

THE RESOURCE

The Trail in the City

The Importance of Keeping Equestrian Trails and Facilities Close to Where We Live

By Denise O'Meara for Equine Land Conservation Resource

Here's a question that you may ask yourself every time you load up your horses to trailer to the nearest equestrian accessible trail: wouldn't it be nice to ride out my back gate, get on a local trail and head out to the park, the woods, the shore or anywhere that didn't involve a fill-up or two? Some of you are very lucky and have that situation. The vast majority of us do not.

Sure, you want to have the trail to yourself, but it's valuable for non-equestrian trail, park and open space users to have the opportunity to see your horses in their natural state (saddled up with you on their backs), within their *real* worlds, because it could help to alleviate their fears and engender a lasting appreciation for the riding experience. It might even bring them into the fold. And that is more important than you might imagine.

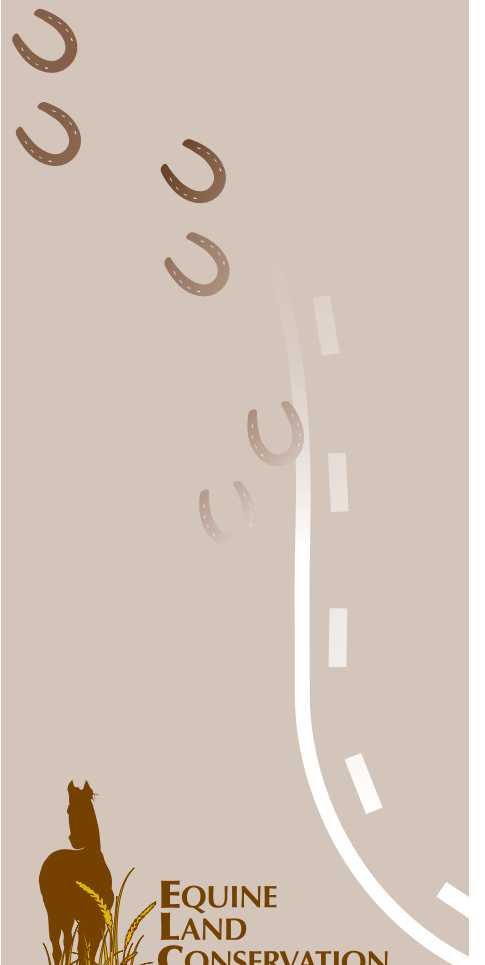
Community Planning – Are You In or Are You Out?

Urban and suburban community members need to see and understand horses and their riders. Unless they learn how joyful and useful horses are to humans, and how they can interact safely with non-equestrians, these folks can help deny horseback access to trails and other equine facilities.



It's valuable for non-equestrians to have the opportunity to see horses and riders within their real world.

Where will you
ride
drive
race
compete
raise foals
grow hay?



**EQUINE
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Community members have a say in who uses their recreational spaces and trails via participation in the planning and administration of public greenspace. Non-equestrian citizenry can easily misunderstand or fear horses, resulting in the loss of potential or existing equine trails or other facilities.

Community members may have other priorities for their public lands. The increasing popularity of youth sports may supersede the desire on the part of the community for riding trails and facilities. For example, Masterson Station Park in Lexington, Kentucky, with extensive riding and cross-country facilities, is under pressure by youth-oriented sports groups to extend existing soccer and other fields to create a regional style sports park, eliminating equine use. Local equine groups continue to advocate for equine use via the planning and public participation process.

Many cities that historically had equestrian trails and facilities are losing them rapidly, or have already lost them. Chicago, where equine facilities within the city have been completely eradicated, is an example. In New Jersey, many communities have suffered a rapid decline in horse properties and trails due to land use changes brought about by unfavorable planning decisions.

What You Can Do

You may not be able to acquire direct access to trails from your horse property, but you can help your community to understand and respond, favorably, to your equine community's recreational and land needs.

Existing Trails:

- With both private and public trails, it's extremely important that horseback riders behave well – respect riding rules, trail conditions and other users.
- Participate in the planning process. Learn what language is in the comprehensive plan and recreational plans that allow or disallow horses on public trails. Advocate for access by educating decision-makers on the value of horses. *Seven Steps to Influencing Horse Friendly Planning* is a great resource to learn more about planning and zoning. (www.elcr.org/?p=2106)
- Participate in trail maintenance activities. Share favorable information and events with the public via websites and social media.

New Trails:

- Form or join organizations or clubs to get the equine community's voice and needs heard by decision-makers. Participate in the master planning of trails and in the inclusion of language favorable to horse trails and facilities in the comprehensive plan and in protective ordinances. *Planning and Zoning Guide for Horse Friendly Communities* is a valuable resource for understanding planning and zoning. (www.elcr.org/planningandzoningguide)
- Advocate for a comprehensive trail system that connects individual trails, through both public and private land.

- Educate yourselves, the public and community planners about the value of horses.
- Help out with trail maintenance, and let decision-makers know that you have a plan for doing this long-term. You can do this via your organization or club, or join in with your local chapter of Back Country Horsemen of America. (www.bcha.org)

Facilities:

- It's very important to have local riding, show and boarding facilities within the community. This gives people that do not own horses a place to ride, show, board their horses or just enjoy equine events. Facilities keep horses in the consciousness of the community.
- Participate in planning. Make sure that facilities are both allowed and protected by language in the comprehensive plan and in zoning ordinances. To learn more about planning for facilities see *Local Planning and Zoning Practices Related to Equine Facilities*. (www.elcr.org/?p=2205)
- Work with your parks department to develop the financial and operational means to create or enhance equine facilities.
- Understand and be able to explain the benefits horses bring to your community. The article *Your Community Needs Your Horse* is an excellent resource. (www.elcr.org/your-community-needs-your-horse)
- Advocate for designation of your community as a Trail Town. For more about trail towns see *Kentucky Trail Towns – A How-to-Guide for Communities*. (www.elcr.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/4-Trail-Town-How-to-Guide.pdf)

Your Horse Lands:

- Don't forget that horse properties in the community are important to protect, including yours.
- Participate in planning. Make sure that zoning changes in the vicinity of your horse properties are not adversely impacted by zoning development decisions. ■



With both private and public trails, it's important that riders respect riding rules, trail conditions and other users.

From the Saddle: 2016 National Equestrian Trails Conference

By Dot Moyer, ELCR Board Member

The annual National Equestrian Trails Conference (NETC) was held July 8-10 in Raleigh, North Carolina. I joined about 70 participants, including an impressive roster of speakers, for three days of learning, sharing and networking.

The NETC was sponsored by the newly formed nonprofit National Equestrian Trails Association, and grew out of the successful Southeastern Trails Conference. Hosted by the North Carolina Horse Council, participants came from every region of the United States. An information fair, exhibits and door prizes offered by many conference sponsors provided lots to see and great swag.

NETC Chair Sue Gray, executive director of the North Carolina Horse Council, led the three-day agenda. While many disciplines and interests were represented, the participants face many of the same issues. Access, education and advocacy were consistent themes.

Public land managers spoke about the challenges facing open access for equestrian recreation in an era of dramatic government budget cuts for public lands and increased recreational usage. They gave great advice on working with agencies and land managers to preserve and expand access. Advocacy groups discussed the need for active participation by trail riders to ensure continued access to public lands. Trail safety and education issues were addressed by many of the speakers, and demonstrations and hands-on sessions kept the participants entertained and moving around. A session on how to engage youth generated a lot of great project ideas.

The need for equestrian land conservation was a frequent theme. Regardless of discipline and interest, both participants and speakers expressed concern about the loss of land for trails and equestrian infrastructure. Privately owned and public trails alike face challenges, and lots of good information and ideas were exchanged.

The keynote address was delivered by Randy Rasmussen, executive director of the Back Country Horsemen of America, a large and active equestrian advocacy group with chapters throughout the country working to preserve access to public lands for horsemen. The address, titled "Why Horsemen Must Unite to Protect Our National Heritage," was a stirring call to resist efforts to transfer federal public lands to state control. Back Country Horsemen and the other public lands advocates need our support to block the transfer of dozens of vast wilderness and park areas to unregulated sale and exploitation. This affects all horsemen—and citizens—and will only be stopped by citizen involvement.

ELCR took an active role in the conference as a sponsor, and Ken Haddad, ELCR board of directors president; Mary Hansen, ELCR advisory council member; and I spoke. We heard a lot of support for ELCR's efforts and concerns about preserving land for equestrian use. Participants came away realizing their



National Equestrian Trails Conference



ELCR Board of Directors member Dot Moyer of Columbus, N.C., and her Lusitano homebred, Recado

interests and issues were pretty much the same, and with ideas and plans to improve trail riding in their areas. It was my first conference, but it will definitely not be my last!

NETC was a great opportunity to exchange ideas and information, and anyone interested in trail riding should put next year's NETC on their calendar. ELCR will release information as soon as next year's date and location are announced. You may also be interested in checking out NETC's website at www.natetc.org. ■

Thanks to our corporate friend:





Rex James "Jim" Bates.

ELCR Remembers Rex James "Jim" Bates

Rex James "Jim" Bates of Sequim, Washington, passed away on March 8, 2016, at the age of 92. He was a great friend of ELCR, supporting our mission for many years through unparalleled support. Jim served in the U.S. Army, where he was awarded the Purple Heart and the Air Medal. After earning a BS in physics and an MBA specializing in statistics and applied mathematics at the University of Chicago School of Business, he proceeded to have a successful career as a stock and bond analyst and later as a financial vice president of State Farm Insurance. Jim touched the lives of many. He was always willing to assist others with financial advice and at one time had over 30 "widows and divorcees" for whom he provided free financial consulting. He loved to mentor young people and provided financial assistance to an unrecorded number of young people struggling to get through college or graduate school. A life-long "birder," Jim served as a trustee of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology for many years, and was also an avid stamp collector, tennis player and salmon fisherman. His influence and friendship will be greatly missed. ■

EQUINE PLACES AND SPACES

NEW: The Park at Harlinsdale Farm Arena / Tennessee

Harlinsdale Farm, a historic farm associated with the Tennessee Walking Horse industry, was established in the 1930s north of Franklin, Tennessee. The farm was purchased by the city of Franklin in 2004, placed under a conservation easement in 2007, and in 2015 the nonprofit Friends of Franklin Parks began work on a multi-purpose equestrian arena. Extensive public planning was used to design a master plan that would do justice to the farm's history. The first major initiative, the Tractor Supply Co. Arena at The Park at Harlinsdale Farm, opened in April 2016.

To find out more, visit: www.tractorsupplycoarena.com
or www.goo.gl/dSQMGA

SAVED: Lana Lobell Farms / New Jersey

Lana Lobell, a local landmark of harness racing in Bedminster, New Jersey, received protection in early 2016 when Somerset County purchased the development rights for the property. The property had previously been approved for a subdivision in 2007 but was never sold. The farm will remain in private ownership, but the easement will ensure that the 172-acre property continue as open farmland.

To find out more, visit: www.goo.gl/aW4qVZ

LOST: Wicklow Farms / Georgia

Wicklow Farms in Savannah, Georgia, is closing in 2016 to make way for redevelopment. The facility was established in the 1920s, and has provided years of equine exposure and enjoyment to the community. The farm is part of 11 acres slated for a new retail project, "The Shoppes at Wicklow Farms."

To find out more, visit: www.goo.gl/iSvA0G

IN DANGER: Winding Oaks Farms / Florida

Winding Oaks Farms in Ocala, Florida, originally announced in 2014 that the facility was slowing operations, and now plans for the 1,000-acre farm are being more clear. The owner would like to convert 70% of the land to residential, commercial and transportation uses, with the remaining 300 acres to continue as a horse training facility. The middle section that is the old Mockingbird Farm portion, containing barns, rings, training tracks and a horse cemetery, should remain untouched.

To find out more, visit: www.goo.gl/iScvxH

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. ■

American Horse Council to Update National Economic Impact Study

From the American Horse Council – The American Horse Council Foundation is seeking to update the Economic Impact Study of the Horse Industry in 2017.

The 2005 Economic Impact Study documented the economic effects of the racing, showing, recreation and other segments of the horse industry. It established that the horse industry in all its segments, including racing, showing and recreation, had a \$39 billion effect on the U.S. economy, involved more than 4 million Americans and 9.2 million horses, and supported 1.4 million full-time jobs. The study also provided invaluable demographic data and insights into professions and other industries that are impacted by the equine ownership.

The study has proven to be extremely helpful to the industry's efforts in Congress and state legislatures and in documenting its size and diversity to the public, press and media.

The 2017 study will include expanded demographic information to include the impact that youth involvement has on the industry, as well as a more in-depth analysis of all segments of the industry—such as rescues and sanctuaries, and therapeutic riding centers.

"The 1996 and 2005 studies gave insight to an industry that operates in every corner of the country and contributes greatly to the American economy and culture," said Julie Broadway, president of the AHC. "We are looking forward to updating this information to continue to be able to educate not only Congress and state legislatures, but also the industry itself as well."

To learn more, visit the American Horse Council at www.horsecouncil.org and read about the updated Economic Impact Study at <http://goo.gl/uXOR2f>. ■

New Articles Now Available

The following new articles have recently been posted to the ELCR Online Resource Library.

- **Nurturing Land Management Relationships**
Maintaining and Acquiring Horseback Access to Public Land, Trails and Facilities
www.elcr.org/nurturing-land-management-relationships
- **How to Assure the Reluctant Landowner**
Maintaining and Acquiring Horseback Access to Private Trails and Land
www.elcr.org/assurethereluctantlandowner
- **Considering Trail Closures on Public Agency Lands: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**
Equestrians on Public Land
www.elcr.org/trail-closures-on-public-agency-lands



Upcoming Webcast

"Create, Maintain and Sustain a Private Trail System"

Tuesday, November 29, 7:00 p.m. EST

ELCR and My Horse University will be co-presenting a webcast on creating and maintaining a private trail system. The webcast will feature ELCR Board of Directors member Dot Moyer. Based in the Tryon, North Carolina area, Dot serves on the board of Foothills Equestrian Trails Association, which focuses on its easement program to protect the trails, as well as being an active member of Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy and previously of the Pacolet Area Conservancy.

For further information on the upcoming webcast, please visit www.elcr.org or www.myhorseuniversity.com.

ELCR Welcomes New Board Member Dawn Davis

ELCR is pleased to welcome a new member to the board of directors. Dawn Davis currently resides in the prominent equestrian community of Barrington Hills, Illinois, where she and her husband, J.R., preside over Barrington Hills Farm. They are both avidly devoted to preserving land for horses in the village of Barrington Hills. Dawn and J.R. are actively involved in equine rescue efforts in the Chicago area through their alliance with HARPS (Hooved Animal Rescue & Protection Society). Ms. Davis is vice chairman of Davis Bancorp and also contributes time to many other civic duties, including serving as director of the Chicago Zoological Society (Brookfield Zoo), Chicago Crime Commission, Chicago Cultural Mile, and the Smith Museum of Stained Glass and American Art. ■



Dawn Davis

Stay Up-to-Date With Equine Disease Outbreaks

The Equine Disease Communication Center (EDCC) works to protect horses and the horse industry from the threat of infectious diseases in North America. The communication system is designed to seek and report real-time information about disease outbreaks, similar to the way the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) alerts the human population about diseases in people.



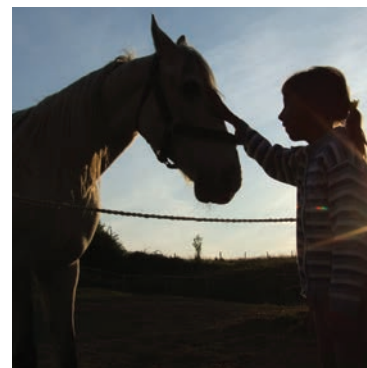
The goal of the EDCC is to alert the horse industry about disease outbreak information to help mitigate and prevent the spread of disease. Ultimately frequent and accurate information about disease outbreaks improves horse welfare and helps to prevent negative economic impact that can result from decreased horse use due to a fear of spreading infection. As part of the National Equine Health Plan the EDCC will serve as part of the communication to help educate and promote research about endemic and foreign disease.

Working in cooperation with state animal health officials and the United State Department of Agriculture, the EDCC seeks information about current disease outbreaks from news media, social media, official state reports and veterinary practitioners. Once information is confirmed, it is immediately posted on their website and messages are sent to all states and horse organizations by email. Daily updates are posted until each outbreak is contained or deemed no longer a threat. Visit EDCC at www.equinediseasecc.org. ■

Working Together to Save Our Horse Lands

Become a Conservation Member Today

Land loss may affect different regions and equine disciplines in different ways, but it clearly represents a significant threat to all equestrians. As members of the equine community the future of the equestrian landscape is in our hands. Land is saved locally, so it's imperative that horsemen and horse enthusiasts act as stewards of horse lands in their own communities. Being aware of threats and knowing how to address them allows us to ensure that future generations can enjoy access to the equestrian landscapes and lifestyle that we enjoy. ELCR membership dues support programs and services such as resources, tools, templates, and one-on-one technical assistance to help individuals and organizations keep land open for horses in their communities.



Participation in our Conservation Membership Program allows you to actively demonstrate your support for equine land conservation. Join today by completing the form on the back page of *The Resource*, or join online at www.ELCR.org. ■

Dr. Ann Swinker Receives AHC's 2016 Van Ness Award

From the American Horse Council - On June 13, the American Horse Council (AHC) presented the Van Ness Award to Ann M. Swinker, Ph.D., of University Park, Pennsylvania, during the organization's annual meeting in Washington, D.C.

The Van Ness Award is presented by AHC to an individual who has shown leadership and service to their horse community. It is awarded in memory of Mrs. Marjorie Van Ness, one of the founders of the New Jersey Horse Council, and one of the organizers of the AHC's Coalition of State Horse Councils.

"Dr. Swinker has dedicated more than 45 years of her professional life to the horse industry," said AHC president Jay Hickey in his presentation of the award to her. "She has had a great influence on the development of state policies as they apply to horses, agriculture and people. Her success as a horseman, educator and person are grounded in her commitment to people and her high standards for integrity."

Her research activities have addressed several management and environmental issues, such as stable air quality, small acreage management, composting and manure

management and water quality, in addition to behavior and reproductive issues. She has served on numerous extension, university and professional society committees.

Dr. Swinker has conducted several scientific equine population surveys that have had profound impacts on the passage of legislation in the state of Pennsylvania, including "Pennsylvania Equine Industry Inventory, Economic and Demographic Characteristics," "Pennsylvania Horse Power, Equine Economic Impact Study," "Pennsylvania's Racehorse Industry Inventory, Basic Economic and Demographic Characteristics" and "Kids + Horse = Magic, Impact of Equine Activities on Youth Development."

"I am truly honored to have been chosen as the recipient of the Marjorie Van Ness award," said Dr. Swinker. "It definitely takes more than one person; it takes an entire council, to get legislation and policy passed. I wish we could give an award to all the people that helped in Pennsylvania and in Colorado with past programs!"

Read the American Horse Council's story at www.google.com/mndmg4. ■

Thanks to our corporate friends:



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

Don't Forget to Follow Equine Land Conservation Resource on Social Media



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TWITTER

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INSTAGRAM (new to ELCR!)

<https://instagram.com/savehorseland>



YOUTUBE

<https://www.youtube.com/Elcvideos>



Riding on trails that are wet can damage trails. Rain softened surfaces are vulnerable to use immediately after rainfall events. Please allow trails time to dry before adventuring out. Ride on dirt roads or more durable surfaces and allow the trails to recover. Do your part by modeling appropriate behavior and best practices.

This PSA was made possible by the American Quarter Horse Association's STEP program.



tread lightly!®

Rain? Rein go away. Come again another day!



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