



Connecticut Horse Council

"Horsemen United in Leadership, Service and Education"

Check out our website at www.cthorsecouncil.org

2022 SPRING / SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Thank you to all who have renewed their membership and to all our new members. We are a non-profit volunteer legislative advocacy group representing all horse interests in CT.

We monitor all issues that have an impact on the horse industry. The Connecticut Horse Council is member supported by individuals and organizations representing every facet of the horse industry including owners, breeders, veterinarians, farriers, breed organizations, horsemen's associations, commercial suppliers and town horse councils. CHC represents equestrian interest with representation on the **Connecticut Greenways Council** and the **Connecticut Equine Advisory Council**. We provide information on Legislation, Road Safety, Trails, Zoning, Barn Fire Training – CT Horse 911, Fire Prevention & Emergency Disaster Preparedness and produce educational brochures for the public. We are an affiliate of the **American Horse Council**, whose primary concern is to oversee federal legislation, including taxes, which affect the horse industry.

CHC has partnered with Community Horse Magazine. Your 2022 CHC membership will include your subscription to the magazine delivered to your address. This is your source for everything equestrian in Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island! Published each spring and autumn, very issue features farms, horse people, and a comprehensive events calendar is prepared exclusively for each state. In our directory, you'll find a range of horse products, horse-related services, and equestrian businesses in our community.

Our supporting organizations and business members are listed on pages **25-30** and are also posted up on our website. Club, Organizations, Business & Professional support is only \$40.00 per year - all posted on our web site and in our Newsletters.

We look forward to helping our communities in all aspects of horse life, education and care. Support your state organization, get up to date information on legislation, policies and more.

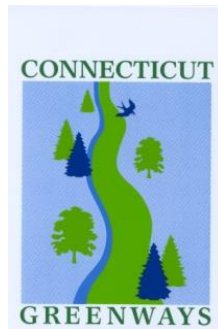
The CHC, Inc., can only be as strong as its membership. Please join us and work together to protect your interests for today and tomorrow! See pages 32-33 for a 2022 application. *If you have already renewed, thank you for your support.*

Your CHC Representation around the state...

CONNECTICUT HORSE COUNCIL



VOLUNTEER HORSE PATROL



CONNECTICUT GREENWAYS COUNCIL



DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

- SCORP – State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- CT State Trails Plan
- CT State Forest Plan

CT Horse Council is Part of iGive



Want to help out the CT Horse Council? We are a part of [igive.com](https://www.igive.com). Just go to [igive.com](https://www.igive.com). Choose CT Horse Council as your cause. Use the iGive Button at over 1,700 online stores. CT Horse Council will get money – free! Please help whenever you can! Thanks in advance!

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Farewell to Bob LaRosa

The Connecticut Horse Council on behalf of its members, the board and the greater equestrian community mourns the loss of Bob LaRosa. Bob was a Board member of the CT Horse Council, member of CTRA and was also currently serving as President of the Cheshire Horse Council. Bob and his horse Tequila were seen together at many events over the years. The officers and members of the CT Horse Council, Cheshire Horse Council and the CT Trail Rides Association would like to express their condolences to his family and friends on his passing.



Your CHC Representation around the state...



**CT Horse Council
TRAIL NEWS
Volunteer Horse Patrol**



Submitted by Diane Ciano

Your CHC Representation around the state...

CT Horse Council Volunteer Horse Patrol

Celebrating 19 Years of Service 2003-2021

The VHP has come a long way from its small start in 2003 of 5 patrol areas to over 88 areas around the state, including town parks, open spaces and land trusts. As we continue to grow, we are expanding our riding opportunities and helping to create long distance connecting trails. Congratulations to all members, because each of your patrol logs, no matter how many hours you patrol and maintain trails adds to the grander total of statewide hours. This service provides CHC, DEEP and other Land Management Areas with information on how the equestrian community is continuing its effort to maintain trails for multiple use, while promoting and educating the community and other equestrians of our volunteer efforts.

Volunteer Horse Patrol Statistics for 2021

For 2021, we had a total of **2,409 Patrol Hours** with **1,322 patrols** out on our state parks, forests, town lands, land trusts and private lands. This represents saving the state (that's you and me!) **\$60,225.00** in service for 2021 alone !

2003 – 2021 CHC – VHP Accomplishments

Established this Mounted Patrol Unit to assist the State during an economic hardship

In the 18 years since, the CT Horse Council's Volunteer Horse Patrol Program has provided **\$ 1,237,625.00** in volunteer service hours.

This was accomplished through **49,505** hours of patrol and trail *maintenance* throughout the State of CT in our state parks and forests, land trusts, open spaces, town lands, city parks and private lands. *Total # of patrols: 25,322*

This program helps to protect and preserve the trails of the state.

For more information contact VHP Supervisors, Diane Ciano or Meg Sautter from the CHC website: www.cthorsecouncil.org.

CT Horse Council Volunteer Horse Patrol

19 YEAR STATISTICS 2003-2021

YEAR	# Of Patrols	Patrol Hours	PARK VISITOR SIGHTINGS								
			Walkers	Cyclers	Equus	People	Dogs OFF	Dogs ON	Hunters	Motor Cycles	ATV
2003	289	594	335	138	151	168	145	8	13	32	18
2004	432	975	940	294	485	231	96	253	78	162	24
2005	726	1,565	1628	798	1272	421	197	424	12	78	24
2006	1001	2,537	3400	1254	2905	1880	374	988	33	186	37
2007	1299	3,053	2337	909	3310	2706	331	772	23	121	52
2008	1404	3,459	2668	837	2367	3847	382	868	48	77	39
2009	1654	3,905	3224	666	2902	3254	446	1144	23	117	67
2010	3385	3,974	3015	649	3450	3170	351	1123	45	83	42
2011	1909	4,207	3420	794	3254	3318	285	940	130	66	47
2012	1464	3,393	3294	838	2795	3279	366	1167	15	40	27
2013	1216	2,314	2088	484	2318	1275	180	478	8	15	8
2014	1693	3,141	2660	462	3017	2304	201	719	42	35	21
2015	1347	2,437	2746	456	2655	803	242	1290	9	13	20
2016	1284	2,426	2282	590	2476	1755	314	769	41	32	20
14 YEAR TOTALS	19,106	37,980	34,037	9,169	33,357	28,411	3,910	10,943	520	1,057	446
2017	855	1,661	PARK VISITOR SIGHTINGS NOT TAKEN								
2018	917	1,739	PARK VISITOR SIGHTINGS NOT TAKEN								
2019	1,070	2,053	PARK VISITOR SIGHTINGS NOT TAKEN								
2020	2,052	3,663	PARK VISITOR SIGHTINGS NOT TAKEN								
2021	1,322	2,409	PARK VISITOR SIGHTINGS NOT TAKEN								
TOTAL	25,322	49,505									

TEAMWORK: NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF THOUGHTFUL COMMITTED PEOPLE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD, INDEED, IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS" -
author, unknown

2021 VHP Hour Recognition

Patrol Hours 100+ Hours	
NAME	Patrol Hours
Rebecca Russell	267
Holly Ely	233.5
Susan Crawford	217
Melissa Evarts	216.5
Kristin Elliott Leas	190
Ruth Strontzer	185.25
Meg Sautter	176.5
ShawnaLee Kwashnak	161
Margaret Lupone	149.5

Patrol Hours 50+ Hours	
NAME	Patrol Hours
Penny Foisey	98.5
Vevette Greenberg	92.5
Ann Moses	92
Denise Ciano	56



Thank you to our Guest Speaker
Laura Claman



Welcome to our New Members
Arlene Doherty – Stafford
Brie Messier – Ellington
Deborah Simon – Barkhamsted
Elizabeth Kennedy - Westbrook



Laura Claman of Equine Solutions, Trainer of
Horse and Rider

Blazing Saddles Consignment Shop

Philosophy: *Be the calming member of your herd*

"I commonly refer to the rider and horse as being a "herd". In a herd, if a member reacts to an object with fear, the horse will mirror that fear as a matter of survival. It's the human's job to instill bravery and confidence to the horse".

Laura's experiences with horses started at riding western at age 4, hunt seat at age 11 and went on to dressage and eventing at 19. She apprenticed with a reining trainer, participated on a show team, fox hunts, drill team, horse training, and eventually taught riding at Shallowbrook Equestrian Center in Somers, CT.

She is currently a CHA English and Western First Class Certified Instructor and has been teaching riding since 1983 at SJ Riding Camp. Laura also has participated in judge's license training with the USEA and USEF and is available for judging schooling shows.

Laura has served on the Board of Directors for Connecticut Dressage and Combined Training Association (CDCTA) in various positions as well as President. She has served on the board for Reddington Rock Riding Club.

"The style of teaching that I use combines my years of riding, teaching, and study of educational psychology. "

Laura also designed tack with Smith-Worthington Saddlery, managed a tack shop for 6 years, and have fit tack to schoolies and summer camp horses for more than 30 years. In 2020, she opened her own tack shop: Blazing Saddles Consignment Shop in Stafford Springs.

Formal Education:

B.A. at ECSU in psychology. 1991

Connecticut state teacher's license. Middle school language arts and social studies. 2001.

M.A. in gifted and talented educational psychology. UConn 2007

shop site: www.blazingsaddlesconsignmentshop.com

training site: www.lauraclamanequinesolutions.com

Facebook business page: <https://www.facebook.com/lauraclamanequinesolutions>

Your CHC Representation around the state...

CONNECTICUT EQUINE ADVISORY COUNCIL



CONNECTICUT EQUINE ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Connecticut Equine Advisory Council was established on May 22, 2007 by **Public Act 07-42** to assist the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection with issues related to the preservation of equine trails in the state.

Membership: The council consists of the president of the Connecticut Horse Council and five representatives from organizations that serve the horse industry within each congressional district statewide in addition to one member of the Connecticut Forests and Parks Association, appointed by the minority leader of the Senate.

The mission of the Equine Advisory Council and is to promote equestrian use on public lands, creating, preserving, maintaining and restoring trails.

The CT Equine Advisory Council's website and link to the **Multi Use Trail Surface Study** and the **CT Horse Council's Volunteer Horse Patrol Trail User Study** can be viewed on: <http://www.ct.gov/deep/eac> under "Links" and on our CHC website. These studies can be used to educate and promote multi-use trails and surfaces for planners of trails who may play a role in maintaining or implementing trail systems including town planners, recreation committees and Council of Governments throughout the state.

2022 Meeting Schedule:

The EAC will meet at the [Connecticut Forest & Park Association](#), 16 Meriden Road, in Rockfall, CT from 6:30-8 PM on the following Thursdays: March 24th, June 16th, September 15th, and December 15th. The public is welcomed. Zoom or Conference calls are available.

Please contact Diane Ciano for current updates or changes for 2022 meetings

CT Horse Council President – Ron Hocutt 2020

1st Congressional District – Meg Sautter (*Appointed 2008*)

2nd Congressional District – Ruth Strontzer (*Appointed 2019*)

3rd Congressional District – Danielle Borelli (*Appointed 2020*)

4th Congressional District – Vevette Greenberg (*Appointed 2021*)

5th Congressional District – Diane Ciano (*Appointed 2009*)

DEEP Liaison – Brian Wilson

CT Forest & Park Association - Eric Hammerling

Your CHC Representation around the state...

CONNECTICUT GREENWAYS COUNCIL



Members of the Connecticut Greenways Council are appointed by the Governor and the leaders of the General Assembly. Their duties include advising and assisting in the coordination of state agencies, municipalities, regional planning organizations and private citizens in voluntarily planning and implementing a system of greenways; providing assistance to state agencies, municipalities, regional planning organizations and private citizens in the technical aspects of planning, designing and implementing greenways, including advice on securing state, federal and nongovernmental grants; advising DEEP on selection of CT Recreational Trails Program grants; and establishing criteria for designation of greenways. Many Council members have had direct experience with trail and greenway development, and they can provide valuable insight into the development of successful local and regional projects.

Council Members

Lois Bruinooge - Executive Director, The Last Green Valley

Paula Burton - New England Mountain Biking Association

Stacey Stearns - CT Horse Council & Water Trails

Robert Dickinson - South Windsor Walk and Wheel Ways; Bike Walk CT

R.Bruce Donald (Chair) - Tri-State Coordinator, East Coast Greenway

Joe Hickey - CT Forest & Park Assoc.

Gillian Carroll - Eversource Energy

William D. O'Neill - East Coast Greenways Alliance (former Chair)

Rista Malanca - (Vice Chair) Naugatuck River Greenway

Cathy Hagadorn - CT Audubon Society, Deer Pond Farm Director

Gwen Marrion - (Secretary) Bolton Trails Committee

Brian Wilson (DEEP Liaison) - Ex-Officio Member

Anna Bergeron, DOT Planning Division - Ex-Officio Member

What's a greenway?

A greenway is a corridor of open space that may protect natural resources, preserve scenic landscapes and historical resources or offer opportunities for recreation or nonmotorized transportation. A greenway may also connect existing protected areas and provide access to the outdoors; may be located along a defining natural feature, such as a waterway; along a man-made corridor, including an unused right-of-way, traditional trail routes or historic barge canals; or may be a greenspace along a highway or around a village.

Greenways in Connecticut cover thousands of acres throughout every county in the state and may include paved or unpaved trail systems, ridgelines, or linked parcels of open space. Many other communities around Connecticut have chosen, through greenway designation, to recognize the importance of river corridors for natural resource protection, recreational opportunities, and scenic values. The [CT Greenways Council webpage](#) contains details on how to propose designations, get assistance, and view a map of our State Greenways.



Your purchase of a Connecticut Greenways license plate will make a difference! These plates both raise the public awareness of the importance of our greenways AND provide funding for state and local efforts to preserve, restore and protect our greenways. Greenway systems offer an exciting opportunity to reestablish connections between the State's natural and cultural resource base and its people. It has been said that greenways connect the places we live to the places we love.

[Greenways License Plate Applications](#)

Greenways Council Holds 23rd Annual Greenway Awards and Kicks Off CT Trails Day Events

Four New Greenways Designated, Four Awards Given

The Connecticut Department of Energy & Environment Protection and the Connecticut Greenways Council held their 22nd Annual Connecticut Greenway Awards and National Trails Day Celebration along the Poquonnock River Walkway in Groton, CT on Friday, June 3rd. The event is traditionally held on the Friday before CT Trails Day, which is the First Saturday in June.

New greenways in Manchester, Rocky Hill, Norfolk, and Groton were designated at the event, and awards were given out to four individuals who have made significant contributions to the promotion, development and enhancement of greenways in Connecticut.

Newly designated greenways:

Cheney Rail Trail System: This greenway is a key component of the town wide, interconnected network. It follows part of the corridor of the South Manchester Railroad, built by the Cheney brothers in 1869. The Manchester Land Conservation Trust (MLCT) owns about 1.7 linear miles of the original rail bed. Connections to the East Coast Greenway and the Hop River Trail make it easily accessible as well.

Rocky Hill Greenway: Totals 4 miles from Quarry Park to the Dividend Pond Trail. The Greenway itself extends from the north at Matterson Ave. about 3 miles to the Cromwell border. Visitors can visit parks and historic sites which the Greenway meanders through.

Norfolk Mountain Express Accessible Rail Trail: Once constructed, this trail will develop access for persons with disabilities and uses an existing railroad bed ROW. The Norfolk Rails to Trails Committee, Town of Norfolk and State of Connecticut have been working together over the past five years to develop a section of the abandoned CNE railroad bed now known as the North Brook Trail. This is the first of many sections linking North Canaan, Norfolk Center and eventually the town of Winchester.

Groton Cross Town Greenway and Tri-Town Trail Greenway: One is a section of the Tri-Town Trail and one for the Cross Town Greenway.

This year's awardees:

- **Lisa Watts:** Strategic communications professional with a track record of helping nonprofit organizations advance their missions. Served as the Content Manager for the East Coast Greenway Alliance for almost 4 years; wrote the ECGA's *Guide to the East Coast Greenway: New Haven, Connecticut, to Providence, Rhode Island, by Bike or on Foot*.
- **Mark Jewell** - Spent the last 22 years as a project manager advancing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure throughout New England and internationally. For the past 11 years has been working for CTDOT, as a member of the VHB team that assists CTDOT in managing all trail projects within the State's Transportation Alternatives program.
- **Laurie Giannotti (Lifetime Achievement Award)**– Recently retired from DEEP as head of the Trails & Greenways Program. Developed relationship between DEEP and CGC, facilitated the CT Recreational Trails grant program and worked to ensure the success of many trail projects. Went “above and beyond” to serve the committee and our outdoor spaces.
- **Ruth Strontzer:** Involved in 4-H for decades; treasurer with the Connecticut Trail Rides Association; member, Connecticut Horse Council; representative, CT Equine Advisory Council. Ruth has helped organize club trail rides over the past 52 years showing others the wonderful state and private lands that are available in Connecticut to utilize on horseback.



Ruth Strontzer has ridden and owned horses for over 65 years. Growing up in 4-H and trail riding and camping with the Connecticut Trail Riders she learned to enjoy the outdoors and resources of this state and to appreciate the importance of volunteer work.

Ruth was an organizational and assistant leader in 4-H for over 20 years introducing children and their families to the joy of trail riding. Also, during that time, she held numerous offices in several riding clubs. Most recently she serves as Treasurer since her election in 2014 with the Connecticut Trail Rides Association. She has helped organize club trail rides over the past 52 years showing others the wonderful state and private lands in Connecticut are available to them to utilize on horseback.

As a member of the Connecticut Horse Council, she has logged hundreds of hours with the CT Volunteer Horse Patrol. Patrolling and helping to maintain trails throughout the state on horseback while acting as an equestrian ambassador to the general public. As a member of both, the CT Horse Council and the Connecticut Trail Rides Assoc. she attended the 2021 Equine Affair helping out in a booth that promoted both Equestrians and Trail Riding in Connecticut.

Ruth is currently on the Board of the Friends of Machimoodus/Sunrise State Park. She has helped conduct fund raising Equestrian events that have raised several thousand dollars to help support the trails in the park. Some of that money has gone to print trail maps of the park, and are available at the kiosks located at the park entrances. She has help post trail courtesy signage in the park and conducted a work day to help remove Invasive plants from an area the equestrians as well as the general public utilize.

She has conducted and participated in work days in the Machimoodus/Sunrise State Park, Cockaponset State Forest, Salmon River State Forest as well as Mohawk State Forest. Reopening old trails and clearing storm damage from existing trails that are highly used by both equestrians and the general public.

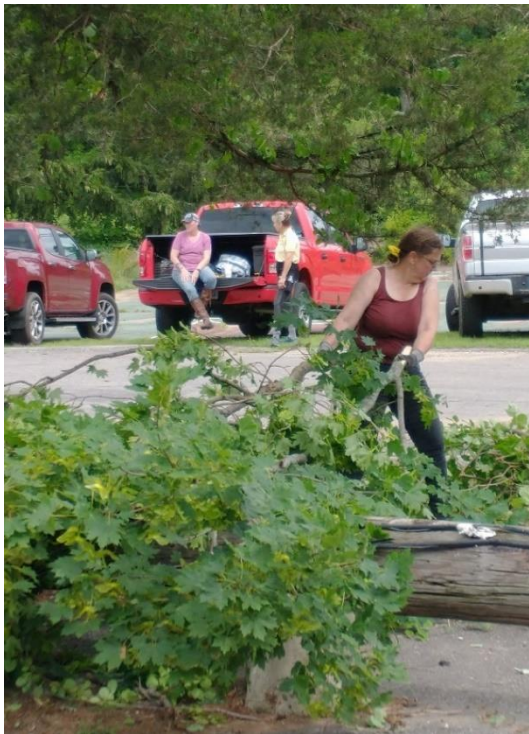
Ruth is current serving on the CT Equine Advisory Council (EAC) since her appointment in 2019 as representative of the 2nd Congressional District. As a participating council member, she reports on trails and the conditions she has found throughout the state while trail riding in an effort to help maintain an active and viable trail system in Connecticut.

She greatly appreciates the land that is available for outdoor recreation. She feels that her contribution in the promotion of state-owned lands and local open spaces to be very important. Ruth enjoys working to help educate, promote and protect our open spaces and trails within the state. It is very important to her that everyone to be able to enjoy our lands and resources. Her hope is that residents and our future generations will be able to continue to enjoy the wonderful opportunities that this state has to offer.

Congratulations Ruth on the well-deserved Recognition Award!

TRAIL NEWS

Sunrise State Park



June 14th was a community service day for 2 horse clubs, the **CT Trail Rides Association (CTRA)** and **Lower Connecticut River Valley Horsemen's Club (LCRVHC)**, along with a few local park goers & horse owners spent several hours brush clearing pulling, pruning, clipping and getting rid of invasive plants that were choking out the natural vegetation.

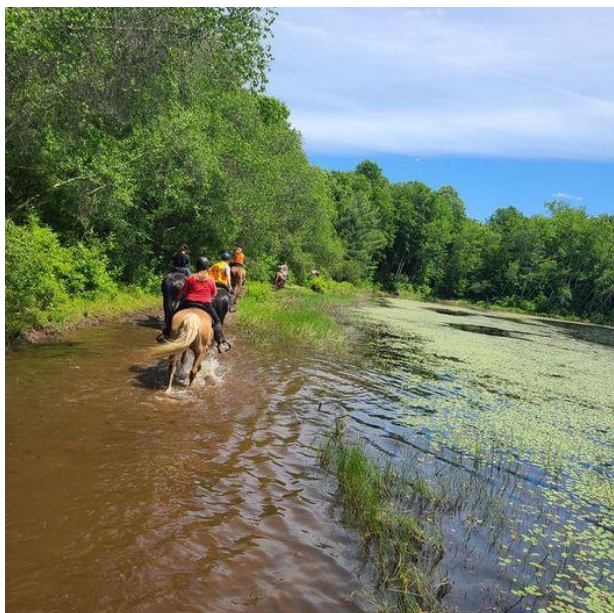
The LCRVHC celebrated their 60th Anniversary with a picnic and ride at Machimoodus and Sunrise State Park with a Ride and Picnic! Congratulations!.

CT Trails Day Events June



The **Bridle Path Conservancy** replaced an old bridge in the Cockaponset State Forest (Weber Woods). Thank you to all who organized, set up, and came and helped! And thank you to the Westbrook Foundation for the grant that paid for the materials for this and other bridges. A picnic lunch followed.

Reddington Rock Riding Club hosted a CT Trails Day Event – Blessing of the Mounts, Trail Ride & Chicken Barbeque.

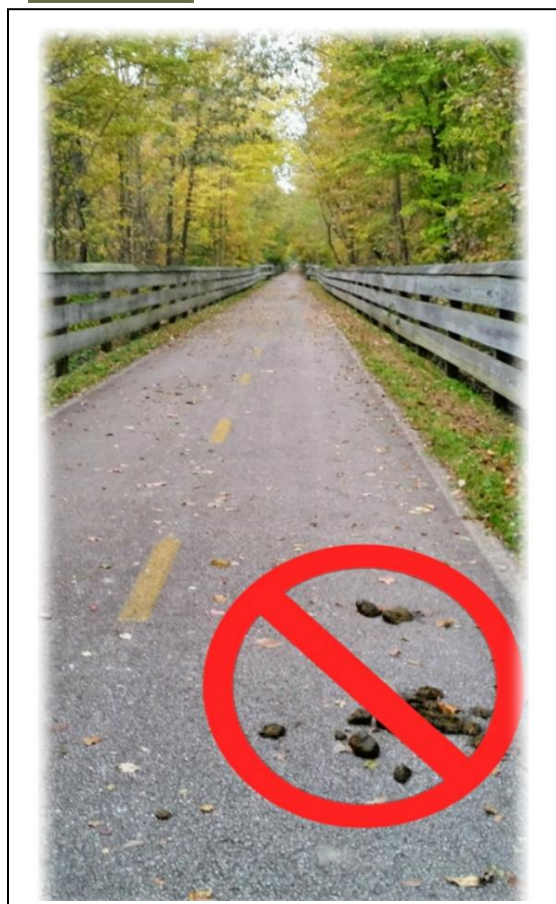




Trail Etiquette - What to Do with Horse Poo

By Lora Goerlich, American Trails contributor and equestrian expert,

Shares trail etiquette around horse manure.



Trail apples - the organic, naturally beneficial, digested balls of vegetation that host nourishing insect meals for birds and game fowl while also providing valuable minerals for butterflies, moths and dragonflies. On unimproved trail tread, manure will break down in about two weeks with a little help from sun, rain, dung beetles and foraging birds. **AND** unlike tacky, foul-smelling human or dog feces (which are more frequently found trailside) horse manure is not considered hazardous or toxic and carries no pathogens of concern^[1].

Manure on trails, at staging areas and camp sites is unavoidable. Knowing when to take it or leave it can be confusing for both equestrians and non-equestrians. Additionally, park agencies may not understand what to expect from riders and haven't established or posted clear guidelines. Unless otherwise posted, the standards listed below are appropriate expectations for riders:

Horse manure at parking areas

1. Trailer manure – take it home, *do not* toss trailer manure into the woods, fields, parking lots and definitely do not pile it around the base of trees.
2. Grass or dirt parking lot - horse has a bowel movement while tied to a hitching post or while tied to your trailer and there is grass or soil beneath their hooves, leave it but

consider spreading it out.

3. Gravel parking lot - horse has a bowel movement while tied to a hitching post or while tied to your trailer and there is gravel beneath their hooves, take the manure home.
4. Paved parking lots – take manure home; hopefully there aren't many concrete or asphalt parking areas for trail riders since they tend to be slippery which can create unnecessary hazards.
5. Manure bin is provided - use it. Manure bins at day use areas are not as common as they are at equestrian campgrounds.

Horse manure on natural trail tread even if the trail is shared

1. Leave it - in about two weeks it will breakdown benefitting birds, game fowl and insects during decomposition.
2. At trailside rest stops - scatter piles with your foot before remounting.

Horse manure at camp sites

1. Authorized manure bin or bunker is available - use it. Meticulously remove all the manure and uneaten hay where your horse was kept.
2. No collection bin - load all manure into your horse trailer or muck buckets; plan ahead, bring extra muck buckets then take it home and add it to your own manure pile. On average for 1 horse + 2 nights camping = 1 muck bucket full.
3. Back country (wilderness) camping and packing on USDA land - Forest Service guidelines require removal or scattering.

Horse manure on shared-paved trails does not break down as fast as it would on natural tread (dirt, sand, clay) These trails are often linear, somewhat narrow rail trails, frequently used by cyclists, inline skaters, walkers with or without dogs and/or strollers.

- Dismount, then kick it off the trail
- Cannot re-mount from the ground - ask a fellow rider to assist; the rider on the shortest horse or the most agile rider often gets this duty.
- Riding alone and cannot re-mount from the ground - consider choosing routes that don't include shared/paved trails.
- Finding manure someone else left behind - whether you are hiking, biking or horseback riding, remove it if you can; push it off the trail with your foot. Count this time as volunteer time if there is a way to do that

In an effort to assist meticulous equestrians, park personnel might consider strategic placement of mounting blocks in high use areas along paved trails for those who cannot remount from the ground. Mounting blocks can be as simple as a sturdy tree trunk section; a pre-fabricated molded rubber step; or as elaborate as a park approved permanent structure.

Additional considerations from my thirty years of park and riding experiences - Riders are usually aware when their horse makes trail deposit, especially if their horse stops to do its business, the sound of manure landing on pavement is hard to miss. Is it really a big deal to leave manure on paved trails? Yes, it is a “big deal”. The greenish brown, heaping piles are repulsive to non-equestrians, not to mention someone else must clean up after you. Even when manure on paved/multiuse trails is rare, it aggravates cyclists the most, who, in turn, rally against equestrians when complaints are lodged about dangerous cyclist behavior around horses. Common sense tells us that comparing manure on trails to dangerous cyclist behavior is illogical; they are entirely unrelated issues. Unfortunately, non-equestrians often prevail when this argument (often heated) arises, potentially leading to exclusion in new and existing trail opportunities for horse riders.

[1] Adda Quinn “Does Horse Manure Pose A Significant Risk to Human Health?” <https://www.bayequest.com/stat...>, March 1998, R.3 October 2001, (Accessed December 8, 2013)

Published March 16, 2021

About the Author



Lora served as a law enforcement-maintenance park ranger for twenty-five years with Metroparks of Toledo and was stationed at the “globally rare” Oak Openings Preserve. Throughout her career she was deeply committed to educating equestrians, non-equestrians and land stewards about proper trail etiquette, trail planning in natural areas, and to preserving equestrian trails. In 2011 Lora began teaching at international, national and state conferences to further encourage equestrian trail inclusion. She has been a board member for the Park Ranger Institute since 2015.

Her formal education includes an associate degree in horse production and management from The Ohio State University and a bachelor of science in environmental studies/resource management from The University of Toledo. Lora’s areas of expertise include: extensive knowledge of equestrian needs (trails and facilities), trail planning and maintenance, law enforcement issues, community involvement, best practice horse keeping, equine behavior, customer service, volunteerism, natural resource management, mounted patrol operations and multi-use-trail conflict resolution.

Lora started riding in 1986, crossing multiple disciplines before exclusively trail riding; you might also find her camping, hiking, kayaking, cross country skiing or cycling. Her current trail horses include: a Paso Fino mare, Tennessee Walker gelding and a rescued gelding of unknown background.

More articles by this author

- [The Equestrian Trail Riders Lifestyle](#)
- [More Than a Pet Peeve - Dogs Off Leash](#)
- [Trail Warriors](#)
- [Yellowjackets on the Trail](#)
- [Equestrian Etiquette - Protecting Trees and Park Structures](#)

FACT SHEET

Department of Animal Science,
University of Connecticut



Effective Horse Management – Horse Management Series

Lighting and Your Horse

Jenifer Nadeau, M.S., Ph.D

Associate Professor Equine Extension Specialist
Department of Animal Science

At a meeting I attended, Dr. Barbara Murphy from University College in Dublin, Ireland spoke about circadian and circannual regulation in the horse: internal timing in an equine athlete. A circadian rhythm lasts approximately 24 hours and exists under constant conditions. It can be synchronized by external signals (light/dark are the most important) and is endogenously (within the body) generated. It is unaffected by changes in temperature. Feeding and exercise schedules are secondary cues that help synchronize circadian rhythms. Nearly half of all genes are turned on and off rhythmically in a circadian manner somewhere in the body. A circannual rhythm lasts approximately 365 days and also persists under constant conditions. It can be synchronized by external signals like light. Weather conditions have a secondary impact, as does higher levels of nutrition.

Natural daylight contains a lot of blue light. Incandescent bulbs are primarily orange/yellow light while fluorescent bulbs have very little blue light. For a long time we have put mares under lights to simulate a longer day length to induce earlier ovulations and also assist with hair coat shedding, Dr. Murphy developed the Equilume light mask which emits blue light into just one eye and found it worked just as well as bright 200 watt barn lighting at influencing hormone rhythms in the horse. Her research showed mares that wore light masks during the last 100 days of pregnancy had shorter gestation lengths, and delivered foals that were 8.4 lb heavier, stood 15 minutes faster, and had shorter, finer hair coats. All of these benefits were attributed to the mare's experiencing a longer day length prior to foaling that mimics the longer days of spring.

To maintain a summer coat in a show horse, horse owners can start using blue light therapy before July 21 according to Dr. Murphy's research findings. This extends the long summer days for the horse. Blue light therapy can also be used to shed out a winter coat earlier in the year. Keep in mind that it takes 6 weeks for an animal to

respond to a change in lighting. . In addition to lighting better coat condition is linked to warm stables where horses are fed well.

The benefit of using red light in horse barns when doing nighttime chores was another interesting finding of Dr. Murphy's studies. Unlike white light, red light does not disrupt sleep rhythms such as those for melatonin. Horses are prey animals that react to threat and when we turn on bright lights after dark, it makes them more reactive. Using red light yields less intrusive nighttime interactions and facilitates a better appetite and more rest overnight.

Another finding Dr. Murphy discussed was that exercise is a known synchronizer of circadian rhythms. Exercise synchronizes gene expression in equine skeletal muscle and regulates muscle metabolism. It was found that, when training routinely occurs at a specific hour of the day, the horse's circadian rhythm becomes set to yield optimal muscle performance at that precise time of training. Given that, could competing or performing strenuous exercise at a time that disagrees with the normal training time, increase the risk of injury? The answer to that question is still being researched. However, Dr. Murphy's research did find that when traveling with horses to areas with a very different day length from where your horse lives, they will perform better at the destination if they perform as soon as they arrive or 3-4 weeks after arrival. Many give a horse one week to acclimate to the new place, but Dr. Murphy's finding suggest that is not optimal for performance as circadian rhythms need time to shift to the new light-dark cycle. Human travelers experience this issue as jet lag.

With the use of blue light therapy you can reduce the number of short winter days a horse experiences, but it does need to "see" typical winter day length at some point. Because of the horse's internal circannual rhythm, allowing the horse to see winter will reboot the horse's body clock so it will again physiologically respond well to the longer days of spring and summer. Therefore, owners should NOT expose their horses to artificially created summertime day length all winter long.

Every day, new discoveries are made that benefit the equine industry. Your equine extension specialists, professors and researchers are constantly working to improve horse health and well-being. I hope that you will reflect on this article and perhaps make a donation to an area of equine research, teaching, or outreach you find beneficial. Feel free to email with any questions you have at jenifer.nadeau@uconn.edu. Also, check out my web site <http://animalscience.uconn.edu/equine/extension/extensionIndex.php> for more information on upcoming horse specialist events and information. Thanks, and have fun with your horses!

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Horse Owner's Corner: How Horse Owners Can Help Protect Water Bodies

Dr. Jenifer Nadeau, Equine Extension Specialist, UConn; Education Committee Chair

It's that time of year when many of us look forward to some time on the water, either with or without horses. A horse owner's thoughts may turn to dreams of riding on the beach or swimming with your horse. Here's are some things to think about when we have horses around water bodies.

It seems like just above every horse lover has a fantasy of riding a horse down the beach or swimming with their horse in the water. However, we do need to ensure that we are only using those beaches that are open to horses and respect beach closures which may be seasonal. Also, equestrians should avoid allowing horses to defecate or urinate in water bodies which can cause contamination with nutrients. Also, avoid entering wildlife sanctuaries, bird and turtle nesting areas, and dune restoration areas that may have fragile or endangered foliage.

In the old days, we all dreamed of having a horse farm with a stream or pond running through it so that we would not have to carry water or create a watering system for the horses. But current environmental research shows that having horses drink out of water bodies directly may lead to erosion of stream banks, and pollution of the water with nutrients, pathogens, and sediment. A vegetated buffer will help to filter nutrients, protect the water body from pathogens and sediment coming from storm water runoff, and also may provide wildlife habitat.

To create a vegetated buffer, you may consider using a natural or landscaped buffer. An appropriate buffer may range from 35 to 100+ feet in width. This area would be from the water body up onto your property. Manure storage or sacrifice areas should be farther from the water body. If you are using a natural buffer, you will want to remove any invasive plants (see this link for help with identifying these: https://cipwg.uconn.edu/invasive_plant_list/). You can simply maintain the existing vegetation by no longer mowing the area and let trees and woody shrubs re-establish themselves, which may take several years. If you prefer to create a landscaped buffer, obtain a soil test (<https://soiltest.uconn.edu/sampling.php>) to reduce or eliminate the need to use lime or fertilizer. Plant native species and preferably a mix of trees, shrubs and ground cover. Most native species will provide wildlife habitat and require little or no fertilizer. Be sure to choose non-invasive shrubs and saplings that will help increase the uptake of nutrients. Choose grasses that are dense stiff species that will trap sediment.

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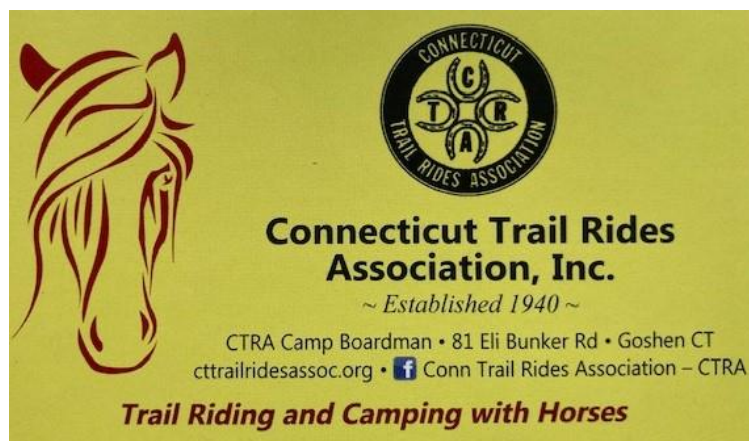
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Note: Listings in our business directory is a service to our members only, and does not necessarily endorse any individual, business, or product.

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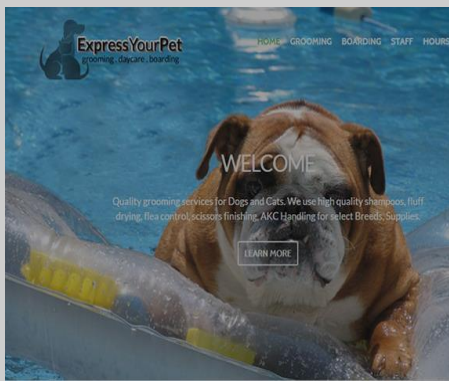


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[] Please give me the contact name of my CTSART Region Team Leader so I can contact him/her.

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