



# Equine Land Conservation Resource

Saving land for horses and horse-related activities

## The Issue:

American history is imprinted with hoof prints. From Native American ponies to the horses that pulled the Conestoga across the Great Plains, horses have always been a part of the American tradition.

Now, our heritage is at risk. We lose 6,000 acres per day of open lands. These are the places that feed, shelter and provide space to raise, compete, recreate and care for our horses. If we continue to lose horse facilities and access to land for horse-related uses, we will lose the resources needed to care for our horses.

Poorly planned, uncontrolled development or sprawl, competing demands for land, and a population that is increasingly unfamiliar with horses are the greatest threats to equestrians and horse lands today. **This issue affects the varied regions and disciplines in different ways. But loss of land is a genuine threat to all equine breeds, disciplines and geographic regions of the country.**

## What We Do:

**The good news is that working together we can protect and conserve our equine places and spaces!** ELCR works with individuals and organizations to provide information, tools, templates and one-on-one counseling and technical assistance to help them keep lands open for horses in their communities.

Since land is saved locally, it is imperative that horse enthusiasts be made aware of the existing threats and understand how they can become actively engaged in protecting horse lands and trails in their own communities. ELCR supports these efforts by:

- Creating tools, templates and resources in our six conservation core issue areas that can be used by those acting to save the horse lands they love in their own communities
- Building a vibrant, engaged network of people, across the country, who are willing and able to assist horsemen protect the lands they use to enjoy and support their horses
- Providing online, no-cost access to our resources for everyone
- Working with partner organizations to host informative webinars on important conservation related topics

## DID YOU KNOW...

- According to the US Census, our nation's population will increase by nearly 100 million people by 2050.
- The majority of the US equestrian community is located in and near the urban and suburban areas where this growth will occur.
- The US Forest Service reports that we are losing an astounding 6,000 acres of open lands per day, meaning lost hay fields, pasture lands and competition venues.
- There are 9 million horses in the US and they require an estimated 36 million acres to support their basic feed, hay and forage needs.





## Join with us now to save the land our horses need!

ELCR is the only national nonprofit organization dedicated to conserving land for horses. We are working hard to stem the tide of development and ensure a future for horses in our communities. We work in the following ways to safeguard the equine spirit:

- Providing public access to current articles and videos on equine land conservation in six topic areas on [www.ELCR.org](http://www.ELCR.org);
- Creating templates, sample letters and guides for navigating planning processes and other tactical tools to help busy people effectively engage in local land use planning;
- Offering best practices and guidance for managing conversations and relationships with private landowners and public lands stakeholders in order to create or support continuing access for horses and horse-related usage;
- Developing tools and handbooks for local land trusts working to include equine related properties in their conservation agenda;
- Providing one-on-one counseling and technical assistance to local organizations and individuals working on land conservation or trail access issues in their communities;
- Providing webinar-style seminars on specific issues such as building sustainable trails, conservation easements and best management practices;
- Providing best management practices to property managers to assure the continued usability of the land; and
- Providing regional forums on a variety of conservation topics in cooperation with our Conservation Partners.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS...

ELCR has made great headway in the last few years, helping individuals address land loss in their own communities:

- Advanced the development of **nearly 1,000 acres of new horse parks**
- Helped dozens of small farm owners work through **planning and zoning challenges** to keep their horses on their property in urbanizing areas
- Helped protect more than **a quarter of a million acres of horse properties** and more than **a thousand miles of trails** in the last five years

## CHALLENGES....

We continue to work every day to respond to needs that arise community by community. We know our work for the coming year will include these pressing issues:

- The revitalized real estate market threatens horse facilities in cities and suburbs. ELCR will help people explain the benefits horses bring to their community, and support planners with information about incorporating horses into their plans.
- Horse parks and horse access to public lands are facing increased competition for usage and space. ELCR will share information about what works at horse parks and promote the economic impact of horse usage on public lands.
- As non-equestrians move into traditionally horsey areas, access can be lost. ELCR will promote tools for managing relationships with landowners.



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