

Commissioners' Comments By Terry Stevenson

There are some occasions when a full explanation of an action taken by the Board of Commissioners is helpful in understanding why a particular action has been taken. At our last meeting the commissioners decided to close the rifle range on Antelope Gap Road. The range is on county property and has been used for many years by the public as a place to sight in rifles or to have a little fun shooting at targets. Unfortunately, there have been a number of people who have acted carelessly with their guns, causing damage and putting the safety of others in jeopardy. On December 17, there was a grass fire in the area that was most likely started by careless shooters at the range. There have also been numerous incidents of bullets ricocheting toward homes in the area as much as a mile away, and whizzing past county workers and others on the county property on the hill above the range.

A similar problem was noted several years ago and the county took action to build up a berm around the target area so that bullets shot into the targets would not continue on far beyond their intended destination. Unfortunately, it appears that many people have shot toward things other than in the target area. Bullets from such shots have bounced off the ground and gone toward homes and other places where people have been put in danger. Since the site is unsupervised, it is impossible to know exactly who has abused the privilege of use and who has been as careful as they should have been.

Since the range is on county property, it is very likely that if someone were injured, the county would be sued. The commissioners do not want any injuries, nor lawsuits.

Therefore, we have decided to close the range.

But also, since we are all interested in ability of Platte County citizens to have a safe place to shoot their guns, we are soliciting help to find such a location. Meanwhile, the rifle range has been posted as closed and anyone still trying to use it will be liable for a trespassing charge.

I have also heard some misinformation getting spread around concerning the transfer of BLM property in the area of Camp Guernsey to the Camp. The commissioners did write a letter of support for the Camp regarding the transfer of BLM property to the Camp, but only the property within the current boundaries of the Camp. The BLM will likely do what they want regardless of what we write to them, but the letter we did write regarded only a few acres within the Camp, and not, as has been rumored, all the BLM property in the Guernsey area.

I think I will end it here this time. Keep in mind that our meetings are open and the public is welcome. Also, if you have any questions, ask a commissioner.