Phase II Construction begins at Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Park

*When complete, new park will offer Olympic shooting sports, hunter safety classes and other recreational opportunities*

Progress is being made at the Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Park. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) awarded MJC Land Development of Royal Palm Beach the contract to complete the second phase of construction at this facility. Phase II consists of clearing the remaining 150-acre site, completing the stormwater retention controls, and installing the remaining roads, parking, sporting clays course and major utilities. MJC Land Development began phase II construction Sept. 15.

FWC is on track to release the request for bids for the support structures – admission building, classroom, restrooms and maintenance building – before the end of the year. Construction of these supporting structures will run concurrently with the phase 2 construction efforts.

“As soon as the supporting structures are built, we should be able to open the handgun and rifle ranges,” said Dean Stoddard FWC’s construction manager. “Depending on the contractor’s schedule, this should be during the first half of 2018.”

Phase I construction was completed in June 2017. It consisted of the site work on the west side of the complex, including the rifle and handgun ranges. The shooting lines and safety baffling was completed for the 30-position 10-meter/50-foot handgun range, the 42-position 25/50-meter handgun range, and the 20-position 100-yard rifle range.
Site work also was completed for the 200- and 300-yard rifle ranges; however, the shooting lines and safety baffling for these ranges is budgeted for completion later in the project.

Recreational target shooting is big business in Florida and firearm sales have risen in recent years: 32.5 percent of all Floridians own a firearm, more than 1.5 million have a concealed carry permit, and nearly 900,000 Floridians participate in recreational target shooting. The state’s sporting arms and ammunition industry supports 14,850 jobs and generates $695 million in wages and $2.4 billion in total annual output. Florida ranks third in the nation for total firearms industry jobs and fourth for economic output.

The Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Park will be one of the largest shooting sports facilities in Florida with five rifle and pistol ranges, five Olympic trap fields, six American trap fields, nine skeet fields, and a 14-station sporting clays course. It will provide opportunities for people to participate in shooting disciplines safely, allow practice for Olympic-style shooting events, and host hunter safety courses.

This project is supported by funding from the Wildlife Restoration program, which brings funding to Florida from the sporting arms and archery industries and the people of Florida who participate in these activities. Florida ranks fourth in the country for contributing to the Wildlife Restoration program. A portion of these funds are apportioned to the FWC to provide hunter safety training and public shooting ranges.

Additional support and funding for the Palm Beach County Shooting Sports Park are provided by Palm Beach County, National Rifle Association, Fish & Wildlife Foundation of Florida, and South Florida Water Management District. The facility is located at Seminole Pratt Whitney Road – toward the main entrance to J.W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area and Everglades Youth Conservation Center Camp.