

9/15/24

From:

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To: Hawaii County Game Management Advisory Commission.

Two months have now passed since the power generator was stolen from the Hawaii County Parks and Recreation Department-managed Trap and Skeet Range, shutting down its operation. It is the only public shooting range on Hawaii Island constructed to established standards in which organized shooting competitions can be held. There are other places on the Island where unorganized, indiscriminate, and unsupervised shooting takes place, most notably at two small and inadequately backstopped parcels of public land off Saddle Road at the 16-mile road marker. It has no power and does not meet the commonly accepted definition of a shooting range, but rather is a DLNR-designated 'place to shoot.'

Background: The Trap and Skeet Range requires power to operate the machines that launch the clay targets which designated 'squads' of shooters attempt to break in flight. In my 30 or so years of shooting at the range, a number of generators have failed in operation, and several others have been stolen. Some time ago, when power lines were extended to the newly established bus service facility nearby, I inquired if Parks and Recreation would be interested in supporting an NRA funding request to extend power lines to the Range. There was no interest indicated.

The stolen generator was part of a facility upgrade a few years ago. Parks and Recreation obtained a portable generator mounted on large steerable wheels and containing a tow bar. With no known consultation to anyone that shoots Skeet, the generator was placed in a covered chain-link fence enclosure located in close proximity to Sheet Shooting Stations 1, 2, and 3. Two problems became apparent: The generator's loud operating noise interfered with normal conversation near the subject shooting stations, creating a safety issue. And the large portable wheeled generator visibly on display in its wire enclosure provided an enticement to theft. Why, for heaven's sake, weren't the wheels and tow bar removed?

Inquiries as to status of the Range have elicited the response, "We'll let you know when it is open." Once again, no public input. What a way to run a railroad.

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