

Feb. 25, 2015

Senate Committee on Judiciary

My name is Gisela Cowger, and I live on a 100 acre farm in Linn County, just south of Stayton. It is zoned EFU. The reason for my letter is my concern re. Oregon SB 86 which would allow the establishment of firearms training facilities on land in exclusive farm zones. I am vigorously opposed to this bill, based on my personal experience.

Let me explain: I have lived on my farm since 1957 with my family, enjoying the peace and quiet of the neighborhood.. Five years ago, this tranquility came to an abrupt end when a farm immediately adjacent to mine changed ownership. The new owner established a hunting preserve, even though his application for a conditional use permit was unanimously denied by the Linn County Planning Commission

For the last 4.5 years, I have endured the noise of almost daily gunfire, often lasting from morning until night. It has taken the joy out of working in my garden, and you can hear the gunfire even indoors.

On May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013, my eleven-year old grandson went to the creek running through my property to do some fishing. He was back soon and told me that he saw two men wearing orange hunting vests. He estimated that they were about 20 yards from him and firing their rifles. My grandson was scared to death and fled the scene.

In July 2014, a weekend of almost non-stop gunfire was hosted on this neighboring farm involving the ODFW.

So, you will understand my concern that SB86 will seriously affect the livability of rural living in our beautiful state, and not in a good way.  
Thank you for your attention to this matter..

Sincerely, Gisela Cowger

December 11, 2013

Mr. R. Wheeldon  
Linn County Planning & Building Department  
Room 114  
Linn County Courthouse  
Albany, OR 97321

Dear Mr. Wheeldon,

I am the daughter of Gisela Cowger, who lives at 40714 Queener Drive, Scio, OR 97374, on the farm where my brothers and I grew up. I am writing to you because I am concerned about how safety on my mother's farm is affected by shooting immediately adjacent on the Queener Ridge Hunting Club premises.

I have children ages 17 and 14, and we often visit my mother's farm, as do other members of my family with their children. We enjoy walks on the farm, which is about 100 acres of woods and fields. Among the main attractions are a pond and stream on the eastern edge of the property, along the line between the Queener Ridge Hunting Club and the Cowger farm.

On November 30, 2013, my children and I were visiting my mother. At 10:00 a.m., I heard many very loud shots near her pond, which is about 250 yards south of her house. As I walked down the hill toward the pond, I saw a pheasant flying up and directly over the pond. I then saw a man under the very large Douglas fir tree that stands on the Queener Ridge Hunting Club property, about 20 or 30 yards east of the line between the two properties and near the Cowger pond.

I spoke to the man, who said his name was Ray Duyn. I asked Mr. Duyn if he was a paying customer of the Bochsers, and he said, "yes." I also told Mr. Duyn that my children and I feel unsafe on my mother's land, due to the shooting immediately adjacent to her property.

I did not get Mr. Duyn's address or phone number that day. I see from the web that a Ray Duyn, whose age is consistent with that of the man I saw, lives in McMinnville, OR, and works at Carlton Farms, 800-932-0946. I should stress that I do not know if this is the same Ray Duyn who was shooting immediately adjacent to my mother's pond and stream that day. **I also want to be clear that I am not accusing Mr. Duyn of anything.** I simply want to provide you with all the facts about this incident, which is part of an ongoing pattern of loud shooting at or near the pond and stream. I provide the name (and the phone number, which *may* be correct) in case you wish to try to contact Mr. Duyn to ask if he hunts at the Queener Ridge Hunting Club, and pays the Bochsers to do so.

I realize that most hunters are responsible, and seek to avoid accidents, and I am sure Mr. Duyn falls into that category. My concern, however, is two-fold.

*(continued)*

First, I am concerned about how close to the property line hunters are shooting on a regular basis. The occasion I describe above was only one of many, on many different days, on which loud shots have been heard in the area that spans the two properties, near the stream and pond. I worry that a hunter might not realize where the Cowger-Bochsler property line runs. I worry that s/he might shoot across the property line as a game bird flies near or across that line. I fear that if one of us is walking quietly near the pond and stream, we might be mistaken for game.

It seems to me that a good solution would be to define and clearly mark a setback of some 200 yards, or other reasonable distance, east of the Cowger-Bochsler property line. That marked setback would provide hunters a line with respect to which they must either aim parallel or away, into the Bochsler property.

Second, I am concerned about Mr. Duyn's statement that he was paying to hunt. My understanding is that Linn County has indicated it needs evidence that the Queener Ridge Hunting Club is charging people to hunt on its premises. I understand that charging a fee to hunt on these premises is not allowed. Mr. Duyn did clearly indicate that he was a paying customer.

In conclusion, I ask that you please let me know how the County will respond to these concerns. My specific questions are: (1) what can be done to ensure safety for persons such as my mother, my children, and me, as we walk on the Cowger farm, and (2) what will be done with respect to the apparent presence of paying customers at the Queener Ridge Hunting Club.

Thank you very much in advance, and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Christina Cowger  
1021 Gardner Street  
Raleigh, NC 27607  
Tel.: 919-637-7678 (cell)

cc: Mr. Harold Anderson, Code Enforcement Officer, Linn County  
Gisela Cowger



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife



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Spaces still available in July 26-27 dog training workshop

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July 17, 2014

SALEM, Ore.—Bird hunting season is just around the corner. Are you and your dog ready?

Some spaces are still open in [ODFW's Family Introduction to Dog Training Workshop](#) July 26-27 near Scio. It's open to adults, couples and families with children (minimum 9 years of age). The cost of the workshop is \$62 for adults, \$22 for youth and it includes lunch both days plus free primitive camping on the site.

This workshop is good for people who already have a hunting dog or who are thinking about getting one. It teaches how to start training a hunting dog or get the most out of the one you currently have. The workshop will explore topics including obedience, tracking, water, field and bird work, and more. On Sunday, instructors will take participants' dogs through some training activities.

"Training begins with obedience and ends with a dog that is eager to work with you," said Mark Newell, ODFW outdoor skills coordinator. "We'll show you how to get started and what these amazing dogs are capable of with the right positive training."

This event is co-hosted by the Owen Denny chapter of Pheasants Forever, Queener Ridge Pheasant Company, the Green Valley Hunting and Retrieving Club and ODFW.

Pre-registration is required, register online at [ODFW's license sales site](#).

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Contact:

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Photos from the 2013 Family Dog Training workshop. Click on image for high resolution.

