

SB

1/13

SB 460
HB 361

Introduced: 2/2/77
Referred: Resources and
Finance

BY CROFT, BRADLEY, RADER
AND RODEY

1 IN THE SENATE

2 SENATE BILL NO. 113

3 IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

4 A BILL

5 For an Act entitled: "An Act making a special appropriation to the Department
6 of Fish and Game to purchase real property known as the
7 Rabbit Creek Rifle Range within Potter Point State Game
8 Refuge; and providing for an effective date."

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

10 * Section 1. The sum of \$75,000 is appropriated from the general fund to
11 the Department of Fish and Game to purchase real property known as the Rabbit
12 Creek Rifle Range within the area known as the Potter Point State Game Refuge.

13 * Sec. 2. The real property described in sec. 1 of this Act shall be
14 maintained as waterfowl habitat, refuge access, and a continued limited use
15 shooting facility.

16 * Sec. 3. Any funds not used in the purchase of the property described in
17 sec. 1 of this Act shall be used to develop safety and sound abatement
18 features on the rifle range.

19 * Sec. 4. The unexpended and unobligated portion of this appropriation
20 lapses into the general fund June 30, 1978.

21 * Sec. 5. This Act takes effect immediately in accordance with AS 01.10.-
22 070(c).

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March 9, 1978

Hugh Malone, Chairman
House Finance Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Pouch V
Juneau, Alaska 99811

Dear Mr. Malone:

Re: Potter Point Shooting Range - HB 381

Representative Lisa Rudd has requested a clarification from my department concerning funding sources and amounts required for the purchase of Potter Point Shooting Range. Some confusion arose, and to a certain extent remains, over the availability of federal aid matching funds on a three (federal) to one (state) basis. These are the so-called Pittman-Robertson funds that form the bulk of the Game Division's budget. It is now my best estimate that funds will be available and I recommend that the sum of \$50,000 be appropriated from the general fund for matching with \$150,000 of federal aid monies to purchase and improve the Potter Point Shooting Range.

Sincerely,

James W. Brooks
Commissioner

cc: Lisa Rudd

MEMORANDUM

State of Alaska

TO: Ronald J. Somerville
Regional Game Supervisor
Anchorage

DATE: April 25, 1975

FILE NO:

TELEPHONE NO:

FROM: Jack E. Alexander
Hunter Safety Coordinator
Anchorage

SUBJECT: Rabbit Creek Rifle Range

The Rabbit Creek Rifle Range located approximately 10 miles south of Anchorage on the Potter Flats is presently the only area readily available to an estimated 40,000 firearm owners and users.

Need

The Department of Fish and Game's involvement in the range came about primarily as a result of the lack of safe facilities needed in the Hunter Education program for instruction and practice in firearms training. It soon became apparent that the need for safe shooting facilities far exceeded that of training an estimated 2,000 hunter safety students annually in the Anchorage area. Adequate firearms training facilities are also lacking for local and state law enforcement agencies. However, the largest need for shooting facilities is in the area of general public shooting.

In addition to firearms training the residents of the Anchorage area have indicated a strong support for year round recreational shooting facilities and programs. Beside the recreational aspect, benefits to the local and state government will no doubt be a reduction in the hazards and conflicts associated with uncontrolled shooting. It is generally felt that an easily accessible range would reduce the frequency of nuisance and indiscriminate shooting along roadsides, litter collection points, etc.

A number of alternate range sites in the Anchorage area have been examined, however, distance, unsuitable topography, high cost of land and lack of controlling authority have eliminated these areas from further consideration.

A count of people utilizing the existing facilities at the Rabbit Creek site and a survey of their interest was conducted during the first two weekends of March (see attachment). During this 4 day period 714 people were observed shooting. During the fall of 1974 when the range operated 7 days a week an estimated 700 people utilized range facilities weekly.

History

The range came into existence as a result of a patent granted by the Bureau of Land Management under authority of the public purposes act (62 and SLAT.,476, 43U.S.C. Section 15) to the Alaska Range Association in 1961. The patent stipulates under a reversionary clause that the land is to be used for recreational firearms and archery range only until the year 1986.

The range operated under the supervision of Dave Drew, President of the Alaska Range Association from its inception until the fall of 1973 when his supervisory activities were suspended due to health problems. Unsupervised and unrestricted public use of the range occurred from that time until the fall of 1974. Without supervision and controlling authorities indiscriminate use of firearms occurred on and adjacent to the Rifle Range. Crowded and unsupervised range conditions forced shooters away from the range and generally towards the railroad tracks and nearby residential areas. In the fall of 1974, the Department of Fish and Game obtained a one year lease with an option to purchase on the property under authority of the Federally funded Hunter Education Program (PL-92-558 and PL-91-503).

The Department of Fish and Game is proposing through legislative action the Rabbit Creek Range be purchased with available federal Pittman-Robertson and state general fund monies. The range is to be a public shooting range, available also for hunter safety and law enforcement training.

Operation and Maintenance -

The range will be operated and policies developed on a cooperative agreement basis with the Greater Anchorage Area Borough, Parks & Recreation Division. Maintenance costs will be covered by user fee. Presently an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 people use the range annually.

Cost -

An appraisal conducted by the Alaska Department of Highways estimates the values of the property at approximately \$148,000. However, the price is subject to negotiation and is likely to be closer to \$100,000. An engineer's estimate of construction cost is not available, however, with labor and equipment provided by the National Guard, Navy and Army reserves cost should remain under \$50,000.

The basis for funding is \$52,000 in surplus Federal hunter safety monies and \$48,000 in PR funds plus the \$50,000 state general fund matching monies.

Planned Developments -

The diversity of shooting interest requires many considerations in range development. Rifle sighting, pistol and shotgun facilities are being considered. The type and number of facilities will rest heavily with the ability to control such activities. Basic safety and noise control features will include earth fills for bullet stops and a parallel baffling system.

Denali State Park Development, Mat-Su Borough	235,000		235,000
Kenai Peninsula Develop- ment, Kenai	255,000		255,000
Kachemak Bay State Park Acquisition, Homer	300,000		300,000
Pleasant Camp Acquisition & Adaptive Use, Haines	75,000		75,000
Ninilchik Camp Develop- ment, Kenai	75,000		75,000
Caines Head Recreation Area Development, Seward	800,000		800,000
Chugach State Park Development, Anchorage	725,000		725,000
Marriott Hunt Lake Development	50,000	50,000	
Chugach Park Road Acqui- sition-Glenalps	40,000		40,000
Department of Fish and Game			
Vessel Equipment Placement, Various	54,000	54,000	
Crystal Lake Hatchery Improve- ment Petersburg	284,000	284,000	
Sonar Scanning Equipment, SE Alaska	15,000	15,000	
Starrigavan Bay Weir and Dock Improvement, Sitka	157,500	157,500	
Central District Water Inven- tory Equipment	60,000	60,000	
SE District Water Inventory Equipment	50,000	50,000	
Fairbanks Regional Office Generator	22,300	22,300	
Sockeye Substrate Incubation Units	445,000	445,000	
Big Lake Expansion, Central Alaska	315,000	315,000	
Tutka Expansion, Homer	420,000	420,000	
Bylva Bay Aquaculture Study	25,000	25,000	
Deer Mountain Hatchery Repairs	30,000	30,000	
Gape Blossom Stream Fishery Project	15,000	15,000	
Rabbit Creek Rifle Range	200,000	50,000	150,000
Cushman Creek Rifle Range - Fairbanks	55,000	55,000	
Montrose Creek Trap Range	100,000	25,000	75,000
Sitka Rifle Range	25,000	25,000	
Fort Yukon Rifle Range	25,000	25,000	
Willow River Stream Clearance	40,000	40,000	
Department of Public Safety			
Single Sideband Marine Radios, Statewide	54,000	54,000	
VHF Marine Radios, Statewide	16,500	16,500	
VHF Portable Radios	61,500	61,500	
Citizen Band Portable Radios, Statewide	1,200	1,200	
Department of Environmental Conservation			

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Department of Fish and Game - Various Rifle Ranges

Rabbit Creek Rifle Range deleted \$200,000

Cushman Street Rifle Range, Fairbanks, deleted \$55,000

Montana Creek Trap Range deleted \$100,000

Sitka Rifle Range deleted \$25,000

Petersburg Rifle Range deleted \$25,000

These reductions delete these projects which, in my opinion, enter the state into a new and potentially large arena of state funding. While, when viewed in isolation, these programs are certainly desirable, it is felt that the projects could best be performed by interested private groups or funded at the local level. This effort I feel should not begin to rely on state support. Accordingly, rather than play favorites and include some projects while deleting others, I have felt it imperative that an across-the-board reduction be made.

TRANSPORTATION

Department of Highways - Various Road Projects

The vetoes that I have made in this area are based upon the belief that the legislature has in this instance appropriated state funds for streets and roads that are now the responsibility of local government. The State of Alaska does have a Local Service Roads and Trails program which provides state bond funds on a formula basis to be meted out by local prioritization by political subdivisions for expenditure on locally controlled and maintained roads. If the roads chosen by the individual legislators for state funding within their various districts are a priority to the citizens in the political subdivision, they can be upgraded or constructed through either local funding or through the state funded Local Service Roads and Trails grant program arranged by the priorities of the local government. My bond package presented to the legislature in January and the final bill which passed the legislature contained \$7.5 million for this very purpose. The reductions are itemized as follows: