

# **The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc.**



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**P.O. Box 57**

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**[www.cthorsecouncil.org](http://www.cthorsecouncil.org)**

**CONNECTICUT HORSE COUNCIL  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
STATE FOREST AND PARK SERVICE EQUESTRIAN  
&  
Land Management Administrations**

**Revised 2009**



## **The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc.**

### **VOLUNTEER HORSE PATROL**

The Connecticut Horse Council (CHC) partnered with Dept. of Environmental Protection (DEP) in 2003 to create the Volunteer Horse Patrol (VHP) to ride and serve in State Parks & Forests.

This unique program benefits many aspects of the DEP, in helping to patrol and provide assistance to the DEP staff and public visitors to our state forests and parks. This also provides our membership the opportunity to volunteer their time to a community service, a cause that also benefits them and their equine companions.

The establishment of this Patrol Unit comes at a critical time, when drastic cuts on our State Budget have caused layoffs, staff & supervisor reductions. This situation is forcing the closure of many state parks & forests and reduction of services due to lack of State Funding.

The Volunteer Horse Patrol Program and Policies is based on the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Mounted Patrol Program and the National Park Service's Volunteers in Parks program (VIP).

The Patrol operates under the auspices of the Connecticut Horse Council in cooperation with DEP and other land management administrations. The primary responsibility is to serve as auxiliary **“eyes and ears”** for the protection of the resource and its visitors -- on the lookout for what is going on out on the trails. Members assist with non-enforcement tasks such as promoting trail etiquette as well as provide hands on services maintaining and repairing trails and other facilities. Volunteers provide non-confrontational services to the public including, but not limited to, information on rules and regulations, facilities and special features. Volunteers also assist with special events and programs such as the "No Child Left Inside" and continue to foster community involvement.

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

The program has been established in over 60 areas throughout the state, including state parks, forests, Greenways, land trusts, open spaces, and town parks. Expanding the program to other areas is a goal of the program.

If you or your organization ride on state DEP or other public or private lands with permission, this is your opportunity to give back for our riding privileges to ensure that we can continue to protect and expand the network of open lands available for trail riding throughout the State of Connecticut.

**We are seeking committed individuals and organizations, leaders and volunteers to join the Patrol.** The Volunteer Horse Patrol Committee is looking for individuals to help out with various functions.

For more information, and a Volunteer Horse Patrol Application please e-mail Diane Ciano [Spirit76@snet.net](mailto:Spirit76@snet.net).

# Volunteer Horse Patrol

Contained within this booklet is the job description of the VHP, educational material and goals of the CHC Trails Committee, telephone numbers of CHC-VHP Supervisors & Volunteer Coordinators. Also included is the DEP Volunteer Program Booklet.

This program is in cooperation with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) that involves state parks, forests, and Greenways. In addition to our patrols on state land, we also have patrols on land trusts, town parks and town open spaces. It is our goal to expand this program to other land management areas both public and private throughout CT. Another goal is to help map and mark multiple use trails.

The VHP is a symbol of unity among the equestrian community to share and protect our public lands, while providing a volunteer service to DEP and other public land users. As a member of CHC & VHP, we thank you for your support and look forward to a continued and growing relationship among horse owners in CT.

As a member, you are required to know all of the reading material contained within this booklet, complete the required training classes, participate actively in the program (our goal is a minimum of 8 hours per month), fill out your Patrol Logs and send them in quarterly to the CHC Coordinators. It is very important to note that this is a non-policing patrol, and in no way should there be any confrontations with any public users.

Please remember your duties and required record keeping. Record your times of patrol and keep separate hours spent clearing or maintaining trails (with DEP or other land governing administration's permission.) These records will help establish the VHP as a viable source for active volunteer service to the DEP or other LMA and will help to aid us in achieving our goals.

It is a good idea to E-mail or call the Volunteer Coordinator when you are available to patrol and where. There may be important things you should know or areas the coordinator may want you to re-visit. If the area is new to you, perhaps arrangements can be made to show you the local trails. Finding parking areas can also be communicated through your call. The list of Volunteer Coordinators & Staff is available in this booklet.

We also encourage volunteers to patrol without their horses. A volunteer can be part of the program, without a horse, as long as they are not in uniform while riding a horse that has not been evaluated by the Horse/Ride Assessment. You can patrol and record your hours on foot or bike as long as you can be identified by your uniform shirt or safety vest.

**This program was revised in 2009 to reflect the program's expansion to other land management administrations with the acronym "LMA" added and to clarify other wording and policy in the program.**

Thank you again for your help and support of the CHC-VHP program.

HAPPY TRAILS

Diane Ciano

## **CT Horse Council's Volunteer Supervisors**

**DIANE CIANO**

CHC Trails Committee Chairperson

[Spirit76@snet.net](mailto:Spirit76@snet.net) 203-757-1904 (C) 203-910-9919

**MEG SAUTTER**

[mmsautter@att.net](mailto:mmsautter@att.net) 860-666-6938 (C) 860-402-3824

## **CT Horse Council's Volunteer Coordinators**

### **AIR LINE GREENWAY (SOUTH) & SALMON RIVER FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** GINGER TULLAI - East Hampton, CT

### **BABCOCK WMA**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** **OPEN**

### **BLUFF POINT STATE PARK - HALEY FARM**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** JIM GRIFFIN - Branford, CT

### **DEVIL'S HOPYARD STATE PARK**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** GINGER TULLAI - East Hampton, CT

### **COCKAPONSET STATE FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** GINA McMANUS - Clinton, CT

### **GOODWIN STATE FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** JAN COLLINS - Somers, CT

### **GREAT POND STATE FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** **OPEN**  
MEG SAUTTER - Newington, CT

### **HAMMONASSET STATE PARK (Seasonal with restrictions)**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** DR. LYNDIA PERRY - Killingworth, CT

### **LARKIN STATE BRIDLE TRAIL**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** **OPEN**  
MEG SAUTTER - Newington, CT

### **MACHIMOODUS - SUNRISE RESORT & HURD STATE PARKS**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** GINGER TULLAI - East Hampton, CT

### **MANSFIELD HOLLOW STATE PARK**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** **OPEN**  
DIANE CIANO - Plymouth, CT

### **MASHAMOQUET - WOLF DEN STATE PARK**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:** PENNY FOISEY - Pomfret, CT

**MOHAWK STATE FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**OPEN**

**DIANE CIANO** - Plymouth, CT

**NATCHAUG STATE FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**OPEN**

**DIANE CIANO** - Plymouth, CT

**NAUGATUCK STATE FOREST -**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**WEST**

**SHIRLEY VICCHITTO** - Beacon Falls, CT

**NEHANTIC STATE FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**OPEN**

**DIANE CIANO** - Plymouth, CT

**PACHAUG STATE FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**OPEN**

**DIANE CIANO** - Plymouth, CT

**PAUGUSSET STATE FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**OPEN**

**DIANE CIANO** - Plymouth, CT

**RORABACK WMA**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**OPEN**

**MEG SAUTTER** - Newington, CT

**SHENIPSIT STATE FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**JAN COLLINS** - Somers, CT

**SLEEPING GIANT STATE PARK & [Cheshire Open Space - DiDominicus Property](#)**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**CHRISTEL MATURO** - North Haven, CT

**STRATTON BROOK STATE PARK**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**OPEN**

**MEG SAUTTER** - Newington, CT

**TUNXIS STATE FOREST**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**OPEN**

**MEG SAUTTER** - Newington, CT

**WADSWORTH FALLS STATE PARK**

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**

**DEBBIE SOMMERS** - Middlefield, CT

## LAND TRUSTS - TOWN PARKS - OPEN SPACE

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### Cheshire Open Space - DiDominicus Property

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**    **CHRISTEL MATURO** - North Haven, CT

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### Clinton Land Conservation Trust

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**    **JIM GRIFFIN** - Branford, CT

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### Granby Area Salmon River Park, Ethel Walker, Holcomb Farm

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**    **HEATHER HICKS** - Southwick, MA

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### Rockland Preserve - Madsion

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**    **MARYLOU MILLETT** - Durham, CT 06422

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### Sprague Land Preserve - Sprague

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**    **GAIL MILLER** - North Franklin, CT

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### Tarrywile Park - Danbury

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**    **DONNA FREEMAN** (H) 203-792-7628 (C) 203-788-3975  
[wfreeman03@snet.net](mailto:wfreeman03@snet.net)  
Bethel, CT

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### Wyndham Land Trust & Pomfret Private Lands

**VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR:**    **Pomfret Horse & Trail Association**  
**PENNY FOISEY** - Pomfret, CT

# **CONNECTICUT HORSE COUNCIL, INC. VOLUNTEER MOUNTED PATROL**

**Revised 2009**

## **VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION**

Job Title: Volunteer Horse Patrol  
Location: Varied areas within DEP jurisdiction or other land management administrations.

The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc. (CHC) Volunteer Horse Patrol program will assist the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) or other land management administrations (LMA), with all non-enforcement duties. Volunteers will provide additional eyes and ears for the protection of the resource and its visitors, as well as provide hands on services repairing trails and other facilities. Volunteers will also assist with programs and special events and continue to foster community involvement.

### **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- \* Report suspicious or unusual situations to appropriate DEP or other land management administrations and the CHC Coordinator.
- \* Provide non-confrontational services to the public including, but not limited to, information on rules and regulations, facilities and special features.
- \* Work in conjunction with DEP or land managers in identifying potential resource management problems such as trail erosion and compaction.
- \* Coordinate and complete maintenance and repairs to facilities in conjunction with DEP staff or other land managers
- \* Render First Aid and coordinate EMS when necessary.
- \* Attend and complete assigned training.
- \* Maintain patrol logs.
- \* Yearly membership fee to the CHC
- \* Maintain current CPR & First Aid Certification

### **QUALIFICATIONS**

- \* Volunteers must be in good physical condition and have adequate riding skills to pass Horse//Rider Assessment.
- \* The assessment team or person will be approved by the CHC Supervisor(s)
- \* Volunteer provides own mount, which must pass minimum standards and be in good health.
- \* Ability to work well with others and follow procedures accurately and responsibly.
- \* Strong interpersonal communication skills.
- \* Desire to aid in the achievement of the goals of the CHC, DEP or other LMA.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

- \* Age: 21 years. Any age younger will be considered by the program supervisors.
- \* Successful completion of a background investigation, which may include a criminal history and driving check.
- \* Successful completion of horse/rider assessment
- \* Certification in CPR and First Aid; uncertified volunteers may be provided certification training.
- \* Volunteers must respect the confidential nature of information learned through working with this program.
- \* Riders / Carriage drivers must supply and wear a safety helmet while on patrol.  
Carriage Drivers must have 2 on patrol.
- \* Horses must be under tack while riding on patrol.

## TRAINING

CHC / DEP / LMA will provide training and orientation as necessary.

Volunteer Horse Patrol Training:

Overview of DEP or LMA

Where and when to patrol

Methods of patrol - Horseback riding, Walking, or Bicycling

Communications - To be determined

Patrol logs and reporting of incidents or conditions of trails

Emergency procedures

Overview of DEP or LMA rules and regulations

Public relations

Interpretive programming

CPR & First Aid Training

## COMMENTS

Volunteers will be issued 2 patches, safety vest and First Aid equipment by CHC-VHP.

Uniforms and other equipment required will be the responsibility of each volunteer.

All persons selected to participate in this program must agree to abide by the following regulations and guidelines:

1. Volunteers **are not** vested with police powers of arrest and **shall not** take direct action in the enforcement of the law. Volunteers shall, at no time, represent themselves as police officers.
2. Volunteers **are not** authorized to carry, display or use any firearms while on duty.
3. Upon detection of any incident or condition warranting regular police attention, the volunteer **shall not** take any direct action but shall immediately notify the DEP Communications Center, or area DEP office, LMA, or the local Police Dept. Volunteers may render any necessary first aid for which they are certified.
4. Mounted Patrols are designed and intended to work independently of the DEP supervisor Or LMA while on duty.
5. Patrol members will bring any questions, problems or concerns to the attention of their CHC Volunteer Coordinator and follow reporting procedure for any observed incident. In extreme emergencies only will the Patrols contact the DEP Supervisor/Hot Line or Land Manager, along with the local Police.
6. Volunteers must present a positive and professional image to the public. Safety, courtesy and respect shall be foremost in their interactions with others. The volunteer is responsible for the conduct of their mount during their patrol duties.
7. Volunteers shall maintain all issued CHC property in a neat, clean and serviceable condition at all times. Volunteers **shall not** wear or use the uniform or any part thereof, or other program related equipment, when not participating in the program. All issued uniform items remain the property of CT Horse Council and VHP. These items must be returned upon volunteer leaving the program for any reason.



# **A CODE OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR EVERY VOLUNTEER**

**The volunteer who commits his time should adopt these responsibilities and obligations.**

<b>Be sure</b>	<b>Look into your heart and know that you really want to help.</b>
<b>Be convinced</b>	<b>Offer your service only if you believe in the value of what you are doing.</b>
<b>Be Loyal</b>	<b>Offer suggestions. Don't knock what you are not willing to help improve. Accept the rules. Make sure you completely understand them before criticizing them; there may be good reason for them.</b>
<b>Speak up</b>	<b>Ask about the things you don't understand. Don't coddle your doubts and frustrations until they drive you away or turn you into a problem worker.</b>
<b>Be Willing to Learn</b>	<b>Training is essential to any assignment well done.</b>
<b>Keep on Learning</b>	<b>Know all you can about your assignment.</b>
<b>Welcome Supervision</b>	<b>You will do a better job and enjoy it more if you are doing what is expected of you.</b>
<b>Be Dependable</b>	<b>Your work is your bond. Do what you have agreed to do. Don't make promises you can not keep.</b>

**Adapted from the Bill of Rights for Volunteers by Mrs. Richard L. Sloss, Dir. Of Volunteers, Pacific American Red Cross, San Francisco, CA.**

# Volunteer Program Policies

## What is a Volunteer?

A volunteer is anyone who, without financial compensation beyond reimbursement, performs a task at the direction of and on behalf of the Department of Environmental Protection, Connecticut Horse Council/Volunteer Horse Patrol, or other land management administrations (hereafter referred to as: DEP, CHC-VHP and LMA).

A volunteer must be officially accepted and enrolled in the program before performing tasks. Volunteer opportunities are available to all people regardless of race, color, religion, sex, age, disability, national origin or political affiliation. Volunteers will be asked to complete an application and sign a Volunteer Agreement and Liability Release statement..

## Purpose of Volunteer Policies

The purpose of these policies is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers engaged in volunteer involvement and management efforts. **These policies are intended for internal management guidance only and do not constitute, either implicitly or explicitly, a binding contractual employment or personnel agreement.**

DEP/CHC-VHP reserves the exclusive right to change any of these policies at any time and to expect adherence to the changed policy. Changes to, or exceptions from these policies may only be granted by the DEP and/or VHP Supervisors, and must be obtained in advance and in writing. Areas not specifically covered by these policies shall be determined by the above.

## Overall Policy on Utilization of Volunteers

The achievement of the goals of CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA is best met through the active participation of citizens of the community. To this end, CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA accepts and encourages the involvement of volunteers at all levels and in all appropriate programs and activities. All CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA staff are encouraged to assist in the creation of meaningful and productive roles in which volunteers might serve and to assist in recruitment of volunteers from the community.

## Role of Volunteer Management

The productive management of volunteers requires a planned and organized effort.

The function of the VHP Supervisor(s) is to provide a central coordinating point for effective volunteer management within CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA. The VHP Supervisor(s) will serve a liaison between DEP or LMA staff and the VHP staff and will aid in community-wide efforts to recognize and promote volunteering.

The VHP Coordinator shall be responsible for collecting, tracking and evaluation of the patrol logs in their areas and passing this information on to the VHP Supervisor(s). A Coordinator can help to plan effective volunteer utilization, assisting staff in identifying productive and creative roles, recruiting suitable volunteers and help to conduct the Horse & Rider Assessment of new volunteers.

## **Volunteer Rights**

**Volunteers are viewed as a valuable resource to DEP/VHP or LMA, therefore:**

- RESPECT:** You will be regarded as a colleague, with mutual goals. You will be asked your opinions and will receive answers to your questions
- GUIDANCE:** You will receive clear and concise directions in all your assignments. You will attend orientation, training and have preparation for special events and programs.
- CHALLENGES:** We will make every effort to insure that your assignments are meaningful and equal to your ability and interests.
- OPPORTUNITY:** You will have many learning experiences. You will be able to express your views and ideas, meet new friends who share your interests, work hard, and have measurable results to show for your efforts.

## **Volunteer Responsibilities**

- COMMITMENT:** Join our team, because you care about public lands and public service. Volunteers shall agree to perform their duties to the best of their abilities and to remain loyal to the goals and procedures of CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA.
- ENTHUSIASM:** Have a real interest in serving the public, and otherwise furthering the goals of the CHC-VHP, DEP and LMA. Savor and enjoy your involvement. You are making a difference.
- COOPERATION:** Be willing to attend training sessions when applicable, follow instructions, work as part of a team, and keep the greater goals in mind.
- DEPENDABILITY:** Do what you say you will do. Be there when you say you will be there. Many will depend on you.

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **i. Confidential Information**

Volunteers are expected to exercise the utmost discretion and care in the use and dissemination of all work-related information that might be regarded as confidential in nature. Volunteers are responsible for maintaining the confidentiality of all proprietary or privileged information to which they are exposed while service as a volunteer, whether this information involves an employee, volunteer, client, or other person, or involves overall agency business. We are bound by law to keep all medical information confidential. All questions related to confidentiality issues should be discussed with your supervisor. Connecticut law allows for legal process that could result in a lawsuit against individuals who breach confidentiality.

### **ii. Media Contact**

No volunteer may be spokesperson or representative of CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA. to the media in any circumstances without the prior approval of the DEP or VHP Supervisors or other LMA. These actions may include, but are not limited to, public statements to the press, coalition or lobbying efforts with other organizations, or any agreements involving contractual or other financial obligations. Press releases and any other data for public dissemination must have DEP /VHP or LMA approval at all times. Should the media (TV, radio, newspapers) appear unannounced, direct them to the CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA Supervisor.

### **iii. Conflict of Interests**

No person who has a conflict of interest with any activity or program of the CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA, whether personal, philosophical, or financial shall be accepted or serve as a volunteer.

### **iv. DEP / CHC / VHP / LMA Logos**

The use of any organizational logo is not to be used without the express consent of the CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA. There are no exceptions.

### **v. Service at the Discretion of VHP**

CHC accepts the service of volunteers with the understanding that such service is at the sole discretion of CHC-VHP. Volunteers agree that CHC-VHP may at any time, for whatever reason, decide to terminate the volunteer's relationship with CHC-VHP. The volunteer may any time, for whatever reason, decide to end his/her relationship with CHC-VHP. Notice of such a decision should be communicated as soon as possible to the Supervisor(s). Completion of an application/registration form does not guarantee placement within the CHC-VHP volunteer program.

## **vi. Corrective Action**

In appropriate situations, corrective action may be taken following a discussion between a volunteer and a CHC Supervisor. Examples of corrective action include the requirement of additional training, reassignment of a volunteer to a new position, suspension of the volunteer, or dismissal from volunteer service. If it is determined that an investigation is necessary, a volunteer may be suspended from service during the investigation. Suspensions are not always a prelude to dismissal, nor does a suspension indicate termination.

## **vii. Dismissal of a Volunteer**

Volunteers who do not adhere to the rules and regulations of the CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA or who fail to satisfactorily perform their assignments may be subject to dismissal. Volunteers may be suspended by any CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA Supervisor pending consultation with a VHP Coordinator. There will be an evaluation, with written documentation prior to dismissal of a volunteer if appropriate.

## **viii. Reasons for Dismissal**

Possible grounds for dismissal include *but are not limited to the following*: Gross misconduct or insubordination; being under the influence of alcohol or drugs; theft of property or misuse of park equipment or materials; abuse or mistreatment of visitors or co-workers; failure to abide by CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA policies and procedures; failure to abide by the park's rules and regulations; misrepresentation of DEP / CHC-VHP / LMA's position on issues affecting state forests and parks; failure to satisfactorily perform assigned duties; failure to maintain the dignity and integrity of the Volunteer Program.

## **ix. Grievances**

When a volunteer has a complaint, regardless of its content, the volunteer can request an appointment with the Volunteer Coordinator assigned to them. The Coordinator will handle the complaint in the appropriate manner, which may include mediation, conflict resolution, investigation, and/or corrective action. If the complaint cannot be resolved at that level, the volunteer may request an appointment with the VHP Supervisor who will follow the same procedures. When filing a complaint, a verbal report will be sufficient, however the volunteer may be requested to present the complaint in writing. Volunteers are encouraged to maintain open lines of communication, so that fair resolution of the situation may prevent it from escalating.

## **x. Safety**

With few exceptions, working conditions will be the same for volunteers and staff. We will do our best to provide safe conditions and will include safety directions for all assignments. Always wear attire and equipment appropriate for the occasion. Always be aware of where you are, of what you are doing, and of the person next to you. We rely on you to be the best protector of your personal safety. Please report to your VHP Coordinator first any safety concerns and injuries to yourself or someone else as soon as practical and always within 24 hours.

## **xi. Liability Coverage**

The State, CHC-VHP or any LMA assumes no liability for accidents that occur while volunteers use their own vehicle or horse for volunteer activities. Your own insurance will apply to all accidents involving your vehicle, horse, or negligence.

CHC-VHP Volunteers will hold harmless the DEP/State of Connecticut, The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc. and The Volunteer Horse Patrol or any Land Management Administration involved with this program, in case of accidents.

Volunteers acknowledge that they are riding at their own risk. For more information on DEP Liability and Insurance, please refer to the DEP Volunteer/Intern Handbook. VHP members will sign Release of Liability forms from both DEP and CHC, along with any other LMA if required..

## **xii. Appropriate Conduct**

As a CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA volunteer, the lasting impression you make on those you serve reflects directly on all of us. Please be sure your words and deeds will help build our volunteer program and its reputation for quality. Your assignments may be office based, outdoors, or involve formal meetings. Your attire and your actions must be appropriate to your assignment and workplace in order to reflect well on all.

In dealing with the public, you must be unfailingly polite and mannerly. Should you find yourself in a situation where courtesy is becoming difficult, please immediately refer the matter to the nearest DEP staff and/or CHC-VHP Coordinator or LMA manager.

Whenever you are wearing the VHP patch or other VHP insignia, the opinions expressed by the volunteer must be in accordance with those stated by CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA. The volunteer may not misrepresent or mislead anyone regarding his or her position or authority within CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA.

Certain types of conduct, such as the use of alcohol or illegal drugs, during a volunteer Activity are so seriously inappropriate that a volunteer will be asked to discontinue his or her volunteer activities immediately and relinquish all volunteer identifications.

### **1. Drug-Free and Alcohol-Free Workplace Policy**

Any volunteer on or off park premises, is prohibited from purchasing, transferring, using, or possessing illicit drugs or using alcohol or prescription drugs in an illegal manner. Volunteers will not be terminated for voluntarily seeking assistance for a substance abuse problem; however, performance, attendance, or behavioral problems may result in disciplinary actions up to and including termination.

Substance abuse has an adverse effect on performance, creates dangerous situations, and serves to undermine the community's confidence in our organization. Our purpose in implementing this policy is to provide a drug and alcohol free workplace in order to ensure a safe, healthy and productive work environment for all volunteers and employees.

### **2. Harassment Policy**

It is illegal to harass others on the basis of their sex, age, race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, citizenship, sexual orientation, disability and other personal characteristics, by making jokes about ethnic or other groups, or through other verbal, physical and visual behavior.

Sexual harassment is also prohibited. Propositions, dirty jokes, sexually provocative pictures and other verbal, physical and visual harassment are prohibited. The harassment of one volunteer or employee by another volunteer or employee will lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination in cases of gross misconduct.

Any volunteer who feels harassed should speak with his Volunteer Coordinator, or if the Coordinator is not appropriate, to the next level VHP Supervisor, in an attempt to reach resolution. It is the Supervisor's duty to listen to such complaints and to refer them to the appropriate authority, which may include the Equal Opportunity Commission.

### **xiii. Volunteer Orientation and Training**

All volunteers will receive orientation. The type of service intended by the volunteer will dictate further process.

For example:

- \* A volunteer wishing to be placed at a Nature Center will be interviewed by a Supervisor. References will be required; a background check, license check and fingerprinting may also be required. Once accepted, specialized training for the specific position will be scheduled. The volunteer will fill out a service agreement.
- \* A volunteer desiring to do extensive maintenance utilizing a chain saw, Bobcat/skid steer or building of a bridge will be interviewed by DEP staff and/or VHP Supervisor or LMA manager, fill out an information/service agreement form, and receive orientation and training (machinery or any power equipment use requires additional training by DEP specialists).
- \* Special event volunteers (one time only/one or more times a year) will fill out the appropriate service agreement. Orientation and training may be combined and be conducted on the same day as the event.
- \* Groups and/or organizations will fill out appropriate service agreements and receive orientation/training accordingly.

We will make every effort to ensure that the training is concise, clear and timely. Our aim is to be efficient in order to maximize your talents and minimize your time.

### **xiv. Volunteer Evaluation/Feedback**

We will attempt to match your skills and interests to projects/events available. You will be asked to evaluate your experience with VHP including but not limited to the following topics: training; value of the project; satisfaction; staff cooperation; materials and equipment availability. We ask that you contribute your ideas and thoughts in order to make our program and the goals of the CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA a success, as well as to reach your goals and aspirations.

### **xv. Maintenance of Records**

A system of records on each volunteer will be maintained with the agency, including dates of service, positions held, duties performed, evaluation of work, and awards received. Volunteers and appropriate staff shall be responsible for submitting all appropriate records and information to the VHP Volunteer Coordinator in a timely and accurate fashion.

### **xvi. Record Keeping**

We require that every volunteer record his or her hours of service. It is necessary to record date and time. Keeping these records will ensure that the land managers are aware of our continuing commitment to this program. We sincerely appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

**xvii. Certificate of Ability**

Any potential volunteer who indicates that they are under the care of a physician for either physical or psychological treatment may be asked to present a certificate from his physician as to their ability to satisfactorily and safely perform their volunteer duties. Volunteers under a course of treatment, which might affect their volunteer work, will not be accepted without written verification of suitability from their physician. Any volunteer whom, after acceptance and assignment by the agency, enters a course of treatment which might adversely impact the performance of their volunteer duties should consult with their VHP Coordinator or Supervisor.

**xviii. Absenteeism**

If a volunteer does not participate in activities for one year, their application shall be removed from the active volunteer files. There may be many reasons for this, lame horse, personal situations, etc. A courtesy call to the Coordinator and Supervisor(s) will be appreciated. They will remain a VHP member as long as they stay current with their CHC yearly membership and CPR/First Aid Certification.

If a volunteer is scheduled for an organized activity and knows he or she will be late or absent, the volunteer should contact the person in charge of the event as soon as possible.

**xix. Volunteer / Staff Relationships**

Volunteers are staff and are considered to be partners in implementing the mission and programs of the CHC-VHP, DEP or LMA, with each having an equal and complementary role to play. The success of this relationship depends upon each partner understanding and respecting the needs and abilities of the other.

DEP or LMA staff can be expected to provide training and supervision for the volunteers and support where possible for volunteer-sponsored events. Volunteer groups are expected and encouraged to work independently. Volunteers may initiate projects and new ideas for park, forest or other land management areas. The DEP or LMA may provide staff representation at volunteer events when possible, however, due to budget constraints and staffing levels, ideas and projects initiated by volunteers should be self-sustaining in both their funding and staffing.

**xx. Supervisors (Staff/ Volunteer)**

Each of the "Friends" groups will appoint or elect one individual to act as their organization's Volunteer Supervisor(s). This person will act as the liaison between the VHP and DEP or LMA Staff. The supervisor will be responsible for recruitment, interviewing, screening, training, and developing volunteer opportunities. All position descriptions shall be in writing. This VHP Supervisor(s) may enlist the help of other volunteers in the organization to assist in volunteer management and/or supervision. The number of supervising assistants will vary, depending on the organizations and its seasonal events.



# CHC-VHP Horse and Rider Assessment

Riders Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Horse's \_\_\_\_\_

1. Stand tied and alone for 30 seconds  
Comments:
2. Approached by hiker with dog, brief conversation  
Comments:
3. Approached by hiker with child, child pets horse  
Comments:
4. Approached from both directions by bicycle  
Comments:
5. Walk by tent and /or umbrella  
Comments:
6. Walk or jump over log  
Comments:
7. Approached by motorcycle or ATV  
Comments:
8. Walk by balloons or flags  
Comments:
9. Car passes and honks horn  
Comments:
10. Walk over tarp or bridge, pass by trash bags or cans  
Comments:

*Please use "Expectations of Horse/Rider Performance" and "Guidelines for Disqualification" from Evaluation (page 2) for Guidelines in evaluating each horse & rider.*

PASS

FAIL

---

CHC-VHP Supervisor / Coordinator

Date / Location

## Expectations of Horse/Rider Performance

1. ☐ Rider is friendly and approachable
2. ☐ Horse and equipment is well maintained/groomed and presentable
3. ☐ Horse is calm and alert
4. ☐ Horse is allowed to show concern or alarm over an obstacle or stimuli without causing a dangerous situation
5. ☐ Rider should have control of horse at all times with minimum amount of restraint
6. ☐ Rider is professional in appearance
7. ☐ Rider can mentally, emotionally, and physically handle any task that may be required of him/her in the process of their patrol
8. ☐ Horse appears mentally, emotionally, and physically capable of performing patrol duties

## Guidelines for Disqualification from Evaluation

1. ☐ Rider is unable to control Horse at any time during evaluation
2. ☐ Horse requires severe restraint to proceed through evaluation (ex: severe bit, more than one handler, etc.)
3. ☐ Horse bolts or runs away with rider during evaluation
4. ☐ Horse shows extreme fear or discomfort during evaluation
5. ☐ Horse shows signs of lameness or illness during evaluation
6. ☐ Rider does not possess the mental or physical capabilities of performing the patrol
7. ☐ Horse does not possess the mental or physical capabilities of performing the patrol
8. ☐ Participants may not use unnecessary and/or excessive force including slapping horse with reins, excessive kicking, whipping, etc to discipline their horse while participating in horse patrol activities.

Props can be substituted on the **CHC-VHP Horse and Rider Evaluation** list if they are similar to the task being evaluated. (Ex. Lawnmower, chain saw, hedge trimmer, etc.) can be used to replace an ATV/ motorized engine. A formal evaluation can be set up with props on the list in a ring or designated area or on a trail ride where obstacles on the list would be encountered.

**A rider may have more than 1 horse for patrol - provided they all have been evaluated.**

## Restrictions

1. ☐ Coggins and Rabies must be presented at evaluation test. CT Coggins test is good for one (1) year, out of state Coggins test within six (6) months.  
Certificates or copies should be with the horse on any patrol.
2. **The horses that pass the evaluation are only horses that may be used during the Patrol. An untested horse may not be used on the Patrol for any reason.**

## Uniform

### HELMET

**SHIRT:** Color - RED. Short or long-sleeved  
"Volunteer Horse Patrol" patch to be worn on the right sleeve.  
Polo Shirt is also available - see below

**PANTS:** Color - black. Riding pants or jeans.

**VESTS:** Safety vests to be worn over jackets. "CHC Horse Patrol" to be imprinted on the back.

**PROPER FOOTWEAR:** Footwear worn by all should be suitable and sturdy.

**FIRST AID KIT:** Self-contained kit including items appropriate to provide very basic First Aid/CPR assistance on the trail.

**Volunteer Patch** - to be supplied by **CHC-VHP**

**First Aid Kits** - to be supplied by **CHC-VHP**

**Shirts** - Polo shirt to be supplied by **CHC-VHP** - see information below

**Safety Vests** - to be supplied by **CHC-VHP**

**Cante bag/Horn bag/ Saddle bag** - to be purchased by individuals.

Attire/gear that is assumed to be an already existing part of everyone's equipment:

**Helmet**, Pants, Proper Footwear (no bare feet, sandals or regular sneakers)

Saddle, Bridle, Halter/ Lead Rope

**CT Horse Council - Volunteer Horse Patrol (CHC-VHP) patches (2) will be issued to applicants that have completed the entire training program.**

Volunteers shall maintain all issued CHC property in a neat, clean and serviceable condition at all times. Volunteers shall not wear or use the uniform or any part thereof, or other program related equipment, when not participating in the program. All issued uniform items remain the property of CT Horse Council and VHP. These items must be returned upon volunteer leaving the program for any reason.

### UNIFORMS - POLO SHIRTS

A Polo short-sleeve double pique knit red shirt, with CHC Horse Patrol embroidered on left front and printed "Horse Patrol" on the back will be issued to each member. For additional shirts contact Meg Sautter at:

[mmsautter@att.net](mailto:mmsautter@att.net)

Day & Evening 860-666-6938

# CHC VHP Quarterly Log - 2012

Check Quarter: 1<sup>st</sup> [ ] Jan, Feb, Mar 2<sup>nd</sup> [ ] Apr, May, Jun 3<sup>rd</sup> [ ] Jul, Aug, Sep 4<sup>th</sup> [ ] Oct, Nov, Dec

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Park/Forest: \_\_\_\_\_ Area: \_\_\_\_\_

Different Parks? Important: Use Separate Sheet for Each Park

\*Please leave 2 spaces between months

\*\* Please e-mail/send copy to the Coordinator of each area patrolled.

Date	Time	Patrol Hours	Maint. Hours	PARK VISITOR SIGHTINGS									ASSISTANCE			
				Walkers	Cyclers	Equus	People*	Dogs OFF	Dogs ON	Hunters	Motor Cycle	ATV	Gen Info	Directions	First Aid	CPR*
<b>Totals</b>																

\* For "People" sightings comment below on their activity, along with ANY other comments including location/ start of patrols within the area, First Aid or CPR incidents"

Date	Time	Comments

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

[illegible]

# SAMPLE: CHC VHP Quarterly Log - 2010

Check Quarter: 1<sup>st</sup> [✓] Jan, Feb, Mar 2<sup>nd</sup> [ ] Apr, May, Jun 3<sup>rd</sup> [ ] Jul, Aug, Sep 4<sup>th</sup> [ ] Oct, Nov, Dec

Name: Judy Beliveau

Park/Forest: Larkin Bridle Trail

Area: Putnam / Nathan Hale

Different Parks? Important: Use Separate Sheet for Each Park

\*Please leave 2 spaces between months

\*\* Please e-mail/send copy to the Coordinator of each area patrolled.

Date	Time	Patrol Hours	Maint. Hours	PARK VISITOR SIGHTINGS									ASSISTANCE			
				Walkers	Cyclers	Equus	People*	Dogs OFF	Dogs ON	Hunters	Motor Cycle	ATV	Gen Info	Directions	First Aid	CPR*
1/4	11-3	4	0.5	12	6	6			6				3			
1/15	10-12	2	0.5	6	2	2	3		2				3			
1/30	1-4	3		6		6		2				1	2	1		
	3	9	1	24	8	14	3	2	8			1	8	1		
2/3	10-1	3	1													
2/15	2-5	3														
2/24	11-3	4	0.5	6	2	4	12		3			1	6	2		
	3	10	1.5	6	2	4	12		3			1	6	2		
3/14	10-1	3	1.5													
3/18	2-4	2				1										
3/29	2-4	2	0.5	3	3 *	6		1*					2			
	3	7	2	3	3	7		1					2			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>				<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>		

\* For "People" sightings comment below on their activity, along with ANY other comments including location/ start of patrols within the area, First Aid or CPR incidents"

Date	Time	Comments
1/4	11-3	<b>3 HP - w/Meg &amp; Vevette / Rode Christian to South St. / G.I. - on HP. I took stats.</b>
1/15	10-12	<b>2 HP - w/Meg / Rode Rte. 188 to Kettletown Rd. / 3 people ice fishing. I took stats.</b>
1/30	1-4	<b>2 HP - w/Ken / Christian to Riggs / Gave G.I. to 3 walkers on leashing their (2) dogs &amp; HP I took stats. 4 other riders were out on the trail.</b>
	2:30 pm	Saw Green & white ATV leave trail and go out onto Riggs St.
2/3	10-1	<b>5 HP - w/Meg, Vevette, Diane, Ken / Riggs St. to Kettletown Rd. / Meg took stats.</b>
2/15	2-5	<b>2HP - w/Diane / Rte. 63 to South St. Diane took stats</b>
2/24	11-3	<b>2 HP - w/Ken / Rte. 63 to South St. 2 other riders were out on trail.</b>
	2:30pm	<b>*People= 6 people hanging out at Towantic Pond, 6 bird watchers. I took stats.</b> Saw same Green & White ATV from 1/30 patrol leaving trail onto Riggs St.
3/14	10-1	<b>3 HP- w/Meg &amp; Diane. Meg took stats.</b>
3/18	2-4	<b>1 HP- Rode alone. Misty weather. No sightings. I took stats.</b>
3/29	2-4	<b>2 HP - w/Ken from Christian to Wooster/1 bicyclist with dog unleashed running by his side. I took stats. 3 other horses were out on the trail.</b>
	3:30pm	Gave First Aid (Band-Aid) to one of 2 young boys riding their bikes. One had fallen and scraped his knee. His first name was Tommy.

Signature: **Judy Beliveau**

Date: **3/31/10**

Coordinator: **Meg Sautter**

# SAMPLE: CHC VHP Quarterly Log - 2010

Check Quarter: 1<sup>st</sup> [ ] Jan, Feb, Mar 2<sup>nd</sup> [ ] Apr, May, Jun 3<sup>rd</sup> [✓] **Jul, Aug, Sep** 4<sup>th</sup> [ ] Oct, Nov, Dec

Name: **Barbara White** Park/Forest: **Cockaponset SF** Area: **Cockaponset / Alex Sokolow**

Different Parks? Important: Use Separate Sheet for Each Park

**\*Please leave 2 spaces between months**

**\*\* Please e-mail/send copy to the Coordinator of each area patrolled.**

Date	Time	Patrol Hours	Maint. Hours	PARK VISITOR SIGHTINGS									ASSISTANCE			
				Walkers	Cyclers	Equus	People*	Dogs OFF	Dogs ON	Hunters	Motor Cycle	ATV	Gen Info	Directions	First Aid	CPR*
7/10	9:00	2		4			2						2			
7/12	9:00	2				3		2					2			
7/19	9:00	2		3		2	4	4	1				4			
7/29	9:00	3	3	4		1			1							
	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>11</b>		<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>				<b>6</b>			
8/27	9:00	1.5		4	4	6	95	2					15	2		
8/29	9:00	1.5		3		4	3		1				3	3		
	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>				<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>		
9/1	9:30	2				3										
9/2	9:15	4	4	4	1		12		3							
9/16	10:15	2				37										
	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>3</b>							
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>				<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>		

**\* For "People" sightings comment below on their activity, along with ANY other comments including location/ start of patrols within the area, First Aid or CPR incidents"**

Date	Time	Comments
7/10	9:00	Patrolled alone on foot / Area North of Route 80. <b>*People = 2</b> birdwatchers
7/12	9:00	<b>1 HP</b> – rode with two other equestrians. / Chester
7/19	9:00	<b>1 HP</b> – rode with one other equestrian. / Deep River. <b>*People = family of 4</b> fishing
7/29	9:00	Patrolled alone. / Weber Woods. There were no sightings.
8/27	9:00	<b>4 HP</b> - Lynda, Jim, Debbie / Chatfield Hollow. Stat numbers are high due to the hot weather. <b>*People =</b> There were over 50 swimmers and 30 picnickers. There were 15 people that came up to us in the parking lot, wanting to pet the horses. Two other riders seen in park. <b>I took stats.</b>
8/29	9:00	Patrolled alone. / Pataconk. Met 3 other riders on trail. <b>*People = 3</b> people in canoes
9/1	9:30	<b>3 HP</b> – w/Cheryl & Fred Mastale / Middletown from Brooks Road. <b>Cheryl took stats.</b>
9/2	9:15	<b>6 HP</b> – w/Pat, Jim, Gina, Lynda, Kristen / Weber Woods - Epic Trail This was a trail maintenance day without horses. <b>*People = 12</b> people working. <b>I took stats.</b>
9/16	10:15	<b>6 HP</b> – w/Pat, Jim, Gina, Lynda, Kristen / Weber Woods - Epic Trail. <b>I took stats.</b> There is a high number of horse stats as this was a <u>Hunter Pace</u> put on by the LCRVHA & BLC to raise money for bridge work and trail maintenance in Cockaponset

Signature: **Barbara White**

Date: 9/30/10

Coordinator: Gina McManus

# **The Connecticut Horse Council Trails Committee**

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the CT Horse Council Trails Committee is to unify equestrian trail users throughout the state in order to build working relationships with individuals and groups that has the same interests or who govern the land that riders want access to, such as the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and to promote multi-use trails.

The Trails Committee represents horse people in:

- The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)
- State Trails Advisory Board (DEP)
- The Connecticut Greenways Council
- Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

We serve as a liaison between state and local horse trails organizations. We recognize that we can not ourselves deal with each trail statewide; that is best done by the local trail user groups. We can provide advice to local trails groups, put them in contact with the right trail manager, and when necessary, intervene with someone at the state or local office.

By working with the CT Horse Council Legislative we can represent equestrian trail users before the Connecticut Legislature on matters such as trails for equestrian use, land owner liability on trails, appropriations for parks and trails funding, and protecting our rights to trails.



# **The Trail Committee Goals**

- Protect and expand the network of open lands available for trail riding.
- Educate equestrians on trail etiquette and sharing the trail with other user groups.
- Educate individuals as well as organizations of the importance of becoming involved in local planning committees and boards, to help to maintain and preserve local riding trails.
- Solicit association membership to the CT Horse Council from individuals and groups. Encourage individuals and delegates from each trail group to sit on the Trails Committee.
- Encourage trail groups to actively assist land managers in planning and maintaining trails and trails systems.
- Identify and catalog all existing equine trails in the state.
- Work in partnership with public land managers to identify new equestrian trail opportunities.
- Provide a resource to public land managers for maintenance of existing and proposed trails and facilities by identifying local user groups that can provide manpower resources to such projects.
- Assist trail groups in working with public land managers and in applying for grant funding for the National Recreational Trails Act and Greenways Fund.
- Develop guidelines for shared use of trails, through effective lines of communication with other trail user groups in the state.
- Develop educational materials regarding trail use, including trail etiquette, sharing our trail resources with other user groups, trail safety, trail riding techniques to preserve our trail resources, working effectively with public land managers, and proper trail development and maintenance.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO "SAVE THE TRAILS"

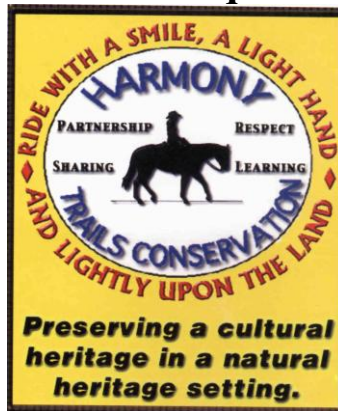
*The Connecticut Horse Council is a volunteer organization that functions with its membership of individuals and organizations.*

*The Trails Committee looks forward to the Council's membership to volunteer its service to help it achieve its goals.*

*We must keep positive when facing the loss of public trails and remain proactive in land use decisions. Some ways this can be done are listed below:*

- Join the CT Horse Council and become unified in the horse industry.
- Volunteer any time, your "expertise" or monetary contributions to help us to achieve our goals.
- We must continue to be good partners with public owned land managers, such as the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), facilities that allow equestrian use, and town owned public lands, by offering our time and financial support for trails maintenance and development.
- We need to pay attention to issues that come before our local planning and zoning committees and boards. We need to have local equestrian representation on them.
- We need to continue to discuss our interest with our senators, delegates and congressmen and let them know that we want more funding directed towards trail development in our public facilities.
- Most of all, we need to become better stewards of the land and recognize that we do have a physical impact on our trails, and help minimize this impact through smarter use patterns, and better design. Water quality is a big environmental issue these days and it is one that may very well affect our trail access if we are not careful about how we treat our streambeds and banks.

## Trail Etiquette



### Be an educated participant

- With the high demand for multiple trail use, be responsible for the passing of good will towards all that may come in contact with a horse and rider.
- On well used multiple trails, consider both you and your horse's experience and ability. Green trail horses and inexperienced riders do not belong on trails where other user's safety may be at risk. It takes only one bad experience for people to concern themselves with encountering horses on the trails.

### Do not cross private property without permission

- Respect property owners. Make sure that "you" have their permission to ride on or cross over their land. Do not gallop across open fields, leaving hoof prints behind or destroying crops. Use common sense and stay to the edges. Again, it takes one bad experience to ruin it for everyone else.

### Protect our environment

- Stay on the trail; never cut switchbacks
- Avoid using trails when harmful conditions exist. (mud season)
- Avoid bringing your horse in bodies of water for a "swim"
- Water crossings should be made where there are safe footings and avoid muddy bottom crossings whenever possible.
- Cross tie your horse between trees to avoid damage caused by chewing and rubbing.

### Be aware and sensitive about "road apples"

- Train your horse to curb off to the side of the trail
- Keep your horse moving rather than leaving the whole load in one spot
- In some cases, on well used multiple use trails and Greenways, it's a good idea to dismount and move the manure over to the side, or go back & clean up.
- Be aware of what you may leave behind, that others will see. Clean up after yourself and your horse at your break or lunch stops and your horse trailer at the trailhead.



## SHARE THE TRAIL By: Bunny Joseph

Like to ride? Who doesn't? There's more to it than hopping on your horse and galloping off across hill and dale, or slaloming through the woods. There are hikers, mountain bikers, cross-country skiers, dirt bikes, snowmobiles, hunters and fishermen, and who knows who else out there. Many of the trails we use are designated *multiple-use*, which means everybody uses the same trail and has to get along, or risk losing those trails for a particular user group. With ***courtesy, responsibility, and common sense***, we can share trails safely.

### BASICS

Before we worry about the other guy, let's make sure you and your horse is trail savvy. You should be a skilled enough rider to manage your horse at different speeds, be able to negotiate a variety of terrains, and deal with unexpected situations. Even beginning riders can have a safe, happy trail ride if they know their limitations, are properly equipped, and are accompanied by other experienced trail riders.

Riders need to use common sense and follow basic safety rules when on the trail. Don't ride alone, have a general plan for which direction you're going and about how long you'll be out, and tell someone or leave a note.

Pay attention to the weather; some horses tend to get spooky just before or after a storm, or during cold or very windy weather. Never ride out in thunderstorms. It's dangerous!

Everyone who uses trails should also keep track of the time, and make every effort to be back before dark. Most state forests and parks close at dusk anyway, and the risks of riding in the dark are great. You may not be able to avoid poor footing or holes, or you may encounter animals or cars that could cause your horse to spook. Worse yet, you could miss trail markers and warning signs and get lost.

### **Think safety!**

### HORSE TRAINING

Good trail horses need just as much training to develop specific skills for their work as horses in other disciplines. Generally, a safe trail horse will be a sound, willing partner suited to his rider, and neither lagging far behind, nor charging out in front. When riding with a group, safety dictates that the group ride at a speed at which the least experienced rider is comfortable. This way the group stays together and can "sandwich" novices during encounters with other trail users or in difficult situations.

A courteous trail rider trains their horse to walk carefully through water or mud, stay on the trail (no shortcuts), and pick its way through rocks. Jumping or plunging through these areas is dangerous, and not environmentally sensitive. Encouraging a horse to drink is fine, but some like to paw exuberantly, defecate, or roll in water. Be polite; get a drink, move on to a less delicate part of the trail, and wait for the rest of the group.

***Treat the trail with respect;*** discourage your horse from snacking. Some plants may be toxic to horses; others could be endangered species. Eating and trampling vegetation leads to bare dirt, which leads to destroyed vegetation and polluted streams. Minimize impact by staying on designated trails and avoiding muddy conditions.

Many horses will move slightly to the side to relieve themselves, the responsible trail user will try to keep his horse's end products away from high traffic multiple-use areas. If a horse is trained to keep moving while defecating, the material will biodegrade within days (because equines are herbivores), and with less environmental impact. On well used Greenways, trails and pavement, getting off your horse and kicking the manure off to the side will go a long way in keeping everyone that uses the trail happy and will deter any negative comments about horses on trails. Manure on the trail and at trail heads is a big issue to those that are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with horses. Deep hoof prints and manure are the two biggest concerns of other trail users.

Don't smoke on the trail, don't litter, and keep the trail head clear of manure and trash. *Be environmentally responsible*, and trail-train your horse. Your goal is to *leave no trace*...

## **"RIDE WITH A SMILE, A LIGHT HAND, AND LIGHTLY UPON THE LAND"**

### **DOGS**

Common sense also means leaving your dog at home. Even the best trained dog accompanying an equestrian is not physically on a leash, and can cause problems with other trail users, especially hikers with their own dogs or small children, mountain bikers, private property owners, and even other horseback riders. Dogs may also chase wildlife or livestock, and the hazards of traffic are very real. Having to deal with an extra animal brain is taking an unnecessary risk.

### **ROAD SAFETY**

Sometimes sharing the trail means sharing or crossing roads. Long sight lines and generally great visibility on a quiet dirt road makes nearly everyone want to move out. Here again, courtesy, common sense, and motor vehicle laws rule.

Connecticut State law groups equestrians and carriage drivers in the same category as vehicles; and subject to the same rules as cars. This means riding on the right side of the road (author's note: if the left side is wider and safer, especially on curves, it makes sense to err for safety's sake.)

Riders and cyclists must observe all traffic directions, stop at stop signs, and signal turns if there are motorists behind you. The law requires riders and carriage drivers to carry a light visible at least 200 feet to the front and rear, from a half-hour after sunset to a half-hour before sunrise. The laws also require the state DMV to print in its manual warnings that drivers must slow down, and stop if necessary to avoid endangering an equestrian or frightening or striking a horse. Drivers should slow to 25 - 30 mph or less, and be careful of noisy brakes, which could send a slightly nervous horse over the edge. Give a wide berth, or let oncoming traffic pass first if following, on a bridge or culvert, or near any off-road distraction that may spook him. Drivers should never beep their horn!

Equestrians should ride single file on roads they are sharing, and listen for the sound of approaching cars. A hand out and down is the universal warning to cars and other trail users to slow down or stop. Riders should have the courtesy to control the situation in a calm and expeditious manner.

When crossing roads, pick a place where there is good visibility, look both ways, listen for oncoming traffic, move briskly, and don't dawdle in the middle of the road.

When riding in a group, cross the road at the same time. This prevents horses from fretting about being left behind, creating a dangerous situation with horses on both sides of the road, confusing to drivers. Large groups often send two of their most experienced riders about 100 feet down a road with long sight lines to stop traffic long enough to get the group across safely. Drivers should always be thanked with a smile and a wave for their courtesy.

### RIGHT OF WAY

Horses have highly tuned senses, whose instinct is to run away from danger. The inherent unpredictability of the horse is why the standard multiple-use trail regulations give equestrians the right of way. Mountain bikes yield to hikers, and both cyclists and hikers yield to horses. As the privileged user, this means it's up to the equestrian to think safety at all times, take control of encounters with others, and be diplomatic and polite. You should communicate your needs tactfully, and whenever possible, educate non-equestrians about horse behavior, so that the encounter can be a positive experience.

Every user should know the local trail rules and stay on designated trails. Multiple use trails are generally wide enough for user groups to pass each other with adequate visibility to avoid collisions. However, it is important to ride at a safe and controlled speed and single file when someone is approaching.

Stay alert; you can often hear others before you see them. Watch for people who may startle your horse because they can't see them until they're close.

Announce yourself, say hello, or otherwise make polite voice contact; don't wait for the other person to notice you. Make eye contact, you want the other person to know where you are and can see your hand signals. Then use the universal hand and palm out to stop or slow down movement, as you plan the safest way to direct the situation.

Although horses always have the right of way, if you hear mountain bikes, motorbikes, or snowmobiles approaching fast around a bend with limited visibility, get off the trail as quickly and calmly as possible. Safety is the most important issue.

Ask the other person to say something. Often horses tense up, or can't identify the other person as a human - a helmeted cyclist, a backpacker, a hunter wearing camouflage. A polite verbal exchange - "Hello! There are more horses behind us. Are there others in your group?" or "My horse doesn't recognize what you are. Could you please say something so he knows you're a friendly human" - will help a horse relax.

Communicate your needs tactfully, and take every opportunity to educate non-equestrians about horse behavior. Ask others to move to the same side of the trail while you pass, so your horse won't feel claustrophobic. When the trail is too narrow to allow safe passing, show them where you want them to stand off the trail while you go by. If you must ask someone to backtrack, apologize and explain how much room your horse needs to feel comfortable.

On high traffic trails with multiple surfaces, stay to the right except when passing. Try to stay off blacktop. It may be safer to dismount and lead your horse across some bridges and viaducts, since footing may be slippery.

When encountering children or hikers with dogs, it is important to be especially alert and diplomatic. Make sure the adult has the child or dog physically under control before proceeding. If others ask to pet your horse, use your judgment about the safety of the situation, and try to take advantage of these public relations opportunity.

## HUNTERS

Hunters have every right to be in the woods during designated hunting seasons. Dates of various game seasons are available from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). It's wisest for equestrians to not ride where hunters will be, especially during the first several weeks of deer season. Why risk you're own and your horse's safety for those few weeks, when there are 52 weeks in a year?

If you must ride in areas where hunting is allowed, be aware that hunters may be wearing bright orange or camouflage, depending on the season. They may be hunting with a dog or from a boat or blind. Gunshots are to be expected, and WILL spook a horse. Be cautious when riding on dirt roads or in fields.

In Connecticut hunting is not allowed on Sundays, but many gun clubs sponsor fun shoots on their property then. Regulated hunting grounds owned by private clubs do have hunting on their property on Sundays. Target shooting is also allowed. If you ride in Rhode Island, wearing blaze orange is mandatory for anyone in the woods, since hunting is allowed seven days a week.

Riders, cyclists, hikers, and joggers should wear bright or blaze orange clothing, never white, carry bells; be seen and heard. Every year, in every state, tragic mistakes are made. For safety's sake, find an alternative to hunting areas.

## STEWARDSHIP

Every trail user needs to find time for protecting trails. It's in your own interest to do so if trails are to remain open. Trail maintenance is an ongoing necessity and enthusiastic manpower is always needed. Contact the Connecticut Horse Council, The CT Forest & Park Association, DEP, CT NEMBA (mountain bike association) for organized workdays. The first Saturday in June is always National Trails Day, dedicated to trails awareness and maintenance. Be a vocal advocate, lend some muscle, and let others know that equestrians share common goals with hikers, bikers, and other user groups.

### *Share the Trail!*

## SUGGESTED EQUIPMENT

Helmet; well fitting tack, in good repair; "Leatherman" multi-tool or knife; first-aid kit; vet wrap; halter and lead rope; saddle bag; baling twine; hoof pick; easy boot; spare stirrup leather; lunch-don't litter! Water bottle; compass and map; rain gear; towel or sponge; mini-mag light; fly repellent; sunscreen; jacket; matches, in waterproof container; space blanket; toilet paper or tissues, in zip-lock bag.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Cabell-Self, Margaret. *Fun on Horseback*. New York: A.S. Barnes and Company, Inc. 1945.
  2. Coggins, Jack. *The Horseman's Bible*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc. 1966.
  3. Haas, Jessie. *Safe Horse Safe Rider*. Pownal, VT: Storey Communications, Inc. 1994.
  4. Harris, Susan E. *The United States Pony Club Manual of Horsemanship, D Level*. New York: Simon & Shuster Macmillian Company. 1994.
  5. Stewart, Lori. "Courtesy for our Crowded Trails." *Practical Horseman*. Stamford, CT: Cowles Enthusiast Media, Inc. September 1997.
  6. The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc. *Road Safe*. Cheshire, CT 1996.
  7. Colorado Horsemen's Council, Inc. *Multi-Purpose Trail Safety Tips*. Arvada, CO.
  8. Minnesota Horse Council. *Minnesota Horse Trails Map*.
  9. International Mountain Bicycling Association. *IMBA - Sierra Club conflict resolution*
  10. Viehman, John. "Let's build trails, not walls." *Backpacker Magazine*
  11. Glass, Caroline. "No Trace Trail Riding... A Necessity in the 90's." Internet Rec. Equestrian. Philomath, Oregon.
- State of Connecticut. *Connecticut Hunting and Trapping Guide*. DEP. Bureau of Natural Resources, Wildlife Division. Hartford, CT. 1997.

All applicants must be members of the CT Horse Council and renew their membership every year. Send your CHC membership application and check to the address on the membership form (Durham, CT)

All other applications are to be sent to:

Diane Ciano  
660 Greystone Road  
Plymouth, CT 06782

Volunteers must also sign the CT Horse Council Volunteer Horse Patrol Liability Release Form. This must be signed and **NOTARIZED**. You can get documents notarized free of charge with someone in your bank that you do business with.

It is also required to fill out **all the DEP application forms, including the DEP Liability Release.**

If you have any questions in filling out the forms, please feel free to e-mail me or call me at any time.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

HAPPY TRAILS

Diane Ciano  
660 Greystone Road  
Plymouth, CT 06782  
203-757-1904  
Spirit76@snet.net



# THE CONNECTICUT HORSE COUNCIL, INC.

# 2012

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

### Membership Classification (Check One)

- ☐ Individual \$20   ☐ Family \$30   ☐ Student \$15   ☐ Business or Professional \$50
- ☐ Club \* \$30 (1-50)   \$40 (51-100)   \$55 (101-200)   \$70 (201-350)   \$85 (351-500)   \$105 (500 & up)
- 1 Delegate   2 Delegates   3 Delegates   4 Delegates   5 Delegates   6 Delegates

\*Note: Club Membership Fee and number of delegates is based on the number of club members. Please submit this form with main contact name. Attach listing of additional delegates with name, address, phone & E-mail address.

☐ 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   ☐ 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.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Make checks payable to:

The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc.  
P.O. Box 57  
Durham, CT 06422-0057

(over)

Telephone: 860-482-9500  
[www.cthorsecouncil.org](http://www.cthorsecouncil.org)

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 situations.

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 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.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

# Volunteer Horse Patrol Application

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact: Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: \_\_\_\_\_ Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Employment: \_\_\_\_\_

My riding experience: \_\_\_\_\_

My reason for wanting to volunteer as a CHC Mounted Horse Patrol member: \_\_\_\_\_

I ride: ☐ Western ☐ English ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

I do: \_\_\_\_\_ I do not: \_\_\_\_\_ have a trailer. Type of trailer: \_\_\_\_\_

Horses name: \_\_\_\_\_ Breed: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Horses name: \_\_\_\_\_ Breed: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

I board my horse at: \_\_\_\_\_ Town: \_\_\_\_\_

Problems my horse consistently has: \_\_\_\_\_

I normally ride \_\_\_\_\_ time(s) a month. I normally ride \_\_\_\_\_ hour(s) at a time.

Riding related physical problems I have: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Individual Member of the CT Horse Council, Inc. (CHC) ☐ CHC Application enclosed

Other Equestrian groups I belong to: \_\_\_\_\_

State Park or Forest I would be willing to volunteer to Patrol: \_\_\_\_\_

I would: \_\_\_\_\_ I would not: \_\_\_\_\_ feel comfortable patrolling alone.

**Mail application to: Diane Ciano - 660 Greystone Road - Plymouth, CT 06782**

**[Spirit76@snet.net](mailto:Spirit76@snet.net) 203-757-1904**



## RELEASE FORM

I acknowledge that as with any equine activity there is an inherent risk of accidental injury or death to myself, my horse and others while participating in this Volunteer Horse Patrol Program.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, I agree to assume the risk of any injury to myself or my horse, or damage to my property which I or my horse might suffer or cause to occur while involved in the Connecticut Horse Council Volunteer Horse Patrol Program, including my own negligent acts or omissions or those of others, including the Connecticut Horse Council, its members or directors: and will not hold the Connecticut Horse Council, its members, directors or Volunteer Horse Patrol program instructors or coordinators liable for any injuries which I or my horse may suffer or damage to my property while participating in this Volunteer Horse Patrol Program.

I acknowledge that in order to participate in the Volunteer Horse Patrol Program, I am also a State of Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection volunteer.

I understand the benefits and limitations available to me as a volunteer while participating in this State of Connecticut DEP program and a copy of the volunteer handbook has been provided to me.

I have read and signed the documents required by the DEP to participate in this program.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the Volunteer Horse Patrol Job Description and a copy has been provided to me.

I further acknowledge that I have been provided the opportunity to ask questions to clarify any areas of concern that may relate to this program, its limitations and my responsibilities.

I hereby agree to hold harmless and indemnify the Connecticut Horse Council, its members, directors, Volunteer Horse Patrol program instructors and coordinators from any damages arising from any and all suits, actions, legal or administrative proceedings, claims, demands, damages, liabilities, monetary loss, interest, attorney fees, cost and expenses whatsoever kind or nature that may arise from my participation and/or my horse's participation in the Volunteer Horse Patrol Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print VHP participant name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(VHP participant signature)

Witnessed: **Notary Public / Commissioner of Superior Court**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Print witness name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEER APPLICATION

**If you would like to volunteer your services or time with our department, please fill out the information and send it to the appropriate office or facility.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

Address/Town/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone # (Home) \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

If available, Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Place of Employment \_\_\_\_\_

Should we need to reach you, is it permissible to call you at work? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Have you volunteered at DEP before? \_\_\_\_\_ Where \_\_\_\_\_

When \_\_\_\_\_ Task(s) Performed \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate the type of activity in which you are interested (indoor or outdoor, clerical, artistic, research, forestry, environmental health, writing, highway/river cleanup, recycling, interpretive/educational, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Location(s) preferred \_\_\_\_\_  
(By order of first choice)

Would you be willing to travel to various locations? \_\_\_\_\_

## INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEER APPLICATION - REQUEST FOR REFERENCES

**POTENTIAL VOLUNTEER:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

**Please provide the name of three references who know your abilities and interests:**

**1. Personal Reference**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe how long you have known this person and what type of relationship you have with this person.

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**2. Employment Reference (if applicable)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe how long you have known this organization, including duties performed and dates of employment.

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**3. Volunteer Reference (if applicable)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your volunteer assignments and length of time you served with this organization.

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Valid Driver's License \_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_ No - If Yes, License Number \_\_\_\_\_

If you are younger than 18 years old, enter your age \_\_\_\_\_

Do you any affiliation with related groups or organizations? (E.g.: Audubon Society; Garden Clubs, Volunteer Groups, Friends Groups) If yes, please indicate below.

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Experience (professional certifications, community service, training or special licenses) that may assist in your volunteer work (if any certificates or other licenses have expiration dates, indicate the dates)

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Are you fluent in a language other than English? If yes, which ones: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been convicted under criminal or military law, forfeited bond or collateral, or are criminal charges currently pending against you? (Exclude minor traffic violations or any offense settled in juvenile court or under a youth offender law.)

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes    \_\_\_\_\_ No (If yes, attach a detailed explanation about the nature of conviction, degree of rehabilitation and if applicable, how long it has been since you were released.)

I certify that the information on this application is correct. I authorize the Department of Environmental Protection to call my references to obtain information pertinent to my responsibilities as a volunteer at the DEP. I agree to abide by the policies, directives and laws of the DEP. I understand that the first month is a trial match for both DEP and myself, to see if my experience is a good match with the DEP.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

The DEP is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer, providing programs and services in a fair and impartial manner. In conformance with the American Disabilities Act, DEP makes every effort to provide equally effective services for persons with disabilities.

(Individual Volunteer Application  
Revised. -January, 2002



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

I, \_\_\_\_\_, intend to work as a volunteer with the  
(Print Name)

Department of Environmental Protection under the auspices of

The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc. Volunteer Horse Patrol

I will abide by all the rules, policies, directives and laws of the Department of Environmental Protection. I hereby release the Department of Environmental Protection and its employees and agents from any liability for any accident or injury I might suffer during the course of my volunteer work with the exception of intentional acts or omissions committed by employees or agents of the Department of Environmental Protection.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Release of Liability Form  
Volunteer Program  
January, 2002