

THE RESOURCE



THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE EQUINE LAND CONSERVATION RESOURCE

Impact of AFO AND CAFO REGULATIONS on the Equine Industry

By Jamie Cohen Wallace for ELCR

In recent years, best management practices (BMPs) have essentially become standard for horse farms/facilities across the country. Meant to protect the ground and surface waters, BMPs are excellent management practices that should be utilized by every horse farm and facility to stay in compliance, regardless of legislation.

In fact, even horse trail systems are now starting to be legislated and/or stopped. Certainly, small amounts of manure on trails and farms won't have negative impacts, but in significant, concentrated amounts, excess nutrients have the potential to be harmful to our environment and water. Using BMPs in all management decisions, both on and off the trails, helps to protect against these excess nutrients from entering into our ground and surface waters as well as to keep you ahead of legislation.

These nutrient rulings vary substantially for horse facilities, depending on size (ranging from an Olympic venue to a backyard farm), location, horse population, and area of the country. The size of an operation is a great determining factor in the amount of legislation. In fact, horse show venues and racetracks are so large that they fall into their own legislated category. Being found not in compliance can result in very costly fines and can include excessive paperwork and construction requirements.

How can you be sure that the show venue, racetrack, etc., that you own, manage, or simply attend is meeting regulations and is in compliance with these more stringent, or different, regulations? And what about your own farm?



Example of an ideal AFO manure containment system.

Photo courtesy of Jamie Cohen

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Many, if not most, horse show venues and racetracks are considered to be a CAFO, or Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation. A CAFO, regardless of animal species, has such a large, concentrated population of animals that their abilities to potentially pollute is much greater than that of a family farm, having only one or a few animals.

Smaller animal operations are known as AFOs, Animal Feeding Operations, as they lack “concentrated” animal populations. Your farm or boarding facility is an AFO. County legislation normally determines where legislation lies with family farms and boarding facilities. For CAFOs, regulations are set on a federal level and are also done for many species (cattle, swine, horses, etc.).



Photo courtesy of Jamie Cohen

Ideal CAFO manure containment system at a CAFO racehorse facility in Ocala, Florida.

As defined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), a “CAFO is another EPA term for a large concentrated AFO. A CAFO is an AFO with more than 1,000 animal units (an animal unit is defined as an animal equivalent of 1,000 pounds live weight and equates to 1,000 head of beef cattle, 700 dairy cows, 2,500 swine weighing more than 55 pounds, 125,000 broiler chickens or 82,000 laying hens or pullets) confined on site for more than 45 days during the year. Any size AFO that discharges manure or wastewater into a natural or man-made ditch, stream or other waterway is defined as a CAFO, regardless of size.” For a horse operation, a CAFO has three size designations, defined as 500 or more being a LARGE CAFO, 150-499 are MEDIUM CAFOs and fewer than 150 horses is considered to be a SMALL CAFO.

The *Producers’ Compliance Guide* for CAFOs (<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-06/documents/compliance-cafos.pdf>) is an outstanding publication created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, which provides information on all CAFOs and answers “how and why” these regulations came to be passed. At least 500 horses are fairly common for many horse shows, so these more stringent federal CAFO guidelines come into play. This publication also clearly explains horse size category thresholds that legislate where the horse show or racetrack falls within those threshold ranges.

A Concentrated Animal Feed operation (CAFO) is another EPA term for a large, concentrated Animal Feed Operation (AFO). For a horse operation, a CAFO has three size designations, defined as 500 or more being a LARGE CAFO, 150-499 are MEDIUM CAFOs and fewer than 150 horses considered to be a SMALL CAFO.

Where does one learn about CAFO regulations to be sure that a horse show is compliant with local, state and federal regulations and to understand the most current legislation? A great first step is to check your local Extension office. This can be found by doing a Google search for your county and state, along with the word “Extension.”

The Extension Service does an excellent job sending you to the appropriate regulatory office. In areas where horses are very present, the local county Extension office may already have programming and information specific to AFOs, CAFOs, and local and state federal manure rulings. Nationally, Equine Land Conservation Resource provides many wonderful links to information such as BMPs, manure on trails, and education on the benefits of horses in our communities.

The good news is that CAFO legislation, now quite stringent and garnering heavy regulatory fines, is largely being followed closely by all horse CAFOs. So much progress has been made, with all now aware of needing to be alert to issues of water pollution while still making a living, and the vast majority are doing their best to protect our water and environment in order to preserve and continue the many wonderful benefits of the equine industry.

About the author: Jamie Cohen Wallace has degrees in journalism/ advertising and animal science. Between 2007-2016, she solely conceptualized, marketed and developed a successful water quality/ natural resources education/outreach program for University of Florida/IFAS Marion County Extension. This included educating horse farm owners and managers on best management practices, manure to energy and composting, producing national conferences, and publishing monthly articles and columns.

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ELCR Education Corner

Recent additions and updates to the ELCR Online Resource Library

New article: Impact of AFO and CAFO Regulations on the Equine Industry

In recent years, Best Management Practices have essentially become standard for horse farms and facilities across the country. Meant to protect the ground and surface waters, BMPs are excellent management practices that should be utilized by every horse farm and facility to stay in compliance, regardless of legislation. Using BMPs in all management decisions, both on and off the trails, helps to protect against these excess nutrients from entering our ground and surface waters, as well as to keep you ahead of legislation. This article defines the difference between a Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) and smaller animal operations known as Animal Feeding Operations (AFO) and how legislation associated with these designations impacts your equine operations. Read the full article at <https://elcr.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Article-CAFO-AFO-Regulations-Final-Sept-2021.pdf>

New article: Trails Safe Passing Plan: Stop, Speak and Stand Back

The dramatic increase in outdoor recreation since the onset of the COVID pandemic adds increased pressure on already overcrowded and undermaintained trails, which can lead to more potential conflicts between user groups on both public and private lands. The Trails Safe Passing Plan: Stop, Speak and Stand Back is an educational resource developed to help all trail users better understand a horse's natural prey survival instincts, how it perceives threats, and how it reacts to its environment. Understanding these horse facts can help eliminate fear of horses and equestrians and provide a plan of safe action when encountering horses on the trail. Read the full article at <https://elcr.org/trails-safe-passing-plan/>

New webinar: Trail Ambassador Programs: Tips, Tricks, and Best Practices Part 2

Trail ambassador programs can be a boon to any trail or trail system. They build local engagement, help identify and solve deferred maintenance issues, and turn casual users into lifelong advocates. This webinar, in partnership with American Trails, is the second of a two-part series that features leaders of some of the best ambassador programs across the nation, representing a variety of trail user types, to share best practices and offer sage advice for starting programs for your trail. Steve McClintock, one of the two national directors for Arizona on the Back Country Horsemen of America (BCHA) national Board of Directors, shares his experiences from the equestrian perspective. You can access the archived recorded webinar here: <https://elcr.org/webinar-recording-trail-ambassador-programs-tips-tricks-and-best-practices-part-2/>. If you missed the live Part 1 webinar back in October 2021, you can access the archived recorded webinar here: <https://www.americantrails.org/training/trail-ambassador-programs-tips-tricks-and-best-practices>

New webinar: Trail Ambassador Programs: Sustainable Equine Management

Like other grazers, horses can be employed to degrade the land or to heal it. This webinar covers innovative, eco-friendly, and low-cost strategies for caring for horses and the land they live on. The webinar provides information on pasture management, composting, erosion control, confinement area innovations, manure and mud management, natural insect and weed control, drainage, integrated habitat restoration, fire preparedness, and more. Alayne Bickle, creator of award-winning Horses for Clean Water, is the main webinar presenter. Other webinar presenters include representatives from Sonoma RCD, NRCS, and San Francisco Bay Water Quality Control Board. Special thanks to Sonoma Resource Conservation District for sponsoring this webinar. You can access the archived recorded webinar here: <https://elcr.org/event/webinar-sustainable-equine-management/>

Central Florida Conservation Summit Inspires Smart Growth Conversation

In November 2021, Horse Farms Forever (HFF), a local land advocacy organization based in Ocala, Florida, held their second successful annual Conservation Summit at Ocala Breeders' Sales Company, attracting over 400 participants for the community-wide conversation about smart growth and land conservation.

Highlights of the summit included an inspiring keynote address by Dr. John C. Malone, CEO of Liberty Media Corporation and recipient of the 2021 Robert N. Clay Award for conservation leadership in the Thoroughbred industry. Charlotte Weber, owner of Live Oak Stud, was honored with the HFF inaugural Acorn Conservation Award for her significant contribution to the preservation of horse farms in Marion County.

Kevin Sheilley, CEO and President of the Ocala Metro Chamber and Economic Partnership, talked about how to balance economic development with protecting Marion County's scenic farms. He also presented the results of the Marion County Quality of Life Survey, conducted by The Matrix Group this summer. HFF was the catalyst for the survey conducted in partnership with five other local sponsoring organizations, who all viewed the survey as an important step in defining the growth-related issues facing Marion County.



Horse Farms Forever President Bernie Little (left) and Canadian Horse Racing Hall of Fame and National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame Thoroughbred Trainer Mark E. Casse (right) present Charlotte Weber, owner of Live Oak Stud, with the Acorn Conservation Award.

The following conclusions were drawn from the survey results:

- Residents of Marion County feel strongly that **land and natural resources need to be conserved and protected** from development and urban sprawl.
- A continued effort should be made to keep residents **informed and reminded about conservation of farmland and natural resources** because it may not be top of mind in their daily lives.
- **Population growth, if left uncontrolled, could have detrimental consequences** for farmland, natural resources, traffic and roadways, and economic development.
- **Planners should decide who they hope to attract as Marion County grows**, as it will have implications for housing developments, the education system, and economic development.
- Residents are less supportive of tourism, as they are unsure how it will affect the things they value most. **Tourism developments need to boost the economy and enhance the aspects that make Marion County**, without negatively impacting natural resources, green space, and farmland.



The full results of the Marion County Quality of Life Survey are here:
<https://www.horsefarmsforever.com/the-marion-county-quality-of-life-survey-results/>

To learn more about Horse Farms Forever, visit www.horsefarmsforever.com

EQUINE PLACES AND SPACES

TRANSITIONING: **Templeton Farms, California**

Templeton Farms, a world-class sport horse facility near Paso Robles, California, has been donated to the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine's Center for Equine Health. Donated by equestrian Gina Bornino Miller, the 52-acre equestrian center on the central coast has been home to generations of performance horses and a boarding program. This new addition to the school's famed veterinary school will continue as a boarding facility, while enhancing the school's research and educational efforts. It will provide new opportunities to bring veterinary students, residents, researchers, and veterinarians together to advance horse health.

GAINING GROUND: **New Hampshire SPCA** **Stratham, New Hampshire**

The New Hampshire SPCA in Stratham has unveiled a \$6 million expansion and renovation, which includes a new equine center and barn for horses. The expansion is the result of eight years of strategic planning, which included an endowment and property acquisition. The expansion includes a full equine training center for staff to better determine the training level of their rescued horses, and for potential adopters to get a chance to ride the horses in a safe environment. Additionally, there are new pens for other rescued livestock. With this expansion, the SPCA's goal is to be able to offer the same level of care to large animals as they do for small animals.

THREATENED: **Boise, Idaho**

The Western Riding Club in Boise, Idaho, reached out to ELCR regarding their concern about the possible rezoning of open land around the Boise Airport to light industrial use. The club is located on just over 25 acres and has been in existence for 80 years. Members can trail ride out from club property through the open land around the airport to reach BLM lands. Their concern is that the rezoning to light industrial will result in the club being surrounded by construction, increase noise and traffic, ruin the views, and potentially

ruin the riding paths to BLM. A campaign is underway by the Boise Open Space Alliance to encourage the city to reconsider the proposed zoning changes. Read more here: <https://www.boiseopenspace.com/>

TRANSITIONING: **Chamounix Equestrian Center** **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

An \$8 million capital campaign to renovate the Chamounix Equestrian Center in Fairmount Park is underway by the nonprofit organization Work to Ride (WTR). Formerly McCarthy Stable, Chamounix was built in 1973 to house the mounted police force that patrolled the parks and streets of Philadelphia. WTR, which provides horsemanship education and equine sports training to youth from under-resourced communities, will update the equestrian center's existing outdoor riding arena and create an indoor equestrian arena for local, regional, and national equestrian events. The proposed indoor arena and renovations will allow WTR to expand its program to reach even more young people and transform more lives through horses and horse sports.

If you are aware of an equine-related place that has been lost, saved, or is in danger, please let ELCR 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.

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John and Leslie Malone Honored with the Robert N. Clay Conservation Award

John and Leslie Malone were recognized as the recipients of the 2021 Robert N. Clay Conservation Award at the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association (TOBA) 35th National Awards Dinner on Sept. 11, 2021, 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.

John Malone, the largest landowner in the United States, is no stranger to the conservation world. A well-respected philanthropist and supporter of land preservation, John is the founder of the Malone Family Land Preservation Foundation and a member of the board of The Nature Conservancy, one of the largest land-conservation nonprofit organizations in the country. Leslie Malone, a horse lover since childhood, is a well-known equestrian and major supporter of the U.S. Olympic Dressage Team.

The Malones purchased the 800-acre historic Bridlewood Farm in Ocala, Florida, in August 2013 and spearheaded its revitalization as a working Thoroughbred operation. It now covers 2,000 acres. The Malones also demonstrated their commitment to protecting Central Florida's prestigious horse lands as founding members of the nonprofit land protection advocacy organization Horse Farms Forever, in Marion County, Florida. HFF was the 2020 recipient of the Robert N. Clay Conservation Award. Their Bridlewood Farm manager, George Isaacs, serves on the board of Horse Farms Forever. The Malones' leadership led to other local farms joining the movement to protect the unique heritage and culture of Central Florida horse farms.

"I have had the pleasure of working for the Malones since the fall of 2013, and since traveled to many of the properties they own," George said. "There is a common interwoven philosophy that binds them all together. Stewardship, commitment, and perpetuity for the land, animals, and people."

Among the Malones' many conservation achievements was the permanent protection of Riveredge Farm, the prestigious Thoroughbred horse farm previously known as Sycamore Hall Farm in Maryland, on track to become a residential development before the Malones purchased the property and protected it with a 532-acre conservation easement. Riveredge is now maintained as a 600-acre world-class sport horse facility.

According to the *Bangor Daily News*, in addition to preserving land in Florida and Maryland for Thoroughbred operations, John Malone also owns large expanses of land in Maine, New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming, and New Hampshire and has earned a reputation as a conservation-minded buyer who maintains the traditional uses of the properties he buys.

"The Malones' long-term commitment to land conservation serves as an impressive example for not only the Thoroughbred community but our equine community at large," said ELCR President Ken Haddad. "We are thrilled to honor them with the 2021 Robert N. Clay Conservation Award."



George Isaacs, Bridlewood Farm Manager, accepts the Robert N. Clay Award on behalf of John and Leslie Malone from Holley Groshek, ELCR Executive Director.

Photo courtesy of TOBA/Mark Mahan

ELCR Continues to Support Nationwide Trail Etiquette Campaign

Recognizing that the community of trail users continues to grow at an exponential rate, ELCR joined an unprecedented consortium of advocacy groups, brands, media outlets, and ambassadors that have come together to create the public awareness campaign **“Trails Are Common Ground” (TACG)** in February 2021. The campaign elevates the importance of respectful, inclusive, safe, and enjoyable experiences on trails.

The coalition shaped the campaign to reinforce the many local, regional, and user-specific trail respect programs in existence by promoting kindness and awareness while elevating the work of these programs. The coalition members represent all manner of activities that take place in the dirt, including hiking, trail running, equestrian, mountain biking, and motorized singletrack, with both ELCR and Backcountry Horsemen of America representing the equestrian trail community.



The campaign includes a website and Instagram account, and creative assets that can be shared and personalized by brands, nonprofits, content creators, and all passionate trail users who want to rise together to share the message of Trails Are Common Ground. All trail-user groups are invited to participate. To learn more about the campaign and how you can support the movement, visit <https://trailsarecommonground.org/>

ELCR, as an active member of the coalition, continues to participate regularly in coalition meetings. We look forward to sharing examples of TACG in action from around the country in upcoming newsletters. In support of this initiative, ELCR and Michigan Equine Trail representative Jenny Cook have collaborated on a new educational resource, **Trails Safe Passing Plan: Stop, Speak and Stand Back**, to help both equestrian and other trail users better understand how horses have evolved to use their extraordinary senses to understand the world around them and react to perceived threats in their environment. Better understanding horses and how they perceive and react to their environment can lead to safer and more enjoyable trail experiences for all! The **Trails Safe Passing Plan: Stop, Speak and Stand Back** resource is available at <https://elcr.org/trails-safe-passing-plan/>

How YOU Can Support ELCR

There are so many ways you can help support ELCR's vital mission of saving horse lands!

1. Join ELCR as a Conservation Partner.
2. Make a gift in honor of friends and family who also love our equine friends and way of life.
3. Donate stock to ELCR.
4. Become a monthly donor and leverage a smaller monthly gift into a larger annual impact.
5. For federal and state employees, contribute to ELCR through the CFC or SECC.
6. Shop on Amazon Smile and select ELCR as your charity (smile.amazon.com/ch/52-2139677).
7. Remember a cherished loved one or equine companion with a Memorial Tribute Gift.
8. Like and share ELCR on Facebook—the more people we reach, the more cherished lands and equine heritage we can save!



Spotlight on Social Media



Did you know, one of the best ways you can help support ELCR's mission to save horse land doesn't cost anything, other than a few moments of your time? By simply sharing ELCR's mission and messages with friends and family on social media, you're helping us spread awareness of the urgent issue of equine land loss to as many people as possible. On Facebook, ELCR currently has just under 8,000 likes and followers, and we would love for you to help us reach our goal of 10,000 followers! Simply visit www.facebook.com/EquineLandConservationResource. After all, the more people we can reach, the more horse lands can be saved, so we definitely urge you to help us get the word out by following ELCR on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, sharing our mission and updates on your own social media channels, and encouraging your contacts to become supporters of ELCR's vital mission to save horse land.



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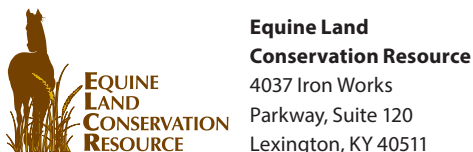
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