

Sources of Financial Assistance

FEDERAL FUNDING PROGRAMS

There are several sources of funding available through federal aid for the construction or improvement of shooting ranges. Listed below is a brief description of each along with the information on how to contact each.

Federal Aid In Wildlife Restoration Act: this better known as the Pittman-Robertson act, (PRA). This program was started in 1937 and has been a major source of funds. The money comes from a manufacturers excise tax on sporting arms, ammunition and archery equipment. Since 1972, a portion of the funds has been available for hunter education and shooting range construction and renovation. Under the PRA each state or private dollar is matched with three federal dollars. For information on the PRA shooting facility grants, contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in your area.

Land and Water Conservation Act: This source was established in 1965 and is the largest federal assistance program providing money to states and smaller jurisdictions for public outdoor use. These dollars are matched one to one. For information contact the National Park Service in your area.

Challenge Cost Share Programs: These programs are administered by various federal agencies such as USDA Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management. Money is allocated on a matching basis to individuals, groups or organizations. Again contact the local offices of these agencies for information.

Military Reservations: The secretary of the Army is authorized to grant leases of lands, including structure there on at water resource and development projects on military reservations for public park and recreational purposes.

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

An excellent source is your local, state and county recreation parks. These facilities area interested in providing recreational sites that accommodate all groups and ages of the community. Since shooting ranges fall into this category, one should seek information from these agencies in hopes of stirring interest in a public shooting range.

PRIVATE ASSISTANCE

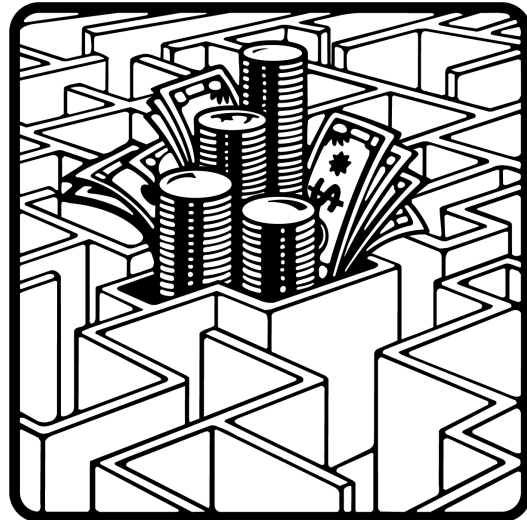
The development of a range may be easier if private funding can be acquired. Below are some possibilities for private funding.

The NRA Range Loan Program: This program is designed to help in new range construction and to expand existing ranges. It also helps NRA affiliated clubs who are facing closure due to environmental restrictions, loss of lease or urbanization.

Large Company Funding: Many large companies such as Olin, DuPont, Ford Motor Co., and 3-M have developed shooting programs as a recreation for their employees.

Business Funding: Many business, large or small, in your community may be interested in working with you in order that the employees can use and enjoy the facility.

Large Landholding Companies: Companies such as mining and logging companies have expressed interest in providing land for use as shooting ranges. Also, Public Utility companies with large land holdings may be an excellent source.



In addition to the above sources, the NSSA offers a program of \$1,000 field grants to its member clubs. On the next page is an outline of procedures that must be followed exactly.

Additional information for Finance Committee: The use of volunteer labor, materials, and city or county supported maintenance crews can greatly reduce the cost of building a new facility or rehabilitating an existing one.

ESTIMATED COSTS

These are estimates exclusive of property costs that may be used as a guide in determining the estimated expenses:

Clubhouse

Approximately \$40 -\$60 per square foot.

Skeet field

Estimated \$10,000 -\$13,000 per field.

Combination Skeet/Trap field

\$15,000 -\$20,000 per field.

Landscaping

Depends upon the terrain, but allow \$3,000-\$5,000 for grass, planting, and add outdoor picnic areas and viewing stands from revenues.

NSSA \$1000.00 Skeet Field Grant Application Guidelines

(Effective July 1, 1998)

The executive committee authorizes grants for \$1000.00 to be used for construction of new skeet fields for clubs with five (5) or fewer fields. Procedures are as follows:

1. Gun club must be affiliated with National Skeet Shooting Association (NSSA) from the time the grant is applied for through completion (continuously).
2. An official letter from the applying club stating the reasons as to why this grant is being applied for, why a new field is being built, how many fields the club currently has, and how the new field will benefit your club and members.
First, letter must be forwarded to the state association for approval, second, the letter of state approval and club letter are sent to the zone executive committee person for approval. Zone executive committee person then sends to NSSA the club application, state approval and zone approval with copies to all parties.
Pre-construction pictures must be included by the club with application letter.
3. Your Zone executive committee person must submit all letters and pictures to NSSA headquarters 15 days prior to the executive committee meeting before consideration for grant approval (Normally skeet field grants are approved at the spring meeting).
4. The construction of the skeet field must be completed within two years after approval, otherwise the grant expires.
5. The club must hold NSSA registered shoots before applying for subsequent grant(s)—at least two shoots per year.
6. At least two years must lapse between grants EXCEPT if the first grant established a one field club, then those clubs may apply immediately for a second grant once their first field is completed and have held two registered shoots. (“Between” means from the time the field was completed, and time of application for additional grant.)
7. Grants are for new fields only, except in the case where a natural disaster (tornado, hurricane, etc.) destroys or severely damages fields, then a grant can be requested for reconstruction by any club (But never for improvements to existing fields or reconstruction for fields that have deteriorated through time).
8. The club will be sent written confirmation from NSSA that a grant has been awarded.
9. Before payment is received from NSSA, the club must have held two registered shoots utilizing the new field. The club will then notify their Zone executive committee person in writing that two registered shoots have been held, including pictures during and after construction. Also included will be paid receipts of all construction costs.
10. NSSA will then send club a letter stating when payment will be sent.

New Ranges: Making It Happen

By Ltc Ralph Aaron

Several things caused me to take the time to write this article. I became aware of several skeet range closures such as Lordship and Loantaka (a forty-year-old New Jersey range). Another stimulus was very informative article by Lonnie Williamson in the March 1991 *Hunter Magazine*, which is published by the National Rifle Association.

I believe that it's time we skeet shooters unleash the pit bull, get mad as hell, and resolve to do something about the demise of shooting facilities.

Imagine if you will a canoeist who has paddled upstream to the halfway distance of his journey. Tired, he now tries to hold his position in the current, but each time he rests his weary arms he loses ground. It might be better to again row forward resting while the canoe glides. I believe this to be analogous to shooting ranges in the good old USA. Rather than maintain our position in the current, let's agree to move forward.

Let me remind you that the purpose of the NSSA is to "in general promote and advance the interest, welfare and development of amateur competition in skeet shooting and related sports." I firmly believe that the NSSA is paddling efficiently with its grant for new fields program.

I have personally been involved in renovating or building skeet facilities on three military installations. My experience from these projects leads me to conclude that if someone will assume the role of "sincere leadership" finding volunteers and materials for new ranges is relatively easy.

I recently purchased a booklet entitled "How to Develop New Places to Shoot." It's published by the Wildlife Management Institute, 1101 14th Street NW, Suite 725, Washington, DC 20005. Copies are available for one dollar each. This is an excellent pamphlet, which covers everything from planning and financial assistance (six pages of good information), to sources of technical and advisory assistance.

What really tripped my trigger was page 12, "Federal Aid In Wildlife Restoration Act: (better known as Pittman-Robertson or P-R) has been a major source of funds for state wildlife programs since 1937. Dollars come from manufacturers' excise tax on sporting firearms, ammunition and archery equipment. Since 1972, a portion of the P-

R funds has been available for hunter education and public shooting range construction, operation and maintenance. In 1988, under the apportionment formula set by law, each state qualified for somewhere between \$170,000 and \$510,000. Between 1972 and 1988, hunter education funds apportioned to the states totaled \$196.5 million. All of this was available for hunter education and shooting range construction, but only \$104.6 million (53%) was used. And of that sum, less than 5 percent went for shooting ranges. Funds not used revert to wildlife programs which, of course, are important but more P-R dollars can and should go to constructing shooting ranges where there are demonstrated needs for them"

Did you get that?!? Less than 5% of YOUR money went for shooting ranges. I say your money because embedded in the cost of every new firearm (paid by the manufacturer) is 11% excise tax, archery equipment also pays 11%, while handguns pay 10%. These are the funding sources for the P-R Fund. Have I got your attention?

Has your state built any new shooting facilities recently? Probably not. What is necessary to **make it happen** is an organized, well lead group of shooters who can demonstrate to their state wildlife agency a need for new shooting facilities!

I would argue that state skeet shooting associations ought to be the ones to champion this cause. Rather than limiting state association activities to only planning state championship shoots (I'm not slighting that arduous effort), how about a long-range vision of where shooting opportunities will be five years from now in your state? Wouldn't your state association officials be proud of being able to say – we built some new skeet fields?

I am very proud of having been part of the New Jersey Skeet Shooting Association team that recently built two new fields on Fort Dix.

I hope I have caused you to think of possibilities for **new ranges-making it happen**.

How about it partners? My arms are really getting weary. Come on, pick up and paddle. Let's stroke this baby on upstream! If I can help in any way, don't hesitate to contact me:

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