



## CONNECTICUT EQUINE ADVISORY COUNCIL

P.O. Box 57 Durham, CT 06422-0057

### Meeting Minutes of March 17, 2016

#### **Attending:**

Fred Mastele, Diane Ciano, Meg Sautter, Eric Hammerling, David Frassinelli, Ruth Beardsley, Laurie Giannotti

#### **Call to Order:**

The meeting was held at the Eversource Building in Berlin. Meeting called to order at 6:45 pm by Fred.

#### **Review Meeting Minutes:**

Meeting minutes of December 17, 2015 were reviewed. Motion by Meg to accept. Ruth seconded. Motion unanimously carried.

#### **State Forest & Park Updates:**

**DEEP Management Areas:** Laurie will email us all a map of the DEEP Management Areas with the Park Supervisors indicated. We will not put this on the EAC website because it changes a lot.

**Pachaug State Forest:** Laurie posted on the website an article Celeste Santos-Rivera wrote about Pachaug. Celeste finished marking the trails at Pachaug.

**Natchaug State Forest:** Unknown if the picnic tables have been returned.

**Salmon River State Forest:** Roxanne Winslow still has not submitted the GPS information. The trail has been flagged. If someone else marks it, he/she must coordinate with Dave Buckley. Meg, Diane and Ginger volunteered to mark it over the summer.

**Mashamoquet State Park:** Penny Foisey and Tom Nosal marked the Mashamoquet Trail, which only took about 2 weeks. The CHC Volunteer Horse Patrol needs a report from Penny on the trail.

#### **Other Trail Reports:**

**Larkin:** Laurie fixed the Pathways to CT link for this trail. Part of the \$7 million RTP grant received will go toward resurfacing and trailer parking on Rt. 67.

**Moosup Valley Trail:** DOT is going to resurface with stone dust in the Sterling and Painfield area. This trail is not yet on the website but Laurie has a map. Some of it is beautiful, some scary to ride. May eventually connect this to a Rhode Island trail.

**Legislative Discussion:** The state budget is still the big topic in Hartford. Eric reported that \$7 million in bonding for the Connecticut Recreational Trails Program has been approved by the Bonding Commission.

**Budget cuts to DEEP:** The state budget cuts may cause layoffs, some campgrounds not to open and less money for the conservation dedicated fund. Sen. Ted Kennedy's proposed 15 cents per wine/liquor bottle bill – with the revenue dedicated to maintaining our state parks and forests, met with much opposition due to the cost to implement it.

**Constitutional Amendment to protect public land, SJ 36:** CT can give land to individuals, corporations and municipalities for whatever purpose(s) they wish, with no laws to prevent donations or purposes against the public interest. SJ 36 does not seek to prohibit this practice, just to have a more transparent and accountable process. All agreed to contact our

legislators by March 23 to ask them to support the bill and tell the Government Administrative & Elections Committee to move it out of Committee.

Amtrak routes: Amtrak has proposed new routes for its trains that may affect a lot of forest in eastern Connecticut. We will continue to monitor.

New England Energy Pipeline: Routes are under discussion for this new pipeline. We will continue to monitor.

### **Old Business:**

Tabled from previous meeting: Pathways in Connecticut link on DOT website – discussion of failure to mention horseback riding permitted anywhere on Air Line Trail and state parks and forests.

### **New Business:**

DEEP Winter Festival: No Child Left Behind Event was held at Burr Pond State Park in February. Over 400 visitors but this was low, due to the unusually warm weather. Diane & her sister Denise brought their patrol horses.

Newtown Bridle Lands Assn. created a new trail with the Catherine Violet Hubbard Foundation called the Trail of Angels. An opening celebration is planned for 4/23/16.

Trail Ribbon Cutting: On May 14 at 11:30 am there will be a ribbon cutting for a new bridge re-decking from Windham to Lebanon. The bridge connects the Air Line and Hop River Trails. Discussion of the proposed extension of the Air Line Trail into Portland and Middletown.

CHC Connecticut Trails Day Event is 6/4 and 6/5. It will include a Volunteer Horse Patrol ride, Blessing of the Mounts and camp out at Lost Silver Mine Horse Camp at the Natchaug S.F.

Connecticut Trail Riders Assn. also scheduled a ride on 6/5 in Natchaug S.F. Diane will contact the Park Supervisor to advise him about lots of horses that weekend.

Also the Lower Connecticut River Valley Horsemen's Club, the Bridle Path Conservancy, Connecticut Forest & Parks Association (CFPA), and the Connecticut chapter of the New England Mountain Biking Association (NEMBA) are once again teaming up for their 10th Annual Combined Arms Multi-Use Trail Work Party. They will be working on an old trail—re-blazing, cutting, and clearing this trail that has been damaged and then practically abandoned

Greenways Council Day: Will be 6/3/16 at Goodwin S.P.

CFPA Trails Conference: Will be in late October at the CFPA.

The CHC Volunteer Horse Patrol Statistics was reported. For 2015, we had a total of **1,350 patrols**. There were **2,437 patrol hours** logged with **528 hours of trail maintenance**, saving the state **\$47,522.00**. In the 13 years since 2003, the CT Horse Council's Volunteer Horse Patrol Program has saved the State of Connecticut's tax payers **\$645,782.00**. This was accomplished through **33,117** hours of patrol and trail maintenance in 83 areas throughout the State of CT. New Areas of Patrol *Ives Farm Land Trust - Cheshire & Nature Conservancy Land Trust - Salem*

### **Next Meeting:**

The next meeting of the EAC will be Thursday, June 16<sup>th</sup> at the Eversource meeting room located at 107 Selden St., Berlin, CT at 6:30 pm. All are welcome to attend.

### **Adjournment:**

Motion to adjourn by Diane at 8:06 pm. Seconded by Eric. Unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,  
Ruth Beardsley  
Acting Secretary, EAC