Providing Safe Places to Shoot

In Washington, about 8 percent of the population shoots firearms and participates in archery.

Recognizing a need for public facilities, in 1990, the Legislature created the Firearms and Archery Range Recreation program, which provides funding for places where gun and bow enthusiasts can practice and train safely.

The program’s goal is to assist with the acquisition, development, and renovation of firearm and archery ranges in order to increase access by law enforcement, the public with concealed pistol or hunting licenses, and people enrolled in firearm or hunter safety education classes.

Ranges must be open regularly to hunter safety classes, law enforcement, and the public to qualify for grants.

Funding Only the Best Projects

The grant process is open and competitive to ensure that only the best projects are funded. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board accepts applications every two years, in even-numbered years. They are reviewed by staff and the Firearms and Archery Range Recreation Advisory Committee, which is made of up experts in archery and shooting disciplines. The advisory committee scores the projects based on criteria established by the board and submits a ranked list to the board for funding consideration.

The Spokane Rifle Club used an $8,800 Firearms and Archery Range Recreation grant to extend and complete its perimeter security fence. Located in Riverside State Park, the rifle club is bordered by a parkway used by cars as well as people walking, running, and bicycling.
The Bainbridge Island Sportsmen’s Club is using a $41,000 Firearms and Archery Range Recreation grant to construct a building open at one end for archery. Currently, the club uses straw bales on the range for archery activities.