



**CT Horse Council  
TRAIL NEWS  
Volunteer Horse Patrol  
SUMMER 2009**



Submitted by Diane Ciano

***THANK YOU REPRESENTATIVE DEBRALEE HOVEY***

***For your work in establishing An Act Preserving Certain Horse Trails***



***Representative Debra Lee Hovey and her steed Danube***

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner May 30, 2009

***AN ACT PRESERVING CERTAIN HORSE TRAILS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) The Commissioner of Environmental Protection shall preserve the following trails for equine use: (1) Larkin State Park trails (Southbury-Oxford-Middlebury); (2) Airline State Park trails - south and north (Colchester-Hebron-Lebanon-Windham-Hampton-Pomfret-Putnam); (3) Hop River State Park trails (Bolton-Coventry-Andover-Columbia); (4) Moosup Valley State Park trails (Sterling-Plainfield); (5) Huntington State Park trails; (6) Natchaug State Forest trails; and (7) Cockaponset State Forest trails.

(b) Nothing in this section shall prohibit non equine uses by the public of the trails specified in subsection (a) of this section.

(c) The preservation of a trail by the Commissioner of Environmental Protection pursuant to subsection (a) of this section shall not be deemed an expansion of such trail.



*A ride at Steep Rock with Rep. Hovey  
NBLA President Cindy Miller, CHC – VHP members, KowboyKen, Diane Ciano, Rep Hovey, Vevette  
Greenberg & Alesia DiFederico*

CHC will continue to work with Representative Hovey in expanding the list of trails to preserve for equestrian use.

**A BIG Thank You to all the Representatives  
& Senators who supported this bill:**

Rep. DebraLee Hovey, 112th Dist.  
Rep. Thomas J. Kehoe, 31st Dist.  
Rep. Christopher Lyddy, 106th Dist.  
Rep. Rosa C. Rebimbas, 70th Dist.  
Rep. Janice R. Giegler, 138th Dist.  
Rep. John Mazurek, 80th Dist.  
Rep. Pamela Z. Sawyer, 55th Dist.  
Rep. Joan A. Lewis, 8th Dist.  
Rep. William Aman, 14th Dist.  
Rep. David A. Scribner, 107th Dist.  
Rep. Patricia M. Widlitz, 98th Dist.  
Rep. Brian J. O'Connor, 35th Dist.  
Rep. Elizabeth A. Boukus, 22nd Dist.  
Rep. Catherine F. Abercrombie, 83rd Dist.  
Sen. Andrew W. Roraback, 30th Dist.  
Rep. Mae Flexer, 44th Dist.  
Sen. Robert J. Kane, 32nd Dist.  
Sen. Joseph J. Crisco, 17th Dist.  
Sen. Donald E. Williams, 29th Dist.  
Sen. Andrea L. Stillman, 20th Dist.  
Sen. John A. Kissel, 7th Dist.  
Rep. Fred Camillo, 151st Dist.  
Rep. David K. Labriola, 131st Dist.  
Rep. John E. Stripp, 135th Dist.  
Rep. Arthur J. O'Neill, 69th Dist.  
Sen. Eileen M. Daily, 33rd Dist.  
Sen. Michael A. McLachlan, 24th Dist.  
Rep. Lonnie Reed, 102nd Dist.

# 2009 Connecticut State-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

There were several public meetings around the state in the fall of 2008 and spring of 2009 for public input to update the CT State Bike-Ped Plan. CHC encouraged equestrians around the state to attend these meetings and ask that DOT recognize that equestrians are **pedestrians** and are in need of safe ways to travel when road transportation projects to improve safety for pedestrian & bicycle traffic are addressed. By recognition and implementation to this plan, this can be the initial step for Town Planners and Regional Agencies to follow suit in providing **policy, consistent guidelines and designs** to a statewide plan for safety, signage and education about horseback riders and carriage drivers.

CHC members Diane Ciano, Jan Collins, Ruth Beardsley and Meg Sautter addressed the Bike-Ped Plan Steering Committee and several letters were addressed to the Department of Transportation and the Steering Committee to ask that equestrians be included in the Plan. CHC also asked several representatives to help support our efforts.

**A BIG THANK YOU** to **Representative Thomas J. Kehoe, 31st Dist.** who came to the foreground and proposed a bill to include equestrians in the plan. Although this bill did not pass, we feel it was instrumental in getting our point across to the legislative body as well as to those responsible for updating the plan.

CHC is happy to report that equestrians are included in the plan and on the CT Bike Map that will be available in print as well as on line. The map will include a section on horses and information from our Road Safe brochure. There will also be a grid of CT State Parks & Forests to visit and we were successful in getting horseback riding on this grid to let equestrians know what areas are accessible.



## Share The Road

The Connecticut Horse Council would also like to thank the Department of Transportation and the Bike-Ped Plan Steering Committee for their foresight and cooperation in addressing equestrian issues on the plan. The DOT now has a separate program called "Share the Road" that addresses all types of non-motorized travel including horses. There is a specific radio commercial that even has a horses hooves and neighing in it to remind motorists to "*Share the Road*" with horses. DOT also has provided a link from this program to the CHC website and has our CHC Road Safe brochure on their website. The ads are on buses, radios and news articles. For more information on the CT Bike-Ped Plan: [www.ctbikepedplan.org](http://www.ctbikepedplan.org)

**Please take the time to visit the website as DOT is taking a count on the visitors to the site from the CHC website: [www.cthorsecouncil.org](http://www.cthorsecouncil.org) or go to**

**<http://www.sharetheroadct.org/#>**

## MMM Trail Receives National Designation!

With the designation, the MMM (Metacomet Monadnock Mattabesett) Trail officially becomes the "New England National Scenic Trail." The New England National Scenic Trail winds for over 200 miles along trap rock ridges, through forests, and across a patchwork of state, municipal, and private lands in 39 communities spanning central Connecticut, western Massachusetts, and southern New Hampshire.

Approximately two million people live within ten miles of the MMM Trail, and certain sections such as Talcott Mountain, Ragged Mountain, Chauncey Peak, Higby Mountain, the Hanging Hills, Mica Ledges, Broomstick Ledges, Bluff Head, and many others are well known regionally for providing amazing panoramic views of the Connecticut River valley and Long Island Sound. The MMM Trail travels through several "classic New England landscapes" and harbors diverse natural resources fostered by the special soils and micro-climates associated with trap rock ridges.

The National Park Service is now authorized to provide funding and technical assistance to help CFPA, AMC, and others to maintain and protect the Trail. Another is that a "Trail Stewardship Council" with representatives from towns, landowners, trail user organizations, and many other groups will be established to oversee maintenance and protection of the Trail's national scenic values.

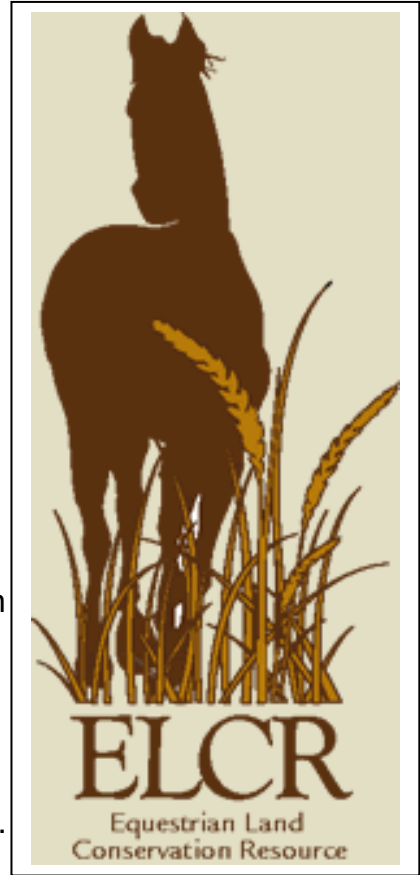
**Fred Mastele**, CHC First Vice President has been appointed the Durham Trail Stewardship Council Representative.

**CHC is looking for local equestrians who are interested in becoming a representative for their town that the trail traverses through *and/or* may have an interest in forming a "sub-committee" to address equestrian access.** These towns are listed below. If anyone is interested, please Diane Ciano at [Spirit76@snet.net](mailto:Spirit76@snet.net)

Avon, Berlin, Bloomfield, Durham, East Granby, Farmington, Guilford, Haddam, Madison, Meriden  
Middlefield, Middletown, New Britain, North Branford, Plainville, Simsbury, Southington, Suffield  
Wallingford, West Hartford

# News from the Equestrian Land Conservation Resource

We would like to update you on the latest news at ELCR on the federal Funding for Recreational Trails. Please ask your local equine organization to become a member of their *Equestrian Partners Program* and help to support this national organization that works very hard to educate enthusiasts about the importance of land protection and trail access and stewardship.  
[www.ELCR.org](http://www.ELCR.org)



## **Federal Funding for Recreational Trails**

Coalition for Recreational Trails Co-Chair Derrick Crandall asked us to let you know that the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is included, by name, as a separate program in Chairman Transportation and Infrastructure Committee's surface transportation authorization legislation. The RTP is shown in Section 1114 of Title I as being authorized for six years (with dollar amounts yet to be determined) and in Section 1203 as being administered by the Director of the new Office of Livability that the legislation would establish within the FHWA. Committee Print:

[http://transportation.house.gov/Media/file/Highways/HPP/OBERST\\_044\\_xml.pdf](http://transportation.house.gov/Media/file/Highways/HPP/OBERST_044_xml.pdf).

Congratulations and many thanks to all for helping the RTP make it over another hurdle on the way to reauthorization!

The CRT is continuing its work on both the House and Senate sides to secure increased funding for the RTP. Thanks to CRT member support, we are building an impressive list of signatories for our letter to Senate leadership, which is scheduled to be sent at the end of this month. We are also working with key members of the House to develop a "Dear Colleague" letter in support of increased RTP funding. CRT will be back in touch when it is time to ask Members of the House to sign on to that letter.

### Background info:

The RTP's primary purpose is to support any kind of recreational trail. It would normally be the primary funding source for equestrian trails. See [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/rtrbroch.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/rtrbroch.htm).

Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds must be used for projects that relate to surface transportation. The eligible list is at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/teas.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/teas.htm). There is no specific eligibility for equestrian facilities, but there is no prohibition, which is why we developed our Equestrian policy at [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/allow\\_uses\\_eqnm.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/allow_uses_eqnm.htm).

The House bill being promoted by Chairman Jim Oberstar proposes to:

1. Keep TE as a 10% set aside of regular Surface Transportation Program funds, as at present (with some amendments on how the funds are distributed within States).
2. Keep the RTP as a separate program, as at present.





## CT Greenways Council Update – Summer 2009

Submitted By Jan Collins, CT Greenways Council, CHC Trails Committee

On Friday June 5<sup>th</sup> 2009, the Connecticut Greenways Council sponsored its 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Awards Celebration at the Old Fire House in Thomaston, CT. Among the honorees were Representative Kehoe, Guerrera, and Senator DeFronzo for their legislative work involving Greenways and Transportation. Also 3 new Greenway designations were awarded including one along the Scantic River in Somers and Enfield which will be a multi-use (including horses) trail. A detailed description of the 3 designated Greenways are below

The Recreational Trails Program money for last year still has not been released keeping many recipients waiting and the program itself may be in jeopardy if it doesn't get renewed in this year's federal legislative session. Jan Collins wrote a letter on behalf of CHC encouraging our senators to renew this important source of revenue for our trail projects.

**Scantic River Greenway Extension** The 2009 Scantic River Greenway Designation is for an extension of the 2008 Designated Scantic River Greenway and the 2002 Designated Scantic River Park Greenway in Enfield. The multi-function greenway encompasses the Scantic River linking sections along the Enfield corridor to the Town line in East Windsor. The Greenway area is one of the most important natural resources in Enfield and enjoyed by a great number of its citizens on a daily basis. Characteristics include natural resource protection, recreational opportunity, and protection of unique geologic and historic features. The Scantic River Watershed Association is the acting steward working closely with the local municipalities and citizens. See their website: <http://www.scanticriverwatershed.org/>.

**Steel Brook Greenway, Watertown** This brook begins in the northern reaches of Watertown and flows south to the Naugatuck River in Waterbury. The establishment of the Steele Brook Greenway from Watertown to Oakville is the first step in getting citizens access to the brook which is an important community water resource providing active and passive recreation. The Town also obtained an America the Beautiful Grant that will be utilized to plant specimen trees and create a "Heritage Trail". A goal is to connect to the Naugatuck River Greenway and provide other links throughout Watertown.

**Shoreline Greenway Trail, New Haven to Madison** The Shoreline Greenway Trail will run through meadows and woods along the Sound from Lighthouse Point on New Haven Harbor for twenty-five miles to Hammonasset State Park in Madison. The trail will provide recreational, transportation and educational opportunities for all Connecticut residents. The Shoreline Greenway Trail, Inc. a non-profit organization has been fundraising, educating potential property owners and working on designing, building and maintaining this trail since 2003. Visit the website at: <http://shorelinegreenwaytrail.org/>.

For a listing of all designated Greenways:

[http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2707&q=323852&depNav\\_GID=1704&depNav=1](http://www.ct.gov/dep/cwp/view.asp?a=2707&q=323852&depNav_GID=1704&depNav=1)



**Apply for a [Greenways License Plate](#)  
and support Greenways funding projects**



## **Volunteer Horse Patrol Events**

Our Volunteer Horse Patrol members kept busy this spring from April through June. There was a variety of events that took place around the state with local members participating in some awesome events and rides.

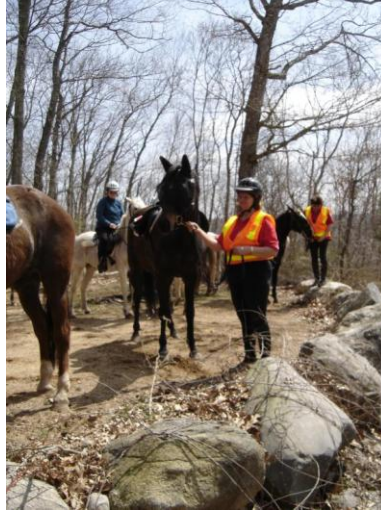
### **Blessing of the Volunteer Horse Patrol Mounts**

Machimoodus State Park - Sunrise Resort

On April 18<sup>th</sup>, 14 CHC members set out from the newly DEP acquired Sunrise Resort in East Haddam to ride the resort area and adjoining carriage trails of the Machimoodus State Park. A top a lookout point of the Salmon River, Steve Vicchitto, High Priest with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints, gave the members a blessing of protection for the riding season. VHP members present: Meg Sautter, Diane Ciano, Denise Ciano, Judy Beliveau, Alesia DiFederico, Shirley & Steve Vicchitto Barbara White, Gina McManus, Peg Lupone, Bev Torell, Jane Samuels, There were 2 other CHC members Peg Carlson & Jennifer Deprisco.



**Steve Vicchitto officiating the Blessing Ceremony**



**Peg Lupone**



**Gina McManus**



**On the trail to the look out**



**Salmon River View look out**



## **POMFRET LION'S WALK FOR SIGHT**

### **Pomfret Horse & Trail Association**

On April 25<sup>th</sup>, members of the Pomfret Horse & Trail Association (PHTA) and the Connecticut Horse Council's Volunteer Horse Patrol participated in the Lion's Walk for Sight along the Airline Trail in Pomfret. The five mile walk was to raise money for the Lion's program was a very successful event with over 100 participants. The PHTA also made a donation to the Lion's Club for \$25.00.

The VHP volunteers patrolled the areas of the Recreation Park on horseback and were couriers between check points. The Lion's were thrilled to have the offer to have the patrol members out on the trail as ambassadors of good will and to make sure everyone was safe and accounted for. It was a great opportunity to be out there and be visible to the local residents.



**CHC-VHP members Bruce McNeill, Antoinnette McNeill, Penny Foisey, and Vikki Fortier.**

## **Memorial Day Parade**

**10 CHC-VHP** members participated in the New Britain parade: Diane Ciano, Meg Sautter, Vevette Greenberg, Diane Morton, Fred & Cheryl Mastale, Jeanna Pellino, Shirley & Steve Vicchitto and KowboyKen. They were joined by two members of the CT Ranch Horse Association Terry Martin and Melanie Stoddard



**KowboyKen as Alexander the Great  
on Dorothy Vallee's Percheron, Buster**



**Jeanna Pellino leading the parade with VHP  
members following**



## **DEP - The Great Park Pursuit**

May 30<sup>th</sup>, Airline Greenway, Hebron

2 **CHC-VHP** members Hilery Slattery & Melissa Kennedy participated in this multiple use trail event with bikers and walkers representing the equestrian community.



Hilery Slattery & Melissa Kennedy

## **National Trails Day Events**

### **Cockaponset State Forest**

Two events were sponsored by the Lower CT River Valley Horsemen's Club and the Bridle Path Conservancy. Workers showed up at a **Trail Clearing - Repairing & Bridge Building Work Day** organized by Roger Ferraro and a **Pleasure Trail Ride** was led by Barbara White for equestrians.

**Pleasure Ride at Cockaponset in Weber Woods:  
Bev Torell and Barbara White**



**LCRVHC & BPC members rest on their newly built bridge  
Cockaponset near Beaver Meadow Rd. in Higganum**





## **Larkin State Bridle Trail:**

Four information stations were set up at town crossings along the 11 mile Greenway. This was a 5 organization group effort to educate all users groups on "Share the Trail." Organizations that were represented included The Connecticut Horse Council and the Volunteer Horse Patrol, Middlebury Bridle Land Association, Pineview 4-H Club, Oxford Horse & Livestock Association and the Southbury Horse & Livestock Association. Each station had information on their organization, Share the Trails educational brochures, refreshments and prizes for a Scavenger Hunt that included decorated horse shoes and key chains. Special thanks to Daisy Gmitter for her help with creating the flyers for the event.

**9 CHC-VHP** - Meg Sautter, Denise Ciano, Diane Ciano, Vevette Greenberg, Ken Forcier, Daisy Gmitter, Alesia DiFederico, Judy Beliveau, Lori Gmuer



**Denise Ciano, Meg Sautter & Diane Ciano  
with Balladeer & Aladdin - Rte. 63 Naugatuck**



**Sylvia Preston of Middlebury Bridle Land Assoc.  
with Daisy Gmitter and visitors - South St.**



**Visitors Sara & Rachael with Daisy Gmitter & Bucky**



**Lori Gmuer & Alesia DiFederico -  
Southbury Horse & Livestock  
Judy Beliveau & Linda Stack - Oxford Horse & Livestock**

## Pachaug State Forest

The Tennessee Walking Horse Breeders & Exhibitors Association (TWHBEA) in conjunction with the Connecticut Horse Council, Inc. held a Pleasure Ride on Sunday, June 7th. The theme of the ride was "Forging Partnerships" launching a trails initiative program that includes partnerships with the National Park Service, the Back Country Horsemen of America, Leave No Trace, Equestrian Land Conservation Resource and Best of America by Horseback.

Twenty riders rode out from the Frog Hollow Horse Camp on a 10 mile NEHT sanctioned ride, enjoying the trails and roads of our largest state forest.

Special thanks go out to the following individuals responsible for organizing this ride:

**Deborah Finco-Kent**, the Connecticut/ Rhode Island representative for the (TWHBEA) Trials Initiative - for organizing the event and providing the lunch.

Trail Route: **Phyllis Alexander**, **Cathie Mestermaker- Harris** and **Cathy Gluck**.

Raffle Prizes: **Daisy Gmitter** for providing a \$160.00 basket from Schick and **Patti Crowther** for getting a cowboy boot bird house and coupons from Green Acres Agway in Woodbury.

**11 CHC-VHP** members participating: Diane Ciano, Meg Sautter, Denise Ciano, KowboyKen, Diane Morton, Vevette Greenberg, Alesia DiFederico, Ariel Kent, Deborah Finco-Kent, Phyllis Alexander and Cathie Mestermaker Harris.



Diane Ciano, Denise Ciano, KowboyKen, Vevette Greenberg,  
Deborah Finco-Kent, Phyllis Alexander with Sahara

# HAPPY TRAILS