

## Billings Rod and Gun Club Master Plan

### Neighbor Survey - Rehberg Ranch Home Owners

The Billings Rod and Gun Club Board of Directors have hired a consultant to complete a long-range Master Plan for the Club's facilities. This Plan will guide future decision making in regard to range improvements and facility locations for many years to come.

As part of this planning process the consultant is asking the Club's neighbors at Rehberg Ranch to provide input via this short survey as to their perceptions of the Rod and Gun Club and how both entities they can best maintain a good neighborly relationship in the future. Your answers will provide important programming information for the Club's Master Planning effort. Individual answers will be kept confidential.

For those not familiar with the Rod and Gun Club its mission is to "serve sportsmen and women in the enjoyment of the hunting, fishing and shooting sports". The Club is very active in youth hunter education, conservation issues, hunting and fishing access issues and has shooting ranges for Archery, Rifle, Pistol and Shotguns. It currently has 2000 family members and has had over 500 families on the waiting list for several years. It is a private, member-owned non-profit organization that is operated by a volunteer Board of Directors.

1) Are you aware of any unsafe conditions that have occurred on or near your property due to living within close proximity of the shooting ranges? ----- YES - 4 NO - 13

- 1) Stray arrows (2) found at the base of my retaining wall. Club had been notified of this a couple of years ago.
- 2) Unsafe sound.
- 3) Not as yet but am aware there is shooting a short distance away. I hope we never have an accident with all the small children who play here.
- 4) My kids and I often walk in the area between the houses on Long Rider Trail and the Club and find arrows each time. We have never seen arrows come across but they are there.
- 5) Arrows & Ammo in trees & ground on other side of fence ("Pa Hollow"). And --- a lot of hikers and dogs along the fence line.

2) Do you have any concerns (either now or in the future) in regard to the shooting activities that occur at the Rod and Gun Club? ---- YES -7 NO - 10

- 1) Not at present use levels. If use levels doubled, --- then maybe (mostly from large bore noise).
- 2) It is fine now; however, I would oppose any major expansion of the current facilities that are now used.
- 3) Expansion could cause the noise factor to become a concern.
- 4) Shooting early in the morning (before 7 AM weekdays and 8 AM weekends) is not appropriate. More activity then which exists now would not be appropriate. Shooting after 8 PM is not appropriate. Automatics, semi-automatics & large caliber (sound like canons) should not be allowed.
- 5) The larger it may get could become a problem in the future. Is a good idea to shoot guns as airplanes fly over!!
- 6) My concern is over the noise pollution created by shooting activities. Anything that can be done to buffer/dampen the noise would be much appreciated. Thanks for asking!
- 7) Noise only and arrow conflicts along the fence line.
- 8) My concern is of the BR&G Club going away because of the homes (I am a member and live in Rehberg Ranch). It (BR&G Club) was here before the houses were and if they don't like it they should have not built here.

3) In your opinion, what future policies or improvements could the Rod and Gun Club pursue that would help to maintain its good neighbor status?

- 1) We live on the north side of the hill down from Iron Horse. We only hear the large bore range and it has not been a problem for the last 3 years. I am also a member of the BR&G Club though my use is very limited in the last few years. "Open ½ hour before sunrise" should be changed for large bore to the same as house construction city rules to avoid annoying neighbors.
- 2) The Rod and Gun Club occupied its current location before Rehberg Ranch subdivision came into being. Residents who purchase property had to be aware of its existence. Live and let live.
- 3) A quiet time prior to 7 AM and after 8 PM.
- 4) If expansion is planned it should be done as not too infringe on the subdivision's peaceful setting or create more noise.
- 5) Start shooting after 7 AM.
- 6) It would be nice to have a couple of hours on summer evenings to enjoy time on the deck without constant shooting. Maybe 7 to 9 on Saturday would be a consideration. Being somewhat new to the situation we were told when purchasing the lot that shooting only went on in the fall before hunting season. It didn't take long to find out how incorrect that was! Thanks for the opportunity to express concerns.
- 7) Limit large caliber shooting hours --- don't start until 9:00 or so --- at least on weekends.
- 8) They were here first and shouldn't have to do anything.
- 9) Keep trash, old pick-up beds, other items removed. Hide buildings with trees to protect rural outdoor view. Do NOT build more structures visible from Rehberg Ranch.
- 10) I don't appreciate shooting at 6 AM and the noise factor at times is very annoying. Maybe place hours on the shooting!!
- 11) Thank you for taking the time to conduct a survey of Rehberg Ranch home owners with regard to the future policies of the Billings Rod and Gun Club.
- 12) I would like to start off by saying that I support Second Amendment rights and the right to own and bear arms. I stand behind you and your desire to train and achieve a high standard of gun ownership. I have lived in the Rehberg Ranch subdivision for several years. My wife and I are now in our second Rehberg Ranch home. My first home was located in Phase One of the Rehberg Ranch Subdivision, and due to man made and natural barriers, I was rarely bothered by the noise of the gun club. Had you sent this survey to me at that time, I would not have given you much of a response, if any.

Since then, however, my wife and I have built a new house in Phase Two of the subdivision, and the sounds from the guns at the large bore gallery are much louder than the gun noise is elsewhere in the subdivision. Our new house is located at the very end of Iron Horse Trail, right across from the large bore gallery. The sound emanating from that gallery is quite loud and unnerving. Had we known how much louder the guns would be in this location, my wife and I would have never chosen to build here.

We know and respect the fact that the Billings Rod and Gun Club has existed in its present location for many years, long before the Rehberg Ranch Subdivision was developed, but perhaps changes could be made at no or little expense to your organization that could address our concerns. Our answers to your three survey questions are as follows.

Question 1 – We are not aware of any specific incidents indicating unsafe conditions that have occurred on or near our property in the past, but we are concerned about unsafe incidents that could occur in the future, given our home's close proximity to the large bore range. Although we have not measured the exact distance, we estimate that a stray bullet could easily reach our house and possibly injure us or others. It spooks us to think that a miss fired gun could send a bullet in our direction.

Question 2 - We do have concerns in regard to the shooting activities that occur at the Rod and Gun Club. First, we are concerned about potentially unsafe conditions, as stated above. Second, the loud noise generated by the large bore guns is very disturbing.

Question 3 - We have several suggestions as to future policies or improvements that the Rod and Gun Club could pursue, including the following:

If possible, we would suggest moving the large bore gun range to another location, possibly over the ridge to the east, farther away from Rehberg Ranch. Build a dirt berm behind the large bore gun gallery or install sound panels to deflect or absorb the majority of the sound. The NRA might be willing to provide grant money for such a project. We know of an individual who has been a leader in obtaining NRA grants for privately operated gun clubs in Montana. He has offered his services to help you should you desire to utilize him. Possibly changing the gun club hours of operation to 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Thank you for your time.

- 13) Please stop shooting so early on Sunday mornings. I have been awoken @ 6:15 AM two times – can you wait until 8 AM?
- 14) My location gets minimal noise from the Rod and Gun Club. However, notification of upcoming events that will create noise and traffic would be appreciated. This way the homeowners can adjust their activities. For example, if I knew an event was planned that would interrupt a cookout at my home, I could reschedule. Thank you.
- 15) Structural & Natural Sound Barriers.
- 16) Offer free membership to everyone in Rehberg Ranch (just joking) --- I think everything is good as it is now.
- 17) Enforce start time after 8 AM on weekends.

Please mail the completed survey to Jim Foley Foley Group LLC 100 North 27<sup>th</sup> Street Suite 450 Billings, MT 59101 or fax to: 294-4478 or email at [jim@foleygroupinfo.com](mailto:jim@foleygroupinfo.com)