at a distance that's far enough away from personal properties that respect safety. Please include an area for skeet/trap shooting as well. It's difficult for me to understand why there isn't a SAFE buffer zone away from the fence lines between personal properties and the national forest NOW. 150 yards is nothing for a bullet to travel. Hunters are also using the forest land with high powered rifles next to residential areas as you know. There should be a buffer zone for that as well. Being shot on our property isn't something we should need to worry about with safety oriented USFS management. As a note, I'm a gun owner and hunter who respects gun rights, with SAFETY being paramount!

Thank you for taking comments, and reading our concerns. This cannot happen fast enough for land owners around here!