

Columbia County Shooting Range Environmental Impact Statement
and
Columbia County Planning Group Masterplan Amendment
On-Line Survey Results

Question 2: Please provide any comments on your support or opposition to the proposed CCPG Masterplan Amendment.

1. Offer something for free & you create an instant demand(termed as a need) while the dnr has stated a demand but not shown a real need for this, according to dnr records there are over 600 shooting ranges in wisconsin including 33 on public land all over wisconsin, there is a place for everyone, while the gun clubs that are open to the public have shown an aversion to dnr funding & free open to the public days, they more than welcome you for a day or more at an affordable cost , we do not need to lose more public hunting grounds, drive from Madison up Hwy 51 to Hwy 16 to the Mudlake area, look around as you drive, how much area do you see for wildlife to survive in until you get here, and how much of that is public hunting grounds, keep taking the land & soon you will only have the experience at the range, we do not need to deplete & destroy this beautiful peaceful area that not only do the hunters enjoy but many others pursue bird watching, hiking, dog walking, teaching their children to enjoy & appreciate nature & just plain getting out to enjoy the peace & quiet, as to the people in the area whether its 2 families or 200 the impact to them is no less, nor to the business that are right there, would you want your wedding reception or any other function by a shooting range, do you want to take your children to the pumpkin maze there?

While we were told this was not a done deal & despite the DNR's assurance that the Mudlake site showing as approved on the Wisconsin shooting range site was a mistake, i am not surprised that it still shows as approved.

2. Definitely need an approved shooting range in this area. Portage rod and gun club is never open to the public and limits it's membership...

As long as the new range was fenced in and occasionally police I don't have a problem with it in my backyard...

3. I strongly support a shooting range. I have often used the DNR site on Wilcox Road. But, since it is now closed I do not have a place to sight in my rifle prior to the deer season. It was unfortunate that the slob and inconsiderates had to take that privilege away from the rest of us.
4. The Town of Lowville is very confused as to how the ad hoc committee chose the site they did as the final site. At the first meeting of the ad hoc committee they eliminated the site of the Rowan Creek Fishery Area on County Highway CS, just off the interstate. The reasons given was that it was too close to businesses such as McDonalds, Subway, and North Point gas station, even though this site would have had a much easier access than any other sites on the list. This makes no sense as the final site that was chosen is closer to 2 businesses, The Barn on the Harvest Moon LLC and Creek Bed Country Farmacy. It also has a private airstrip where planes land just to the east of the site where the landing

comes in right over the proposed shooting range site.

This is even more confusing as the businesses near the Rowan Creek site would have benefitted from the additional traffic that the shooting range would have brought, stopping at McDonalds or Subway for a quick bite to eat or filling up with gas before taking the long drive back to Milwaukee. While the businesses near the Lowville Mud Lake site would see a negative impact. Who would like to plan a beautiful wedding only to have shooting going on in the background? Or who would like to take their kids to a peaceful day in the country through a corn maze while gun fire can be heard? The point is if the easier access site was rejected because it was too close to businesses, why is the site even closer to businesses chosen as the final site?

Also we go back to the subject of the roads. The Rowan Creek site was on a county highway while the Lowville Mud Lake site is on a town road. Because the Town of Lowville and all towns have been severely limited in raising money to pay for the maintenance of our roads, we cannot afford to keep up the approximately 42 mile of roads we have at current traffic levels. With the additional 100,000 people that Mark Aquino quoted to the Natural Resources Board we simply cannot maintain King Road for a shooting range without help from the state. When we asked for this help we were told by Mr. Aquino himself to contact Sara Kehrli and she would help us. This has proven to not be true. In fact we had a hard time getting Ms. Kehrli to even pay for a simple driveway permit that the DNR requested from us. It took 2 years to get that payment from the state.

If this site were to go on a county highway the cost of the additional traffic could be spread out to a larger tax base, including the businesses, like McDonalds and Subway, that would profit from the range. Without help, there will not be a King Road for 100,000 people to use to get to the shooting range.

In short it seems as if not enough research went into the impact this shooting range would have on the community it was being forced onto. This top down approach of the state has left the Town of Lowville scrambling to understand how the choice was made and how we will be able to afford and cope with the proposed changes.

5. I support the range and live near the Lodi gun club and a marsh that people waterfowl hunt with no problems. The not in my back yard does not fly. You can't have it both ways, complain about safety and not fix it. Shooting and hunting in this area is tradition and good use of our tax dollars.
6. Do not support the gun range. In the 30+ years I've lived on Mud Lake there have been many changes, turkey season, more deer seasons, and then the dove field have changed the atmosphere and feel that this gun range will contribute to the further decline in our home value.
7. Would like to see a 200 yard range.
8. Once again we are seeing pieces of state owned land being taken out of use for everyone and being put into use for one special interest group. We have been told by the DNR over and over how they cannot stop people shooting on their land in Columbia County if there

are problems because they would have to close the entire area for all uses just to stop the shooting. Yet they close the MacKenzie Environmental Center to all uses BUT shooting with no problem. Why is it that they are unable to close an area down to shooting for safety reasons but they can close an area down to hikers and nature lovers for the same reasons? It seems as if some untruths are being told to the people in these statements.

Also at a meeting on 2/5/15 all we heard from the pro-shooting range people was how good it was that people may finally have a place to come shoot their guns. For an entitlement program, this seems to me that it would be low on the totem pole for a state with a soul. Of course if the state was just running for president and didn't care about others it would be a perfect way to show how evil they actually were. Such as, the State of Wisconsin could have asked for the federal government for monies for a high speed rail that would have brought in thousands of businesses and jobs for the state. Or the State of Wisconsin could have asked for federal dollars to help fund Medicaid so that burden would not have fallen on the taxpayers of Wisconsin. Instead those moneys were rejected and federal monies were taken for a shooting range so people could pursue a hobby.

The State of Wisconsin could have put their efforts and monies into other pursuits of a nobler nature such as funding a UW System that gives our kids a chance for a quality higher education and also brings thousands of dollars into the state for tax revenue. The state could continue funding Senior Care so that our elderly, who deserve our help, could afford their medication. Other worthwhile pursuits could be making sure parents with terminally ill children can afford to stay home with these children, or there were enough homeless shelters for all, or no child had to worry about the quality of their education going down the tubes, or even making sure every dog in the state could be fed and watered. But no, the State of Wisconsin decided to take federal dollars so that people could plink with their guns without having to take personal responsibility of having a place to do so.

I feel that perhaps we have our priorities mildly in the wrong place and I ask that all the Wisconsin tax dollars that went into the people who were hired or work to sell us the idea of a shooting range be directed to more worthwhile pursuits and that closing down a piece of land so that one special interest group can use it to the detriment of the neighborhood be let go for better reasons. Perhaps we can simply ask those who want to shoot to learn to practice personal responsibility.

9. Very much needed to continue safe shooting sports.
10. I am opposed to the shooting range because I feel there must be a better place for it other than in our populated area. I moved to this area for peace and quiet. Not gunfire all day every day.
11. I see no need to put a shooting range in an area where it may adversely impact my property value. There are also several businesses in the area that will negatively be affected. The one by Portage was a disaster and we have problems with shooting down at the landing. I would suggest you put it in a not populated area and have it only open during certain hours with someone there to supervise. The best thing would be to encourage people to join the Portage Gun Club and shoot in an appropriate setting.

12. A shooting area is needed to keep shooting and hunting safe and to be sure there is a future for sportsmen.
13. Use of firearms in a designated shooting range with safety design and construction for a shooting range is safer than shooting on private lands with only natural occurring safety berms and considerations. In addition, this shooting range will provide easier and greater access to firearm owners without access to private lands with allowable shooting. Familiarity with one's firearm elevates the shooter's shooting skills and knowledge thus developing safe firearm use.

Firearm owners shooting interest and competitive spirits will provide an economic boost to the immediate area.

14. Support amendment

15. I think the proposed shooting range at Mud Lake is not only an excellent location, but also minimizes "noise" concerns to most residents.

The basic proposed schematic plan includes a 25 foot pistol section. That's EXCELLENT, as 25 feet is the recommended MAXIMUM distance for practice training for self-defense in your home.

Please keep the 25 foot pistol range in all your plans and NEVER let a citizen(s) demand a 25 YARD range instead.

16. I know many of us would use it. Hunters in this area do not practice enough, with this provided our marksmanship would improve, providing a more ethical and successful hunt.
17. I believe the range area includes wooded habitat and is not all an "upland fallow field". From the EIS "Lots of tree clearing would be required." I would not like to see any of the range be located south of Conservation Drive.
18. Habitat managed area should be maintained to protect the surrounding areas from use of special interest groups., very few area in the county are available multipurpose use land. Making shooting range will eliminate the majority of the use for the majority of the local residents, This proposal is strictly for special interest groups, like welfare. If it is so important to shoot go to an organized , supervised range.
19. I fully support the use of public lands for all uses, including fishing, hunting, bow hunting, and firearms uses.
20. A public shooting range would be a useful recreational site, and place to promote safe firearms handling. With the growing number of shooters, hunters, and CCW permit holders a shooting range will be a popular facility.

21. Let's get this open "ASAP" for fall shooting of 2015 !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

22. I support this simply because it's long overdue in this area.

23. Columbia County Does not have the need to have these tax dollars spent on this.

The 18 Counties that prohibit target shooting are the Counties that have the most need for free target shooting. Not one of them have free target shooting.

Over 60% of the population resides the Counties that prohibit target shooting.

Columbia County is the worst County to establish a free target shooting range. The County has address the need for target shooting without any help from the State of Wisconsin.

A family membership at the Portage Rod and Gun club (a 50 year old establishment) is only 35.00 per year. They have a 100 yard rifle range, a pistol range and sport clays. A family of four would spend more than that at the State owned McMiller sport center for one day of target shooting.

Columbia County also has the Winnequah gun club which is the state of the art facility. Boasting the longest target range at 1,200 yards.

No other County offers shooting opportunities as diverse as Columbia County.

24. Measures needed to be taken to provide an alternative site if French Creek and Swan Lake were being taken away.

25. Unsure. Need to know more on how this would be ran and operated. It is better than what they have been using.

26. I support the amendment and think it is a good use of the land.

27. I don't believe there is a need for a shooting range in Columbia County. If it is built, I think it will be used by non-residents of Columbia County more than residents of Columbia County.

Mud Lake would be better used as a place for wildlife not humans.

28. It is too close to many Lowville residents. Many are elderly and do not want to hear shooting at dawn 7 days a week.

29. DNR needs to propose master plan amendments that apply to problem target shooting areas including at least the Swan Lake and French Creek areas. Proposed written amendments should be made available for public comment prior to February 5, 2015. This request is in accordance with resolutions passed by the Columbia County Board, the Town of Pacific Board, and the Columbia County Conservation Congress. "Special Management Areas" should be prohibited on DNR Ice Age Trail properties and on Natural Areas. Swan Lake should be designated for shotgun only. These masterplan amendments and the associated public input are needed to set the stage for future rulemaking.