

THE RESOURCE



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE EQUINE LAND CONSERVATION RESOURCE

News for You – ELCR's New Zoning Practices Manual is Now Online!

By Denise Y. O'Meara for Equine Land Conservation Resource

Christine Hughes' "Horse-Friendly Zoning Practices in American Communities"

In 2015, Christine Hughes, AICP, created the "Planning and Zoning Guide for Horse-Friendly Communities" for ELCR. This document reviewed the basics of how community planning is accomplished, what zoning is and how zoning is created, and how comprehensive planning and zoning work together to both establish and regulate a community's desired future land use. The specifics included how equine-friendly language can and should be included, and what can happen if equine and agricultural community members do not engage in the planning and zoning process.

ELCR's newly released "Horse-Friendly Zoning Practices in American Communities" is a continuation of the 2015 document. This guide focuses on the implementation of zoning regulations, especially as they relate to horse-keeping, equine activities and the protection and conservation of equine lands, facilities and trails, and gives many examples nationwide.

These guides form a body of work that will assist the individual horseman or woman, equine advocacy organizations and community decision-makers to both understand and act in favor of horse-friendly planning and zoning regulations within their local communities.

Introduction to the Guide, by Tom Daniels, PhD

Zoning is the most common local government land use regulation in the United States. The purposes of zoning are to: 1) promote orderly community growth and development according to the local government's comprehensive plan; 2) separate conflicting land uses; and 3) determine where different types of development should go. Owners of horses and those



who access equine lands and trails need to understand how zoning works and what zoning allows and requires in the management of horses and the location of horse barns, fences, and other facilities.

"Horse-Friendly Zoning Practices in American Communities" offers not only an introduction to zoning but also provides descriptions of best zoning practices with links to the zoning ordinances of the leading communities.

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Understanding zoning is important for people who already have horses and for those looking to purchase properties where they will board and raise horses or simply keep horses for pleasure riding. What zoning allows or requires can greatly affect how many horses a landowner can have, how to handle manure and stormwater to protect water quality, and what uses are allowed on neighboring properties.

“No land, no horse” is the motto of the Equine Land Conservation Resource. Horse-friendly zoning is essential for maintaining horse operations, the businesses that support horse operations, as well as access to equine lands and trails. Horse owners need to be vigilant about proposed zoning changes in their communities that might hinder horse operations. In addition, horse owners can work with their local government to promote horse-friendly zoning.

What the New Zoning Guide Covers

Topics covered in the new guide include what zoning is, how horse-friendly zoning language can be created, and a discussion of the value of agricultural zoning as a means for protecting the ‘critical mass’ of land that is important to equine operations. As most horse zoning is based on number of horses per acre, horse-density zoning is explored as the commonly used method in regulation of potential environmental and land use issues that can result from horse-keeping in suburban and urban areas.

State level regulations also affect zoning and can offer protections from local over-regulation for horse properties and activities through such legislation as the Right To Farm Act and exemptions from regulation for agricultural land pursuits.

Other factors in protection of agricultural and horse lands include the basic yet complex practices involved with sustainable urban planning. Throughout this section, several states are given as examples for both state level regulations and growth planning.

Some cities and municipalities plan for growth within specified boundaries only in order to protect rural open land. These ‘urban service’ boundaries, such as that employed by Lexington, Kentucky, improve ‘livability’ for residents without sacrificing the beauty and function of open lands with opportunities for protection of equine lands.

Horse-Friendly Zoning Examples

Several communities around the nation are illustrated as exemplary Horse-Friendly communities, considering the methods they have utilized to bring about special equine land and activity regulations and zoning practices. For example:

Wellington, Florida, employs Equine Overlay Zoning Districts, in

which every aspect of the amenities within the EOZD serves to preserve, protect and enhance the equestrian lifestyle. Lexington, Kentucky’s four agricultural zones are preserved for agricultural, winery and equine uses and are protected by the Urban Service Boundary mentioned above. Aiken, South Carolina, boasts special equine residential and commercial horse districts, and Norco, California is zoned so that equestrian activities, residential horse-keeping and ubiquitous community trails are available to community members for recreational enjoyment.

The section “Zoning Highlights from Communities Across the Country” gives a multitude of examples from each region of the U.S. A brief background of each community is given, along with a description of what makes that community’s zoning horse-friendly. Potential challenges are also discussed. These examples provide a broad learning opportunity for those wishing to know about or expand their knowledge about horse-friendly zoning and how it can be applied in their local community.

“Horse-Friendly Zoning Practices in American Communities” can be found at www.elcr.org/zoning-best-practices/. Christine Hughes will present “How to Use and Understand ELCR’s Horse-Friendly Zoning Practices in American Communities” in a webinar on March 27. Refer to ELCR’s Education Corner on page 5 for exact date and time, and for registration.



Christine Hughes, AICP, is a senior planner with the City of Wilmington, North Carolina Planning, Development and Transportation Department. She oversees the Long-range, Environmental, and Special Projects unit and has worked extensively with community groups developing small-area, corridor, and comprehensive plans. Christine has been with the city of Wilmington since 2005.

Prior to moving to Wilmington, Christine was a planner with Gwinnett County (Georgia), and a program coordinator at the University of Georgia. Christine is a member of the American Planning Association and the American Institute of Certified Planners.



Tom Daniels, PhD, is the director of Land Use-Environmental Planning in the Department of City and Regional Planning, School of Design, and administers the Certificate of Land Preservation. In 2010, Tom was recognized as a leading academic planner in the U.S. when awarded the Clarkson Chair at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Prof. Daniels is well-known as one of the leading thinkers and practitioners of farmland preservation. He managed the nationally famous farmland preservation program in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. He was a senior contributing editor for *Farmland Preservation Report*, a national newsletter, and co-authored *Holding Our Ground: Protecting America’s Farms and Farmland* (Island Press, 1997). He is currently working on a book on the law of farmland preservation for the American Bar Association.

From the Saddle

A letter from the ELCR's Executive Director, Holley Groshek

2016-2018 Strategic Plan Update

With the new year off to a great start I wanted to take this opportunity to update our friends and supporters on what has been happening here at ELCR!

2017 proved to be a very busy year for ELCR. We have continued our educational programming, our one-on-one counseling and technical assistance services, and made substantial progress implementing our ambitious three-year strategic plan.

The plan focuses on expanding our existing national network to include more locally-based organizations, concentrating on communities with the greatest horse land challenges, and partnering with local equine land conservation and advocacy organizations actively working to address these issues.

We have identified over 700 local organizations that are working on equine land advocacy and protection, and have recently completed the first comprehensive national survey of these organizations, in partnership with the University of Kentucky, which resulted in an impressive 20 percent survey response rate!

A review of preliminary data has already revealed some very valuable information. This information will help us expand our local partnerships and fine-tune our educational programming, counseling and technical assistance services, helping to achieve greater impact in conserving local horse lands. The Survey Summary will be available to the public in March 2018, with the full Survey to be released in May 2018.

This national survey represents just the first phase of our strategic plan implementation. In 2018, ELCR will develop a database of the local organizations identified in 2017. This data will be the base of an expanding national network for ELCR. The local organizations in the expanded network will learn from one another by sharing successes, failures and best practices, in a shared commitment and mission, which will ultimately strengthen locally-based equine land conservation efforts.

Expanded input from local network members and information from the national survey will be utilized to help ELCR shape programs and services, provide and disseminate materials, and spread our expertise to grass roots horse land advocacy organizations.



ELCR Executive Director Holley Groshek with her mount, Raz.

In fulfillment of our strategic plan, we are also partnering with specific communities on their particular equine land related issues and initiatives. Examples include horse land initiatives in Marion County, Florida, and startup equine trail organizations in St. Johns County, Florida, and Jefferson County, Kentucky.

The opportunity to partner with many more local communities is helping us all to keep access to horse land, facilities and trails. We will be sharing more detailed information and updates with you on these partnerships as we move forward.

Our **Gaining Ground** campaign (www.elcr.org/gainingground) is supporting the implementation of our three-year strategic plan. A big **'thank you'** to all that have supported this important campaign and remember **there is still time to make a pledge to the campaign to help turn the tide on land loss!**

GAINING GROUND

A campaign to engage and strengthen local equine land conservation efforts.

Campaign Update: We have reached 60% of our **\$375,000 Gaining Ground** campaign goal!

The campaign directly supports the implementation of our strategic plan, which will enhance network-building, program development and lay the foundation for the future.

But we still need your help to reach our goal!

Every donation that we receive during this special campaign will be matched 100%, dollar for dollar, up to a total of \$90,000.

Won't you be a part of our **Gaining Ground** community?

To find out more about the campaign, please visit www.elcr.org/gainingground/.



Heubeck and Windham Families Recognized with the Robert N. Clay Conservation Award

On September 19, 2017, Equine Land Conservation Resource (ELCR) announced that the Heubeck family and James and Lee Windham of Marion County, Florida, had been named co-recipients of the 2017 Robert N. Clay Conservation Award. Established in recognition of Robert N. Clay's equine land conservation leadership in the Thoroughbred industry, the 2017 Award was presented at the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association National Awards dinner on September 9th in Lexington, Kentucky. H'Krih Shelhamer, daughter of Kerry Heubeck, accepted the award on behalf of the Heubecks and Windhams at the event.

The Heubecks are associated with the development of early thoroughbred farms in Marion County, and subsequently developed their own unique property, Quail Roost Farm. Harriet and Elmer Heubeck and their son Kerry Heubeck, along with current farm owner James Windham and his late wife Lee, have been recognized for preserving Quail Roost Farm II as horse land.

Harriet and Elmer both passed away in 2003, and their son Kerry sought to protect the 1,000-acre Quail Roost II as a memorial to his parents. Kerry, along with new owners James and Lee Windham, worked with Conservation Trust of Florida to protect and limit development on approximately 800 acres of Quail Roost II as a working thoroughbred and cattle farm. Marion County is the heart of the second largest thoroughbred breeding industry in North America. This award recognizes the Heubeck and Windham families for their efforts in creating and sustaining the equine environment that helped establish Marion County's equine prominence.



ELCR's Executive Director Holley Groshek (left) presents the Robert N. Clay Conservation Award to H'Krih Shelhamer.

ELCR and USDF Announce the Equine Land Conservation Achievement Award

Equine Land Conservation Resource (ELCR), in partnership with the United States Dressage Federation (USDF), presented the inaugural Equine Land Conservation Achievement Award to Ms. Janine Malone on behalf of the late Caroline McNair Carl on December 2, 2017, at the Adequan/USDF Annual Convention awards ceremony in Lexington, Kentucky.

This new award recognizes leaders and advocates who actively engage in equine land conservation, stewardship, and access to land for equine activities; those who work to raise awareness of equine land loss issues; and those who provide successful model solutions for their equine land related issues.

This year, USDF's Regional Group Member Organizations (GMOs) searched for and submitted nominees with exceptional achievements in the area of equine land or facilities protection. Caroline McNair Carl (Nov. 21, 1953 - July 24, 2012) formerly owner of MacNair's Country Acres, a well-known horseback riding stable providing 50 years of area service and located near the Raleigh, North Carolina area, was chosen as the winner.



Caroline McNair Carl



Presentation of the ELCR/USDF Equine Conservation Achievement Award, bestowed posthumously to Caroline McNair Carl. Left to right are Holley Groshek, Executive Director of ELCR; Janine Malone, friend and representative of the McNair family; Denise O'Meara, Director of Education for ELCR; and George W. Williams, President of the United States Dressage Federation. Photo courtesy Jennifer Bryant.

Ms. McNair's land conservation accomplishments have been well-recognized by the City of Raleigh and now merit this award. Her achievements include tree and landscape preservation efforts, her overall equine business acumen, and especially her use of conservation easements to protect her farm's open land and the community's watershed.

Nomination applications for the 2018 award will be announced early in 2018 on the USDF website, www.USDF.org.

ELCR Welcomes New Board Member

Dr. D. Craig Barnett has been a horse owner and equine enthusiast his entire life. After receiving his doctorate of veterinary medicine from the University of Missouri, he owned an equine/small animal veterinary practice in Spring Hill, Kansas. Several years later he started his industry career as an equine technical services veterinarian in the animal health pharmaceutical industry. He is currently the director of the Merck Animal Health equine veterinary technical services team.



ELCR's New Board Member Dr. D. Craig Barnett

Dr. Barnett is actively involved in many aspects of the equine industry. He currently is on the Kansas Horse Council Board of Directors, a member of the American Horse Council Health & Regulatory Committee, the American Association of Equine Practitioners (AAEP) Infectious Disease Committee, Moderator of the AAEP Infectious Disease Rounds, Chair of the AAEP Serology Task Force, and is the AAEP representative on the American Veterinary Medical Association Clinical Practitioners Advisory Committee.

In addition to his veterinary work, Dr. Barnett enjoys working with horses in his free time. He boards several retired, senior horses on his ranch in Paola and enjoys driving a wagon team and trail riding as often as he can.

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ELCR Education Corner

Recent additions and updates to the ELCR Online Resource Library

Purchase of Development Rights: What's Happening Across the US Today

Since we published our first information on Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) programs and other land protection program tools a few years back, PDR programs have quietly taken off in local communities and at state levels across the country. This article provides a review of the basics and shows how PDR has grown as an important land conservation tool for agricultural and equine lands.

www.elcr.org/purchase-of-development-rights

Community Based Organizations Working for Sustainable Land Use

A look at community-based land use advocacy organizations and how they encourage sustainable land use policies that can work for equine land protection.

www.elcr.org/community-based-organizations-working-for-sustainable-land-use/

Ecological Benefits of Horses

To fully evaluate the economic value of horses and horse land in the community, an understanding of the ecological benefits provided by horse farms and agricultural land is needed, allowing for horse lands to take their place in land use planning and the achievement of community environmental goals.

www.elcr.org/ecological-benefits-of-horses/

Airport Equestrian Trails: Extra Eyes on Horseback

In a new twist on airport security, some major airports are seeing the advantage of hosting horseback riders on perimeter trails, keeping an eye out for potential security risks. Three airport programs are profiled here.

www.elcr.org/airport-equestrian-trails-riders-provide-extra-eyes-for-security/

Frequently Asked Questions

Our recently incorporated FAQ section is designed to quickly link users directly to the most pertinent articles, tools and templates related to their specific issue.

<https://elcr.org/conservation-resources/frequently-asked-questions/>

Upcoming Webinars



ELCR and My Horse University will be co-presenting these upcoming webinars:

- **March 27, 2018:** How to Use and Understand ELCR's "Horse-Friendly Zoning Practices in American Communities" presented by the author, Christine Hughes. To register go to goo.gl/vmhEzL. To download or view the document, visit www.elcr.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Zoning-Best-Practices-Copy.pdf
- **October 16, 2018:** "Sharing Trails- How Equestrians can Effectively Work with Other Trail User Groups", a panel discussion. Registration details will be posted later this year.

Further information will be made available on our website at www.elcr.org and through My Horse University at www.myhorseuniversity.com

EQUINE PLACES AND SPACES

NEW: Sheffield Farm | Ithaca, New York

On January 25, 2017, the Finger Lakes Land Trust announced its acceptance of the donation of perpetual conservation easements that will conserve the 470-acre Sheffield Farm on Ithaca, New York's West Hill. As one of the largest remaining privately owned parcels near the town of Ithaca, Sheffield Farm is a tableau of open fields, woodlands, and wooded natural areas that owners Jan and Susan Suwinski have grown from its original 62 acres over 40 years. FLLT's website says "A portion of the property is located within the headwaters of Coy Glen – a nearby county-designated Unique Natural Area. The conservation easements will protect the property's natural and scenic features while providing for continued equestrian and agricultural use on the farm." The farm contributes to protection of the watershed as well as development of the community's West Hill Wildway greenbelt.

To learn more, visit www.flit.org and search Sheffield Farm.

THREATENED/LOST: Wandering Trails Riding Academy | Palm Beach, Florida

Wandering Trails Riding Academy, a well-loved riding facility in Palm Beach, Florida, was lost to development in a slow demise. Greg and Jane Schrein's 40-acre leased farm was once home to nearly two dozen horses, many of them rescued, and focused greatly on children's experiences and joy of horses through summer camps and trail riding, catering to special needs children and community members enthralled by the ranch resort experience. Over four decades, the farm was reduced in size as parcels were taken for transportation corridors and development. The Schreins, however, have leased acreage in another location to begin again. Hopefully the community will support the new venture.

To learn more, visit goo.gl/S4xdSm

THREATENED: Esther Simplot Riding Center, Idaho Horse Park | Nampa City, Idaho

16.26 acres of the Idaho Horse Park, currently designated the Esther Simplot Riding Center, was declared as surplus land on November 20, 2017, by the Nampa City Council. This action would open the parcel up for being sold at auction, scheduled for December 2017. An overwhelming response by the community convinced the outgoing mayor and city council

to table the public hearing on the auction until the January 16, 2018, city council meeting, which would allow the public to comment on the matter and make their case as to the value of the facility to the community and protect the land from sale. The Idaho Horse Park Foundation and Snake River Stampede board have outlined points in favor of retaining the facility below. Stay tuned!

To learn more, visit <https://gem.godaddy.com/s/a1b08b?o=fs>

REBORN: Nash Farm Park | McDonough, Georgia

Everything Old is New Again! Nash Farm Park in McDonough, Georgia, was considered important enough as a multi-use facility and historic equestrian site to warrant a master plan – in 2009. Unfortunately, the master plan was not approved by the local commission at the time and no work was implemented. Fast forward nine years later: the master plan has been resubmitted and approved! Along with many other recreational amenities and historic restorations, connections to equestrian trails with an equestrian trailhead are included. See the master plan at the link below.

To learn more, visit goo.gl/TNE1pZ

If you are aware of an equine-related place that has been lost, saved or is in danger, please let us know about it. You can contact us at 859-455-8383 or info@elcr.org, or visit the Report an Issue page on our website.

Thanks to our corporate friend:



Active Interest Media

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, Horse & Rider, HorseBooksEtc.com, Horse Journal, HorseLinkMagazine.com, MyHorse.com, Practical Horseman, Spin to Win Rodeo, and The Trail Rider

Forming a New Organization – St. John’s County, Florida Horsemen See the Need and Take Steps to Form a New Backcountry Horsemen of America Chapter

ELCR has been working directly with some organizations at the local community level in fulfillment of our strategic plan. On our travels around north Florida in the fall of 2017, ELCR staff met with members of several groups in St. John’s County, Florida, who are interested and active in promoting horse land conservation and equine recreational pursuits, especially trails. St. John’s is a highly desirable community to live in, with beautiful natural landscapes, a great school system, proximity to the ocean, and a good jobs market. It all makes for a vibrant community. However, as the population rapidly expands, burgeoning development is eating up the very agricultural (and equine) lands that attract people there in the first place.



Mary Farr indicates areas of existing and potential conserved land throughout the county.

Mary Farr, former Chairperson of the Greenway Trails Committee of the St. Johns Horse Council is a local horsewoman and owner of a conserved equine/nature property with her husband, Charles Farr. She has been on the forefront of the effort to start up a local Backcountry Horsemen of America chapter, successfully organizing local horsemen and women to represent volunteer equestrian trails interests and provide trail building and maintenance hours and expertise. ELCR spoke at the inaugural meeting of the First Coast Backcountry Horsemen of St. John’s, congratulating them on their volunteer and organizing efforts,



Mary Farr, Holley Groshek, State Forestry staff and local equestrians tour the Matanzas State Forest Wildlife Management area’s existing trails and trailhead, looking for expanded equestrian opportunities.

and reviewing ways that they can work cooperatively with the community, local and state agencies, and ELCR to achieve their trails access goals.

Mary is a powerhouse of energy and ideas. The couple graciously invited us to stay at their farm overnight. Mary then accompanied us to meet with County Extension Agent Tim Wilson to talk about the need to conserve additional lands within the county, and how the equine industry and recreation can fit into conservation scenarios. We then met with County Commissioner Jeb Smith; Wil Smith, Director of County Parks & Recreation; and that evening, with Marc Hudson, Director of the North Florida Land Trust (NFLT) to discuss the value of equestrian land conservation, trails and community growth generally, and to identify areas where the county can work with ELCR and local equestrians to educate and generate interest for equestrian trails and land conservation throughout the community.



ELCR’s Denise O’Meara (left) and Holley Groshek (right) meet with Co. Ext. Agent Tim Wilson and local horseman and trails advocate Jon Pearson.

Speaking of trails, opportunities for equestrian access in the county are abundant. About one third of the county is owned and managed by state forestry and parks agencies. At a meeting with the staff of the Matanzas State Forest Wildlife Management Area and tour of the lands, our group of equestrians enthusiastically made plans to work with the Matanzas staff to utilize and expand equestrian trails throughout the Forest. Additional opportunities to create a connected system of trails throughout the county will be identified and included as time goes by.

Mary reports that since our visit, the Matanzas Forest Advisory Board supports and is in agreement with the plans for equestrian trails. They are pushing to start work ASAP. Also, NFLT is helping to organize a promotional ride on 3,000+ acres of private conservation easement land. They are awaiting approval. Mary says, “Thanks ELCR! Your visit has encouraged and motivated us. We hope to take you on a long trail ride next time you come.” You bet!

So far, things are looking good and moving forward!



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