

THE RESOURCE

SPRING 2019



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE EQUINE LAND CONSERVATION RESOURCE

A Look at Backyard Horse Keeping

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

There are many considerations that make backyard horse keeping a viable option. Maybe there are no nearby boarding stables, or the cost of boarding at someone else's facility is prohibitive. Perhaps you're already set up with an existing barn and fencing. The presence of a great trail system or other equine facility nearby may make stabling your horse elsewhere a non-starter. In fact, your neighborhood may be home to many small horse properties, with regular riding companionship!

Smaller, private backyard horse barns and paddocks in older neighborhoods that have larger lots are really a necessity for the horse-loving population as larger farms, stables, and event places are continually replaced by development as previously open or agricultural lands are consumed. These neighborhoods are subject to a few restrictions, and zoned for that purpose.

Newer planned equestrian communities, with amenities such as communal stabling facilities, tend to be on the expensive side and require special zoning.

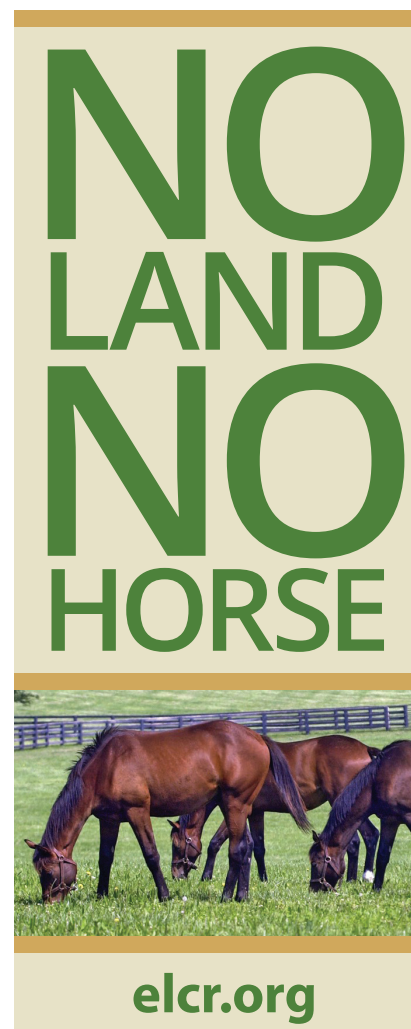
Know Your Zoning

Zoning ordinances spell out the basic regulations for keeping horses, or for that matter other livestock, on residential lots. You need to find out about these, and follow them. Those regulations may include:



A pretty barn and an equine companion or two live cozily in a residential backyard zoned for horse keeping.

- The number of horses that may be kept by the owner per acre of land;
- If horses belonging to outside boarders may be kept or not;
- How manure is to be disposed of;
- Types of fencing that are allowed;
- How a backyard or small farm should be laid out to achieve permitting approval;



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Zoned for boarders? Make sure you check with your municipal planning/zoning office.

- Required setbacks from adjacent homes, property lines, etc.;
- Inclusion of stormwater protection mechanisms, such as vegetated swales, infiltration ponds, etc., that can be found in local engineering and stormwater manuals;
- Accessory buildings, such as storage buildings and arenas, that may or may not be allowed;

Before you start putting up barn and fence, communicate and make friends with your neighbors. Broach the subject of horse-keeping carefully. Ensure neighbors that you will act to prevent any negative impacts from affecting them.

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About Liability

Even a casual horse operation, with a boarder or two to help offset costs, is legally a business. Talk to your insurance agent about business or commercial coverage. Remember, you are responsible for the condition of all aspects of your property, and need to keep barns, fencing, paddocks, utilities, and all other structures and paved areas in good shape.

Thanks to our corporate friend:



Considerations for New Backyard Horse Facilities

Back-yarders need to consider the following before jumping in at the deep end:

1. Check those zoning ordinances for horse-keeping regulations. If you don't understand them, ask your planning and zoning office for help.
2. Have a professional engineer, architect or landscape architect assess your lot for soils that are not good for building on, for steep or very shallow slopes (poor drainage), and existing vegetation.
 - Create a muck enclosure to protect groundwater and streams from pollution.
 - Use permeable or pervious pavements for driveways and parking areas.
 - Install lighting that does not interfere with neighboring residences.
 - Plan for a sacrifice area for the muddy season or to give other turnout areas a rest.
 - Place drainage materials around outdoor waterers to prevent erosion.
 - Install sustainable stormwater collectors, such as rain gardens, vegetated swales, and infiltration basins.
 - Follow stream buffer regulations and keep livestock away from streams and ponds.

If you decide that backyard horse keeping is for you, congratulations! You're on your way to being an informed and responsible owner.

ELCR has in-depth information available about horse-friendly zoning at the following links:

- <https://elcr.org/zoning-best-practices/> "Guide – Horse-Friendly Zoning Practices in American Communities" (guidebook, 2017).
- <https://bit.ly/2SKB2Fz> "Horse-Friendly Zoning Practices in American Communities" (webinar, 2018).
- <https://bit.ly/2F8sW6l> "The Basics of Planning and Zoning for Horse-Friendly Communities" (webinar recording, 2015).
- <https://bit.ly/2UNFGCX> "Seven Steps to Influencing Zoning Change in Your Community." (webinar recording, 2018)

Protecting Marion County's Horse Country

Marion County, Florida, is home to one of the largest concentrations of horse farms in the world. With an annual economic impact of \$2.62 billion in revenues and nearly 20,000 jobs from the equine industry, Ocala/Marion County has rightly earned the brand "Horse Capital of the World™".

But it seems not even the Horse Capital of the World is immune to the impact of sprawl and development on its bucolic horse lands.

According to the Florida Chamber Foundation's Florida 2030 Project report, Florida's population of 21 million is projected to increase by another 5 million residents by 2030. Unfortunately, the greater Ocala area has one of the highest growth rates in the nation for a city its size and is expected to reach 500,000 residents by 2040, a rapid increase of nearly 150,000 residents in about 20 years. In addition, a majority of the development is outside the city of Ocala in the rural areas of Marion County.

This sprawling development pattern threatens not only farms and local jobs, but also food security, the region's water quality, and wildlife habitat. In addition to the equine industry's \$2.6 billion economic impact, the \$1.4 billion economic impact from general agriculture is also at stake. And while horses are the most visible part of the local landscape, the county is also known for its springs. Florida has more springs, including first-magnitude springs, than any other place in the world, and Marion County is home to three first-magnitude springs.

In 2017, ELCR was contacted by the Marion County Horse Country Protection program (HCP) due to a growing local concern about the loss of horse farms to urban uses. Roughly 2,000 acres of land in Marion County's Farmland Preservation Area (FPA) was recently lost to urban use. The goal of the HCP is to help protect Marion County's agricultural lands, equine heritage, and unique natural springs.

Since 2017, Equine Land Conservation Resource has been partnering with the Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT) to support the



Horse Country Protection program. The goal of the partnership is to build consensus within the community through a series of educational forums leading to the development of a long-range plan that balances economic growth and development while protecting horse farms and agricultural lands. This plan will also help protect the agricultural industry and rural lifestyle of Marion County, while safeguarding the local quality of life and natural resources. American Farmland Trust (AFT) provided program support during this phase of the project.

The first educational forum took place as a visioning session titled "Visioning the Future of Marion County's Farmland" with community leaders from agriculture, business, education, and government. From this first session the Leadership Roundtable, a broad-based group of about 40 community leaders, emerged. The group met for two additional sessions with Equine Land Conservation Resource and American Farmland Trust, the latter of which provided program support from a national perspective.

In addition to the Leadership Roundtable sessions, the partners organized a local town hall meeting at the Ocala Jockey Club for the equine community on protecting Marion County's horse country. Over 150 people participated in the town hall meeting where they shared their concerns over the loss of horse farms and the future of Marion County's equine industry.

After several meetings, the consensus of the Leadership Roundtable was to move forward with developing a Rural Land Management Plan for Marion County. The recommendation paved

Continued next page...



Horse Country Protection Program partners and community leaders at the May 9, 2018, Visioning the Future of Marion County's Farmland Leadership Roundtable: (L to R) Billy Van Pelt II, American Farmland Trust; Ocala Mayor Kent Guinn; Holley Groshek, Executive Director, Equine Land Conservation Resource; Marion County Commissioner Michelle Stone; Busy Shires Byerly, Program Manager, Horse Country Protection Program; Tom Kay, Executive Director, Alachua Conservation Trust; Barbara Fitos, former Executive Director, Community Foundation for Ocala/Marion County.

...continued from page 3.

the way for Marion County commissioners to take the first step: holding a public workshop to learn about the benefits of a Rural Land Management Plan and how other communities have addressed similar growth and development related issues.

At the October 25, 2018, workshop, Equine Land Conservation Resource and American Farmland Trust outlined some of the benefits of a Rural Land Management Plan and provided examples of successful plans from other communities.

The next phase of the project includes a trip to Lexington, Kentucky, this spring with some of the Marion County commissioners, County Growth Services staff, HCP staff, and other representatives from the community to learn more about how Lexington has protected their rural agriculture land and heritage with a Rural Land Management Plan. Equine Land Conservation Resource, American Farmland Trust and the Alachua Conservation Trust will help facilitate some of the meetings for the Lexington trip and look forward to providing ongoing support to Marion County.

Marion County is proud to be known as the Horse Capital of the World and the Horse Country Protection project will help protect this distinctive and irreplaceable equine community known for its scenic views of farms and iconic natural areas.

Stay up to date on the project at: <https://www.facebook.com/HorseCountryProgram/>

Legislative Update January 2019



Despite the impact of the recent and protracted federal government shutdown, there has been some good news for the land conservation and equine communities. Thanks in part to input from the agricultural and conservation communities, December 2018 brought bipartisan passing of the *2018 Farm Bill*, updated from the 2014 version. Horse land owners also made their opinions known to their representatives. Facing steep cuts in early versions of the bill, the Title II, Subtitle F Conservation allocation for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program actually rose “from approximately \$250 million to about \$450 million,” according to Nick Lowrey in the *Capital Journal* on Dec. 17, 2018). This program provides funding to the states for the protection of open and agricultural lands with several programs, administered through local governments. See ELCR’s “Advocating for the Farm Bill” article at <https://bit.ly/2H4OeTN>.

The story is different regarding renewal of the *Land and Water Conservation Fund*, which was not voted on by its expiration date in September 2018. The fund, which receives a small portion of oil and gas royalty payments, has good bipartisan support and receives no tax funding. The fund is important to the equine community as these dollars serve to protect recreational and hunting/fishing parks, forests, trails, and wildlife areas. Congress promised to address the fund during the January 2019 session. See future ELCR eblasts for any updates. To contact your congress persons, visit <https://www.lwcfc coalition.com/get-involved/> to learn how to make your voice heard.

It’s never too early: According to the Recreational Trails section of the US Dept. of Transportation (USDOT) website, the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation (FAST) Act reauthorized the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) for Federal fiscal years 2016 through 2020. In 2020 this important state-allocated funding program that includes trails will be up for discussion again. In the meanwhile, horsemen and women need to learn more about the program (https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/) to understand how it works and be ready to advocate for continued funding in the next round of congressional budgeting.

Thank you to all who have supported our

GAINING GROUND CAMPAIGN

The **GAINING GROUND CAMPAIGN** supports the goals of our three-year strategic plan viewable at <https://elcr.org/strategic-plan/>



We still need your help to reach our goal! Click here to donate online to the campaign: www.elcr.org/gainingground/.

Travels with Darley

Darley Newman, of "Equitrekking" fame, has been ELCR's friend and long-time supporter of land conservation. Many have enjoyed following her adventures on their PBS channel. Here's an update on her current activities. Darley continues to trek around the world with her popular "Equitrekking" series and has added a new show to the lineup, "Travels with Darley," on PBS and Amazon Prime. In the series, Darley takes us along as locals guide her through new locations to gain greater insight into local history, culture, and food. From riding at a 100-year-old dude ranch in Wyoming to saddling up in the Finger Lakes National Forest to wild horses on Assateague Island, viewers visit geographically diverse and beautiful places to travel on horseback.

Darley and her team also continue to develop resources for travelers who want to ride, including the new TopRidingVacations.com site and a special Travel Deals page on Equitrekking.com. Guest posts for Equitrekking.com are also bringing new flavors and ideas for great places to ride, train, or volunteer with horses. The 50 State Trail Riding Project features guest-postings about their firsthand experiences, sharing their personal "great places to trail ride" across the USA. To get involved or learn more, visit Equitrekking.com and TravelswithDarley.com, or email info@equitrekking.com.



Darley Newman, 'Equitrekking' in Alaska.



ELCR Education Corner

Recent additions and updates to the ELCR Online Resource Library

Webinars:

Mark Your Calendar! On March 19, 2019, 7 pm eastern, My Horse University will co-host with ELCR to bring you "How They Did It - Dealing with Opposition to Equestrian Trails," presented by Mark Flint with Southwest Trail Solutions. Mark will help you to recognize and handle objections, both potential and real. The registration link to the webinar at My Horse University will be posted on ELCR's website, Facebook page, and eblasts. <https://bit.ly/2GA9Vcx>



How They Did It – Organizing for Advocacy. If you missed ELCR's joint November webinar with My Horse University hosting, you can access the recorded webinar <https://elcr.org/webinar-advocacy-planning-and-creating-equestrian-trails-through-organization/>. Expert Gwen Wills presented "How They Did It Trails Series: Part 1: Action for Equestrian Trails in Pennsylvania and Beyond," speaking about the issues, solutions, and collaborations that the equine community needs to know about to keep and expand trails access for equestrians. Part 2 of this series will be presented during 2019.

New Articles:

"A Look at Backyard Horsekeeping" explores the facets of keeping your companion, sport or other horse on small properties throughout the US. A surprising number of horses are kept on small farmettes and residential properties, and this article tells you what you may need to know in order to avoid the pitfalls. Visit <https://elcr.org/a-look-at-backyard-horse-keeping/> to view or download.

"Working With Parks for Equine Access, Part 1: The Master Plan "and" Part 2: Master Plan Illustrations" describe the need for master planning, the process, and what a master plan ultimately looks like, with colorful and specific examples in Part 2. Parks are an important source of both revenue and location for equine facilities and trails, something that the equine community needs to know about and participate in. For Part 1: <https://elcr.org/working-with-parks-for-equine-access-master-plan-part-1/> For Part 2: <https://elcr.org/working-with-parks-for-equine-access-master-plan-illustrations-part-2/>

"Equine Land Advocacy: A Best Practice for Equine Access." Just as there are many issues that arise to threaten the equestrian way of life and access to equine land, facilities and trails, there are just as many opportunities to partner with local and state level government agencies, conservancies, land trusts, and other organizations to work toward resolving land and trail issues in your local community and have a positive outcome. <https://elcr.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/EQUINE-LAND-ADVOCACY-A-BEST-PRACTICE-FOR-EQUINE-ACCESS-revised-Nov-2018.pdf>

Thanks to our corporate friend:

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



Active Interest Media

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

EQUINE PLACES AND SPACES

LOST: Rogers Farm | Loudoun County, Maryland

Rogers Farm in Loudoun County, Maryland, is about to be developed. The Leesburg Town Council, in an effort to include just 12 acres with the original house, recently voted to initiate an expansion of the H-1 Overlay Old & Historic District to include the 12 acres out of the 62 original acres. Development will include 162 houses. The 12-acre parcel will not be a horse property. Including properties in the historic district would require an extra layer of review for the demolition, or changes to, any structures deemed to be contributing historic resources, but that is the extent of the Council's ability to forestall or prevent the development. According to Kara Clark Rodriguez in Loudoun Now, the development company is developing the land "by right under current zoning, the development would not go before either the Planning Commission or Town Council for legislative approval."

THREATENED: Lakeview Stable | Santa Clara County, California

The 175-acre Lakeview Stable, located in Santa Clara County, California, was offered for sale in 2018. The county's Board of Supervisors is interested in purchasing the Lakeview property. Public use and programming for the horse stables could be advantageous to the community; however, if the county does purchase the property, it may be repurposed as a municipal park, disallowing horse activities, as has been done with other horse ranches in the area. The county isn't saying what the potential use would be until the purchase is completed. The stable manager hopes that equine programs would continue and be expanded. But eviction is a real possibility, as the expense of upgrading existing run-down buildings and equipment could be prohibitive for the horse operation to continue. Hopefully public hearings and a petition will allow the equine community to voice their concerns and provide specific reasons to keep the stable running for public use and enjoyment.

SAVED: Smith Farm | Saratoga County, New York

Building on more than three decades of protecting land in Saratoga County, New York, the Open Space Institute (OSI) announced the acquisition of land in the town of Moreau that will permanently protect a scenic, forested parcel for public enjoyment and recreation. OSI's protection of the Smith Farm property, identified as a "primary acquisition to begin fulfillment of the *Palmertown Range Master Plan* recreation corridor, lays the groundwork to expand Moreau Lake State Park and further connect families and visitors with the countless recreational opportunities offered at the park," said Rose Harvey, commissioner of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. The protection of the Smith Farm property will also help to supplement high demand for equestrian resources in the region!

REBORN: 40 Acre Farm | Dutchess County, New York

A 40-acre farm and late 1700s dwelling located in Dutchess County, New York had been abandoned after the previous owner died. It has recently been rescued and given a new purpose by Caroline Goodman-Thomases and James McKenna. The couple renamed the facility *Thomases Equestrian*. It specializes in boarding, lessons, and training in equitation, jumping and dressage. The farm is also close to the Willowbrook Trail Association trails. A dairy farm in past years, it was used as a tannery by its original owner, Zadock Southwick, and later as a breeding operation for race horses. Services include yoga classes for equestrians. Plans for expanded offerings are in the works. Video: <https://bit.ly/2GbAZAv>

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.



Ways You Can Support ELCR in 2019

1. Join ELCR as a Conservation Partner at elcr.org/join/
2. Make a gift in honor of friends & family who also love our equine friends and way of life at <https://bit.ly/2N12ZX1>
3. Donate stock to ELCR at <https://bit.ly/2N4sZRy>
4. Become a monthly donor and leverage a smaller monthly gift into a larger annual impact at <https://bit.ly/2GCSAzl>
5. Shop on Amazon and select ELCR as your charity at <https://amzn.to/2USZrJc>
6. Like and share ELCR on Facebook at www.facebook.com/EquineLandConservationResource —
the more people we reach, the more cherished lands and equine heritage we can save!

Strawbridge Honored with the Robert N. Clay Conservation Award

George Strawbridge, Jr. was honored with the Robert N. Clay Conservation Award at the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (TOBA) National Awards dinner on September 8, 2018, in Lexington, Kentucky.

The award, established in 2014 as a partnership between TOBA and ELCR to help increase awareness of the importance of land conservation to the Thoroughbred industry and to serve as an inspiration to others within the industry, is presented annually at the TOBA National Awards dinner.



Dan Rosenberg (left), vice president of Equine Land Conservation Resource, and Bruce Hill, manager of Live Oak Stud, accept the Robert N. Clay Conservation Award on behalf of George Strawbridge, Jr.

Strawbridge, through his Augustin Stable, has been an important player in both flat and steeple chase racing and as an industry leader. He has also been at the forefront in land conservation. Over the years, Mr. Strawbridge has purchased several farms in Pennsylvania with the purpose of establishing a conservation easement on the land to preserve the beauty and function of the property. While some of the properties were subsequently sold once an easement was in place, he retains ownership of over 900 acres of farmland in Pennsylvania, all of which are under conservation easement.

Strawbridge has been recognized as an ardent supporter of open space preservation for decades. His donation of multiple conservation easements to the Brandywine Conservancy, since 1993, has protected over 2,500 acres of land in Lancaster and Chester counties. Mr. Strawbridge was one of the original investors in the Buck and Doe Associates Limited Partnership that bought and conserved the King Ranch Property totaling over 5,000 acres.

George Strawbridge is an active trustee of the Brandywine Conservancy and encourages landowners to conserve their properties so that future generations have a chance to appreciate the land before it is lost to development.

Welcome ELCR's New Office Coordinator

Anabelle Wright-Gatton has joined ELCR's staff as office coordinator. A welcome addition, Anabelle provides all of ELCR's administrative needs, including communications, donor relations, and countless other responsibilities.

Anabelle became involved in nonprofit work through her love of music and animals. She holds a Bachelor's of Vocal Music Performance and much of her work the past twenty years has involved singing and teaching private voice and piano. In 2012 she joined a nonprofit organization providing free private music lessons, mentoring and instruments to financially disadvantaged students in Lexington, Kentucky. She has spent summers volunteering at a local animal shelter.

Anabelle is continuing her work in nonprofit administration with ELCR, and helping to save cherished horse lands around the US! She believes that organizations like ELCR are making a positive difference in their communities across the country. Anabelle believes strongly in the healing power of animals and nature, including the therapeutic benefit of horses in helping people survive and overcome trauma. When not at ELCR, singing, or teaching music students, Anabelle stays busy at home with her lovably crazy group of two- and four-legged family members.



Anabelle Wright-Gatton with Cody and Shiloh.



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