

Draft

## **Ben Avery Mounted Shooting Development Business Plan**

### **Executive Summary**

Arizona mounted shooters lead by Ben Avery Mounted Shooting Development, BAMSD, is developing facilities at the Ben Avery Shooting Range of Arizona Game and Fish Department, AGFD, in 4 Phases at a cost of \$2.5 million over 11 years.

Facilities suitable for mounted shooting are rare, distant and hard to schedule due to competition from other uses. The few that have been historically available are being restricted due to the use of firearms. There are no weekend facilities which makes recruiting and education of working shooters impossible.

The development project is highly synergistic. Local shooters have the ability to design, raise funds and ensure active use of a facility, but the land is unattainable privately. AGFD has sufficient land in protected shooting uses but does not have the funds. The combination is able to do a project neither can do alone.

The project will support education, shooting sports, recreation, safety and improve public perception of firearms.

It is significant that the first mounted shooting competition was held at Ben Avery as a part of SASS Winter Range. The founder of mounted shooting and Chairman of the Cowboy Mounted Shooters Association, CMSA, is on the BAMSD committee. CMSA is actively supporting the project with funds, publicity and participation.

The chief risk to the project is that sufficient funds will not be raised. However, significant portions of the objectives will be met even if the overall fund raising goals are not met. An outdoor facility sufficient for many purposes is believed to be easily attainable.

Construction will begin in December of 2008.

September 16, 2008

## Objective and Needs

Arizona mounted shooters represented by the Ben Avery Mounted Shooting Development Committee, BAMSD<sup>1</sup>, and the Arizona Game and Fish Department<sup>2</sup>, AGFD, have undertaken the development of a world class mounted shooting facility at the Department's 1650 acre Ben Avery Shooting Facility in Phoenix Arizona. AGFD has included over 11 acres of suitable and generally unattainable land in its Ben Avery Master Plan<sup>3</sup> adopted by the Arizona Game and Fish commission in 2007. The Arizona Mounted Shooters Association, Inc<sup>4</sup>, ACMSA, worked closely with the department on the Master Plan.

The objectives of Ben Avery mounted shooting development are:

1. Construction of a mounted shooting facility including 2 covered arenas and appropriate support facilities and equipment
2. The facility is designed to be suitable to host CMSA Championship Series Events including spectator accommodations.
3. Coordinate the facility with planned RV sites to attract winter visitors for long term mounted shooting practice and camping.
4. Develop programs for regular practice, new shooter recruitment and education, spectator enjoyment, youth training, firearms safety and outdoor recreation.
5. Construct Facilities on a phased basis to enable immediate benefits and expand as funding is available.

The joint efforts of AFGD and BAMSD address several difficult issues that inhibit the development of firearms shooting and mounted shooting activities in Arizona and the Phoenix area. The resulting joint effort is highly synergistic.

1. Firearms sports have steadily been restricted in the Phoenix area which is the dominant population center in Arizona.
2. No weekend practice facilities are reasonably available.
3. Most local horse facilities will not allow mounted shooting due to the use of firearms.
4. Weekend mounted shooting practice is generally unavailable.
5. Local horse facilities which allow mounted shooting have very limited availability due to space competition from other horse sports. AGFD has assured local

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://bamsd.com>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.azgfd.gov/>

<sup>3</sup> The Arizona Game and Fish Commission voted to approve the Master Plan for the Ben Avery Shooting Facility. The plan was developed over the past year with input from user groups and the public, and will guide the future development of the Ben Avery Shooting Facility. It will help prioritize use of the property to best serve a wide range of shooting sports customers in the future. There is no specific timeline or budget; projects will be implemented as funding becomes available. Source: AGFD Annual Report, 2006-2007

<sup>4</sup> <http://acmsa.com>

- mounted shooters that non-firearms related equine activities are not within the mission of AGFD and will not be permitted to use the facility.
6. There is a very limited amount of private land in Arizona which makes land that can be purchased for mounted shooting very expensive.
  7. AGFD has land, but is severely limited in development funds. It is generally funded by License fees and grants and receives no funding from the State of Arizona general fund. Many shooting sports compete for remaining funds.
  8. Local mounted shooters cannot afford the land, but have the ability to raise funds for facility construction and can supply volunteers to ensure low cost and high usage.
  9. AGFD, being a department of the State of Arizona, is a Qualified Organization<sup>5</sup> under IRS rules making donations tax deductible, subject to some restrictions.
  10. The resulting facility will be available as a publicly owned facility on a non discriminatory basis to all mounted shooting organizations and individuals.
  11. AGFD has set up a dedicated account to receive donations and furnishes each donator an acknowledging letter including the specified use to mounted shooting development.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department and the Arizona Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association have executed a Memorandum of Understanding that defines the relationship in cooperatively developing mounted shooting facilities at Ben Avery.

---

1. <sup>5</sup> See IRS publication 526. "Generally, only the five following types of organizations can be qualified organizations....5. The United States or any state, the District of Columbia, a U.S. possession (including Puerto Rico), a political subdivision of a state or U.S. possession, or an Indian tribal government or any of its subdivisions that perform substantial government functions.

**Note.** To be deductible, your contribution to this type of organization must be made solely for public purposes.

## **Background**

### **Cowboy Mounted Shooting**

Cowboy mounted shooting consists of a mounted competitor engaging a course with 10 target balloons with the objective being the lowest adjusted elapsed time. The competitor is armed with two .45 caliber Colt Single Action Army revolvers, or replicas, loaded with 10 mounted shooting blanks.

The blanks contain only black powder and do not have a projectile. The cartridge is crimped. The effective range is less than 30 feet, making the sport safe for spectators, participants and horses. Millions of rounds have been expended without any fatalities and minimal serious injuries. Indoor use is widespread and demonstrated to be safe.

The competitor engages 5 targets, holsters the first weapon and draws the second. The second 5 targets are then engaged. The score consists of the elapsed time, usually 13-25 seconds, plus penalties for missed targets and specified course errors.

There are over 30 different classes each have 6 competitive levels including Wrangler (under 12), junior (12-16), Adult and Senior. Each class also is split by gender. This results in each individual competing within their age group, gender and expertise level.

In addition to the original pistol event there is a rifle and Cavalry Class. The rifle class uses pre 1900 rifle

About 40 % of competitors are female. There is sizeable family and youth participation. There are currently about 8,000 members in the Cowboy Mounted Shooters Association, CMSA, which is by far the largest and the original organization and is actively supporting the project. Mounted Shooters of America also sanctions matches and has been briefed on the project.

The sport presents a thrilling experience for spectators in contrast to other shooting and equine sports. The fast action and colorful Cowboy costumes combined with racing horses presents a thrilling spectacle.

Many recruits to Cowboy Mounted Shooting are first time gun owners. They are drawn to the sport by the thrill, Old West flavor and class structure which allows immediate success. Most participants find a strong social satisfaction. The management of CMSA has been successful in keeping competitiveness between participants to a low level which creates a happy participant.

In contrast to many gun sports, mounted shooting is rapidly growing. The spectacle and safety creates a positive example of the benefits of firearms for safe recreation, entertainment, the celebration of the American Western Heritage. The many female and

youth participants bring positive participation from traditionally under represented groups in gun sports.

Arizona Cowboy Mounted Shooters Association, ACMSA, is the original mounted shooting club and continues organizing the majority of events in Arizona today. It has about 80 members at any given time.

Ben Avery Mounted Shooting Development, BAMSD, consists of members of ACMSA who have organized the effort to build the Mounted Shooting Center at Ben Avery. This committee works closely with AGFD, The parent Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association and ACMSA in the development effort. The Chairman of CMSA is a member of the BAMSD committee.

### **Mounted Shooting History**

Mounted Shooting was invented by Mr. Jim Rodgers of Scottsdale, Arizona in the early 1990s in the Phoenix area. The first organized Cowboy Mounted Shooting competition was held at Ben Avery in 1992. The largest and original organization is Cowboy Mounted Shooting Association<sup>6</sup>, CMSA. The second largest organization is Mounted Shooters of America<sup>7</sup>, MSA.

### **Ben Avery Shooting Facility**

The Ben Avery Shooting Facility is owned and operated by the Arizona Game and Fish Department. It is located in northern part of the City of Phoenix and is one of the largest shooting facilities in the world at 1650 acres. The facility is protected by specific state laws and expansion is planned to serve demand. AGFD completed a Master Plan<sup>8</sup> in 2007 for the facility.

The existing facilities at Ben Avery consist of a single temporary fenced arena on open ground. The new Center is to be built in the same expanded area.

### **Arizona Game and Fish Department**

AGFD is the agency of the State of Arizona responsible for Wildlife management, off road and watercraft registration and regulation and state firearms ranges. As a governmental agency of Arizona it is a Qualified Organization under IRS regulations. This allows donations to AGFD to be deductible on Federal Income taxes with some restrictions.

This provision is a key factor in obtaining donations from individuals.

---

<sup>6</sup> CMSA.com

<sup>7</sup> newMSA.com

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.azgfd.gov/pdfs/outdoor\\_recreation/ben\\_avery/BASFFinalMasterPlan.pdf](http://www.azgfd.gov/pdfs/outdoor_recreation/ben_avery/BASFFinalMasterPlan.pdf)

AGFD has set up account PCA 04087 for mounted shooting development at Ben Avery and provides a confirming letter to donors for their use.

AGFD has been supremely active and supportive in accepting and acting on the plans put forward by BAMSD. AGFD has dedicated a portion of its maintenance resources to the project.

September 16, 2008

## Funding and Expenditure Plans

Development of the planned mounted Shooting facilities will proceed as funding is obtained. This will control the speed with which facilities are developed. The entire plan is designed to recognize this limitation and utilize funds to continuously and progressively build while allowing concurrent use. Although 4 different phases are being used for planning purposes it is anticipated that pieces of the Center will be completed as rapidly as funding is obtained.

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Major Facilities</b>	<b>Cost with 30% Contingency</b>	<b>Target Use</b>
<b>1</b>	2 Outdoor Ranges, Target and Safe Loading Structure	139,000	Practice, Training
<b>2</b>	Announcers booth, Corrals, Range Improvements	184,000	Local Competitions
<b>3</b>	West Range cover, Lighting, Bleachers	1,315,000	State and Regional competitions
<b>4</b>	East Range cover	821,000	CMSA Championship Series events
		2,460,000	

The facility at completion is projected to cost \$2.5 million. See Attachment 2 for a detailed cost estimate.

Attachment 3 shows the detailed Expenditure and fund raising plan by years from 2008 through 2018. The following summarizes sources of funds.

<b>Sources</b>	<b>Amount over 10 years</b>
Private Tax Deductible Donations	54,000
Volunteer Labor	85,500
Range Advertising	255,000
Corporate Sponsorships and Donations	340,000
CMSA Sponsorship	276,000
Major Named Sponsors	275,000
Friends of NRA Grants	550,000
Fund Raising Events	48,000
Pavilion Brick Sales	275,000
AGFD Funds or value	301,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,459,500</b>

## **Risks and Contingencies**

The key risks to the project and discussion of contingencies are as follows:

1. **Insufficient Funding:** The amount of funding required, \$2.5 million for the final facilities is the major risk. It will take a multiyear effort by a sizeable number of people to raise the funds. Offsetting this risk is the following:
  - a. ACMSA is the original Cowboy Mounted Shooting club started by the founder and has been in operation for over 14 years.
  - b. The project will be successful in providing a safe training, education and practice facility even if funds are not available to fund the high cost structures. Range covers for rain protection and shade account for over half of total expenditures. In the worst case a first class outdoor facility will be in place.
  - c. The sport continues to grow at a very rapid pace.
  - d. The Phoenix area has a huge demand for Mounted Shooting facilities with essentially no competing projects. As other facilities are closed to mounted shooting, the Ben Avery facility will grow in importance.
  - e. Local mounted shooters have a history of successful fund raising and club operation.
  - f. Numerous prominent and talented people are associated with the effort.
2. **Inflation and inaccuracy of the cost estimating**
  - a. A 30% contingency has been added to account for inflation and estimating inaccuracy.
3. **Personnel and Human Resources**
  - a. The project has universal and widespread support amongst mounted shooters. Central Arizona is the headquarters and birthplace of both major organizations. This provides access to resources and motivated people.
4. **Arizona Game and Fish Issues**
  - a. **Change in Game and Fish Objectives:** The facility is in the Ben Avery Facility Master Plan which was approved by the Arizona Game and Fish Commission in December of 2007. It was recognized that AGFD would not have sufficient funds to build the center from the start. That is the motivation for mounted shooters to provide significant funding.
  - b. **Failure to support the project:** AGFD has been an exemplary partner in hearings, staff support and engineering. The project meets a core need of the department to expand participation in outdoor activities. It also represents an entertainment rich way to showcase outdoor and firearms recreation.

## **Exhibits**

- **Business Plan Cost, Usage and Financial Summary**
- **Fund Raising and Expenditure Summary**
- **Cost Estimate**
- **Usage Summary**