

Northeast Kingdom Skeet & Sporting Clays Club
STRATEGIC
PLAN

Northeast Kingdom Skeet and Sporting Clays Club
743 Bugbee Crossing Road
West Burke, VT 05871

Approved October 7, 2020
Directors' Meeting

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1.0 Introduction

The Northeast Kingdom Skeet & Sporting Clays Club (NEKSC) is located on fifty-five acres off Bugbee Crossing Road about four miles north of Lyndonville, Vermont in the Town of Burke. The club property and improvements are owned by its directors and are free and clear of all loans and/or liens. In addition to the 55 acres, the club owns a 25 foot-wide surveyed access road from Bugbee Crossing Road. Improvements include a parking area, club house, two skeet ranges (one with a wobble trap), one five-stand range, a sporting clays course, four large storage containers, and many electric remote-controlled trap machines. Shooting activities take place throughout the year when weather permits and access is not blocked by snow. In addition to shooting by members and the public, the NEKSC sponsors shooting instruction for 4-H youth and NEK Clayshooters, a Scholastic Clay Target Program (SCTP) club. The club also hosts hunter education classes and shotgun safety training.

1.1 Mission Statement

The Mission of the Northeast Kingdom Skeet & Sporting Clays Club is to provide a shotgun sports venue for the development and maintenance of shooting skills among youth and adults from the Northeast Kingdom and surrounding areas.

1.2 Purpose

This Strategic Plan provides a basis to:

- Set forth goals, objectives, and issues of potential concern that may exist;
- Identify, evaluate, and prioritize appropriate actions to address them;
- List long- and short-term action items and the steps needed for implementation;
- Develop an implementation schedule;
- Identify ways to measure the Plan's success;
- Annually evaluate the progress made towards implementing the Plan.

1.3 Goals

- Provide excellent environmental stewardship of the club property.
- Maintain cordial working relations with club neighbors and the Town of Burke.
- Provide access to club facilities when snow doesn't prevent it.
- Foster safe shotgun handling through member training and youth education.
- Improve facilities to better recruit, retain, and reactivate members and to provide handicapped access.
- Foster shotgun sports skills development and competition.

2.0 Site Assessment

2.1 Description of Ranges and Support Facilities

Shooting facilities at the NEKSC include two skeet ranges (one of which is primarily used for instruction and also includes a wobble trap) served by three skeet houses, a five-stand range served by a storage shed and small shelters for the remote electric traps, and a sporting clays course served by an access road, and many remote-controlled electric clay target traps. Support facilities include the access road, a bridge over Roundy Brook, a clubhouse with two gender-neutral bathrooms, cooking facilities, and a parking area. When the club was founded in 1965 it was in a rural setting and ranges remain oriented away from residential areas and Roundy Brook. While increasing numbers of residences are being built nearby, these new neighbors are generally supportive of the club. The club, however, is actively seeking to acquire adjacent land in order to increase the safety and sound buffer around the ranges.

Skeet and Trap Ranges: The two ranges are built to regulation and face east away from the clubhouse and toward a wooded hillside. Grass covers the ranges except for the concrete shooting stations. Paid use in 2019 was one hundred fifty 25-bird rounds (3,750 targets) shot. Field #1, immediately in front of the clubhouse, is served by two modern battery-powered high capacity carousel-type traps which are located in recently rebuilt houses. It is the main shooting field. Field #2 is served by similar traps and also has a wobble trap and four single-stack traps to permit diverse presentations. It shares a house with Field #1 and is adjacent to it. It is used primarily as an instructional facility and accommodates overflow use from Field #1. All traps have remote electric controllers.

Five-Stand Range: The five-stand range is located 50 yards south of the skeet fields and has the same orientation. Grass covers this range and traps are regularly moved to throw a diversity of challenging targets. Paid use in 2019 was five hundred eighteen 25-bird and forty-nine 50-bird rounds (15,400 targets) and is increasing as shooters from throughout New England become aware of it. All traps are electric and remote-controlled.

Sporting Clays Course: A 14-station sporting clays course is situated on the wooded hillside to the east of the clubhouse. All stations are served by two or three battery-powered, remote-controlled traps. The access road has been redesigned, drainage facilities installed, and the native surface replaced with crushed ledge to minimize erosion during rainstorms. It crosses several seasonal watercourses where culverts have been installed. Paid use in 2019 was seven hundred fourteen 100-bird rounds (71,400 targets) and six hundred and fifty-one 50-bird rounds (32,550 targets) and is increasing as more shooters become aware of the course and more registered target events are held. Again, all traps are electric and remote-controlled.

With the exception of registered shoots, the club functions on an honor system and members, their guests, and the public pay for their rounds (via VISA charge or cash) after shooting. Total paid use in 2019 was 123,100 targets. Total paid use through September 2020 was 147,200 targets. In addition, our junior shooters (in hunter education classes, 4-H, and NEK Clayshooters) shot an estimated 4,000 targets which the Club sponsored.

2.2 Existing Environmental Conditions

At its western edge the property is bounded by Roundy Brook. Except for the cleared flat areas (elevation 1050 feet) around the clubhouse where the skeet fields and 5-stand course are located the property is situated on a wooded slope that faces west. It is covered by a 60-year-old mixed maple/birch hardwood and a spruce/fir softwood forest that was logged in 2008. The springs and headwaters of one small stream tributary are on the property. Away from these spring areas and small watercourses the property is generally well drained. Soils are sandy loam on the slope and alluvial deposits (mostly sand) on the flat to its west. The slope behind the skeet fields and 5-stand course has been cleared and is maintained to permit periodic applications of lime and the eventual mining of the accumulation of lead shot from years of use. Annual monitoring of soil pH provides information to guide liming activities.

3.0 Environmental/Safety Action Plan—skeet fields, 5-stand, and sporting clays course

- Clear, stump, grub, and establish grassed shot-fall zones at Stations 12-14.
- Maintain shotfall zones with regular mowing.
- Monitor lead mobilization from shotfall zones as is feasible.
- Monitor pH levels on an annual basis and apply lime as needed.
- Conduct lead reclamation from the shotfall zones when necessary.
- Maintain hazard zone placards around perimeter of property.
- Maintain range sign with contact information at gate on access road.
- Purchase and install cardboard-storage trailer to facilitate recycling.
- Move storage containers to permit relocation of sporting clays access road.
- Conduct major overhaul of zero-turn mower and purchase second UTV.

4.0 Development Plan—skeet fields, 5-stand course, and sporting clays course

- **Field #1**
 - Construct ADA-accessible concrete shooting pads.
 - Regrade to ensure proper surface drainage.
 - Relocate sporting clays course access road away from field.
- **Field #2**
 - Construct ADA-accessible concrete skeet and trap shooting pads.
 - Regrade field to ensure proper surface drainage.
 - Trim out and finish new windows for quartering-target traps.
- **5-stand Course**
 - Install 50-foot tower with two remote-controlled traps.
 - Construct ADA-accessible concrete shooting pad.
- **Sporting Clays Course**
 - Redesign drainage facility between Station 5 & 6 (culvert?).
 - Top-dress access road as needed with Staymat to minimize erosion.
 - Chloride access road as needed to control dust.

5.0 Development Plan—access road, parking lot, and clubhouse

- **Access Road**
 - Maintain overflow channel and culverts adjacent to Roundy Brook.
 - Grade as needed to ensure proper surface drainage.
 - Surface and further stabilize critical erosion areas.
 - Chloride as needed to control dust.
- **Parking lot**
 - Top-dress parking area with Staymat and chloride as needed to control erosion and dust.
- **Clubhouse**
 - Construct ADA-compliant access ramps.

6.0 Shooting Education and Development (recruit, retain, reactivate)

- **4-H Shotgun Instruction**
 - Continue providing targets at no cost.
 - Provide 4-H certified shotgun instructors/coaches as needed.
 - Build scholarships to further develop promising students.
 - Sponsor parent-child shooting events to foster club membership.
- **Interscholastic shooting training (Scholastic Clay Target Program)**
 - “Graduate” 4-H youth into NEK Clayshooters and NSCA-registered shooting.
 - Reach out to other area high schools to increase NEK Clayshooters participation.
 - Investigate expanding NEK Clayshooters to include Northern Vermont University students.
 - Continue providing targets at no cost.
 - Provide certified shotgun instructors/coaches as needed.
 - Move gun safe, guns, and cleaning equipment to NEKSC clubhouse.
 - Consider application to obtain tax-exempt 501 © (3) status from IRS.
 - Involve parents in shooting activities to foster club membership.
- **Women’s’ shooting program**
 - Establish Women’s Night with available coaching/instruction.
- **Hunter education/safety**
 - Continue to host existing programs at clubhouse.
- **Increase public shooting hours**
 - Seek grant funding to hire range officer
 - Advertise public hours and availability of instruction.
- **Reactivate members who are no longer active**
 - Ask each active member to get an inactive member to return to shooting at club.
 - Invite shotgun hunters to sharpen skills prior to hunting season.

7.0 Review Plan. Update as needed and set future goals.