



Washoe County

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

STAFF REPORT

COMMISSION MEETING DATE: August 2, 2016

DATE: July 26, 2016
TO: Open Space and Park Commission
FROM: Dave Solaro, Arch., P.E., Director
Community Services Department, 328-2040, dsolaro@washoecounty.us
SUBJECT: Update on Congested Shooting Area Boundary

SUMMARY

The Community Services Department initiated proceedings to amend the Washoe County Code (Chapter 50 – Public Peace, Safety and Morals) as requested by Commissioner Berkgigler and Jung at the June 23, 2015, County Commission meeting to address concerns of public safety related to the current Firearm Congested Area Boundary last updated in 2002.

On July 12, 2016 the Board of County Commissioners approved a boundary change to the congested shooting boundary which went into effect in Washoe County on July 22, 2016.

The County Code amendment extended the boundary of the Washoe County “congested area” where uncontrolled discharge of firearms is not permitted as it would result in the greatest risk of injury to life and limb. Due to increased construction activity, annexations by the City of Reno, and implementation of planned outdoor recreation trails and roadways, the current congested area the previous boundary was determined to be inadequate.

Strategic Objective supported by this item: Safe, secure and healthy communities.

PREVIOUS ACTION

July 12, 2016, the Board of County Commissioners held a second reading and adopted changes to Chapter 50 of the Washoe County Code (Public Peace, Safety and Morals).

June 28, 2015, the Board of County Commissioners introduced and held a first reading to amend Chapter 50 of the Washoe County Code (Public Peace, Safety and Morals).

July 28, 2015, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) approved a request to initiate proceedings to amend Washoe County Code (Chapter 50 – Public Peace, Safety and Morals)

pursuant to a request by Commissioner Berkgigler; and directed the County Clerk to submit the request to the District Attorney for preparation of a proposed ordinance, pursuant to Washoe County Code Section 2.030 and 2.040.

August 26, 2014, the Board adopted an ordinance, amending Sections 50.090 and 50.092 of Chapter 50 of the Washoe County Code (Peace, Morals and Public Safety) to remove certain restrictions on the discharge of firearms in portions of Warm Springs.

December 2002 - The Firearm Congested Area Boundary was adjusted by the Board of County Commissioners.

BACKGROUND

Residential areas within Washoe County, and areas annexed by the cities of Reno and Sparks have grown substantially since the last Firearm Congested Area Boundary adjustment in 2002 and need to be adequately captured. Additionally, outdoor recreational opportunities within Washoe County have increased and have created areas of conflict between users of trails and unsafe recreational shooting. These areas of conflict can be mitigated if the Firearm Congested Area Boundary is clear for all users of Washoe County open space. To address this in the most prominent area of the county with trail and recreational shooting conflicts, Peavine Mountain, the new boundary includes utilizing the main roadway to the peak as the boundary. It is hoped that by utilizing a landmark as the boundary, not only will shooters now know they are in a legal shooting area, the enforcement of the boundary will be easier.

Along with the change in the congested area boundary it is important that the Washoe County citizens and visitors take steps while recreating to be as safe as possible. It is not only incumbent on shooters to make sure that while shooting in a legal area, that all precautions are made as to not unintentionally harm others in the area, but as a non-shooter how to react when encountering either legal or illegal shooting. Information on shooting regulations can be found on the Washoe County Sheriff's Office website, www.washoesheriff.com

While Peavine Mountain certainly gained the most notoriety during this process of defining a recognizable safety boundary all areas of the unincorporated county were reviewed. Members from the Sheriff's Office, the County Manager's Office, and the Community Services Department reviewed complaints, concerns, and best practices across the west in determining the best boundary.