



COUNTY OF HUMBOLDT

For the meeting of: 2/4/2020

File #: 20-129

To: Board of Supervisors

From: Supervisor Mike Wilson and Supervisor Virginia Bass

Agenda Section: Initiated by Board Member

SUBJECT:

Safety Concerns Due to Target Shooting Occurring Within Densely Populated Residential and Recreational Areas of the County (Supervisor Mike Wilson and Supervisor Virginia Bass)

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Direct Planning staff to (1) explore the options available to restrict the use of firearms in densely populated residential and recreation areas; and (2) bring back a detailed proposal for the Board to consider.

SOURCE OF FUNDING:

General Fund

DISCUSSION:

The frequent discharge of firearms for target practice on the Samoa Peninsula (and other densely populated residential and recreational areas of the county) has become an immediate concern for residents who are worried about their safety because shots are fired so close to their homes and public places.

Cities of Eureka and Arcata have ordinances restricting target shooting within city limits, but there are no such restrictions on target shooting in the residential districts of the unincorporated areas of the county. By contrast, hunters are prohibited by state law from discharging any firearm or other deadly weapon within a 150-yard safety zone protecting occupied buildings located anywhere in the county (Fish and Game Code Section 3004(a)).

The adoption of a county ordinance, or other measure, restricting target shooting in residential areas could provide for a safety zone like the one imposed on hunters by the Fish and Game code and would help ensure that target shooting is conducted safely.

Specific options available to your board include:

1. A county-wide ordinance restricting target shooting in, or near, all residential and heavily-used

recreational areas of the county by introducing measures such as safety zones, shooting range requirements, and/or conditional use permits;

2. A limited ordinance restricting target shooting in, or near certain residential, commercial, and heavily-used recreational areas of the county;
3. Further exploration of the availability of public nuisance/code enforcement actions;
4. Formation of a Citizens' Advisory Committee comprised of residents from affected areas who can study the issue and make recommendations to the Board.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There will be staff time associated to the research requirements of this recommendation. The amount of staff time required is currently unknown at this time. Staffing has been included in the fiscal year 2019-20 budget, there will be no additional impact to the General Fund.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK:

This action supports your Board's Strategic Framework by enforcing laws and regulations to protect residents.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

County Administrative Office, County Counsel

ALTERNATIVES TO STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Board could choose not to take any action to address this issue at this time

ATTACHMENTS:

N/A

PREVIOUS ACTION/REFERRAL:

Board Order No.: N/A

Meeting of: N/A

File No.: N/A