

The State of Our Range February 5, 2010:

During 2009 a lot of positive things have happened with our range, along with a couple of challenges. In May we were given a 20-year management agreement from the Board of County Commissioners. From that point we have been working on the permit process, which is where ERML has had a few challenges.

The first challenge is when the neighbor's of the range convinced the Commissioners to have a third-party safety evaluation made of our plans for construction. Roy Ruel was the self-proclaimed Safety Specialist that the residents recommended for the County to use. After we reviewed his recommendations we concluded that Mr. Ruel was the type of so called expert that is so often used in Court to testify for the side who will pay for his testimony. Mike Hedaria, one of our Board Members, found a court case where Mr. Ruel testified as an expert witness on an accidental shooting case. Mr. Ruel testified the defendant shot and hit the victim several times and claimed the incident was an accidental shooting because of a light trigger pull from a Glock. The Judge indicated Mr. Ruel was the worst expert witness he had ever seen. After we discredited this so-called expert witness, Cheryl Crowley (a resident), presented a drawing to the County Permitting Department showing our berm height to be inadequate, and bullets could hit a house if a round went over the berm. We then had to show the Permitting Department where Ms. Crowley's drawing was in error, and our Range Design Engineer confirmed that the ERML berm is in fact high enough to protect any surrounding house. Once again this process took additional time we had not planned for.

After calling other ranges to see what challenges they faced, I found the NRA has a Range Design Department who will make an on-site visit and evaluate ranges. We entered into a contract with NRA in December and had a representative conduct a study of our range and plans. The final assessment from the NRA should be complete within two weeks. All parties (ERML, Neighbors & Permitting Department) have agreed to abide by NRA's recommendation.

Hopefully construction will commence very soon.

Respectfully,

Mike Roberts
ERML Sportsman's Foundation President