



The Volunteer Horse Patrol was the outcome of work by a sub-committee of the Connecticut Horse Council's Trails Committee. The primary goal of the CHC Trails Committee is to promote multi-use trails in the state. To do so, it seeks to bring together equestrian trail users throughout Connecticut, and build relationships with other groups whose mission is trail accessibility. The Committee also seeks alliances with those who govern the land that riders and carriage drivers use — state, federal and private lands as well as land trust areas, town parks and open spaces.

If you are interested in becoming a part of the CHC Volunteer Horse Patrol, or if you would like more information, please contact Diane Ciano at (203) 757-1904 or visit the CHC website: [www.cthorsecouncil.org](http://www.cthorsecouncil.org).

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**The Connecticut Horse Council, Inc.**  
*Horsemen United in Leadership,  
Service and Education*



Member of the American Horse Council

**TO ALL TRAIL USERS**

Please be courteous to others who are using the same trails for a variety of activities. Trail etiquette dictates that you yield right of way to walkers and horses. One of the most prevalent safety problems in all parks and forests is dogs off-leash. **PLEASE KEEP DOGS LEASHED.**  
**THANK YOU!**



Published by The Connecticut Horse Council  
with funding provided by the  
Recreational Trails Program  
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THE CONNECTICUT HORSE COUNCIL

**VOLUNTEER  
HORSE PATROL**





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

The establishment of the Patrol came at a critical time, when cuts in the state budget required reductions in DEP staff amongst those overseeing and working in the parks.

Since that time, the VHP has filled part of the gap left by staff no longer there to patrol and maintain trails. The Patrol has now expanded to include several land trust areas, town parks and town open spaces.

Connecticut's VHP is patterned after the Maryland Department of Natural Resource Mounted Patrol Program and the National Park Service's Volunteers in Parks Program.

The Patrol continues to operate under the auspices of the Connecticut Horse Council in cooperation with the DEP or the towns and land trusts where the trails exist.

Patrol volunteers' primary responsibility is to serve as auxiliary "eyes and ears" — on the lookout for what is going on out on the trail. They assist DEP and land governing bodies with non-enforcement tasks such as promoting trail etiquette on multi-use trails, and sharing information with visitors about regulations, facilities and features in the parks. Patrol members repair and maintain trails, freeing limited DEP staff time for other tasks.



Mounted volunteers also assist with municipal programs and special events, and serve as goodwill ambassadors for the equestrian community. All mounted volunteers have completed a training program that includes CPR, First Aid, and learning the rules and regulations of Connecticut's Parks and Forests. The volunteers ride their own horses, and usually trailer them to the parks, although some are able to ride directly to the trails from their barns.

Volunteer Horse Patrol members can be easily identified by the color **red**. Riders on duty wear red shirts or jackets and display the patch shown on the cover of this brochure on a front pocket or sleeve.



Safety, courtesy and respect are foremost when Patrol members interact with the general public. Volunteers are not vested with any enforcement powers, but are instructed to immediately notify

the DEP or local police if situations call for direct action.

Members of the patrol keep logs each time they ride, which are compiled on a quarterly basis and shared with the DEP. Providing this information — such as how many visitors are seen in the parks at certain times of the day or week, and what types of activities are popular — is an important function of the Patrol. VHP members also document and report problems such as hazardous situations on the trails, and when and where park or forest visitors are breaking rules.

