



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2025.** Please include this submission form as the first page of your electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Dinwiddie
Program Title: Precision Partnership: Shooting for Excellence
Program Category: Parks & Recreation

CONTACT INFORMATION

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SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: W. Kevin Massengill
Title: County Administrator
Signature: 

Situation:

Dinwiddie County, a rural community with deep 4-H roots, proudly traces its history back to 1909 when the nation's first 4-H community club—the Corn Club—was established here with 75 boys. Over the years, the program has expanded to offer a wide range of opportunities, including archery and riflery. However, without a designated range, these clubs struggled to thrive. Until 2024, members depended on private land for practice—an arrangement that posed safety concerns and offered no long-term stability. Participation in competitions and recreational shoots often required traveling outside the County, creating barriers for many families. To fully engage and grow, Dinwiddie youth needed a safe, dedicated space to train, compete, and welcome fellow young shooters from other communities.

Additionally, the Dinwiddie County Sheriff's Office expressed the need for a local shooting range for practice and qualifying with their service weapons. It was often a challenge for deputies to leave the County to visit shooting ranges, sometimes for a fee, in order to practice and conduct required qualifying activities.

Awards Criteria:

Innovation – This project exemplifies a non-traditional and highly innovative model of intergovernmental collaboration. It is rare to see a coordinated effort that brings together Waste Management, Cooperative Extension, and the Sheriff's Office under a shared initiative. The partnership was further strengthened by the involvement of state agencies such as the Virginia

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Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Department of Forestry, making the effort both unique and impactful. By aligning the distinct goals of multiple partners, the program successfully addressed a variety of needs: it established shared shooting ranges for both 4-H and the Sheriff's Office, fulfilled a required training component for the Department of Forestry, and provided VDOT with a practical and efficient solution for the disposal of excavated soil.

Collaboration – This project is the result of a non-traditional collaborative effort between Dinwiddie County's Department of Waste Management, Dinwiddie County Sheriff's Office, Virginia Cooperative Extension (4-H), the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the Virginia Department of Forestry.

Model for Other Localities – While the list of partners may look different, the Precision in Partnership project is one that could be used as a model for other localities that would benefit from a shooting/archery range. The specific needs and resources within a locality will determine which agencies need to be at the table. Positive professional relationships and out-of-the-box thinking are what make this type of collaboration successful.

Program Description:

The idea for the shooting ranges began when the Dinwiddie County Extension/4-H Agent approached the Director of Waste Management to explore the possibility of using the County Landfill for target practice during non-operating hours. After discussions with representatives from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Virginia Department of Forestry,

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a collaborative plan was developed to construct permanent, purpose-built ranges. This solution would provide a safe, reliable space not only for 4-H clubs but also for Sheriff's Deputies requiring regular firearms training and qualification.

Once suitable locations for each range were identified at the landfill, VDOT agreed to deliver soil excavated during routine roadside ditch maintenance. The Virginia Department of Forestry, which requires hands-on bulldozer training for its staff, used this opportunity to move, shape, and compact the soil into protective berms—turning a training exercise into lasting community infrastructure. The result was a win-win collaboration, transforming surplus materials and training needs into a safe, sustainable asset for youth development and public safety.

Financing and Staffing:

The entire project was completed with minimal cost, requiring only staff time and the use of equipment. There were no additional financial expenditures, making this a highly efficient and resourceful collaboration.

The Director of Public Works, who oversees Waste Management to include the County Landfill, served as the Project Director and collaborated closely with all partners to ensure the successful completion of the project

Results:

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The shooting range project has been a tremendous success. The Archery and Riflery ranges opened in early 2024 and were used weekly from March through September. Although only “fun shoots” have been held so far, consistent practice on the home range has helped youth become better prepared for future competition. Currently, 52 youth are enrolled in the Archery and Riflery clubs. Many of them would not have had the opportunity to experience these sports without the new, local ranges.

The Dinwiddie County Sheriff’s Office employs 67 sworn deputies, each of whom must qualify with their service weapon annually to maintain certification. Before the range opened, deputies had to travel 45 minutes to the Meherrin River Regional Jail to complete their qualifications. Now, the Qualifying Range has become a regional asset, serving not only Dinwiddie deputies but also officers from surrounding agencies. These include the cities of Petersburg and Hopewell, Richard Bland College Campus Police, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Marshals Service’s Regional Fugitive Task Force.

Executive Summary

Dinwiddie County's Department of Waste Management spearheaded a collaborative effort with the Dinwiddie Sheriff's Office, Virginia Cooperative Extension (4-H), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and the Virginia Department of Forestry to develop three specialized shooting ranges at the County Landfill site. The Archery Range, Riflery Range, and Shooting/Qualifying Range were constructed using soil excavated by VDOT during routine roadside ditch maintenance. As part of a bulldozer training exercise, the Department of Forestry expertly spread and shaped the dirt to form the range layouts. Today, the Archery and Riflery ranges support the county's growing 4-H youth programs, while the Shooting and Qualifying Range provides a secure training space for the Dinwiddie County Sheriff's Office and neighboring law enforcement agencies.

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4-H Archery Club youth and volunteers enjoying the Archery Range.



4-H Riflery Club practicing on their Shotgun/Rifle Shooting Range.

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Aerial views of the DCSO Shooting/Qualifying Range.

Images captured with a DCSO drone during routine training.

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The Hopewell Police Department's Tactical Team preparing for practice on Dinwiddie's range.



On the left is the long-range weapon area (berm can be seen in the distance). To the right is the main qualifying range. Both ranges may be used safely at the same time.



Target practice.