

## TV Series Production “Shooter” Based in Santa Clarita

By [Jana Adkins](#) -  
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*Crews prepare to film an episode of 'Shooter' at the Rancho Deluxe movie ranch. Katharine Lotze/The Signal.*

Not to throw names around, but Mark Wahlberg has been in town. Filming in Santa Clarita is the USA Network's TV show “Shooter,” based on the 2007 film of the same name about an American marksman trained in counter intelligence and on the run from the U.S. government.

Wahlberg, who starred in the movie version, now has a dramatic TV series set to debut on the USA Network in the fall. Produced by Wahlberg's production company, Closest to the Hole Productions, in conjunction with Paramount Television, the production is based in Santa Clarita.

The story unfolds around the lead character, played by actor Ryan Phillippe, who is wrongly accused of a crime. Phillippe plays a highly decorated ex-Marine sniper who is coaxed back into action after he learns about a plot to kill the president. USA says the conspiracy thriller is “ultimately about trust, loyalty and family.”

The Santa Clarita Valley Business Journal caught up with the film crew on a busy set day at the Rancho Deluxe movie ranch before the wildfires swept through. The production had been filming at Rancho Deluxe and neighboring Sable Ranch movie ranch, and at open space property owned by the city of Santa Clarita in Placerita Canyon.

### **Wave of filming**

Film crew members were arriving in droves on the hills above the ranch, hoisting equipment and cables up the canyon hills, some carrying cameras up the steep hills. Two water trucks were parked nearby in the event of fire – a potential scenario that would become real life only a month later. But on this particular day, unusually breezy and cool during the summer season, 150 to 200 crew members, movie ranch hands and vendors gathered to set up for filming later in the day.

“There is a wave of filming going on that’s not going away to other states now,” said Steve Arklin Sr., owner of Rancho Deluxe. “And now that the tax credits apply to productions being filmed at approved motion picture ranches, we’re seeing more local filming.” Arklin spurred the drive to qualify movie ranches as approved production facilities under the state’s film commission by inviting a group of legislators over last year for a barbecue.

“Shooter” is also one of 11 film projects that earned the California’s film tax credit program for the first fiscal year, Amy Lemisch, executive director of the California Film Commission, confirmed in mid-June. A second TV project approved for credits also has its film production based in Santa Clarita: “Westworld,” directed by J.J. Abrams of “Star Wars: The Force Awakens” fame. Both are filming at local studios, movie ranches and locations around Santa Clarita.

Besides putting money into the checking accounts of local businesses and crew members, “Shooter” is also using Santa Clarita-based [Allan Padelford Camera Cars](#). A former stunt person, owner Allan Padelford has been chasing and filming car crashes and high-speed action in film and television since 1982.

“There are at least 100 people here (Rancho Deluxe) today and another 50 in the office at Avenue Scott Stages,” said Jennifer Jzyk with the city of Santa Clarita’s film office.

### **Incentives lure more filming**

But, before the state revamped its film program last summer, a lot of productions had left the state for friendlier film climates. It is doubtful “Shooter” would have even filmed locally without the new incentive program to keep productions and jobs home. After securing the film credit, however, “Shooter” picked Santa Clarita to base its production.

“Filming has absolutely picked up tremendously since the tax credit,” said Howard Harnett, location manager key assistant. “I haven’t seen it this busy in the industry since I first started in locations in 2003.”

Arklin agrees. Last summer, when the program first kicked into place, “Westworld” filmed at his movie ranch four times. And “Shooter” was filming at his place this summer.

“We had 4,000 people at the ranch in four months last year. It was our biggest year yet,” he said.

### **Debut delays**

When not filming on location, “Shooter” works out of Avenue Scott Stages, operated by Hollywood Locations and Los Angeles Center Studios. They’re co-owned by local Santa Clarita resident, Pete Brosnan. The production also filmed at a local airport, Agua Dulce Airpark, where unfortunately a stuntman was injured when actor Tom Sizemore ran over him and pinned him under a vehicle during filming.

Originally set to debut on July 19, the air date for “Shooter” was pushed back to July 26 by the USA Network after the shooting deaths of five Dallas police officers. That plan was then shelved when another attack on law enforcement occurred in Baton Rouge, La. The network then announced it would hold off release of the sniper series until the fall.

“After further consideration, USA Network, Paramount TV and Universal Cable Productions have decided to move the premiere of ‘Shooter’ to the fall,” NBC Universal said in a statement.

“Shooter” is one of nine film projects certified in the past year by Got Your 6, a group launched in 2015 to encourage the film industry to “craft more thoughtful narratives around veterans and military families.”