

Full archery field delayed

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"The PCC wants to see a wonderful archery range out here, they're excited for us to use it," Somers said.

The PCC gave its permission to use the land last year, and the Bowman rushed headlong into building a large berm, removing brush and prepping the ground for a field. Unfortunately they failed to get permits from View Royal, halting prep work in its tracks.

Wills admitted they know a lot about archery, but little about the rules of property development. Fortunately no damage was done to an existing creek and riparian area, and a surveys and environmental studies have been completed. View Royal is helping guide them through the process, Wills said.

"Everything must be finished the way the (View Royal) planner wants and then it's up to council," he said. "We won't be building a target archery field until we get all our ducks in a row."

In the meantime during the summer, Bowman archers skewer targets with calm precision on the rough field. Wills is happy any members remain after two years of renting indoor space and wandering in the proverbial wilderness.

"We've got about 50 members now, we had 150 in the old days," Wills said. "It's a tribute to the faith of the archers that we've got 50. And it will be nice to not spend a ton of money on renting schools and gyms."

If and when the archery field is built — it would look akin to a soccer field — Somers said he's looking forward to reviving Bowman youth archery programs.

"There's a lot of young families around here," said Somers, a retired teacher. "To build up the sport, you've got to start with the kids."

"We've brought kids through all the way to the Olympic level."

George Trattner, a 16-year member, said it's tough to start from scratch — the DND property had a club house and plenty of space for target and field archery. The new range is expected to have up to 90 metre targets, but there isn't a lot of room to maneuver.

"(The DND land) was probably the best facility of its kind in Canada, it was a phenomenal place," Trattner said. "But this place has potential."

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