



To: Richmond City Council
From: Councillor Bill McNulty
Chair, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Committee
Date: April 4, 2006
File:
**Re: CLOSURE OF PACIFIC SHOOTERS ASSOCIATION IN LOWER SEYMOUR
CONSERVATION RESERVE**

The Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee, at its meeting held on Tuesday, March 28th, 2006, considered the attached report, and recommends as follows:

Committee Recommendation

That the GVRD take a leadership role in coordinating member municipalities and the provincial and federal governments in efforts to provide a fully enclosed shooting range facility within the GVRD, that the current Pacific Shooters Association Range be considered as a potential site for the new facility, and that the issue be considered as soon as possible.

Councillor Bill McNulty, Chair
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee

Attach.



City of Richmond
Councillors' Office

Memorandum

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Committee Members

Date: March 27, 2006

From: Linda Barnes
Councillor

File:

Re: Closure of Pacific Shooters Assn. in Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve

I suggest we endorse the recommendation contained in the attached GVRD report.

“That the GVRD take a leadership role in coordinating member municipalities and the provincial and federal governments in efforts to provide a fully enclosed shooting range facility within the GVRD, that the current Pacific Shooters Association Range be considered as a potential site for the new facility, and that the issue be considered as soon as possible.”

Linda Barnes
Councillor

pc: Cathy Volkering Carlisle

GVWD Board Meeting Date: March 31, 2006

To: GVWD Board of Directors

From: John MacFarlane, Policy Coordinator, Corporate Relations Department

Date: March 22, 2006

Subject: **Closure of Pacific Shooters Association Range (PSA) in Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve (LSCR)**

Staff Recommendation:

That the GVWD Board authorize staff to take a leadership role in coordinating member municipalities and other interested parties in efforts to provide a shooting range facility that can be operated sustainably. A key consideration must be safety standards such that no projectiles are able to leave the range. The issue should be considered as soon as possible.

1. PURPOSE

To provide background information and to provide a framework for addressing issues resulting from the closing of fire arms shooting activities on the Pacific Shooters Association (PSA) Range in the Lower Seymour Conservation Area.

2. CONTEXT

The Pacific Shooters Association (PSA) Range is located in the Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve. Its original lease was renewed in 2003 for a final period of five years and notice was given at that time that no further renewals would be made after the 2008 expiry.

The Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve Management Plan (LSCR), which received extensive public consultation, addresses the appropriate land uses and recreational activities for the Reserve. It states that: "*Strategies to manage recreational and educational activities will balance the Board's goal of increasing recreational and educational potential while protecting the natural and experiential assets that attract visitors to the LSCR.*" "*A variety of recreational opportunities that reflect the LSCR's landscapes and features and encourage their appreciation will be pursued.*" A strategy relative to commercial activities is that "*we will permit appropriate, low impact commercial activities that enhance visitor experience and provide benefits to the LSCR.*"

The Pacific Shooters Association Range has been in existence on the North Shore for about 40 years. It has competition-grade facilities that serve Olympic (winter & summer), Commonwealth Games and international-level able-bodied and physically-challenged competitors for training and competition. Its facilities for wheel chair shooters are currently the only ones in the Lower Mainland. The range has been a key part of the run-up training

for the Biathlon event for aspirants to berths on the Canadian Olympic team for the 2010 Winter Games.

From October to December, 2005, a number of incidents occurred involving projectiles being found in the Seymour – Capilano filtration plant construction site, including one where a consultant left a wooded area after hearing bullets strike nearby trees. Consultants were employed to identify the causes and propose remedies but were unable to guarantee that projectiles would not once again escape the shooting range in future. As a result, on February 21, 2006 GVRD staff met with the Directors of the Pacific Shooters Association (PSA) and asked them to permanently close the shooting range for safety concerns as per the language in the 2003 Range lease extension.

The lease renewal agreement with the PSA includes a clause that *states "If GVWD (or any contractor constructing the (Drinking Water Filtration) Plant), acting reasonably, considers the operation of the Shooting Range during the hours of construction of the Plant will have an adverse effect on worker productivity as a result of fears for personal safety or pose risks to the workers or other persons authorized to be on the work site or workers express serious concerns over safety, then PSA will, at GVWD's written request, cease operating the Shooting Range during construction or operation hours of the plant."*

At its meeting of March 8th, 2006 the Water Committee reviewed a staff report that updated the Committee on the recent closure of the range. At that meeting a resolution was passed that stated that *"That the GVRD take a leadership role in coordinating member municipalities and the provincial and federal governments in efforts to provide a fully enclosed shooting range facility within the GVRD, that the current Pacific Shooters Association Range be considered as a potential site for the new facility, and that the issue be considered as soon as possible."* A copy of this report is attached for information.

The Pacific Shooters Association believe it will be very difficult for them to find an operating alternative in the short term. In the spirit of taking action "as soon as possible" a meeting with the PSA board of directors, as one of the major stakeholders, was held on March 15th to establish contact and to discuss whether or not facilitation by the GVRD would likely be productive. The PSA has expressed interest in pursuing such an option.

The PSA had previously been provided with the text of the resolution from the Water Committee and they indicated that a more functional description of a modern high-level safety range would be more useful. The key issue here appears to be the reference to 'fully enclosed' in the original resolution. As a result, a modification of the resolution wording is proposed by staff as set out in the recommendation.

This amended wording would allow proposals for a range of a very high level of safety-standard design coupled with high environmental standards that could meet the highest international safety and environmental standards and practices.

In view of the conflict with the already approved LSCR plan, reference to the existing site has also been removed as it seems unlikely that a facility could be designed which would meet the tenets of that plan. This does not preclude consideration of the existing site but avoids sending what might be an unrealistic message.

The PSA has also indicated that their partnerships with wheel chair shooters, Olympic biathlon training programs, National Defence Cadet program shooting, police shooters and summer Olympic & Commonwealth games shooters would be strengthened such that the

benefits to the shooting community of the Lower Mainland of BC would become more apparent.

Having had indications from the PSA of an initial desire to work with GVRD toward a strategy that would identify potential options for shooting facilities in the Lower Mainland, it is proposed that the GVRD be directed to engage in a facilitation process that would allow the PSA and other stakeholders from the shooting community of the Lower Mainland of BC to develop viable options.

It is recommended that the Board approve the participation of the GVRD as "process-facilitators" to provide leadership to the various stakeholders as they develop viable options. This would involve bringing the interested stakeholders from various levels of government and the shooting community of the Lower Mainland of BC together to coordinate their development of viable proposals that could be implemented by them in the short and mid-term time frames.

3. ALTERNATIVES

There are two alternatives:

- a) That the GVWD Board authorize staff to take a leadership role in coordinating member municipalities and other interested parties in efforts to provide a shooting range facility that can be operated sustainably. A key consideration must be safety standards such that no projectiles are able to leave the range. The issue should be considered as soon as possible.
- b) To take no further action.

It is recommended that Alternative "A" be adopted.

4. CONCLUSION

It is recommended that the wording of the resolution to the Water Committee should be amended to remove reference to the new facility being necessarily enclosed and remove reference to the existing site.

It is recommended that approval be given to the GVRD to carry on with the consultation and facilitation process with the Pacific Shooters Association and other major stakeholders from the shooting community of the Lower Mainland of BC in efforts to find a solution to the range closure by the GVWD.

Attachments:

1. Correspondence from the Water Commissioner to the GVWD Board of Directors
March 13, 2006
2. On Table Report to Water Committee "Closure of Pacific Shooters Association Range in LSCR"



Chief Administrative Office
Tel. 604 432-6210 Fax 604 451-5614

DATE: March 13, 2006 **FILE NO.:** CR-13-00

TO: GVWD Board of Directors

FROM: J. Carline
Commissioner

RE: **On-table Information Report #4.3**
Closure of Pacific Shooters Association Range in LSCR
Water Committee Meeting – March 8, 2006

An information report titled "Closure of Pacific Shooters Association Range in LSCR" was provided on-table to the members of the Water Committee at their March 8, 2006 meeting. A copy of this report is attached for your information.

The Water Committee received the information report and the following motion resulted from their discussion on the subject:

"That the GVRD take a leadership role in coordinating member municipalities and the provincial and federal governments in efforts to provide a fully enclosed shooting range facility within the GVRD, that the current Pacific Shooters Association Range be considered as a potential site for the new facility, and that the issue be considered as soon as possible. "


for J. Carline
Commissioner

Attachment (1)

1. Water Committee report entitled "Closure of Pacific Shooters Association Range in LSCR" dated March 6, 2006



Water Committee Meeting Date: March 8, 2006

To: Water Committee

From: Michelle Garvock, Property Division Manager
Finance & Administration Department

Date: March 6, 2006

Subject: **Closure of Pacific Shooters Association Range in LSCR**

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive for information the report dated March 6, 2006 titled "*Closure of Pacific Shooters Association Range in LSCR*".

1. PURPOSE

The Pacific Shooters Association (PSA) shooting range is located on land they lease from the GVWD in the Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve. This report is intended to update the Committee on the recent closure of the range.

2. CONTEXT

PSA's shooting range was moved to the current location in 1985. In 2003 the GVWD Board approved a five-year renewal term, ending December 31, 2008, for the lease and confirmed that this was to be the final renewal.

The lease renewal agreement includes a clause which states "If GVWD (or any contractor constructing the Plant), acting reasonably, considers the operation of the Shooting Range during the hours of construction of the Plant will have an adverse effect on worker productivity as a result of fears for personal safety or pose risks to the workers or other persons authorized to be on the work site or workers express serious concerns over safety, then PSA will, at GVWD's written request, cease operating the Shooting Range during construction or operation hours of the plant."

In August 2005 two bullets were found on the roof of the clearwell in the filtration plant construction site. GVRD staff met with PSA Directors and PSA removed a shooting gong, that may have caused ricochets, from the range.

On November 2, 2005 an environmental consultant working on the filtration plant construction site heard bullets striking trees near where he was working. He immediately left the area but did not report the incident to the GVWD Project Manager until the end of November.

A contractor discovered a bullet lying in the snow within the filtration plant site on November 30, 2005. He immediately notified the Project Manager.

Closure of Pacific Shooters Association Range in LSCR

Water Committee Meeting – March 8, 2006

On December 10, 2005 GVWD requested that PSA close the shooting range until safety concerns could be resolved. The range has remained closed since that time.

PSA representatives, GVRD staff, GVWD contractors, Robert Turple, Federal Firearms Officer, and Murray Gardner, Firearms Safety Consultant met at the PSA site to review the concerns on December 14, 2005. Following the site meeting, Robert Turple and Murray Gardner both prepared and submitted reports.

The experts recommended changes that would reduce the risk of bullets leaving the PSA range. With the recommended changes, GVRD staff understand that bullets could still ricochet out of the range even if PSA members follow proper shooting procedures.

GVRD staff reviewed the reports with senior management and recommended that the range be permanently closed. Staff believe it is reasonable to expect that if the range reopens, concerns over safety will affect the productivity of staff and contractors constructing and operating the Filtration Plant. On February 21, 2006 staff met with PSA Directors and asked them to permanently close the shooting range.

Since the permanent closure of the shooting range in late February there have been a number of television and radio interviews and letters to the editor related to the closure.

PSA has accumulated approximately \$120,000 in their site remediation fund. These funds will be used to remediate contamination on the site when the shooting range is decommissioned.

3. ALTERNATIVES

No alternative presented.

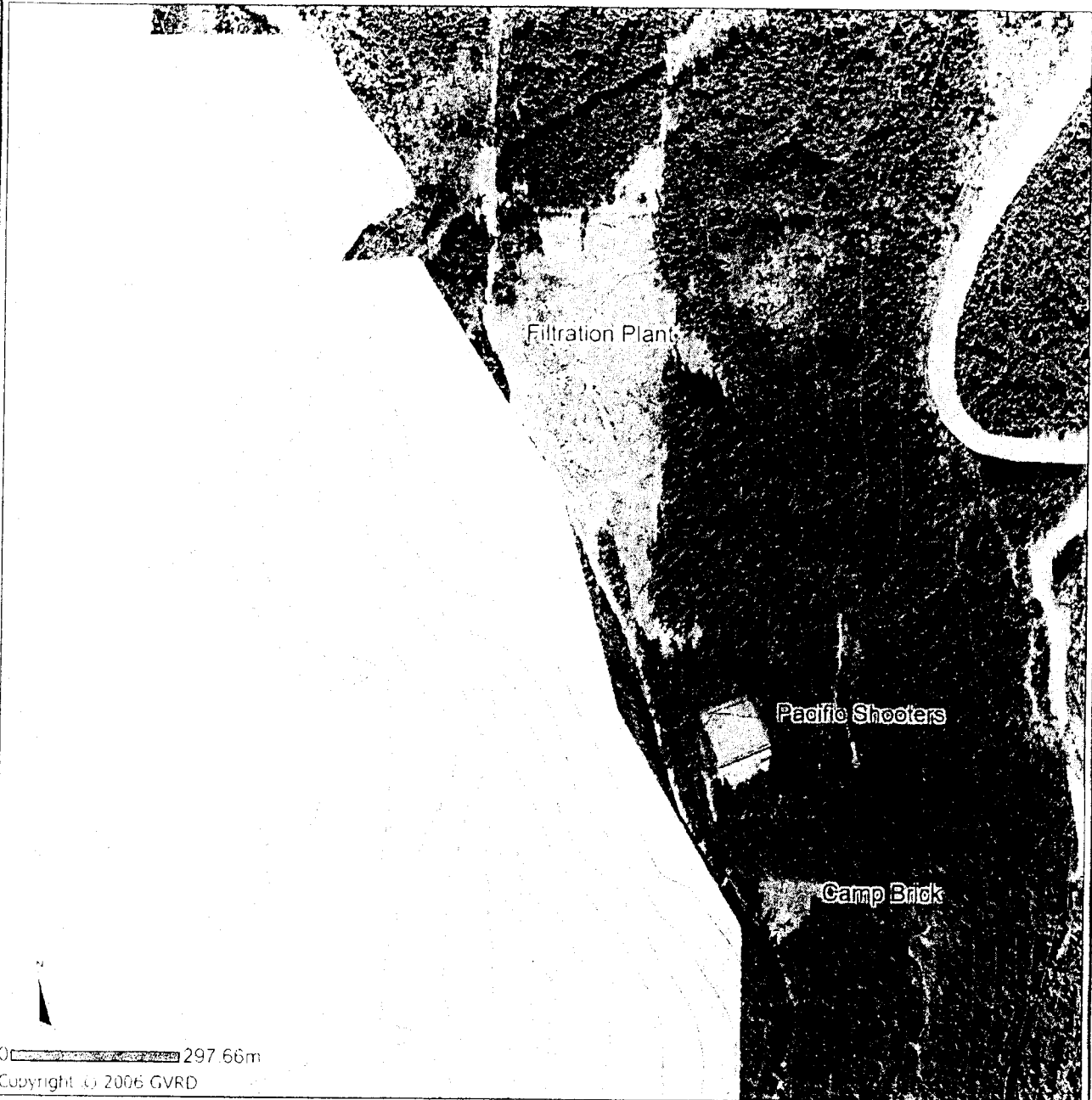
4. CONCLUSION

GVRD staff will continue to work with PSA to resolve any remaining issues as directed by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Attachments (3)

1. Aerial Photo of PSA Range
2. Follow-up Shooting Range Inspection Report by Robert Turple, Firearms Officer, Canada Firearms Centre dated December 28, 2005
3. Site Inspection Report by Murray Gardner dated December 22, 2005

Pacific Shooters Location, 300dpi



0 297.66m

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Air Quality Sites	Regional Parks
★ Monitoring Sites	Water Bodies
Municipal Sanitary Sewer Mains	Sewerage Areas
Municipal Boundaries	PSA
LSCR Trails	LWBA
20m Contour Intervals	NSSA
	VSA
	2004 20m Image

Scale
1:11250



C/o West Shore RCMP Detachment
698 Atkins Avenue
Victoria BC V9B 3A4

Pacific Shooters Association
C/o Bob DAVIDSON (Club President)
PO Box 16035
Lynn Valley Postal Outlet
North Vancouver BC V7J 3S9

December 28, 2005

Dear Club Members:



Re: Follow-up Shooting Range Inspection / Range Safety Meeting – Pacific Shooters Association:

Shooting Range Description:

100 Metre Rim-fire Rifle / Handgun Target Range – MGRS Location Left Side Firing Line Gr. 9934 6522, Right Side Firing Line Gr. 9944 6523, Direction of Fire 343 Degrees:

The Pacific Shooters Association range facility is leased from the Greater Vancouver Regional District and is located in Part of L852 and L865, North Vancouver BC. The shooting range is designed specifically for the discharge of rim-fire rifle and centre-fire handguns only at paper targets out to a maximum distance of 50 metres from the main firing line. The discharge of firearms takes place from a fixed covered firing line approximately 100 metres wide with 23 individual shooting bays evenly spaced throughout the entire width of the firing line. There are four shooting bays designated for users to move down range and shooting does not take place at these designated bays.

A follow-up Shooting Range Inspection of the Pacific Shooters Association shooting range facilities was conducted on December 21, 2005 by Firearms Officer Robert Turple. The inspection was conducted as the result of a public safety concern identified by members of the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) following reports of the possibility of projectiles leaving the shooting range facility operated by the Pacific Shooters Association and crossing onto property controlled by the GVRD.

The inspector was advised by Jim RICHES (GVRD) that two (2) projectiles had been recently found by employees at the GVRD Filtration Plant construction area located north of and bordering the Pacific Shooters Association shooting range facility. Mr. Riches also advised that use of the shooting range facility for the discharge of firearms has been stopped pending further investigation into the cause(s) of the incident. Mr. Riches requested that the inspector attend a scheduled meeting on December 21, 2005 at the Pacific Shooters Association range facility to discuss safety concerns with the continued operation of the shooting range. In addition, Mr.

Riches also advised that Mr. Murray Gardner had been requested to attend as a Firearms Safety Consultant.

On December 21, 2005 the inspector attended the scheduled meeting at the Pacific Shooters Association Clubhouse. In attendance were Bob Davidson, Club President, Mike O'Neill, V/President and several members of the GVRD associated with the Seymour-Capilano Filtration Project. The meeting was called to order by Jim Riches (GVRD) and formal introductions were made by all attendees.

The inspector identified himself as a Firearms Officer responsible to the Chief Firearms Officer (CFO) for the ongoing inspection and approval process of all shooting ranges within the Province of British Columbia and the Yukon Territory. The inspector also advised the meeting that any safety concerns with respect to the operation of a shooting range are taken seriously and that the CFO would investigate any safety concerns.

The issues surrounding the discovery of projectiles at the construction site was discussed by GVRD personnel and a diagram showing the location of where the projectiles were discovered was provided to the inspector by Jim Riches. Photos of the two projectiles discovered at the construction site was also provided. On initial inspection of the actual projectiles it was believed that the projectiles are a .45 Calibre and .40 Calibre Full Metal Jacket (FMJ) bullets. The bullets sustained little surface damage that would lead one to believe they did not strike a hard surface before coming to rest at the construction site. The inspector advised those attending the meeting that it would be beneficial for all attendees to accompany the inspector to the shooting range and that the inspector would explain the built in safety measures currently in place at the shooting range and the most likely cause of why a projectile may have exited the range property.

The inspector explained to the members of the GVRD that the shooting range had been initially inspected on September 30, 1999 and it was identified that ground baffles were to be constructed on the shooting range in order to contain projectiles to within the property controlled by the club. The club installed ground baffles as requested and a follow-up range inspection was conducted by Area Firearms Officer Robert Currie in November of 1999. Robert Currie identified that the ground baffles were properly constructed and that the range has met the requirements of the Regulations with respect to the containment of projectiles to within the range property when firearms are discharged there in accordance with the clubs posted range rules.

The GVRD outlined in a letter dated May 17, 1999 to the Pacific Shooters Association that as a condition of the lease agreement for the range property that the club must install an overhead baffle for the protection of the general public using the lands around the range property. The overhead baffle was constructed forward of the firing line in a manner that users of the shooting range are prevented from physically aiming or pointing a firearm in the direction of the top of the natural topographical feature that serves as the backstop for this range.

The inspector indicated that the third and fourth ground baffles have sustained damage from repeated bullet strike. The inspector explained that the likelihood of a projectile leaving the active range area is increased as a direct result of a bullet striking the top portion of the ground

baffle thus being redirected. The only logical reason for the damage to the ground baffles is due to the current height of the target holders in relation to the overhead baffle. Target holders are placed at varying distances out to 50 metres from the firing line and physically sited between the existing ground baffles. Viewing the top of the target holders from the main firing line is restricted due to the location of the bottom of the overhead baffle, the current location forces the shooter to place targets lower resulting in lower aiming of the firearm and increasing the likelihood of projectiles striking the top of the ground baffle and possibly being redirected outside the range property.

To address the area of concern without compromising public safety, the bottom of the ground baffle should be modified so that a minimum clearance of 60 centimeters is achieved from the bottom of the overhead baffle and the barrel of a firearm when the shooter is in the aim and in the standing position. This modification will also permit the raising of the target stands so that when projectiles pass through the targets they will strike the backstop and not the top of the ground baffle. With the implementation of this modification, the top of the backstop will still not be visible from the main firing line.

Other Protective / Safety Features:

Fixed Firing Line: The club ensures that all firing takes place at the current fixed firing line and that no shooters move forward of the overhead baffle.

Backstop: The backstop for this range facility is a natural topographical feature approximately 20 metres in height measured from the contour interval of a topographical map of the area. The backstop is sufficient in height to capture all projectiles passing through paper targets used at this range facility.

Range Safety Rules: Range safety rules are posted and members are provided with a copy for reference.

Range Location: The range is located in a natural bowl type feature that assists in the containment of projectiles to within the range proper.

Range Flags / Lights: There are red and green firing line lights available for use to indicate firing line status during range operation.

Controlled Access: Access to this range facility is controlled via locked gate.

Range Safety Officer: The club trains and designates Range Safety Officers to supervise the firing line during range operation. The club executive advised the GVRD that a Range Safety Officer would be present during range operating hours to ensure that all Range Safety Rules are complied with.

Down Range Safety Area: With proper target placement and with the current design of the range with respect to the previous installation of ground baffles, this range is classified, as a "No Safe Area Range" in that projectiles discharged on this range will remain to within the range

proper. ("Down Range Safety Area Trace" is attached and shows the range location on a topographical map)

Recommendations: The inspector recommends the following.

- The bottom of the current overhead baffle should be modified so that there is a minimum of 60cm of clearance as previously described.
- The repair or replacement of the ground baffles that have been damaged by bullet strike.
- Target holders raised in height so that all projectiles passing through the targets will strike the backstop and not the top of existing ground baffles.
- A Range Safety Officer to be made available during range operating hours to supervise the firing line and to ensure that the clubs posted range rules are complied with.

Summary: The inspector has identified what is the most likely the cause of the two projectiles identified as leaving the range property. With the modification of the overhead baffles and target holder placement as previously described, the risk of projectiles leaving the range property when firearms are discharged there in accordance with the clubs posted range rules is unlikely. It is apparent that the Pacific Shooters Association's primary goal is to ensure safety for not only those persons who use the club's range facilities, but to those individuals who are currently involved in the GVRD construction project in close proximity to the range and also to others who use the area for recreational activities. Club Approval **BC-317-C** and Range Approval **BC-318-R** remain valid.

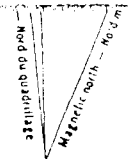
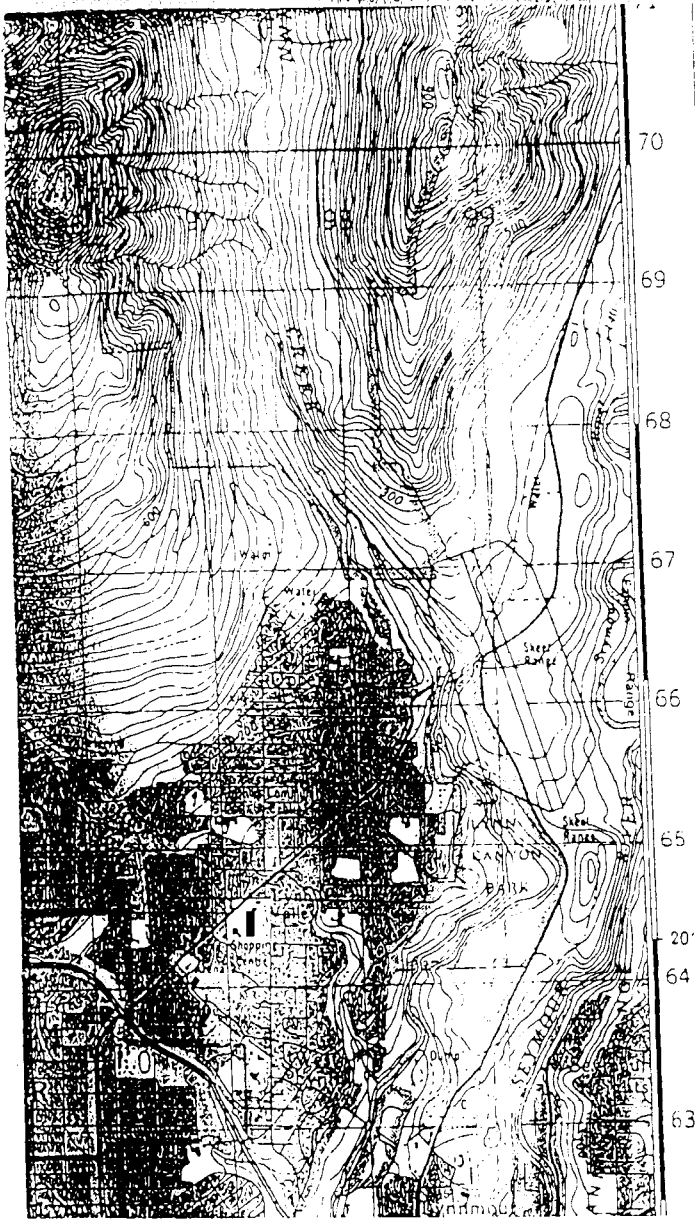
If you have any questions or concerns regarding the inspection of your shooting range facilities please feel free to contact me at 250-474-6297 or toll free at 1-800-731-4000 extension 9555.

Thank you,



Robert Turple
Firearms Officer
Victoria, Province of British Columbia

cc: Jim Riches, Greater Vancouver Regional District

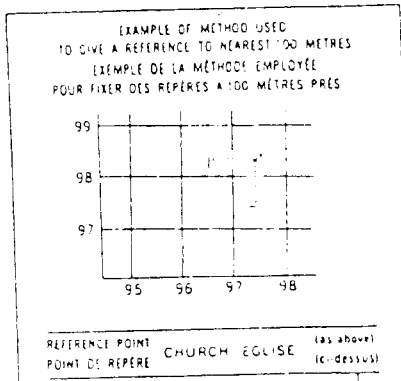
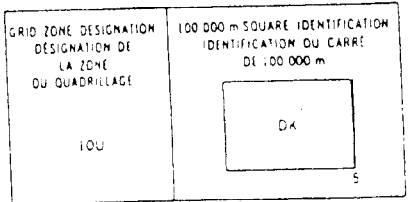


Use diagram only to obtain numerical values
 APPROXIMATE MEAN DECLINATION 1988
 FOR CENTRE OF MAP
 Annual change decreasing 13 0'

Utiliser le diagramme que pour obtenir les valeurs numériques
 DÉCLINAISON MOYENNE APPROXIMATIVE
 AU CENTRE DE LA CARTE EN 1988
 Variation annuelle décroissante 13 0'

METRIC/MÉTRIQUE

ONE THOUSAND METRE
 UNIVERSAL TRANSVERSE MERCATOR GRID
 ZONE 10
 QUADRILLAGE UNIVERSEL TRANSVERSE DE MERCATOR
 DE MILLE MÈTRES



Read number on grid line to left of point
 Lire le chiffre de la ligne à gauche du point

Range Danger Area

Pacific Shooters Association
 Legal Address: Part of Lot 852 and Part of Lot 865, North Vancouver BC
 Map Location: Left Side Firing Line Gr. 9934 6522,
 Right Side Firing Line Gr. 9944 6523
 Direction of Fire: 343 Degrees
 Calibre: .357 S&W Magnum and 22 LR HV Template Groups
 Map: North Vancouver 92 G/6
 Scale: 1:50,000

Robert Turple
 Robert Turple
 Firearms Officer
 Victoria BC

Dated: December 28, 2005