

Federal grants available for shooting-range projects

Local News

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OLYMPIA - Shooting clubs and range operators have until June 30 to apply for federal grants to construct, maintain or expand public shooting-range facilities in Washington state.

The grants are coordinated by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and are awarded each year through the department's Shooting Range Program. Approximately \$50,000 in competitive grants are expected to be awarded this year, with individual awards ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000.

Prospective applicants must attend a May 1 grant-writing workshop. The workshop is scheduled for Saturday, May 1 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will be held at the Washington Cattlemen's Association building, 1301 North Dolarway Rd., Ellensburg.

WDFW's Shooting Range Program was established in 2002 and supports development of not-for-profit shooting ranges with proceeds from a federal excise tax on archery equipment and firearms. The grants reimburse eligible shooting ranges for a significant portion of their construction, materials and other building expenses.

Successful applicants must pay for construction and materials up front, and are then reimbursed for up to 75 percent of the cost. The remaining 25 percent must be raised locally. Administration of the grant program helps WDFW meet its goal of promoting firearm safety.

"Hunting and recreational shooting are important elements of our Northwest heritage and this federally-funded program effectively promotes both at absolutely no expense to Washington taxpayers," said Mik Mikitik, WDFW's hunter education coordinator. "More than 165 shooting ranges in Washington offer hunters and recreational shooters a safe environment to hone their skills."

Applicants must complete a detailed application packet, including information on public range use, an environmental review, program narrative, user fees and charges. Applicants will be notified in August on grant awards. Information and grant applications are available through the WDFW website at

http://wdfw.wa.gov/hunting/shooting_ranges , or by contacting the Hunter Education Program at (360) 902-8111, or by e-mail at huntered@dfw.wa.gov .