

THE SPRING 2013 RESOURCE

ELCR advances the conservation of land for horse-related activity.

ELCR's Regional Educational Forums Continue

By Holley Groshek

In 2012 Equine Land Conservation Resource (ELCR) launched a program of focused one-day regional seminars, as a way to offer intensive educational opportunities tailored to the particular issues confronting local communities or specific areas of the country. These one day efforts, done in partnership with local horse councils, trail clubs, community planners, universities and grassroots groups, have proven to be a highly effective tool for keeping land open for horses. By partnering with local groups, we are able to specifically identify and address the particular challenges and issues of a community. Our local partners help bring the right people to the table to ensure a productive day with actionable outcomes that will help realize progress on the specific issues addressed during the seminar.

Recently, ELCR has collaborated with an equine organization and community partners to hold seminars in Wellington, Florida and Weyers Cave, Virginia. These two events are highlighted below. Videotape presentations of all ELCR Regional Forums can be accessed at elcr.org.



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Educational Forum on Planning for Horses Creates Dynamic Dialogue in Wellington

While Wellington's horse industry is booming, its notable success presents some interesting and time sensitive challenges for the Village of Wellington. Multiple stakeholders, representing many interests, are struggling to work through complex zoning, regulatory and environmental policies to balance the benefits of being an equestrian community with environmental regulations and the needs of the community as a whole.

In January 2013, ELCR presented a one day forum, working with a local grassroots group to bring together regional and community planners, water control and natural areas managers, emergency planning leaders, conserva-



Working group participants at Wellington Forum.

tionists, representatives of developers and landowners, and other concerned citizens. The Forum focused on increasing communication and improving levels of understanding across a broad range of interests and issues among various agencies and constituent groups.

Mike O'Dell, Village Project Manager, kicked off the program with a review of the equestrian component of Wellington's Comprehensive Plan, underscoring the value of community places within the equestrian preserve area. Presentations were also made by South Florida Water Control District, Palm Beach County Animal Care and Control, Palm Beach County Agricultural Extension Office, Wildlife Conservation Commission, Palm Beach County Planning Division, and Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department. Each representative put forward their needs as well as their plans for supporting Wellington's equestrian footprint.

Visiting speaker John Nicholson, Executive Director of the Kentucky Horse Park, led a discussion on the implications and benefits of being a horse destination. ELCR CEO

Anna Gibson followed with a presentation on planning and zoning tactics that build workable and sustainable horse communities. As the presentations continued, a sense of a common purpose developed around the core issues of maintaining horse lands, managing the impacts of horse shows on traffic and infrastructure, and emergency planning for the horse population. The working groups committed to specific action and follow through on emergency planning, soil management, and trails issues. George Tauber, owner of Equistar International, concluded the presentation portion of the program by urging persistence, cooperation and coordination among all stakeholders.

The participants split into two working groups; one focusing on land stewardship, water management, emergency planning and soil protection and the other focusing on trails, infrastructure, economic development and long-range planning goals. Action plans were developed by each group around specific subject areas. Look for additional updates on our work with the Wellington community at elcr.org and in future issues of *The Source*.

ELCR Partners with Virginia Horse Council to Bring Land Issues to Annual Meeting

Virginia faces development pressures that are converting the Commonwealth's horse lands into subdivisions, highways and commercial zones. More than a quarter of this development has occurred in the last 15 years. Recognizing the sense of urgency, the Virginia Horse Council (VHC) partnered with ELCR to share tactics, tools and information to help keep land open for horses at a joint VHC Annual Meeting and Regional Forum on March 16 in Weyers Cave, Virginia.

The program began with a discussion of how planning and zoning can affect horse lands. Dr. Tom Daniels, of the University of Pennsylvania, provided basic definitions and

("Regional Educational Forums," continued on page 4)



VA Regional Forum morning session "No Time To Waste: Protect Your Equine Land & Trails"

From the Saddle

A letter from ELCR's CEO, Anna Gibson

Dear Friends,

Every morning when I sit down at my desk, I think about one question: What can I do today to keep land open for horses? It is my daily metric for success and I pursue it with focused determination. When I sit down with my team to make decisions about how we spend our time and allocate our resources, this is the question we use to determine what gets priority.

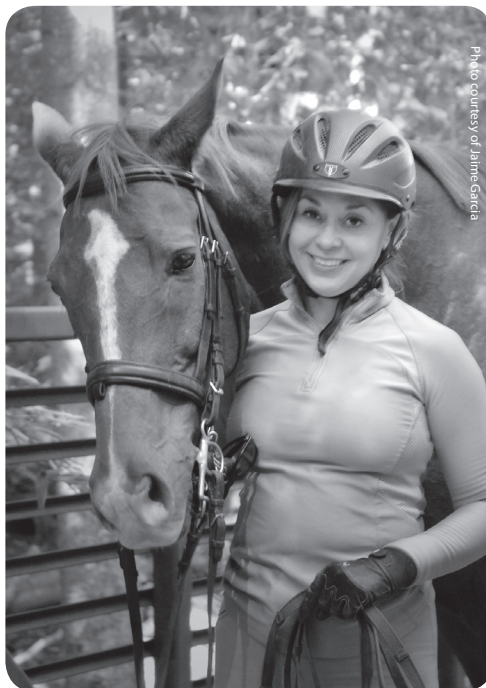
In looking over the past few months, I realized that there are several pleasant surprises and developments that give us good evidence that our efforts to keep land open for horses are yielding results. I am pleased to share them with you in this space in hopes that they will inspire you to continue to work with us to protect the lands and access we need to feed, care for and enjoy our horses.

Greens to Greener: Abandoned golf courses are finding a new, greener life as equestrian focused retirement communities. Chemical intensive greens are being converted to native grasses for pastures and hacking grounds. Regaining lost lands for horse use is unprecedented and the market drivers behind these changes are evidence of a hopeful trend.

Planning for Horses: This edition of our newsletter features an article on the educational workshop we held with a grassroots group in Wellington, Florida and our partnership with the Virginia Horse Council on its annual meeting. Our expertise is increasingly being sought by communities endeavoring to retain and improve their horse population and the economic and social benefits that come with the horse community and industry.

Free for All: In reviewing our educational content, we realized that most people access our information when they are in crisis. They tend to seek us out when they are in the midst of a zoning battle, facing closure of a trail or competition facility, or fighting for survival of their farm or ranch. One result of this realization is that we will now produce more templates that can be easily adapted to local planning or access struggles. This realization also caused us to make all of our online resources available to any interested party at no cost.

I look forward to sharing more of these inspiring surprises with you as we continue our work. Thank you for making what we do possible! ■



Anna and Finn

ELCR Congratulates Anson W. Taylor Jr. Memorial Scholarship Winner

The Anson W. Taylor Jr. Memorial Scholarship was established in 2006 to honor Mr. Taylor for his work with The United States Pony Clubs and The Equestrian Land Conservation Resource. Mr. Taylor gave much time to his local Pony Club and also served as USPC President in the mid-1980s. An avid equestrian and foxhunter, Anson W. Taylor Jr. was dedicated to educating equestrians about land conservation, and was a founding member of the Equestrian Land Conservation Resource. The scholarship, sponsored by USPC and ELCR, is annually awarded to a Pony Club member in his/her senior year of high school with a GPA of 3.0 or higher, that has been accepted to an institution of higher learning and has achieved a USPC rating of C-2 or higher. The purpose of the scholarship is to encourage Pony Club members in their academic pursuits, and reward them for their outstanding achievements in Pony Club as well as commitment to and efforts on behalf of land conservation.

The 2012 scholarship was awarded to Eliza Weeks from Narrows Pony Club, in the Northwest Region, for her essay on the implementation of a best management practices farm plan for her family's 18 acre horse farm in Western Washington. Eliza, a C-2 USPC member, is a Journalism and Music major at Western Washington University. ■



Thanks to our corporate friend:



community examples to clarify the planning and zoning processes explaining the specific impact on horse communities and ways horse people can participate in the process.

Wilfred Woode, of the Fairfax County Soil and Water Conservation District, presented information on effective pasture management and other best management practices for horse properties and provided information about several programs available to assist with farm improvements costs. Heather Richards, of Piedmont Environmental Council, presented an overview of conservation easements and their importance in preserving horse lands in Virginia, illustrating several examples of PEC's conserved horse lands.



Jennifer Wampler presenting on Virginia trail system expansion and connections

An afternoon panel presentation addressing recreational access to public lands through maintaining viability of private equine operations included Sister Maureen Carroll of Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Belmead-on-the-James, Marilyn Catlett of Belmead Stables and Riding Club and Carol Atwood of Broadview Ranch. The group addressed their approaches to creating sustainable equine business models using a variety of agriculturally based ventures to complement their equine operations.

The importance of trail network connectivity and the value of a strong user stewardship ethic was the focus of a presentation made by Jennifer Wampler of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. The program offered a full day youth track which included a land use planning exercise presented by ELCR.

Upcoming Educational Forums are planned for California, New Jersey and Pennsylvania in 2013 and 2014. For more information about how your organization can partner with ELCR, please contact Programs@elcr.org. ■

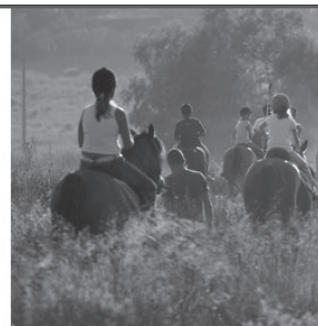
2013 National Equestrian Trails Conference (NETC)

By Holley Groshek



National Equestrian Trails Conference

Preserving a Cultural Heritage
in a Natural Heritage Setting Through Education



In its spring 2012 newsletter, ELCR reported on the successful 2012 Southeastern Trails Conference (SETC) held in Lexington, Kentucky.

Initiated in 1999, SETC had become the largest equestrian trails conference in the country. While other state and regional conferences have come and gone, SETC had persisted, though not without its logistical trials and tribulations. The renaming of the annual conference to National Equestrian Trails Conference (NETC) is in keeping with a new concentration on issues across the country. The South Carolina Horsemen's Council is excited to be the host of the first National Equestrian Trails Conference in beautiful historic Rock Hill, South Carolina. July 18-20, 2013. South Carolina, and in particular the Rock Hill area, provides a lovely setting for both conference attendees and non-conference-attending guests to explore.

NETC 2013, with its extensive agenda and range of topics is reflective of a broader focus, addressing issues across the country. The theme of NETC 2013 is "The American Trail Rider and Conservation Policy". Conference attendees will

find an agenda packed with information to help American trail riders better understand their role in conservation policy.

In addition to the two plenary sessions "The National Forest System: The Framework for Sustainable Recreation: What does it mean for Trail Riders?" and "The Future of Designated Wilderness and Its Recreational Use," the conference will offer the following four breakout session topics: a) National Organizations and Trail Riders, b) Trails, Trail Horses and Trail Riders, c) The Place of Equestrian Trail Recreation Among Outdoor Recreation Activities in the United States, and d) The Role of Private Lands for Recreational Horse Use. This event will also include a youth program. ELCR is pleased to be a sponsor of this important event. Anna Gibson, ELCR CEO, will be making a presentation on The Role of Private Lands for Recreational Horse Use.

We hope you can join us in Rock Hill this July! For registration information and a complete conference agenda please visit <http://netc2013.com>. ■

New Articles Now Available

The following new articles have been posted on the ELCR website www.elcr.org and can be accessed under the specific topic area indicated.

ARTICLES

Eight Steps for Effective Pasture Management

Understanding the methods for managing horse pastures is as important to the health of your horses and the environment as it is to your bottom line. Here are eight steps to a better pasture management strategy.

Topic area: Farm and Ranchland Stewardship/Best Management Practices under subtopic Manure Management/Nutrient Management.

Open and Green – Conserving Horse Lands to Sustain Your Community and Economy

Why do we need to conserve land for horses? Land loss is occurring rapidly due to sprawl and poor planning. What does that mean to horse enthusiasts versus community? It turns out that the issues of economic impact, community identity and aesthetics, and the ecologically 'cleansing' nature of open lands are a good reason to keep our communities Open and Green, and are in sync with our need to have places to raise, grow feed for, ride, drive, compete with and enjoy our horses.

Topic area: Community Land Use Planning under subtopic Community Comprehensive Planning -Including Equine Language

Spring In To Better Water Management — Wet Climate or Dry, Good Horse Land Management Saves and Protects Water

April is Water Quality Month. Horse land owners can help commemorate water quality and conservation year-round by incorporating these management tools and techniques to conserve and protect water on their facilities, for themselves and their communities.

Topic area: Farm and Ranchland Stewardship/Best Management Practices under subtopic Waterways, Water Quality Protection.

Rules of the Ride – Model Rules for Trail Riders

Whether you ride as a member of a trail club or on your own, there are some basic rules of trail behavior that you and your companions should always follow. The tenets of equestrian etiquette described in this article, when adhered to closely, will help you and your group to gain and maintain access to trails on both public and private land.

Topic area: FTrail Access and Other Issues under subtopic Shared Use Trails

New Videos and Webinars Now Available Online

The following new articles have been posted on the ELCR website www.elcr.org and can be accessed under the specific topic area indicated.

VIDEO

Conservation Easements as Farm and Ranchland Protection for Equine Enthusiasts

[runtime 29:15]

At the 2012 ELCR One-Day Regional Forum in Atlanta, Georgia, Laurel Florio, J.D. presented a "Conservation Easement Workshop." This presentation provides vital information for protecting farm and ranchlands with conservation easements.

Topic area: Farm and Ranchland Protection under subtopic Conservation Easements & Land Trusts/Conservancies

WEBINAR

The Trust For Public Land—An Introduction for Horsemen

[runtime 54:40]

Kelley Hart and Ernest Cook of the Trust for Public Land present an overview of the Trust's land protection and conservation projects and work throughout the US, focusing on their equine-based work. The webinar, geared toward horsemen and women, describes the processes and procedures that the Trust utilizes to protect significant equine lands. The presenters take us on a tour of several projects, from historic farms and facilities to vast open areas.

Topic area: Farm and Ranchland Protection under subtopic Conservation Easements & Land Trusts/Conservancies

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Equine Network and its fine family of equestrian print and online publications:

American Cowboy, Arabian Horse World, Discover Horses, Dressage Today, EquiManagement, Equine.com, EquiSearch.com, EquiShopper, EQUUS, HorseBooksEtc.com, Horse Journal, HorseLinkMagazine.com, Horse & Rider, MyHorse.com, Practical Horseman, Spin to Win Rodeo, and The Trail Rider

ELCR Updates Offerings and Expands Access to Resources, Tools and Information

By Anna Gibson

Here at ELCR, our mission is to keep land open for horses. We do this by providing tools, resources and information to people acting locally to save horse lands. We are pleased to announce the debut of our new website and to announce that all of our online information, tools, templates and resources are available at no cost.

In addition to building a new website, we have also refreshed our subject matter. Each of the core areas is described below.

Planning for Horses in Your Community: Planning and zoning decisions can affect how land is taxed, what uses are allowed on land, whether horses have access to community parks and trails, and which standards and regulations are applied to lands. ELCR offers users the tools they need to understand land use planning, zoning ordinances and their implications for horses and horse-related activities. Our website offers a primer on terms and processes, sample letters and tools to support involvement in planning and zoning in your community. Our website also provides tools for community planners to help them understand how to include horses and horse-related activities in their planning efforts.

Conservation Tools for Horse Lands: There are many excellent tools for protecting open lands, including horse

farms and ranches, competition venues, trails, hay fields, and hunt fixtures.

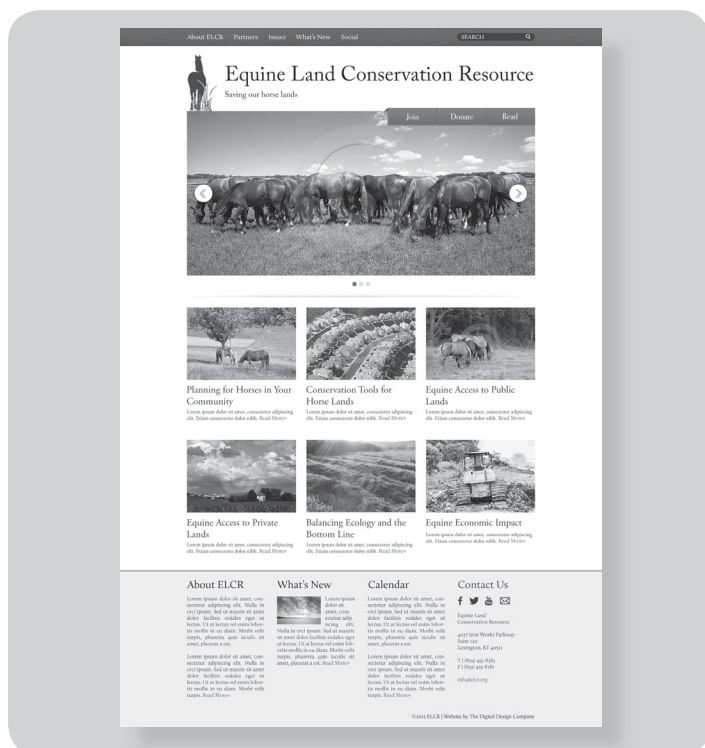
ELCR offers plain language explanations of a range of conservation tools from conservation easements to purchases of development rights. We offer sample language to protect horse access in conservation easements and other conservation tools. The website also offers guidance on working with land trusts and an overview of historic and cultural preservation issues.

Equine Access to Public Lands: Public lands play an important role in our equestrian landscape and in the horse industry. Horse usage of public lands includes trail riding, competition venues, stabling and pasturing, and more. ELCR offers information on a range of horse-related uses of public lands. We provide examples of successful horse-related uses of public lands, guidelines on engaging with land managers and other users to ensure that everyone can enjoy appropriate use of the public land, and advocacy tools for sustained and increased access to public lands for horse-related uses. The website also provides how-to guides and tools for building local horse coalitions.

Equine Access to Private Lands: Privately owned land is the most at-risk component of our equestrian landscape. Boarding barns, competition venues, trails, hunt fixtures and hayfields are being lost every day as a result of development, misunderstanding of liability issues by new owners of land, and rising demand for land around urbanizing areas. ELCR offers talking points for explaining liability issues to landowners, liability management tools, guidelines for fostering positive relationships with landowners, model rules of usage and other protections for landowners who wish to open their land to horse usage, and information about the benefits of ensuring that horses stay in your community.

Balancing Ecology and the Bottom Line: The most common issue we confront in talking with owners of farms and ranches is the challenge of making their business sustainable financially and ecologically. Tools and information exist to resolve many of these challenges. ELCR offers links to best management practices resources for implementing them by region. We also offer easy-to-use guides for improving cost management, creating business plans, and managing farms and ranches so that they last.

(Continued on page 7)



Equine Economic Impact: We all know that horses and horse-related activities generate spending. While much information exists on the economic impact of the horse industry, the figures can be difficult to put in context. ELCR provides simplified summaries of a range of studies as well as a how-to guide for completing a local economic impact assessment of horse activity in your region. Additionally, the

website features articles on a range of models for horse parks, equestrian tourism, and successful horse communities.

Our goal is to provide you with the information, tools and resources you need to keep land in your area open for horses and horse-related uses. We built our website with the knowledge that the resources we offer will continue to expand and evolve with the issues that threaten horse lands. Please visit www.elcr.org to check out our new website and to access our resources. ■

ELCR Introduces New Conservation Membership Program

New in 2013 is the introduction of the ELCR Conservation Membership Program. The program offers both individual and organization membership options allowing both individuals and small organizations access to special member benefits at affordable rates.

Conservation Members are individuals and organizations that are concerned about keeping land open for horses. From hayfields to horse farms, we know that you are the key to protecting the lands our horses need. The Conservation Members program is designed to provide targeted information, support and engagement opportunities to interested individuals and groups acting at the grass roots level.



Visit the Equine Land Conservation Resource on Facebook

Individual Conservation Membership dues are \$28 annually and include the following membership benefits:

- Full member benefits for a single individual
- One premium ELCR member gift item
- Attendance at ELCR events at the member rate for one attendee
- ELCR newsletter subscription
- Direct email access to ELCR for technical assistance support
- Twice a year Member's Briefing Conference Calls on key land conservation issues
- Discount on branded merchandise and publications

Organization Conservation Membership dues are \$46 annually and include the same member benefits as described above for up to three individual members of the same organization. Please see Conservation Membership at elcr.org for additional information about the program. ■

"Our competition sites and trails are **disappearing**. Join me and the **Equine Land Conservation Resource** in the fight to **conserve land** for equine activities." –Karen O'Connor, Olympian



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