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## **PACIFIC SHOOTERS ASSOCIATION NORTH VANCOUVER RANGE CLOSED**

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Pacific Shooters Association (PSA)'s North Vancouver target range in the Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve has been ordered closed permanently by the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), invoking its power under the lease agreement with the club.

"Concern for the safety of workers" on the new water purification plant under construction approximately 1km north the range boundary is stated as justification.

This club has operated a target range in this area since 1960, and in this particular location since 1989. Its 380+ members include members of Canada's Olympic Biathlon, wheelchair/Para Olympic, and Commonwealth Games teams, Canadian Forces Cadets in training, and numerous other national and international medal contenders, as well as recreational shooters and archers and their families. It is the only all-weather and wheelchair-accessible facility of its kind available to these sports in the Lower Mainland.

Officials of the GVRD have alluded to spent pistol bullets allegedly found or "heard to ricochet" after work began on their construction site to justify their action. However, in its 46 years here, there is no history of any previous incident or complaint of this or any other kind from the many users of the area beyond occasional reports of the sound of firing. There are well-used hiking and cycling trails surrounding the boundaries of the range and an active Scout camp adjoining it to the south.

The GVRD called for inspections by both the Provincial Firearms Officer and a private firearms safety consultant. Their findings were substantially that (1) the range was now operating safely and (2) assuming normal club safety regulations and procedures continue to be observed, any likelihood of a projectile ever going beyond the range boundaries was virtually eliminated. Unsatisfied, the GVRD insisted that the consultants devise additional--redundant--measures to even further "enhance safety," all of which have subsequently been implemented by Pacific Shooters Association at its own expense. The GVRD then rejected all of the foregoing, demanding a 100% guarantee that no future situation whatsoever could occur in which a projectile might stray beyond the perimeter.

In a meeting between GVRD officials and PSA the club offered to undertake any additional modifications requested of it and was told that none would even be considered. GVRD policy was to eliminate any target shooting facilities on land under its jurisdiction. In short, these actions give the appearance of uncompromising discrimination against a definable group, e.g., participants and supporters of shooting sports, under the catchall claims of 'safety concerns' and 'fear'. It is the sincere hope of all those affected that the GVRD will reconsider its position and become a partner in our goal--to continue developing a world class shooting sports and training facility for Canada well in advance of 2010.