Connecticut Horse Council

"Horsemen United in Leadership, Service and Education"

2026 FALL NEWSLETTER

Happy Autumn



Hello Everyone, Happy Autumn!

Hope to see you all at our CT Horse Council Booth at the Equine Affair! Stop by our booth to visit and say Hi – in the ***Stroh Building****. and support us with your 2027 membership!*

CHC has been busy these past few months. We addressed the public hearing on the Improvements to the Larkin Bridle Trail. (See our letter addressing our concerns with the proposal on pages 9-12

CHC-VHP members met with the ***Avalonia Land Trust*** *and we have established a relationship that includes having the Volunteer Horse Patrol in their newly acquired Louis and Gladys Bond Preserve property, a 670.22 acre preserve in Oakdale, CT a subsection of Montville. CHC s looking for local riders to become members of the CHC-VHP. The President of Avalonia Land Trust, Dennis Main included the CHC-VHP in his message of the Avalonia trails Fall Edition. See Page 8*

We have participated in the No Child Left Inside Programs and are now looking for help at the ***Fall Festival taking place Saturday, November 14th at Hammonasset State Park****.- Page 4.*

If there is anyone willing to give up that day… (which happens to be the Saturday of the Equine Affair …., we would love and appreciate you to come forward to help out in promoting horses in our state! We are looking for 1 or 2 horses that can meet and greet the visitors of this event. Don't have a horse but would like to help? CHC can provide you with material for handouts at your table. If you belong to an organization, you can also help to promote horses with your club's material. Please contact Diane Ciano 203.910.9919

A presentation was made by President Diane Ciano at the 8th Annual CT Trails Symposium in October on "by The Multi-Dimensional Value of Equine Greenways: Health, Environmental, and Economic Impacts of Trail Riding" by yours truly. This was a great exposure to trail planners, engineers, Dept. Of Transportation, Trust for Public Land, Council of Governments and other user groups. The Power Point Presentation will be put up on the DEEP & CT Equine Advisory Council website as well as ours. Page 7

Rural Health Transformation Grant – Air Line SP Trail Grant: Up to $40 million in federal funding over five years to improve outdoor recreation along the Air Line State Park Trail with the goal of improving public health in rural communities. See Page

A virtual meeting on **Thursday, November 19, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.,** to discuss upcoming improvements DEEP will make to the **Air Line State Park Trail** and potential funding opportunities for municipalities along the trail. *If anyone would like to attend, please contact Diane for Zoom link*

Our next CT Horse Council meeting is **Tuesday, December 1st – 6:30 ***

*Please Note: For this meeting *only*, we will meet at ***The Rooster, Main St Newington, CT 06111.*** We will also be holding the **CT Equine Advisory Council meeting** along with celebrating the upcoming holidays**. Cost is $20.00 for snacks. Please RSVP to Diane by text 203-910-9919.**

Happy Trails

Diane Ciano

President

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- **We Need Your Support**
  We are a group of volunteers working for the equestrian community. Volunteers are wanted to help on committees to promote the horse industry.
  Join the CHC-VHP and be a part of promoting equestrian use on trails while providing a community service while having fun and riding your horse!
- *The CT Trails Symposium – CHC presented "**The Multi-Dimensional Value of Equine Greenways: Health, Environmental, and Economic Impacts of Trail Riding."***

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UP COMING EVENTS - Save the Dates

Equine Affair November 12-15, 2026, at the Eastern States Exposition in W. Springfield, MA!

Visit our CHC booth - Strough Building



Volunteers needed for upcoming DEEP – NO Child Left Inside: Contact Diane

This Fall Festival takes place at Hammonasset State Park. We are looking for 1 or 2 horses that can meet and greet the visitors of this event.

Don't have a horse but would like to help?

CHC can provide you with material for handouts at your table. If you belong to an organization, you can also help to promote horses with your club's material



Visit our Website:
www.cthorsecouncil.org *We continue to update our website. Missed meetings? Check out our "Meeting Highlights" of our past meetings under the icon "Publications" You'll be amazed at all the work we are doing, goals, accomplishments and how volunteers help to promote CHC and the Horse Industry.*
Can you help in any way?

Support Your State Horse Council for 2027 – Thank you

- *Members will receive the Community Horse – Free Digital Subscription by email.*
- Our next CT Horse Council meeting is **Tuesday, December 1st – 6:30 ***

We will also be holding the meeting for the **CT Equine Advisory Council**.
Join us at our final CHC meeting of the year to celebrate the season and all we have done.
****Please Note: For this meeting only,*** we will meet at
The Rooster, Main St Newington, CT 06111. **Cost is $20.00 for snacks.**
Please RSVP to Diane by text 203-910-9919.

Your CHC Representation around the state…

State Representation

Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
CT State Trails Plan
CT State Forest Plan
SCORP – State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan

CONNECTICUT EQUINE ADVISORY COUNCIL

CONNECTICUT GREENWAYS



Our Mission – Our Vision

The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to serving all aspects of the horse industry in Connecticut
The Vision of the Connecticut Horse Council is to be recognized as the leader in all issues concerning the Connecticut horse industry

Legislation We are a non-profit volunteer legislative advocacy group that informs the community of horse related legislation issues.

Education - Outreach We provide information our website, brochures, newsletters, Facebook page. We participate in DEEP No Child Left Inside Events and other similar local events. We promote horseback riding through our Volunteer Horse Patrol Program.

Emergency & Disaster – CT Horse 911 We provide information on our website. Lectures, demonstrations and workshops are available on Barn Fire Safety and Emergency Disaster Preparedness for both horse owners and first responders

Trails CHC educates and promotes the public on the trail riding community through our Volunteer Horse Patrol Program and attending other public events. CHC represents equestrian interests addressing the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) Plans, representation on the Connecticut Equine Advisory Council and the CT Connecticut Greenways Council. We comment on Forest Plans.

Road Safety CHC sponsored legislation that enacted state statutes that are printed in the instruction manual for motor vehicles operations for safe riding and driving of horses, and the public's responsibility when encountering horses on the roads. Pamphlets are available

Zoning We assist individuals and local governments with educational materials pertinent to horses and farms with extensive information on our website.

OUTREACH / EDUCATION:

We Want Your Support

We are a group of volunteers working for the equestrian community.

Volunteers are wanted to help on committees to promote the horse industry.

Legislation

Outreach / Education

Website & Marketing

Volunteer Horse Patrol

Trail Maintenance

CT Horse 911

Legislation Goals:

- Encouraging all equestrians to be aware of monitoring legislation involving horses, and farmlands, etc. and report to CHC so that we can bring this information to our members.
- We are looking for volunteers to Chair this Committee to help in getting the information out quickly.

Outreach / Education Goals:

Promoting and Supporting the Horse Industry through Education and Community Service

- Encouraging equestrians to join in on the Volunteer Horse Patrol Program and participate at educational events such as the DEEP No Child Left Inside programs

- Encouraging Horse Organizations around the state to periodically set up educational tables at trail heads, educating users about horses, dogs on leash and bicyclists regarding trail etiquette and how to pass a horse safely. CHC will provide material.

- Encouraging Horse Organizations to plan on holding a trail event once a year on National Trail's Day Weekend *(1st weekend in June). It can be a "Meet & Greet a Horse" educational event at a Trail head, Trail Clearing, organized trail ride for members, etc. or any event promoting trails and horses.*

WE would love to have horse events around the state, promoting and celebrating and promoting horses

Please contact Diane Ciano for more information

OUTREACH / EDUCATION:



CT Trail Symposium

The 8th Annual CT Trail Symposium was held at Southern CT State University in New Haven on October 2, 2026. Hosted by the CT Greenways Council, the Theme this year was Benefits of Greenways

Diane Ciano presented a PowerPoint of "**The Multi-Dimensional Value of Equine Greenways: Health, Environmental, and Economic Impacts of Trail Riding."** This presentation examines the vital role equestrians play in trail utilization and advocacy for expanding multi-use greenway networks that include equestrian-friendly infrastructure.

The PowerPoint included State and National American Horse Council (AHC) information on the economic value of the horse industry and addressed community benefits, trail etiquette for safety, environmental issues and stewardship. It included our Volunteer Horse Patrol and 14 Year Study. This PowerPoint will also become available on the DEEP & Equine Advisory Council website as well as CHC.

There was a variety of different attendees (115 +) of whom were town planners, Design Greenway Planners, engineers, DOT, DEEP, Trust for Public Land, Grass Roots Volunteer Planners, etc., which were spoken to individually after their presentations. The guest speaker was J. T. Horn, Director of National Trails Initiative, Trust for Public Lands. One of his topics was the Mono Pond State Park Reserve – Planning and Design Project.

Other Education Available: Equestrians can follow updates on what is going on with the News from the Coalition of State Horse Councils https://conta.cc/3Sw8W4F

TRAIL REPORTS:

Avalonia Land Trust:

New opportunities for equestrian trail riding are coming to CT.

CHC-VHP members met with the Avalonia Land Trust and we have established a relationship that includes having the Volunteer Horse Patrol in their newly acquired land.



GThe Louis and Gladys Bond Preserve

Diane Ciano, Meg Sautter, and Diane Morton were invited by the president of the ALC, Dennis Main, to walk a newly acquired property in Oakdale, CT a subsection of Montville. The Louis and Gladys Bond Preserve property, a 670 acre preserve, currently has 5 miles of trails. The trails are multi-use for walking, biking, jogging, equestrian riding, birding, photography, bow hunting (in season), and cross-country skiing.

Avalonia's conservation efforts throughout southeastern Connecticut have expanded with the acquisition of its largest parcel of land to date. The Grand Opening Day was held on Thursday October 22, 2026. at 777 Chesterfield Rd, Oakdale, CT.

President of Avalonia Land Trust, Dennis Main *included the CHC-VHP in his message of the Avalonia trails Fall Edition: "… We are fortunate* to have the Connecticut Horse Council's Volunteer Horse Patrol involved to include Bond in their patrols. Since 2003, the organization has provided 32,779 patrols in 110 lands statewide, including forests, state parks, wildlife management areas, land trusts, and municipal parks" …

CHC is looking for local equestrians to join the Volunteer Horse Patrol to ho patrol and help to maintain the properties.

You can visit their website to support and join their efforts at **https://avalonia.org/** for a list of the many properties that the ALC stewards and for ways to support this organization and their dedication to keep open spaces available in CT.

Camp Laurel, Lebanon

Camp Laurel in Lebanon, a 350-acre forestland has an existing 6-mile trail system in proximity to the Air Line State Park Trail. The Camp Laurel property was previously owned by the Girl Scouts of Connecticut. The girl scouts held a full summer camp program for many years. Horseback riding was among the activities they girls enjoyed. Credit for the purchase of Camp Laurel goes to the **Trust for Public Land** (TPL), a national non-profit organization that works to connect everyone to the benefits and joys of the outdoors. The TPL is in the final stages of handing over ownership of Camp Laurel to the ***Avalonia Land Conservancy*** (ALC). The ALC, founded in 1968, is a land trust organization in CT dedicated to conservation through the acquisition of open space. The ALC will own and steward the Camp Laurel Property with a focus on public access.

The transition of Camp Laurel in Lebanon from the TPL to Avalonia Land Conservancy is still in progress.

Larkin Bridle Trail

CHC attended the Public Design Progression Presentation Proposal was on 9/8/26. The proposed was for the areas that were destroyed by the storm. The members of CHC & the CT Equine Advisory Council discussed this proposal and it is not acceptable for this historic linear railroad bed trail. A formal joint letter regarding the proposed SLR design improvements was sent out to the DEEP regarding our concerns regarding critical safety and accessibility elements within the current project scope, specifically relating to the proposed 12% paved grade at the Southbury end, 8% grades on the 3 other areas, bridge designs, and the critical need for a public safety crosswalk signal at the Route 67 trail crossing. *(See letter below)*

November 6, 2026

To: Jeremy Hall, Assistant Director, Division of State Parks
From: The Members of the CT Horse Council & CT Equine Advisory Council (EAC)
CC: Amanda Jacobson, David Cooley, Jared Rice, Jeff Dery, Kimberly Bradley

Dear Assistant Director Hall:

The Members of the CT Horse Council and CT Equine Advisory Council (EAC) attended the Public Information Presentation in Southbury on September 8, 2026. We discussed the proposal at our recent meetings and feel the SLR design of the project is unacceptable for the following reasons:

1. Unacceptable 12% Grade at the Southbury End
The project design at the Southbury end features a 12% grade, which is entirely too steep and simply not feasible for a multi-use trail. SLR mentioned that this section would be paved. Paving is completely outside the scope of reconstructing this historic railroad bed. A paved, steep slope is unacceptable; it creates a highly slippery surface that will cause injuries to both bicyclists and horses, while potentially encouraging the area to be used as a ramp for rollerbladers, trick bicyclists, and others.

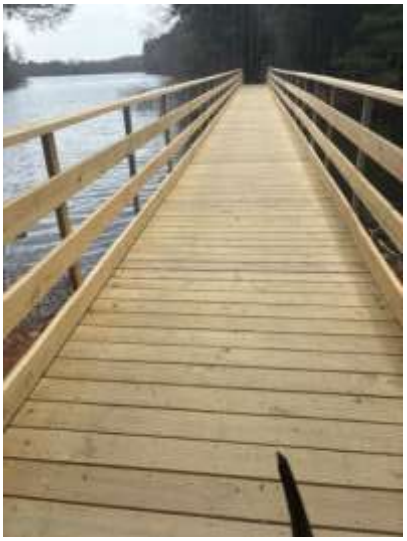
Rather than paving a dangerous 12% grade—which will become a severe safety hazard particularly during winter months—this area of the project must be reconsidered. Keeping a natural surface is an avoidable accident waiting to happen, and it aligns properly with the historic, multi-use, natural surface of the rest of the trail.

SLR staff seemed to dismiss this area under the claim that "the trail does not extend too much further" and that building a bridge here would be too expensive. This claim is inaccurate. The trail extends to Kettletown Road, and providing an improved parking lot there would naturally attract more users to access the trail from this end.

Furthermore, local residents noted that the trail originally ended at the former IBM property, which features beautiful views and is now owned by the Town of Southbury. This area would be an ideal location for the terminus of the trail, perhaps incorporating a park-like space. While this is something the town must consider within its own property plans, encouraging Southbury to improve the original trail system on the IBM property will greatly enhance this historic trail corridor.

DEEP and SLR must find a way to incorporate a bridge at the Southbury end of the trail instead of building a ridiculous 12% paved grade. A bridge will keep the trail at a continuous, safe, and level grade, preserving another 1.6 miles of the original trail to Kettletown Road. This solution will benefit all trail users and incentivize the Town of Southbury to improve the connecting trail on the IBM property.

2. Bridge Design and Materials



Throughout the presentation, SLR mentioned that the three proposed bridges are engineered way above FEMA standards. By re-evaluating the costs of over-engineering those three bridges, funding could likely be freed up to construct the necessary bridge at the Southbury end.

We would like clarification regarding the specific surfacing materials and structural designs intended for these bridges. Will they feature kickboards, as displayed in the presentation graphics? SLR mentioned metal fencing. DEEP and SLR should look to existing, aesthetically appropriate bridges for inspiration; for example, a project in the Town of Wolcott features a beautiful wooden construction that feels significantly more natural for a trail setting. The referenced Wolcott structure is 134 feet in length with a 6-foot width spanning a body of water.

We recognize that the significant height distances and drops involved in this project require a steel base. However, a deck width of 8 to 10 feet would be far superior. While using a metal fence is a sound idea to prevent individuals from leaning over or throwing objects, placing wooden boards along the fence line would help the structures blend into the environment. The height of the safety railings will also need to be increased. Finally, establishing a slip-proof surface is a critical concern, especially since this trail is utilized year-round by a diverse variety of user groups.

3. Unacceptable 8% Grade Levels

An 8% grade is proposed for the remainder of the trail system. This level is also entirely unacceptable and too steep for a multi-use trail. DEEP already faces significant challenges securing funding for personnel, let alone repairing trail damage caused by bicycles, horses, natural surface erosion, and washouts. DEEP simply does not possess the maintenance budget or resources required to repeatedly reconstruct this trail as it erodes.

According to Universal Trail Slope Standards, any grade exceeding a 3% to 5% average is highly discouraged for multi-use infrastructure, as it causes heavy tire skidding for bicycles and severe hoof erosion for horses. Funding must be utilized correctly to make this trail safe and sustainable by maintaining a maximum 5% grade, though a 3% grade is highly preferable.

It is best to utilize the funding available to make this trail safe and sustainable with a minimum of 5% but ideally 3% grade.

Universal Trail Slope Standards

Trail Classification	Recommended Grade	12% Grade Suitability
ADA / Universally Accessible	**5% or less** (up to 8.33% for very short stretches with resting intervals)	❌ **Strictly Unacceptable.** It exceeds federal Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) limits.
Multi-Use / Biking / Equestrian	**3% to 5% average**	⚠️ **Highly Discouraged.** It causes heavy tire spinning/skidding for bikes and severe hoof erosion for horses.

Standard Hiking (Natural Surface)	**10% or less average**	✔ **Acceptable only as a maximum grade** for short pitches to clear obstacles or gain a ridge.

4. Public Safety Infrastructure at Route 67 Crossing



While this project is actively being constructed using FEMA funding, DEEP must revisit the safety proposal previously submitted by the CHC for this 10.8-mile trail. The Larkin Bridle Trail is a Designated Greenway that intersects a state highway. We previously engaged DEEP, the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG), the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Town of Southbury in multiple meetings regarding the installation of a safe equestrian and pedestrian crossing light where the trail crosses Route 67 in Southbury. For unknown reasons, this critical safety item has once again been cast aside.

This highway crossing is exceptionally dangerous for horses, pedestrians, and cyclists alike. Route 67 is heavily traveled by fast-moving vehicles. On one side of the trail crossing, a very steep incline forces users directly onto the edge of the roadway, leaving almost no safe clearance to wait for traffic to stop in both directions. The trail is heavily used by all groups, including joggers, dog walkers, equestrians, young children, and parents with strollers.

The safety of all users at this road crossing will benefit from a crosswalk light. Having an activated beacon or signal that will actually stop traffic when someone is trying to cross will help to save the lives of people and animals. As you know, motorists do not pay attention when they see pedestrians and do not slow down or stop when needed. We have received multiple reports of vehicles illegally passing cars that have voluntarily stopped to let trail users cross. It is only a matter of time before a catastrophic injury or fatality occurs. Your office has the authority to prevent this tragedy by deciding to protect public safety and provide a dedicated crossing light system, similar to successful pedestrian-activated warning beacons utilized by CTDOT on other major multi-use trail highway intersections across the state.

5. Horse Trailer Parking Access

Adequate parking for horse trailers has been a persistent issue along the corridor. The parking lot on Route 63 could be successfully expanded if DEEP coordinates directly with the DOT. Additionally, a former DEEP supervisor previously identified available DEEP-owned land on either Jeremy Swamp Road or Curt Smith Road that could be utilized. Trailer parking should also be established at the Kettletown Road entrance.

Historically, almost all requests submitted by the CHC receive a boilerplate response from DEEP stating that *"DEEP will support the CHC's efforts."* This language unfairly shifts the entire burden of trail and safety improvements onto a volunteer organization. For example, a previous DEEP response regarding the requested safety light on this Designated Greenway stated:

"CT DEEP will support Horse Council coordination with the municipality and CT DOT. The local municipality may be required to formalize request with District DOTs."

A separate request to expand trailer parking on Route 63 in Naugatuck received an identical response:

"CT DEEP will support Horse Council coordination with the municipality and CT DOT. The local municipality may be required to formalize request with District DOTs."

An excerpt from another DEEP letter states: *"...the State Parks Division currently has a grant to improve the trail, improve parking and signage along the entire trail corridor. It is expected that trail visitation will increase once we have made these improvements."*

Attached for your review is the *DEEP Proposed Larkin State Park Trail Improvements* plan and corresponding map, dated November 2, 2023 (prior to the 2024 storm). DEEP explicitly proposed numerous improvements in that document that remain uncompleted, including the Kettletown Road entrance.

As an officially Designated Greenway, pushing the logistical and financial burdens of these projects back onto the CHC is neither fair nor reasonable. It is the fundamental responsibility of DEEP to ensure that state park trails are safe, properly maintained, and accessible to all designated user groups.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and prompt attention to these urgent safety matters. We look forward to your detailed response.

Sincerely,

Diane Ciano
President / Committee Chair
CT Horse Council / CT Equine Advisory Council

The Members of the CT Horse Council
The Members of the CT Equine Advisory Council (EAC)

Enclosures and Attachments:

1. DEEP Proposed Larkin State Park Trail Improvements Plan (Dated November 2, 2023)
2. Larkin State Park Trail Improvements Project Map
3. Photographic Exhibit A: Wolcott Trail Wooden Bridge Design (134' x 6' span)
4. Photographic Exhibit B: Proposed Reference Design for Route 67 Crosswalk Warning Light

Rural Health Transformation Grant – Air Line SP Trail Grant: A virtual meeting on **Thursday, November 19, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.,** to discuss upcoming improvements DEEP will make to the Air Line State Park Trail and potential funding opportunities for municipalities along the trail. *If anyone would like to attend, please contact Diane for Zoom link*

In July, Governor Lamont announced up to $40 million in federal funding over five years to improve outdoor recreation along the Air Line State Park Trail with the goal of improving public health in rural communities. The towns currently eligible for improvements under this grant are Portland, Hebron, Lebanon, Columbia, Windham, Chaplin, Hampton, Pomfret, Putnam, and Thompson. This funding is provided through the Rural Health Transformation Program grant; visit Rural Health Transformation Program for the full federal funding disclosure.
Year one of the 7-million-dollar grant required allocation of funds by the end of September. Contracting included more data collection on trail use, partner coordination support, contractors for vegetation management, resurfacing. DEEP will work on coordination on enhancement of equestrian parking and access. A letter was written to Deep - Eastern District - Eric Gileau cc: Kim Bradley, Matt Quinn Mashamoquet Area Supervisor and ALTP President, Bruce Donald. asking that grant money to be spent for **horse trailer parking in Goodwin State Forest**. This parking area would give equestrians access to the

Airline Trail and the 15-mile multi-use loop trail to the Lost Silver Mine Horse Camp in Natchaug State Forest. *(See letter below)*

Goodwin State Forest - Equestrian Trailer Parking area

to Deep- Eric Gileau, Kim Bradley, Matt Quinn, Bruce Donald-(ALSPT)

Hello Eric,

Nice to talk with you today regarding the ALSPT funding for 7 million dollars and a reminder that the equestrian community has asked for horse trailer parking to access the ALSPT in Goodwin Forest for many years as the parking area at the Conservation Education Center on Potter Road limits both horse trailers and other vehicle visitors.

It is my hope that you will help to be the voice of the equestrian community on the committee regarding the above-mentioned funding that is available to enhance this well used section of the ALSPT.

I mentioned in our conversation that further down on Potter Road toward the ALSPT could possibly be made available for pull over parking as you can see the Horse symbol on the bottom of the Goodwin Map trails (attached).

Also attached is the Natchaug/Goodwin map that shows the suggested multiple use trails that the CT Horse Council marked out connecting to both forests.

The CHC has addressed this request on past Forest Management Plans and the most recent (2025-2026) is attached. On page 33 of the Plan, it mentions parking:

GSF supports a 6-mile portion of a 15-mile equestrian trail which extends north into neighboring Natchaug State Forest. The equestrian trail traverses portions of the Airline Trail, the Blue-Blazed Trail system, old cart paths, and Town Roads between Rte. 6 in Chaplin / Hampton and Rte. 44 in Eastford.

The plan calls for brushing out a currently unused road toward the end of 11th Section Road to serve as pull-in pull-out horse trailer parking nearby to two trail access points. Currently horse trailer parking is limited. Trailers using existing parking lots can significantly limit parking for passenger cars, and trailers are often observed parking in poor spots along Town Roads. Brushing out this 300-foot section of 11th Section Road will create space for horse trailers to park on the shoulder, enable other horse trailers to bypass parked vehicles, and allow for drive-in drive-out horse trailer access to the forest. It is recommended that DEEP establish signs at this location to inform users that this specific parking area is solely for use by horse trailers. Additional signage at existing parking locations to direct horse trailers to dedicated horse trailer parking spots will help minimize future parking issues associated with trailer's using vehicle parking lots.

Thank you in advance for advocating and passing this information onto the committee that will be making the decisions on how to best utilize the 7 million dollars. It will be appreciated that the equestrian community finally gets a designated parking area to access the ALSPT, Goodwin and Natchaug State Forests.

Please keep me informed of the upcoming public hearing.

Respectfully,

Diane Ciano
President, CT Horse Council
Volunteer Horse Patrol Supervisor

Report from DEEP Trails and Greenways Coordinator, Kim Bradley:



CT DEEP Signage Policy Update: CT Trails and Greenways program has prioritized trail blaze order, which was completed in August 2026. We then worked on pilot of trail maps updated printing, which is in requisition process now. This order is next on the list and anticipates a requisition this fall, unless it is determined to request focused sign printing funds through next CT Rec Trail Grant.

The Preserve: Greatly appreciate the input from Equestrian community, working toward a final trail plan that will incorporate input provided, will be presented to the Conservation Management Committee (coordinated committee between the Town and CT DEEP). Anticipated plan by end of 2027.

CHC-VHP member, Elizabeth Kennedy submitted her report regarding trails and parking at the Preserve:

The Preserve: ***Suggested Equestrian Comments to trail system and parking areas:***

NOTE*: In response to Kim Bradley asking for suggestions for sustainable trails, Liz was asked to create a report so that Kim could forward it onto the planners of the Preserve.*



The easiest parking area for horse trailers at The Preserve is on Rte. 153 in Westbrook. Currently if the park is not busy and vehicles are not spread out, we can fit 6 trailers in the area.

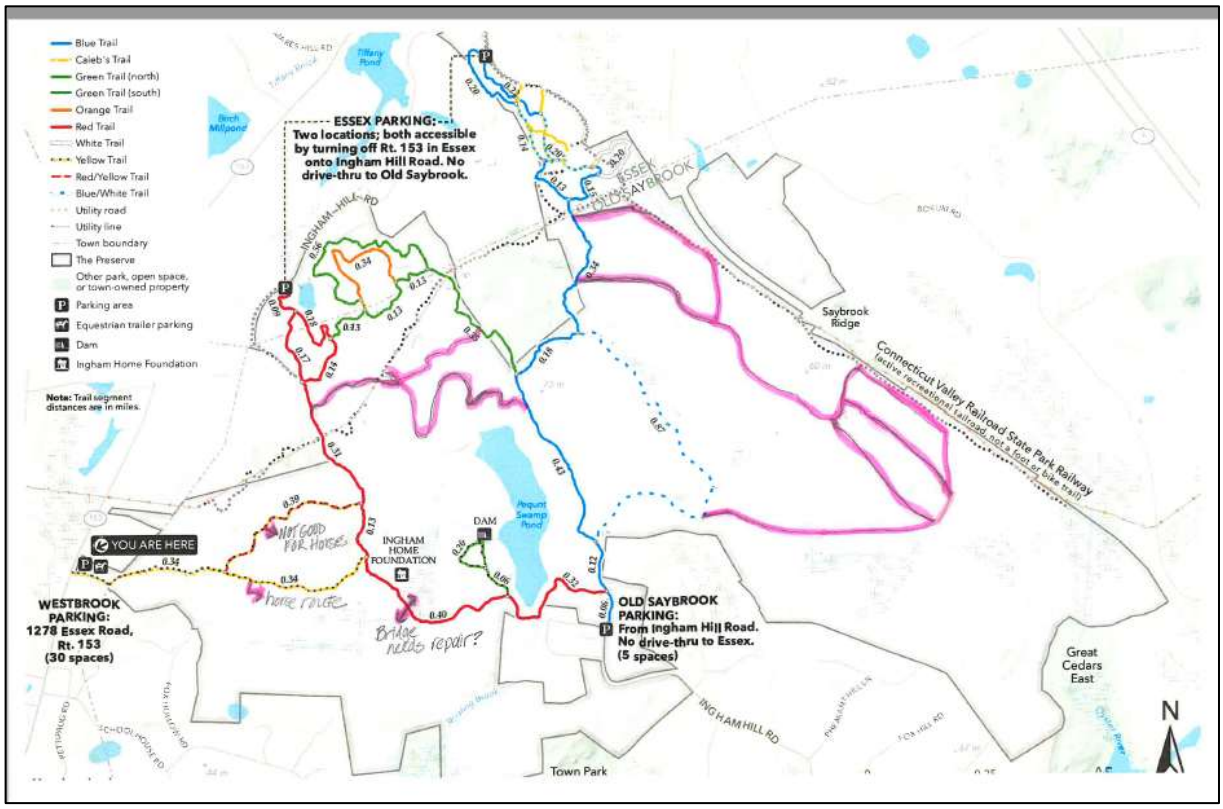
There are two other parking areas close by located off Ingham Hill Road in Essex, that do not accommodate space for trailers as well as the parking area on Ingham Hill Road in Old Saybrook.





A suggestion to create additional parking is to utilize the picnic area to expand the lot. Not many users utilize the area. An alternative would be to move the picnic tables to the side of the parking area where there is shade.

Horse traffic typically starts from the 153 entrances. I have identified on the map that the yellow entrance route is the best horse route due to footing and terrain. I usually head out on the Red trail to Essex and turn off on the Green trail and connect with the Blue trail to make a nice loop of 6 to 7 miles. These trails tend to be used heavily by bike riders and dog walkers. I have had no issues with either group, the majority of people are familiar with the trail yield and leash requirements. With the Red trail bridge in need of repair, I limit the time I spend on that trail with co-riders whose horses will cross running water. Many horses will not cross that area, so it does limit the use for all users including bikes and walkers. To the right on the map and off the Blue and White trail are some old, unmarked trails that may have been roads at one time. The marked areas in Pink are approximate areas I enjoy riding. This area seems too far for the bike riders and dog walkers. I am lucky if I see another person. I will do a larger loop and connect with the Blue Trail to add miles on to my ride.



<u>Naugatuck State Forest</u>: On talking to Supervisor Jeff Dery at the Public Design Presentation regarding expanding the parking area at the Naugatuck State Forest to accommodate horse trailers, it was said that DEEP plans to close the area with fencing because of people swimming in the reservoir and other illegal activity in the spring & summer months. This is unacceptable that legitimate trail users will not be able to access this forest. CHC will address this issue.

<u>OTHER REPORTS</u>:

$10.5 Million Awarded Through Connecticut's Recreational Trails Grant Program
Governor Lamont Announces State Grants for 50 Projects To Plan, Build, Expand, Restore, and Improve Recreational Trails Across Connecticut 10/01/2026:
https://portal.ct.gov/governor/news/press-releases?language=en_US

<u>CT Forest & Park Association:</u> ***Kristin Connell, CT Forest & Park Association reports:***
We are beginning to work on our next Strategic Plan (5-yr). There will be an opportunity for partners/ donors to share input via an online survey in the coming months. There will be a QR code in the next issue of CT Woodlands.
We have about one month left of our CT Woodlands Conservation Corps (CWCC) season with trail projects on the Mohawk and on the NET planned.
Upcoming volunteer work parties for the Fall are posted in our volunteer portal (which folks can access via our website).

Horse Owner's Corner:

Timely Tips – How to Have a Great Winter with Your Horse: Dealing with Snow Loads and Ice
by Dr. Jenifer Nadeau, UConn Equine Extension Specialist and Education Chair of CHC

Like many New Englanders, you may dread winter. But, it can be a great time to appreciate what you have and enjoy a short period of rest or a different type of recreating if you so desire. There are many things to consider when preparing your horse and its environment for winter.

The first thing to consider comes before the first flake hits the ground. Make sure that water is not ponding up in parts of the pasture and areas around the barn to avoid having horse or human fall, since these puddles often lead to ice formation. With the intensity of rain and storms during the other seasons, erosion can occur, and this can lead to ponding resulting in ice. Some ways to deal with the issues causing these conditions can be found here: https://ctrcd.org/wp content/uploads/2017/10/GOODHORSEKEEPINGBMP_WEB.pdf You will want to take a close look at the section on diversions and sacrifice areas.

Once winter has arrived, keep drives clear of snow so that emergency vehicles can access the property. If ice does form, you will want to find ways to keep you and your horse safe. Some simple things you can do includes obtaining some footwear traction devices for you when walking on ice, such as Yaktrax, Stabilicers, or Microspikes (UConn Extension does not promote any of these specific products). Also have some ice melt (pet-safe products of course!) and/or kitty litter or sand on hand to spread where you and the horses walk.

If you have a new roof installed, be sure that it has been built according to the building code. Before winter arrives, make sure the roof of your barn or other buildings are structurally sound, and have intact shingles intact so that they do not blow off creating leaks or a danger to animals. Consider installation of snow slides that can help remove snow. While a snow slide might scare the horses at first, it will prevent the snow from building up on the roof. Keep gutters clean and free of debris to prevent ice buildup leading to ice dams and roof damage.
Have an evacuation plan and practice what to do in the event of a roof collapse.

Next, consider snow load. Snow load isn't too much of a problem for buildings with metal roofs since although the snow may be around for a few days especially if it is a snowstorm followed by rain that turns to ice or an ice storm, once temperatures warm up, snow will slide off the roof. Most structures are safe for 20 to 25 pounds of snow loading per square foot, with some of the newer constructions being good for probably 30 to 35 pounds per square foot. For a roof built to handle 20 to 25 pounds of snow loading per square foot, that translates to handling about 6 feet of dry, fluffy snow or one foot of wet, heavy snow. Now is a good time to find out how much snow the roof can handle.

If you are concerned the roof is at risk for collapse, you should have a professional remove snow from the roof. Concerning signs include doors or windows that you can no longer open, swelling from collapsing knee braces, sagging roof lines, and doors or windows that no longer open. Cracking, popping or squeaking noises might indicate the roof is under stress. Buildings with large spans between supports, like indoor arenas, are typically at greatest risk of suffering a collapse.

Consider installing snow guards on your roof. They are used to break up sheets of ice and snow as they fall off the roof. This can help avoid hurting people or animals as well as property damage. Snow guards have other names including snow breaks, snow blocks, snow catchers snow cleats, snow stops and gutter guards.

For horses, shoes can make all the difference. Consider getting snowball pads and perhaps adding borium or frost-ribbed nails if you plan on riding your horse outside this winter. Speak to your farrier about which traction device will work best for your horse.

Horses need to continue drinking in winter. Just like in humans, this will keep them healthy and hydrated, and in horses it helps to prevent impaction colic, a major concern in winter. Reduced water intake also results in reduced feed consumption by horses. According to studies, horses prefer water that is not too cold. A study by the University of Pennsylvania found that horses drank 41% more water when it was heated rather than when it was allowed to stay at near freezing temperatures. During winter months, increase the temperature of water to 45 to 65 degrees F to maximize consumption. Also, be sure not to also have icy water present because when icy water was present, horses would drink the icy water exclusively, but less volume compared to when only heated water was present.

Winter doesn't have to be dreaded. We can all find something to appreciate about winter. By following these tips, you can feel more excited about seeing that first flake hit the ground. Feel free to call or email with any questions you have: (860) 486-4471 or jenifer.nadeau@uconn.edu. What topics would you like to see in the horse owner's corner next month? Send ideas to jenifer.nadeau@uconn.edu. Thanks, and have fun with your horses!

Sources:

1. CT Horse Environmental Awareness Program - https://ctrcd.org/wp content/uploads/2017/10/GOODHORSEKEEPINGBMP_WEB.pdf Accessed 7/23/26.
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5. Lochner H. and Janni K. 2024. Managing snow on horse farms. Farmer's Advance. https://www.farmersadvance.com/story/life/2024/01/03/managing-snow-on-horse-farms/72096086007/ Accessed 7/23/26
6. 4 Buyers Real Estate. 2019. What are those things on the roof? https://www.4buyersre.com/blog/what-are-those-things-on-the-roof Accessed 7/23/26.
7. Roof Things. 2013. Snow Guards – Known by Many Names. https://www.roofthings.com/snow-guard-alternate-names.html Accessed 7/23/26.
Snow Guards - Known by Many Names

UPCOMING MEETING: Our next CT Horse Council meeting* is **Tuesday, December 1st – 6:30** * Please Note: For this meeting *only*, we will meet at ***The Rooster, Main St Newington, CT 06111.*** We will also be holding the **CT Equine Advisory Council meeting** along with celebrating the upcoming holidays**. Cost is $20.00 for snacks. Please RSVP to Diane by text 203-910-9919.**

CT Horse Council Membership 2026

Please Support us in 2027 – Thank You

If your name is not on the supporting membership list, won't you please consider supporting your state horse council. It is greatly appreciated and needed. Thank you in advance.

*** = Volunteer Horse Patrol Members**
= WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

2026 INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Daniel Barnett – Providence, RI
**Ruth Beardsley – Bethany*
John Bennett – Putnam
Carol Birdsey – Middletown
Mary Bonville – North Stonington
Gary Borla – Torrington
**Danielle Borrelli – Northford*
Sally Carter – Nashua, NH
**Jean Casella – Higganum*
**Rain Chocholka – Waterbury*
**Denise Ciano – Wolcott*
**Diane Ciano – Plymouth*
Valerie Clark – Thompson
**Susan Crawford – Hampton*
**Tracy DeGennaro – Middletown*
Paul DeNio – New Hartford
**Arlene Doherty – Stafford Springs*
Michelle Dubner – West Hartford
**Melissa Evarts – Clinton*
Esther Fiddes – Bethel
**Kowboy Ken Forcier – Oxford*
**Vevette Greenberg – Oxford*
Kristie Gonsalves – Canton
Fran Hornick – Bridgeport
**Cory Iacino – Harwinton*
Valerie Kane – New York, NY
Theresa Kennedy – Killingworth
**ShawnaLee Kwashnak – Middlebury*
Kathleen LaTronica – Woodbridge
Cathy Latulipe – Torrington
Cynthia LeMay – Watertown
Andrew Liveten – Bethany
Lisa Mazzotta-Ivaldi – Glastonbury
Linda McLaughlin – Killingworth
**Gina McManus – Clinton*
**Billie McNealy – Waterford*
Jacqueline Mickiewicz – Marlborough
**Diane Morton – Lebanon*
Karen Muller – Bethany
Jennifer Nadeau – Andover

2026 INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Debbie O'Donnell – Allenstown, NH
Randy Olmstead – Terryville
Carol Parker – New Fairfield
Mary Petruzzi – Woodbury
Jennifer Reilly – Coventry
Katie Richards – Bethel
Gary Rutkauskas – Plymouth
**Janet Samperi – North Haven*
Celeste Santos-Rivera – Voluntown
**Meg Sautter – Newington*
Ann Marie Seavey-Cioffi – Danbury
Jeremy Serwer – East Woodstock
Marcia Sigman – Portland
Maryann Smith – Salem
**Ruth Strontzer – Haddam*
**Susan Taricani – Stafford Springs*
Anna Tardif – Lebanon
Aubrey Tarr – Willimantic
Bethany Thatcher – Sandy Hook
Penny Urbanowicz – Enfield
Karen von Bachelle – South Windsor
Teresa Waitkins – Stafford Springs

2026 FAMILY MEMBERS

Sarah Block – Monroe
**Cathy Clouse & Jim – Cheshire*
**Joel Conte & Joanne – Southington*
**Holly Ely - Jay & Nora – Granby*
Roger & Linda Ferraro – Salem
Linda Francois – Bethany
Ted Hintz – Middle Haddam
Carolann Keeley – Wilton
**Ed Levin & Patricia – Bristol*
Carla & Bob Lord – Southbury
Nancy & Richard Mangino – Cheshire
Alice & Neil Marrinan Family – Oakdale
Don & Jean Nordell – East Windsor
**Nancy Palermo-Lee & John–Westbrook*

2026 SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

If your organization is not on the supporting organizations list won't you please consider supporting your state horse council - Contact. Carol Birdsey. membership@cthorsecouncil.org 860-344-1804







www.granbyhorsecouncilct.com



Fairfield Bridle Trails Association
fairfieldbridletrails.com



Litchfield Hills Driving Club

www.litchfieldhillsdrivingclub.org



Lower Connecticut River Valley Horsemen's Club

www.lcrvhc.org



Middlebury Bridle Land Association

www.middleburybridle.org



Newtown Bridle Lands Association
newtownhorses@gmail.com https://nblact.com

Pomfret Horse & Trail Association www.pomfrethorseandtrail.com	www.reddingtonrockridingclub.com

2026 Business Member Directory

CHC would like to encourage horse owners to use the services of our member businesse**s.** This will help our industry to prosper. If your business does not appear here, consider joining CHC so that we may add your listing as well. This information is made available at our trade show booth and on our website.
Note: Listings in our business directory is a service to our members only, and does not necessarily endorse any individual, business, or product.









Dream Hill Farm
LLC

Horse Programs - Equine Events - Horse Boarding

East Haddam - Victoria Conlin 860-682-0834

Express Your Pet
Grooming • Boarding • Daycare
Date: _____
Time: _____
(860) 563-7387
www.expressyourpet.com
945 Cromwell Ave., Rocky Hill, CT 06067

Kathy & Peter La Tronica
Mary & Theron Simons
Owners
Info@LSBFarmSupply.com
Vendors@LSBFarmSupply.com

LOCK STOCK & BARREL

Lock Stock & Barrel
What can we feed or fix for you?
770 Amity Road
Route 63
Bethany, CT 06524
Store 203-393-0002
Fax 203-691-5450

Neigh.com

Boxford MA

Lauren

978- 409-5748

Rebel Therapy

Bovine & Equine Therapy

Cold Fascia Mobilization

Cyro Therapy

Rebecca Baker 860-398- 0831



United Ag & Turf
119 S. Main Street, East Windsor, CT
Russell Baker (860) 623-8296

PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR STATE HORSE COUNCIL WITH YOUR BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP

To advertise on our Website & Newsletter, please send your business membership to:
The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc. P.O. Box 57
Durham, CT 06422-0057
Send your Business card JPEG (preferred) or PDF to: Diane Ciano
DianeMCiano@gmail.com

Thank You!

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DianeMCiano@gmail.com

Thank You!

2026-2027 Officers and Board Members

The Connecticut Horse Council Officers and Board of Directors are elected volunteers who are dedicated to helping the equine industry grow.

President
Diane Marie Ciano
Plymouth, CT
DianeMCiano@gmail.com

1st Vice President

Laurianne Goulet
Cromwell, CT
860-997-6434
CTHorse911@cthorsecouncil.org

2nd Vice President

Meg Sautter
Newington, CT

3rd Vice President

Randy Olmstead
Terryville, CT

Treasurer
Laurianne Goulet
Cromwell, CT

Membership Secretary

Carol Birdsey
Middletown, CT
membership@cthorsecouncil.org

Recording Secretary

Carol Birdsey
Middletown, CT
860-344-1804
membership@cthorsecouncil.org

Chairman of the Board
Stewart Beckett, III, DVM
Glastonbury, CT

Board of Directors:

Denise Ciano
Wolcott, CT

Kowboy Ken Forcier
Oxford, CT

Vevette Greenberg
Oxford, CT

Gary Rutkauskas
Plymouth, CT

Ann Marie Seavy-Cioffi
Danbury, CT

Ruth Strontzer,
Haddam, CT

Committee Chairs:
Animal Health and Welfare
Laurianne Goulet
CTHorse911@cthorsecouncil.org

Education

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Associate Professor
Equine Extension Specialist
Unit 4040, Dept. Animal Science
University of Connecticut
17 Manter Rd., Storrs, CT 06269-4040
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jenifer.nadeau@uconn.edu

Legislative
OPEN

Publicity / Newsletter
Diane Ciano
Ann Marie Seavy-Cioffi

Road Safe
Diane Ciano

Trails
Diane Ciano
DianeMCiano@gmail.com

Web Site
Laurianne Goulet
CTHorse911@cthorsecouncil.org

Zoning
Cory Iacino

THE CONNECTICUT HORSE COUNCIL, INC. 2027

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Membership Classification (Check One)

[ ] **Individual** $20 [ ] **Family** $30 [ ] **Student** $15

[ ] **Business or Professional** $40 [ ] **Club** $40

[ ] NEW [ ] RENEWAL Membership decal available [ ] Static [ ] Sticker

Check which one you wish to receive with your membership. Additional decals are available for $1.00 each

How did you hear about the CHC?_____

CLUB or BUSINESS NAME (if applicable) _____

NAME_____

STREET_____

CITY / STATE/ ZIP_____

TELEPHONE_____**EMAIL**_____

NUMBER OF HORSES OWNED:_____

AREAS OF INTEREST (Please check all that apply)

[ ] Trails [ ] Zoning [ ] Booth [ ] Legislation [ ] Website [ ] Emergency/Disaster Preparedness

[ ] Volunteer Horse Patrol [ ] Education [ ] CT Horse 911

I would be willing to serve on a committee of my interest. [ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] More info, please

I would be willing to have my name listed with CHC Connections as a person to contact in an emergency involving horses, or for emergency resources. [ ] Yes [ ] No [ ] More info, please

Please describe resources/services you would be able to provide on the back of this form.

I wish to join The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc.

_____Date_____

Signature

Make checks payable to: The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc.
P.O. Box 57
Durham, CT 06422-0057

www.cthorsecouncil.org
Telephone: 860-344-1804

Connecticut Horse Council Connections is a volunteer network being developed to provide assistance and resources to our fellow horse owners in the state during times of natural or man-made disasters, or emergency incidents such as fires, loose horses, or trailer accidents. When there is an incident or emergency situation involving horses Connections will be a resource for local fire departments, first response dispatchers, and, as they continue to organize, with local CTSART Region Team Leaders. If you choose to participate in Connections, CHC will add your name to our list of people who can be contacted when help is needed.

[ ] CHC has my permission to make my name available to my local Fire Department/local Emergency Dispatcher as an experienced horseperson to call in the event of an incident involving horse/s.

My local FD is_____

Local Police_____

[ ] CHC has my permission to contact me to provide emergency trailering for horse/s.

Type/size of vehicle_____

[ ] CHC has my permission to contact me to provide temporary emergency shelter/housing/paddock space for horses which need to be relocated in emergency situation

Describe_____

[ ] CHC has my permission to contact me to provide emergency supplies (feed, bedding, or other) for horses involved in emergency incidents.

Describe_____

_____

[ ] I am unable to participate at this time but would like to be included in future alerts or mailings.

Although not yet mandated by Connecticut statute, the CT State Animal Response Team regions recognize the needs of large animals. CHC remains committed to assisting the five Region Team Leaders in their efforts to include horses in their disaster response plans.

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

I attest that I am at least 18 years of age and that the information I provide The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc. is true and accurate. I understand that I may, in any particular situation, prudently decline to offer my good faith services.

I further understand that The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc. acts only as a conduit for providing this information to individuals and/or organizations for the purpose of emergency response, and CHC is not liable for any injury or misadventure resulting in my volunteer efforts.