

Texas Youth Clay Sports Proposal

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Background: Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has administered a mobile sporting clays range as part of its efforts to promote youth shooting sports participation and hunter education in Texas. Charlie Wilson has operated the range statewide, first under contract with the National Sporting Clays Association and then as an employee of department since 1996. Sporting clays opportunities are provided primarily to youth and to women at ranges and sites throughout Texas, primarily for weekend events.

The mobile range has reached between 7,000 and 10,000 shooters and over 25,000 spectators in each year of its existence – making it the number one program of its kind in the nation.

At its regularly scheduled committee meeting in May 2006, John D Parker, Lufkin, made a presentation to the TPWD Commission members regarding the success of the Tennessee Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP), a state affiliate of the national program sponsored by the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF). The program has been highly successful in Tennessee, and Mr. Parker proposes that TPWD look at it in bolstering youth shooting sports and hunting participation in Texas.

Mr. Wilson and Terry Erwin, Hunter Education Coordinator, originally collaborated with Dr. Bill Christy, 4-H Shooting Sports, Virginia, and Jim Smith, formerly with Thompson-Center Arms, Inc., on the use of SCTP in Texas. While the program was not used specifically by TPWD, there are several entities in Texas participating in the national program. Mr. Wilson participates in many programs and organizations that promote shooting sports in Texas, primarily the 4-H Shooting Sports program, but also the American Trap Association (ATA), National Skeet Shooting Association (NSSA), National Sporting Clays Association (NSCA) and their affiliate ranges throughout Texas.

FY07 Proposal: Wilson met with the organizations above and many individuals at participating ranges, and proposes the following as a way for TPWD to proceed in FY07 without additional funding or resources added to hunter education program operating budget. (NOTE: To proceed with SCTP in Texas, it would take a minimum of one added staff and an operating budget of \$75,000 to proceed.)

The proposal represents a fast, simple way to expand shooting sports opportunities to those who currently do not participate in the shooting sports or who have some experience, but really haven't embraced it as a participatory or competitive sports for themselves or their family's participation.