

Media Advisory – Dec. 7, 2010

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County secures property for public shooting range

Snohomish County Parks and Recreation will begin developing plans for a public shooting range outside Sultan following Tuesday's reconveyance of property from the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The State DNR Board of Commissioners voted 6-0 to transfer a 156-acre area off Sultan Basin Road to Snohomish County for "public park use." Snohomish County Parks and Recreation intends to construct a public outdoor shooting range on the property.

"I have always supported this project and am pleased to see it finally moving forward," said Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon. "This project has been discussed for more than 20 years and will provide a safe location for shooting enthusiasts and hobbyists to meet."

Snohomish County residents have long clamored for a place to safely meet and practice. Since then, Snohomish County Parks and Recreation and DNR have hosted public meetings to discuss the future project and to garner support from the DNR Board of Commissioners for the property reconveyance.

The location of the future shooting range is several miles outside the Sultan city limits and is isolated from inhabited areas. Snohomish County will construct a shooting range that limits noise and provides a safe alternative to current outdoor shooting practices. Parks' staff will begin the master-planning process in early 2011.

"Our master-planning process will involve all citizens with an interest in this facility," Reardon said. "We believe this will result in one of the premier outdoor shooting facilities in the nation with public/private investment."

Officials and members of the business community in Sultan and the Sky Valley say the shooting range will create new economic opportunities.

"The Sky Valley Chamber is very excited about this positive step," said Debbie Copple, the chamber's director and a member of the County Parks Advisory Board. "We look forward to the process of working with our neighbors to develop an environmentally friendly and sustainable shooting range that will enhance outdoor recreation and tourism opportunities."

The reconveyance is the second of two recent Parks' projects involving DNR. In November, Parks purchased 8 acres near Wallace Falls State Park to serve as a primary access point to the adjacent Washington State Reiter Foothills Recreation Area.

Nonprofits and community organizations will work with the county and DNR to develop a new parking area there while increasing access to Reiter Foothill trails from the site.

Snohomish County Parks is working with DNR, the Washington State Parks Commission, the Sky Valley Chamber of Commerce, and the cities of Gold Bar and Sultan to promote outdoor recreation as part of East Snohomish County's economic development plan.

For more information on either project, contact Parks Director Tom Teigen at 425-388-6600 or tom.teigen@snoco.org.



Snohomish County Parks & Recreation
www.snocoparks.org