

# Swift River Sportsman's Club

## Member's Handbook

**Swift River Sportsman's Club**

**350 Cold Spring Street**

**Belchertown, MA 01007**

Phone: 413-323-9387

Visit our website at  
[www.swiftriversportsmans.org](http://www.swiftriversportsmans.org)

Welcome to Swift River Sportsman's Club.

Your membership entitles you to use our 400 acres of fields and forests for hunting, fishing, target shooting, camping, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, hiking, biking, bird watching etc. It's a great place to relax and enjoying the company of others who share your interests. Please treat the property with respect and always leave it clean and well maintained for the next member. Please carry your membership card at all times.

Turkey shoots, trap shooting, 3-D archery and many other club functions are open to the public, so feel free to bring your family and friends.

MEMBERSHIP - Membership is at either the Senior level, or Junior memberships are available for students and those under 18.

Family Memberships are also available for those wishing to enroll their spouse. The continued success of the club hinges on everyone helping. Volunteers are needed for all club functions, including game dinners, 3-D shoots, ham and turkey shoots, club/hall rentals, and outside parties like our clam bake.

PLEASE consider helping the work parties trying to improve the club house and grounds. Your involvement is important.

"A Senior Member shall expend effort to annually raise funds or save costs by participating in fund raising drives, working on an activity committee or performing a trade or professional service to establish credits in lieu of assessment. The Board of Directors shall determine the minimum level of service required annually."

(Excerpt from By-laws)

## **Pheasant**

The club raises several hundred pheasants each year. The rules and limits are set by our Board of Directors.

Limits are 2 per day - 10 maximum for the season. You must tag and record the birds you harvest. Tags and harvest log can be found in the glass case outside the clubhouse entrance. The State of Massachusetts requires that the club report the number of birds stocked & harvested. This also helps the club track the success of our pheasant and quail programs.

It is important that you and your dogs stay away from the pheasant and quail pens. These birds are sensitive and need to be left alone while maturing.

Please do not hunt or shoot within 500 feet of the caretaker's home, clubhouse, or the private property to the right of the access road after the rifle range.

During a Private Hunt the Preserve grounds are CLOSED to hunting except by those in the private party. (\*\*Hunting is still allowed on Club property west of the "Mayflower Trail.")

## **Private Hunts** **October through March**

In addition to stocking birds for our members to pursue, as a Class 'A' Preserve we also run private hunts for members and the general public.

Members and guests are able to enjoy extended opportunities for outdoor recreation.  
Contract and 50% down payment required

Valid MA Hunting License required

**For Contact Information etc , See Reservation Form**

### **Senior Members**

To become a Senior Member with key card you must work a minimum of twelve hours per year. (Requirement set by Board of Directors.)

### **Club House**

The main clubhouse is open to Senior Members with a key card. If a Senior Member is on the grounds and has opened the club, all members are welcome to use it. This includes the kitchen, bathrooms and upstairs archery range. Keys to the pistol range and railroad gate (Chickadee Trail) are also available.

(Sorry absolutely no dogs allowed in club house.)

Before leaving the club house, please clean and put away any kitchen utensils that you use, turn down the heat, turn off all lights and return any keys to their proper place.

The club house can be rented by any member for a fee. The bar can be used as long as there is a Bar Manager present. NO alcohol can be brought in from the outside at any time or at any function.

### **Membership Meetings**

Membership meetings are held each month at 7 :30 on the second Wednesday of the month. This is a good time to get acquainted with other members and to keep updated on current events. The Board of directors meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at the same time of the evening.

### **Board of Directors**

Board meetings are held each month at 7 :30 on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

Nominations for the Officers and Board of Directors are held at the December membership meeting.

Elections are held at the Annual Meeting, held on the 2nd Sunday of January. You must be a Senior Member with dues paid for the year in order to run for office or vote.

### **Rifle Range**

You must sign in to use the rifle range. Sign-in sheets are located in the glass case at the front door of the club house. Only paper targets are allowed on the rifle range. **NO** cans, bottles, appliances etc. will be allowed. The range is **CLOSED** during the shotgun and muzzle-loader seasons for deer hunting **EXCEPT** for Sundays.

### **Trap House**

Trap shooting is held on Sunday mornings from March through September. Watch the newsletter for updates. Please contact the trap committee chairman for more information.

### **River Access**

The river can be accessed by driving past the trap range and through the woods or by using the gate key located in the club house. These roads are accessible during daylight hours only.

### **Camping**

Camping is allowed anywhere on the grounds. Campfires are allowed. Please camp safely.

### **Pistol Range**

A key in the clubhouse accesses the pistol range. No jacketed ammunition allowed, lead target loads only. **No** rifles larger than 22 rim fire allowed. If you are interested in shooting in league matches, please contact the pistol team/committee chairman.

### **Archery**

The 20-yard indoor archery range is located upstairs in the club house. No broad heads allowed on the archery range. The Winter Archery program runs from January through March.

### **Other Recreation**

Snowmobiling, horseback riding and mountain biking are permitted on club grounds. Dirt bikes are NOT permitted anywhere or any time. 4-wheel ATV's may be used **ONLY** for work details or game retrieval.

## **Swift River Pistol Team**

How many members know that SRSC has an active pistol team ? We've been around for a long time.

Our team is part of the Western Mass. Pistol League that includes five other teams. We shoot an NRA course of fire consisting of :

Slow fire: 10 rounds in ten minutes.

Timed fire : Two strings of 5 rounds in 20 seconds with a reload between strings.

Rapid fire: Two strings of 5 rounds in 10 seconds with a reload between strings.

The targets are 50 feet down range. Each shooter fires a total of 30 rounds in the course of the match. Each of the three targets has a possible score of 100 with 300 being a perfect match.

Our pistols are .22 cal. Semi-auto's although revolvers can still be used. It's good to have at least two magazines for your pistol to help things run smoother.

All shooting is done only on the command of a range safety officer. This is not open shooting, the range safety officer runs the range. **SAFETY is our FIRST CONCERN.**

We have 20 matches in the season. This year we will be shooting the first half of the season as HOME and AWAY matches. The second half of the season will be shoot at HOME as "POSTAL" matches. The scores will be sent to the league for final scoring. We are doing this so the teams will not have to travel during the winter weather. It worked well last year.

With few exceptions our matches are on Tuesday evenings at around 6:30 pm until about 8pm. Most shooters are home before 8:30 pm. We always have some coffee and munchies for the waiting shooters.

It all makes for a nice night at the club and a lot of fun. So come on out, give it a look , give it a try. We'd like to have you. You might just like it. We can always use more shooters.

For more information please Contact: **Larry Raines**, phone **413-213-0392**,  
or E-mail **B52c406@Charter.net**

## **Rifle Range -Basics and Fine Points**

### **First and foremost, safety.**

Always keep your gun pointed down range or in a safe direction. Shoot only towards the target, which is backed up by the berm. Paper targets only, on backing which will not deflect a bullet off the range. No cans, junk, appliances and especially no glass bottles.

Stay at the firing line except to retrieve or exchange targets. If other shooters are at the line, make sure that the line is clear before proceeding down range. When shooters are down range, all guns should be tabled with the actions open.

### **Do not leave unfired 'dud' rounds at the range. Discard them safely.**

Sign in and out of the range, using the sheet to the right of the clubhouse door. This is MANDATORY for all shooters, NO EXCEPTIONS.

Plywood target frames are available, usually tucked under the rafters of the range roof. Feel free to use them, or bring your own. There are target frame holders set in the ground at marked distances, and portable frame bases available as well. Please do NOT shoot the bases.

A staple gun such as the Arrow T-50 is useful for securing targets to the cardboard backing. Paper targets can be purchased at any sporting goods store, or hand-drawn. There are even computer programs and websites which allow you to print out various targets. (Go online to MYTARGETS.COM)

Please discard all paper trash in the provided receptacle. DO NOT set it on fire; the Club burning permit requires us to notify the Fire Department before we burn brush etc.

The brass receptacle for brass only. We will recycle all used brass. Do not mix shotgun shells in with the brass.

### **No shooting before 9 AM on Sundays.**

If you have any questions, or suggestions for improvement, please contact the Rifle Range Committee Chairman, Dan Grondalski.

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*In 2008 the Rifle Range was dedicated to Ray Kapinos, who spent many years maintaining the facility for the use of our Members.*

### **Archery at Swift River Sportsman's Club**

**The Club** has an active **Archery** program, with a 20 yard indoor range upstairs.

The Winter Archery Leagues offer shooting in friendly competition from January through March.

Monday night is target or 'Spot' shooting at standard 20 yard indoor targets.

Tuesday is 'Hunter' night with a mix of paper and 3-D targets at mixed ranges.

Friday is 'Family Fun Night' where adults and juniors shoot at various ranges as their skills progress.

Saturday Mornings are for Junior League, where young shooters develop their skills.



Swift River is also one of several clubs in the **Pioneer Valley 3D League**, which coordinates outdoor shoots from March through September. Typically each club hosts 3 or four shoots every season, so archers can experience a variety of outdoor settings and challenges every week.



**3D shooting** uses full-size animal targets and is considered excellent preparation for the hunting seasons in the Fall and Winter.



## **Logging at Swift River Sportsman's Club**

Logging on the Club is conducted sustainably under a long term management plan with multiple purposes.

First, the sale of timber provides periodic income, now and years down the road. Not all the logging we do nets large amounts of income, however, some areas have never been cut before, and need to be managed, or thinned to improve those stands long-term. Improvement cuttings remove less desirable trees, used mainly as fire wood and pulp wood. The trees that are left are widely spaced and have room at the top (crown) so they can get plenty of sun and grow to their full potential. (The effect is similar to weeding a garden. ) These become valuable 'saw logs' down the road, logs big enough to be made into high-quality sawmill products.

Second, we manage for wildlife habitat. This makes for a more complicated logging plan, but it benefits both game and non-game species.

By providing areas with different age classes of growth, we encourage a wide number of species to call our club 'home'. We have diverse habitat that supports animals ranging from tiny song birds to small mammals to large fur-bearers to deer.

Open fields and smaller clearings benefit many species of birds, and deer, smaller animals and even birds of prey. Brushy areas make excellent cover for numerous other species, while maturing forest benefits still other species as well as providing quality timber. The 'edges' between various types of cover are used by many species. And as different areas mature, we maintain a source of logging income.

We are currently one of only a handful of sportsman's clubs in Massachusetts taking advantage of MassWildlife's LIP (Landowner Incentive Program) grants to help us improve our land/habitat. This helps offset the cost of logging, such as developing the management plan and marking trees for harvest.

Some of the animals seen recently on the club include a hen turkey with a brood of young, owls, woodcock, ruffed grouse, fishers, bobcat, moose, fox and of course those too-smart deer that gave a lot of us fits this past fall.

## **How can I Help?**

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**Probably the biggest question we hear from new (and some not-so-new) members is, how can I get my hours?**

Here at Swift River Sportsman's Club we have a lot going on, functions like banquets and dinners, events like ham shoots and 3-d archery shoots, and plenty of maintenance/upkeep chores on the facilities and grounds.

**Some of the areas we need help on include -**

**Carpentry**      - club house and barn  
                         - painting, preparation and application  
                         - picnic tables need maintenance

**Grounds keeping** - We engage someone to mow the lawns but we can always use help for trimming and brush clearing etc.

**Archery** - Winter archery league - target maintenance, banquet help  
                 3-D Shoots are held in March, April and August  
                 - shoots are set up on Saturday  
                         - trails need to be cleaned and marked  
                         - targets have to be brought out and set up  
                 - Sunday morning – shoot registration  
                 - kitchen help for breakfast and lunch  
                 - targets retrieved Sunday afternoon

**Trail clearing and marking**  
                 - hiking and 3-D trails  
                 - co-ordinate work parties

**Trap** - the trap Committee is looking for help to assist and run the shooting on Sunday mornings in season. Spring through Fall. Also Tuesday evenings during Summer.

**Pheasant Stocking Program**  
- feeding and watering birds  
- Stocking birds for club and private hunting

**Turkey and Ham Shoots** - Held before Easter in Spring and before Thanksgiving October and November.

Help is needed to -

- set up targets and shooting line
- hand out ammunition
- pull and score targets
- help in the kitchen

**Legislation Committee** - Delegates needed to attend Sportsmen's Council meetings, stay in touch with GOAL, etc. and keep the club apprised of news and legislation which affects us all.

**Dinners and Banquets** We hold numerous dinners and banquets every year, and we need help at every one of them in these areas -

- food prep and cooking
- table and chair set-up
- serving and clearing tables
- raffle sales
- clean-up
- bar tending
- TICKET SALES

#### **Just Some of our Events**

January through March -- Indoor Archery League

February -- Game Dinner

March - April -- Ham Shoots

April/July/August -- 3-D Archery shoots

June -- Clambake

October - November -- Turkey Shoots

October through March -- Pheasant hunting

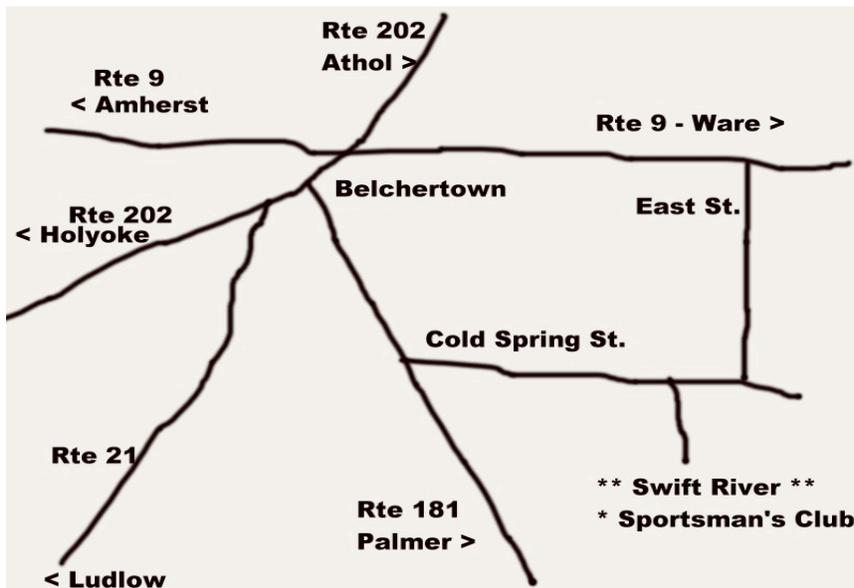
## SWIFT RIVER SPORTSMAN'S CLUB

is located off Cold Spring Street in Belchertown, Mass.

It is private hunting club with 400 acres of land. We are also 'next door' to Herman Covey WMA, with 1474 acres of public hunting land. Our property offers excellent hunting for deer, turkey and other upland game. The club stocks pheasant and quail for members' hunting.

Along with the wooded area we also own extended frontage along the Swift River, one of the best cold water fisheries in the state. The crystal clear water is well stocked by the state. The public boat launch adjacent to our property allows easy access for small craft. Anglers can expect to find everything from perch to bass and large trout. Our river front property has a few sites for camping.

### Where are we?



The Club is easily accessed from any direction by main roads. We are within easy driving distance of Worcester, Springfield, Amherst and Northampton.

We're also a short drive from the scenic Quabbin Reservoir, the state's McLaughlin Fish Hatchery and the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife District Headquarters. (License sales and game checking.)