



Uniting Citizens to Conserve, Protect and Enhance Michigan's Natural Resources and Outdoor Heritage
PO Box 30235 Lansing, MI 48909 | 800.777.6720 P | www.mucc.org

April 29, 2020

Governor Gretchen Whitmer
P.O. Box 30013
Lansing, MI 48909

RE: Outdoor Shooting Ranges

Dear Governor Whitmer,

Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) is a 501(c)3 conservation organization representing more than 200 affiliate clubs and 40,000 members in the state of Michigan. Founded in 1937, our mission is to unite citizens to conserve, protect and enhance Michigan's natural resources and outdoor heritage. We are reaching out to you to express our concerns on behalf of recreational target shooters, hunters, and our affiliate clubs with outdoor shooting ranges across Michigan.

MUCC is conscious of the public health crisis associated with COVID-19 and supports the administration in taking well-informed, scientifically based action to curb the spread of this virus. Since the onset of the COVID-19 crisis and associated "Stay Home, Stay Safe" orders, many of our affiliate clubs have been affected by the decision to limit public use of outdoor shooting ranges. Our members have also voiced opposition to the closure of unstaffed shooting ranges that fall under the management of the Department of Natural Resources (MDNR).

The administration has been supportive of individuals engaging in outdoor activity, and we strongly urge you to consider opening both private and public outdoor shooting ranges starting May 7. This would bring these facilities in line with the reopening of businesses, including building and construction, which require similar social distancing protocols and occur outdoors. Many of these outdoor facilities are owned by not-for-profit clubs that are driven by a model where individuals purchase a membership entitling them to the right to use the range. However, many of these clubs also rely on the public, outside of their member base, to stay in operation and remain fiscally sound. In many cases, these outdoor facilities operate without anyone present, but some have part-time or full-time managers or a slate of volunteers that keep the club operational to serve the public.

MUCC and our member clubs, including the operators of recreational shooting facilities, advocate for the reopening of these outdoor spaces to the public with common sense regulations for the protection of human health. In accordance with Executive Order 2020-59, members of the public should still be required to maintain a distance of six feet from individuals outside of their households and shooting ranges could remain operational with no in-person contact by staff or volunteer managers. Shooting ranges may also be required to sanitize commonly touched surfaces, as well as provide hand sanitizer for customers. Payments could be touchless as well through the use of dropboxes or paying by phone/online. We would also

ask specifically that MDNR shooting ranges that do not require staff for operation be opened to the public as well. MUCC feels that this would be a safe reopening, given the nature of outdoor shooting ranges and safety protocols that will be taken.

We look forward to working with your office to ensure that Michigan's hunters, target shooters and conservationists can safely resume their outdoor recreational activities. Please feel free to reach out to me or my staff with any questions or concerns regarding this pressing issue.

Yours in Conservation,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amy Trotter".

Amy Trotter, Executive Director
517-346-6484

CC:

Attorney General Dana Nessel
Senate Majority Leader Mike Shirkey
Senate Minority Leader Jim Ananich
Speaker of the House Lee Chatfield
House Minority Leader Christine Greig
Department of Natural Resources Director Daniel Eichinger
Department of Natural Resources Deputy Director Shannon Hanna
Department of Natural Resources Parks & Recreation Division Chief Ron Olson
Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division Chief Gary Hagler
Energy and Environment Policy Advisory Kara Cook
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation Upper Midwest States Coordinator Nick Buggia
National Shooting Sports Foundation Regional Director of Government Relations Chris Lee