



Club survey open response summary (AI Generated)

Question 1: In your opinion, what single investment would most improve shooting facilities in Montana for the long-term benefit of the public?

1. Sustained infrastructure funding and upgrades (11 Clubs)

Many responses ask for steady or expanded funding dedicated to infrastructure updates and maintenance at existing ranges. This includes general “infrastructure funding,” money for updating current ranges, and support for targets, benches, and ongoing upkeep.

2. Grants and financial relief for clubs (9 Clubs)

Several comments emphasize the importance of grant programs and want more grant opportunities, especially those without matching fund requirements and with simpler applications. Others mention financial relief such as reduced DNRC lease payments, lower property taxes and insurance, and continued support for club-level grant applications.

3. More and better facilities, land, and utilities (11 Clubs)

Clubs frequently mention the need for more facilities and adequate shooting ranges, especially in population centers and underserved areas. They also highlight investments in local outdoor ranges, land preservation from encroachment and development, adequate parking, and basic infrastructure like water and power to ranges.

4. Education, outreach, and visibility (7 Clubs)

Several comments focus on shooter education, particularly responsible target shooting on public lands, and assistance with educational program materials. Others call for promoting safe shooting events and advertising ranges.

5. Diversification of disciplines and user experiences (6 Clubs)

Multiple responses point to diversifying beyond basic rifle, such as adding or expanding archery (including 3D and indoor), shotgun sports (trap, skeet, 5-stand, sporting clays), and multiple separated range areas for different disciplines.

Question 15: What are the top three maintenance or development projects you would like to complete at your range?

1. Safety berms, backstops, and noise mitigation (11 Clubs)

Many clubs want to increase or improve safety berms on rifle and pistol ranges, upgrade backstops, and add safety barriers between bays. Several also mention sound abatement or noise mitigation, sometimes via sound barriers or trees.

2. Restrooms, water, and utilities (11 Clubs)

Multiple responses call for new or improved restrooms, including handicap-accessible and indoor bathrooms, as well as vault toilets. Others mention running water, wastewater systems, and more reliable electricity or permanent power at the range.

3. Clubhouse and indoor spaces (10 Clubs)

Several clubs want to renovate or replace their clubhouse, or add larger buildings for meetings, education, and multi-purpose use. Indoor facilities like indoor pistol ranges, indoor practice butts, indoor classrooms, and updated indoor ranges with air handling and lead mitigation come up repeatedly. Heating and cooling in clubhouses are also mentioned as priorities.

4. Targets, shooting bays, and course development (20 Clubs)

Many responses focus on upgrading or adding target systems, including rifle backstops, longer rifle ranges, more pistol bays, steel target stands, and 400-yard targets. Shotgun and archery development is also common: new or upgraded trap and skeet machines, 5-stand or sporting clays courses, 3D and static archery ranges, and better target stands. These projects aim to expand shooting opportunities and modernize the shooting experience.

5. Roads, access, and general site improvements (10 Clubs)

Several clubs mention road maintenance, new roads, graveling or paving internal roads and parking lots, and dust mitigation. Others focus on access control and security like auto gates, badge readers, and camera systems, along with better signage and fencing. Handicap access improvements also appear under this broader theme of making the facility more usable and controlled.

Question 22: Is there anything else you would like to add?

1. Support existing local ranges, not one mega-facility (7 Clubs)

Multiple responses stress that Montana is large and that one central state-run facility would not serve most residents, who will not travel long distances for routine shooting. Clubs repeatedly ask that resources be focused on partnering with and assisting

established local ranges across the state instead, which they see as providing greater long-term benefit.

2. Funding and grants (including operations, PR dollars, and lease relief) (5 Clubs)

Several clubs highlight the importance of grant funding, including suggestions to secure more Federal Pittman-Robertson dollars for range development and enhancement. Others emphasize that match-required grants are hard for small or rural clubs, ask for flexibility on matching funds, seek grants that can cover operations or security, and mention large DNRC lease increases and rising insurance costs as serious financial pressures.

3. Infrastructure, accessibility, and facility improvements (5 Clubs)

Clubs mention the need to improve or update existing facilities, including ADA compliance, security, advertisement and access at specific clubs, and onsite caretakers or housing to reduce theft and vandalism as ranges move farther from towns.

4. Public-land shooting impacts, safety, and conflicts (4 Clubs)

The 17 Mile Recreation Area response describes unmanaged dispersed target shooting on BLM land with no facilities and high visitation, leading to unsafe practices, damage to infrastructure and vegetation, fire starts, and trash problems, as well as conflicts with grazing permittees and neighbors. Another club notes its purpose is to draw shooting activity off surrounding public lands (county, state, national forest, BLM), underscoring the role formal ranges can play in reducing unmanaged public-land shooting issues.

5. Community impact, youth, and outreach (5 Clubs)

Clubs emphasize how grants and range investments support small rural ranges that are important for youth and local communities. One club describes using FWP grants to build a facility that doubles as a fundraising venue for youth programs and nonprofits, exposing non-shooters to shooting in a positive way and building broader community support for shooting sports.

