

March 10, 2002

LCMR Final Work Program Report

Date of Work program Approval: 7/1/99

Project Completion Date: 6/30/01

LCMR Work Program 1999

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I. PROJECT TITLE: Development and Rehabilitation of Recreational Shooting Ranges

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Total Biennial Project Budget:

\$ LCMR: \$350,000.00 **\$ Match:** \$350,000.00

-LCMR Amount

Spent: \$286,850.55 **Spent:** \$286,850.55

= \$ LCMR Balance \$ 63,149.45 **= \$Match Balance** \$ 63,149.45

A. Legal Citation: ML 1999, Chap. 231, Sec. 16, Subd. 11 h.

Development and Rehabilitation of Recreational Shooting Ranges

\$350,000 is from the future resources fund to the commissioner of natural resources to provide cost-share grants to local recreational shooting clubs for the purpose of developing or rehabilitating shooting sports facilities for public use. In addition to the required work program, grants may not be approved until grant proposals to be funded have been submitted to the legislative commission on Minnesota Resources and the commission has approved the grants or allowed 60 days to pass.

DEVELOPMENT AND REHABILITATION OF RECREATIONAL SHOOTING RANGES

11(h) \$350,000 FRF

Nonstate Match: \$325,000

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This project provided matching grant funds to local shooting range operations open for public use. Both new and existing ranges were given grants to improve the safe operation of a given range, to address accessibility improvements, address environmental concerns or to conduct utility upgrades pertaining to the safe operation of each range.

Twenty eight grants were used by local shooting sports organizations throughout the state. These improvements have helped to increase the capacity of each participating range to provide a safe shooting environment for users. Grant funds are also intended to help in the education of both youth participating in Firearm Safety program training, and provide individuals using these facilities a venue within which to improve their safe use of firearms, either prior to hunting or in competitive shooting.

COMPLETION DATE 6/30/01

II. FINAL PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS: This project's intent has been to provide matching funds to local recreational shooting clubs, for the purpose of developing and/or rehabilitating shooting sports facilities for public use. Ensuring public use of these facilities was part of the terms and conditions set forth in the grant agreements providing funding to each participant.

Project funds were apportioned to local clubs at a 1:1 matching rate, with selection of participants determined through an application process, using an Advisory Committee for review, comprised of members of the shooting sports community. Included were representatives of the National Rifle Association, Federal Cartridge, the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association and a shooting club member.

Upper grant limits per applicant were set at not more than \$20,000 per club. Verification of local expenditures was required when requesting reimbursement, since payments were made only after bills and payment proof were received by the DNR. No use of in-kind time or materials was allowed as a match contribution; match consisted only of dollars (using non-state funding), derived from membership dues, donations, or from outside sources such as charitable gambling organizations. Additional work was allowed to be conducted, but was not eligible for use as local match, such as contributions of machinery, time or materials.

Half of the LCMR funding was earmarked for new construction, such as for development of rifle and pistol ranges, shotgun or sporting clay shooting, or archery ranges, with the other half being used for rehabilitating existing facilities, such as in replacement of shooting berms and baffles, or in the provision of improved access for disabled shooters.

III. FINAL PROGRESS SUMMARY: On November 1, 1999, the LCMR approved recommendations received from this project's advisory panel, to provide project funding to 35 of the 63 initial applicants. Of the 35 groups offered funding, 33 indicated a desire to accept state funding, with two groups declining to participate, since their original proposals were significantly reduced based on the types of activities selected and then recommended for funding. Additional approval was given to allow up to three (3) additional applicants to receive funding, if the situation arose where funding might become available.

Project participant groups were dropped and added, based on LCMR's approval to include selected additional groups with funding if the opportunity became manifest. While 33 grants were initially provided, one group dropped out of the process, with three previously approved groups being added. When additional groups decided not to use their funding for a variety of reasons (outlined later in this document), their funds were allocated to groups already participating in the project, provided that the additional funding did not carry them past the \$20,000 upper limit per grant.

As of the preparation of this report, 28 groups accomplished either new construction or rehabilitation improvements on their shooting range facilities. After repeated reminder mailings, phone calls and other reminders being sent to each participant with reimbursement funds remaining, a total of \$ 286,850.55 of the \$350,000 was paid out to the local groups. This attests

to both the less than perfect nature of club-run shooting ranges, as well as the loosely run nature and attitude of such organizations. Prior to the end of August, additional contacts were made to account for all of the funding made available to the participant groups. Field visits to verify results were also conducted.

IV. OUTLINE OF PROJECT RESULTS:

Result 1. New Rifle/Pistol Ranges & Shotgun Facilities

Result 1:	LCMR Budget: \$175,000	Match: \$175,000
	Balance: \$175,000	Match Balance: \$175,000
	LCMR Budget: \$ 249,705	Match: \$ 249,705
	LCMR Balance: \$ 0	Match: \$ 0

Completion Date: 06/30/01

Result 2. Construction of Outdoor Shooting Facilities and General Improvements (Rehabilitation and New Construction)

Result 2:	LCMR Budget: \$175,000	Match: \$175,000
	Balance: \$175,000	Match Balance: \$175,000

Result 2: LCMR Budget:	\$ 100,295	Match: 100,295
LCMR Balance:	\$ 0	Match Balance: \$ 0

Completion Date: 06/30/01

All but one of the 29 groups with viable contracts in place completed their work. Three of the canceled projects were the result of unforeseen difficulties, including where land control could not be obtained in time to construct the range facility, due to either lack of control over the site, or due a landowner's change of mind over the use or sale of the property.

A wet early construction season in 2001 also hampered progress in many parts of the state. At least one of the canceling parties stated this was a reason they were not going to do the work they were anticipated to accomplish. Procedural changes to be made for the future would include requesting an additional year's time for the project period, to allow for two full construction seasons for each grant recipient. For the 2001 biennium, I have conducted an earlier season sign up period, in anticipation of getting current grant recipient's work started yet during this fall field work season.

V. DISSEMINATION: Documentation of the results of this project have been chronicled, including writing of case studies showing the types of work accomplishments achieved, also budgets and expenditures, so that future participants in a similar program might benefit from the work done in the initial grant period. All sites were also field visited for final proof of

accomplishment, with filming done to document the accomplishments completed at each facility.

The results of this project work will be chronicled in various publications, including the Minnesota Conservation Volunteer, and other newspapers and magazines. I intend to reach out to the Outdoor News, as well as other publications, including those belonging to Peterson Publishing and the North American Hunting Club, headquartered in Minnetonka.

VI. CONTEXT

A. Significance: One main intent of this project was to improve and increase the capacity for shooting sports involvement in Minnesota, and increase the safety and enjoyment in shooting for participants. One of the participant groups (i.e., the Grand Rapids Gun Club) corresponded in their project report that, as a result of the improvements made through receiving this grant, they have increased their membership from 120 to 200 in the past year. Other new facilities estimate they will be able to generate between 60 to 100 new members, especially during the upcoming fall deer rifle sight in period.

B. Time: With an estimated one third of the existing local shooting clubs across Minnesota responding in the affirmative to participate in a project of this type, as determined through an initial solicitation sent to known local clubs, there is little doubt that additional funding will be used during the upcoming biennium, with additional requests thereafter. We want to work with any and all local clubs that have raised their own funding and are ready to proceed within the time frame and budget of this project. Word of mouth from a number of groups has been able to generate a great deal of additional interest in the project in the biennium starting in June 2001.

It is the goal of this project to provide a range of opportunities or potential objectives to local clubs (which provide the bulk of firearm safety training and hunter education classes to hunters of all ages) to enhance their facilities so that a safe shooting environment is provided to participants, and so that safe habits in all types of shooting are advanced to participating members of the local clubs. It is the expectation of the DNR that future work on additional sites will either be funded through the use of additional state or federal funding, along with a wide variety of non-state match sources. Whether a future state match will be provided through the LCMR, general funding or another source or initiative remains uncertain beyond 2003, but the enthusiasm indicated by the local recipients remains high at the time of this writing.

C. Budget Context: This was the first time LCMR funding had been requested for use in cost sharing local shooting range development. Other shooting clubs are either privately run, or are devoted to specific uses such as the training of local law enforcement agency staff. The funding provided for this project was made available to both clubs run by local groups, and/or private shooting sports facilities. A provision of the acceptance of the grant funds was that any facilities using LCMR funding be open for public use, i.e., for gun safety training and certification, hunter education, instructional or competitive shooting. With local enthusiasm seeming to be high at this point, DNR is pleased with the outcome of the initial grant cycle, from 1999 through June 2001.

This project was intended to be part local match, part LCMR funded. However, it was

documented that a number of activities accomplished were not eligible to be reimbursed, since they constituted contributions and donations of time and materials. This may be another area needing to be changed or otherwise addressed in the future, since many of the groups that could be worked with are cash poor, but rich in the availability of members with expertise in trade craft, construction and materials. To discriminate against these groups in the future would be unfortunate and regrettable, given that all shooting clubs and users contribute to the federal excise tax program through which the state receives annual funds to work on enhancing wildlife species and habitat conditions. While not directly related to this LCMR-funded project, it was DNR's intent to use this project as a vehicle to provide sorely lacking and needed assistance to these same shooting organizations.

VII. COOPERATION: The cooperation for this project was garnered in three ways. The first way was through the contribution of effort provided by representatives on the oversight committee for the project, whose job it was to develop selection criteria, score proposals and award grant funds to participants. Representatives of the National Rifle Association and Federal Cartridge Company and the Minnesota Deer Hunters Association participated as members of the oversight committee. Additional members are being solicited from other sport hunting associations, including one or more local shooting clubs. The second group of cooperators were the local clubs selected to participate as recipients of grant funding in or through the project. The third group is internal to Minnesota DNR. The Divisions of Enforcement, Fish & Wildlife and other units such as the Bureau of Engineering within the organization worked together to administer and oversee this grant. None of the oversight members were provided reimbursement for their efforts, since their participation is a normal part of their workload. The LCMR funds are intended to be used strictly for projects. Technical assistance from the Bureau of Engineering was the only cost to the state that was included as a part of this project, in order to meet the needs of local groups needing a low-cost source of engineering assistance. DNR employees included in this project are listed below:

Chuck Schwartz, Information and Education Manager, Enforcement Division
Chuck Niska Shooting Range Coordinator, Enforcement Division
Jason Peterson Landscape Design Specialist, Bureau of Engineering

VIII. LOCATION: This project has been, and will continue to be conducted throughout Minnesota.

Funding for this project was provided by the Minnesota Future Resources Fund as recommended by the Legislative Commission on Minnesota Resources.

**FY2000 SHOOTING RANGE GRANT APPLICATIONS
FINAL REPORT FUNDING LIST**

<u>RANGE/CLUB</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>GRANT TOTAL</u>	<u>AMOUNTS REIMBURSED, BY PAYMENT</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Babbitt Sportsmen's Club	Babbitt	\$ 13,470	1,549.73, 1,007.98, 1719.17, 1202.00, 812.25, 1,408.11, 1,217.50	[8,916.74]
Bald Eagle Sportsmen's Club	White Bear Lake	\$ 15,357	4,308.65, 1,250.00	[5,558.65]
Cedar Valley Conservation Club*	Austin	\$ 3,790	2,462.50, 3,127.50, 785.00	[6,375.00]
Chisago Lakes Sportsmen's Club	Lindstrom		\$ 1,640 CANCELLED	
Deer River Sportsmen's Club	Deer River	\$ 5,386	3,522.21, 1,477.79	[5,000.00]
Eagle Bluff ELC	Lanesboro	\$ 21,539	16,020.00, 1,780.00, 2,200.00	[20,000.00]
East Grand Forks	East Grand Forks	\$ 5,376	2,768.31, 978.85	[3,747.16]
East Morrison County Rod & Gun Club	Pierz	\$ 10,782	6,001.10, 3,998.58	[9,999.68]
Fairmont Sportsmen's Club	Fairmont	\$21,539	CANCELLED	
Faribault Rifle & Pistol Club	Faribault	\$ 16,152	4,037.42, 5,904.56, 316.26, 574.15, 4,167.61	[15,000.00]
Forest Lake Sportsmen's Club	Forest Lake	\$ 21,522	20,000.00	[20,000.00]
Gopher Rifle & Revolver	Harris	\$ 18,898	1,491.92, 645.42, 575.00, 102.14, 1,477.50, 470.84	[4,762.82]
Grand Rapids Gun Club	Grand Rapids	\$ 11,325	7,500.00, 3,000.00	[10,500.00]
Henning Sportsmen's Club	Henning	\$ 10,775	6,500.00, 3,500.00	[10,000.00]
Itasca Gun Club	Grand Rapids	\$ 13,454	12,500.00	[12,500.00]
Key Cities Conservation Club	Mankato	\$ 5,386	4,287.97	[4,287.97]
Knob Hill Sportsmen's Club	Wadena	\$ 10,782	8615.67, 1,384.33	[10,000.00]
Lakes Area Shooting Center	Fergus Falls	\$ 5,370	CANCELLED	
Moose-Willow Sportsmen's Club	Hill City		\$ 8,093 5,690.87, 1,781.75, 27.38	[7,500.00]
North Star Club of Leech Lake*	Walker	\$12,111	5,792.04, 5,000.00, 1,207.96 4,250.00	[16,250.00]
Northern Mississippi Range Association	Cass Lake	\$ 7,536	11,250.00	[11,250.00]
Northland Range & Gun Club	Roseau	\$ 8,493	4,150.50, 3,749.50	[7,900.00]
Northwoods Shooting Sports	Carlton	\$ 21,522	5,000.00, 5,000.00, 9,000.00, 1,000.00	[20,000.00]
Pelican River Gun Club	Pelican River (Rapids)	\$ 1,100	CANCELLED	
Pennington County Sportsmen's Club	Thief River Falls	\$ 17,826	16,930.00	[16,930.00]
Sandstone Sportsmen's Club	Sandstone	\$ 21,532	5,019.00, 3,355.00, 2,341.50, 2,341.50, 1,943.00, 5,000.00	[20,000.00]
St. Cloud Valley Sportsmen's Club	Houston	\$ 1,470	6,70.03	[670.03]
St. Paul Rod & Gun Club	South St. Paul	\$ 5,386	5,000.00	[5,000.00]
Tyler Rod & Gun Club	Tyler	\$21,522	CANCELLED	
United Northern Sportsmen's Club	Duluth	\$ 1,495	CANCELLED	
Vermilion Range Trap Club*	Ely	\$ 6,461	1,734.32, 3,546.00, 273.68, 314.17, 2,031.83	[7,900.00]
Waverly Rod & Gun Club	Waverly	\$ 5,274	864.00, 3,100.00 446.00, 490.00	[4,900.00]
Wolf Lake Shooting Club	Wolf Lake	\$ 5,386	1,432.50, 1,400.00, 300.00	[3,132.50]
Zumbro River Sportsmen's Club	Kasson	\$ 9,212	4,300.00, 4,250.00	[8,550.00]
Engineering Services Provided by DNR		\$24,965		[10,120.00]
TOTALS		\$ 350,000		286,850.55

Grant amounts include a pro-rated amount for Engineering Services provided to groups. Unspent funds from this service were returned to the LCMR.

* Funding from some of the canceled projects was provided to previously under-funded projects, to do additional work.

Date: February 25, 2002