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**ELCR Reports Increased Success in Equine Land Conservation Efforts**

Equine Land Conservation Resource (ELCR) is the only national nonprofit working to advance the conservation of land for horse-related activity. Striving to answer the question, “Where will you ride, drive, race, compete, raise foals and grow hay?” is an ongoing quest.

“The point where we can say, ‘We have won,’ is not easy to define,” relates CEO, Deb Balliet. “Rather than one large victory, like curing a disease or making a single legislative change, our goal can only be accomplished with thousands of small local victories. And ELCR has been adding to that victory list at an impressive rate.”

In the past three years, ELCR has been instrumental in the conservation plans for 44,237 acres and 985 miles of trail. Most of that progress has come directly from technical service calls; when an individual contacts ELCR for assistance with an issue in their area.

One such call was answered earlier this year regarding a piano key development in horse history and culture-rich Clark County, Kentucky. ELCR’s staff was able to gather a large amount of information with which to arm the residents for planning and zoning meetings. The development was halted and the horse country will stay unblemished.

Providing information is an important piece of providing technical assistance, but providing connections often proves important too. Last year ELCR worked with a landowner interested in conserving a large amount of land for riding. ELCR facilitated a partnership between the landowners, the National Park Service Recreational Trails Conservation Assistance and the Fort Harrod Back Country Horsemen to develop a lasting protection arrangement for the trail riding land they had accumulated.

Providing resources is another important facet of what ELCR does. In the past two years, ELCR has published a revised *Guide to Equestrian Friendly Conservation Easements*, a resource manual with examples of easement language to protect horse activity; and *Horses Make Good Neighbors*, a resource designed to explain the benefits of horses in your neighborhood to people unfamiliar with horses. ELCR has also launched the “Equine Activity Statutes and Recreational Use Statutes Directory,” an online resource compiling statutes from each state.

ELCR has improved its Conservation Partners program to include five CP conference calls per year, featuring expert speakers and national networking for our Partners. ELCR has also initiated regional meetings to give partners an opportunity to discuss needs. Meetings have been held in Illinois, Massachusetts and South Carolina.

All this activity has attracted notice. Both Karen O’Connor (Olympian and championship eventer) and Lyle Lovett (singer/songwriter and celebrity reiner) have provided their endorsement for ELCR and its mission.

ELCR has also strengthened partnerships with many influential groups. As a representative of ELCR, Balliet serves on the Kentucky Recreational Trails Authority, the Recreation Committee of the American Horse Council, the Federal Interagency Council on Trails, and the Board of Directors of the Coalition for Recreational Trails.

“The past few years have been productive for ELCR,” adds Balliet, “and we have made significant progress, but there are still trails, hay fields and farms in jeopardy. ELCR will continue to work diligently and tirelessly to ensure the future of equine sport, industry and culture, but it is not a battle that can be fought by a single organization. The goal directly in front of us is to develop an equine land conservation curriculum so that we may train leaders to be equine land conservation experts in every equine trail, breed and discipline organization and every horse community in the country.”

ELCR recognizes that all land is conserved locally and it takes committed individuals to make that happen. “Get involved in your local land use planning and conservation efforts,” advises Balliet. “Organize your concerned neighbors. Assist local trail riding organizations, land trusts and other committed organizations. And call ELCR if you need help with any of your land-related endeavors.”

Please contact Deb Balliet at [dballiet@elcr.org](mailto:dballiet@elcr.org) or (859) 455-8383 for more information or assistance or if you would like to help us enable horsemen in your community or organization.

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#### About the Equine Land Conservation Resource (ELCR)

The Equine Land Conservation Resource is the only national not-for-profit organization advancing the conservation of land for horse-related activity. ELCR serves as an information resource and clearinghouse for land and horse owners on issues related to equine land conservation, land use planning, land stewardship/best management practices, trails, liability and equine economic development. If you want to know more about ELCR, visit our website at [www.elcr.org](http://www.elcr.org) or call (859) 455-8383.