



The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc.

VOLUNTEER HORSE PATROL

In 2003, The CT Horse Council partnered with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to provide a Volunteer Horse Patrol Unit. This unique program benefits many aspects of the DEP, in helping to patrol and provide assistance to the DEP staff and public visitors to our State Forests and Parks. This also provides our membership the opportunity to volunteer their time and service to our state's public lands, a cause that also benefits them and their equine companions.

The establishment of this Patrol Unit comes at a critical time, when drastic cuts on our State Budget have caused layoffs, staff & supervisor reductions. This situation is forcing the closure of many State Parks & Forests due to lack of State Funding. If you or your organization ride on State DEP land, this is your opportunity to give back for our riding privileges on Public Lands and to ensure that we can continue and expand riding areas.

The Volunteer Service and Policies is based on the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Mounted Patrol Program and the National Park Service VIP (Volunteers in Parks) program. No state or federal dollars support this program; funds and services are donated. The Program will assist DEP and other landowners with all non-enforcement duties. Volunteers provide additional eyes and ears for the protection of the resource and its visitors, as well as provide hands on services repairing trails and other facilities. Mounted volunteers also assist with programs and special events, and continue to foster community involvement. Volunteers also provide non- confrontational services to the public including, but not limited to, information on rules and regulations, facilities and special features.

All volunteers go through a training program, learning the rules and regulations of the State Park or State Forest, trails that they are assigned to patrol, public relations, trails etiquette, communication skills, First Aid and CPR. The horse and rider must be in good physical condition and have adequate riding skills to pass the Horse/rider assessment that will be used to educate and test applicants to the program. Volunteers maintain patrol logs that include volunteer hours as well as visitor sightings, contacts and assistance.

The program is in the following State Forests & Parks: Airline State Park Greenway, Cockaponset SF, Larkin State Bridle Trail, Natchaug SF, Pachaug S.F., Paugusset S.F. and Shenipsit SF. The patrol has also expanded to the Clinton Land Conservation Trust, the City of Danbury's Tarrywile Park, Fairfield Hills Open Space in Newtown, Racebrook Tract Park in Orange, and Eisenhower Park in Milford.

We are in the process of setting up patrols in Nehantic SF, Hartman Park, Devil's Hopyard SP, Tunxis SF, Mansfield Hollow SP, Bluff Point, Hammonasset SP, and Babcock WMA,

This Mounted Volunteer Program is under the CT Horse Council. This project is a sub-committee of CHC Trails Committee. **We are seeking committed individuals and organizations, leaders and volunteers to join the Patrol.** The Volunteer Horse Patrol Committee is looking for individuals to help out with various functions.

For more information, and a Volunteer Horse Patrol Application please e-mail Diane Ciano Spirit76@snet.net.