



CONNECTICUT EQUINE ADVISORY COUNCIL

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

Meeting Minutes of September 18, 2014

Attending:

Diane Ciano, David Frassinelli, Ruth Beardsley, Meg Sautter, Laurie Giannotti, Eric Hammerling (CFPA)

Excused:

Fred Mastele, Jan Collins

Call to Order:

The meeting was held at the Northeast Utilities Building in Berlin. Meeting called to order at 6:50 pm by Diane.

Review Meeting Minutes:

Meeting minutes of June 19, 2014 were reviewed. Motion by Diane to accept. David seconded. Motion unanimously carried.

Legislation:

Eric brought up discussion on Governor Malloy's promise if re-elected would announce a Trail Stewardship Fund of \$5 million for cities and towns toward extension and completion of multi-use trails, with an additional \$7.5 million for land conservation, open space grants and farmland preservation.

Eric suggested that CFPA and EAC work together to get funding for more encon (environmental conservation) officers to respond to ATV and other state park/forest concerns. There are only 34 officers for the entire state. Discussion of ATV use, registration and use of DOT land.

Laurie stated that the federal transportation funding bill S. 2322 was up for a 6 year re-authorization. It is currently due to expire in December 2014. She suggested that we support it because it funds the Recreational Trails Program. Connecticut would get over \$800,000 per year under the bill. We were all encouraged to contact our federal legislators to urge their support of the bill.

David met with state Rep. Laura Hoydick of Stratford recently at Fairfield U. (where he works). He believes she may be another advocate for equestrians. Suggested that we all get to know legislators who may be interested in our issues.

David reported that not much is going on presently with the Merritt Parkway Trail.

State Forest & Park Updates:

Natchaug State Forest – Lost Silver Mine Horse Camp: Diane reported that CHC is waiting on the toilets to be installed and gave the report on work done at the camp by the CHC-VHP volunteers (see attached). She also noted that a large dead tree needs to come down.

Salmon River State Forest: Diane will continue efforts to work with the DOT in opening the Comstock Bridge for safe crossing to both sides of the forest to avoid the dangerous ride on Rte 16. She will contact Kevin Nursick of DOT for further info to keep communications open.

Ginger Tullai reported on the extensive damage of the ATV's on the trails and now deep erosion with them crossing the river by the Comstock Bridge. Laurie encouraged Ginger to call the DEEP hotline any time she sees an ATV on the trail. Ginger will email the photos she took today to Laurie, who will see that they are transmitted to the proper person. Ginger has also seen continued evidence in the area of parties and fires left burning unattended. Ginger has been in contact with the DOT and Re. Melissa Ziobran about opening the bridge to horses, so far without any luck.

Ginger contacted Roxanne Winslow but has not gotten her to do her GPS information for the maps.

Naugatuck State Forest: Diane reported that CHC-VHP Coordinator Shirley Vicchitto sponsored a National Ride Across America on Saturday, September 13th in the forest. The Rides Across America take place around the time of 9/11 to show appreciation of the trails and our country. DEEP Supervisor, Nathan Hale, accommodated access for the event by having the gates opened for the horse trailers to pull in off the road.

Other Trail Reports:

Bissell Trail - Windsor - Meg reported the extensive damage and erosion of a now washed out culvert on the trail, making it impassable. It was noted that the state does not own this property and the town of Windsor was notified, but did not respond back regarding this situation.

New Business:

Laurie reported that the DEEP has a new Chief of Outdoor Recreation - Mike Lambert from North Carolina.

Ruth reported that Marian Larkin of Middlebury contacted her to state the family was very upset that the Larkin Bridle Trail was renamed the Larkin Greenway. The Larkins had purchased the old railroad bed many years ago and gave it to the State on the condition that it remain a bridle trail in perpetuity. Ruth indicated to Ms. Larkin that she would pass along the information but doubted that the name would be changed back, and explained the advantages of receiving funding and attention from the DEEP if the trail were open to multiple recreational uses in addition to horseback riding.

Old Business:

Hop River Greenway: Ginger reported that she contacted local horse farms in the Shoddy Mill Rd. area and educated them on trail courtesy regarding manure on the greenway and on the covered bridge. Continued discussion on signage at trail heads, kiosks and along trails such as this one. Diane will follow up with CHC.

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.

CT Forest & Park Association (CFPA) – Eric reported that they are seeking a replacement for the EAC representative on the Council.

Award from Legislature – DebraLee Hovey had requested additional information on Ann Lehman and the Bethany Horsemen for presentation of an award recognizing her/its efforts on behalf of equestrians. Ruth will forward to DebraLee relevant information and the organization's By-Laws, which contain a statement of the organization's mission and history.

Trail Surface Study:

The group reviewed the Trail Surface Study power point and all were very pleased and appreciative of the work done by Ruth to complete the study and Laurie's great job on the presentation. Laurie noted that the power point may not be the correct format to present it on the website because a power point can be changed. She suggested making it a PDF. Laurie will email it one last time to everyone for a detailed review for typos and corrections and then finalize it.

Webinar on Horses and Trails:

Laurie participated. She will share the power point and other valuable information with the committee. She noted that recommendations for campgrounds had already been implemented in the Lost Silvermine Camp.

Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the EAC will be Thursday, December 18th at the Northeast Utilities meeting room located at 3333 Berlin Tpke., Newington, CT at 6:30 pm. All are welcome to attend.

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn by Ruth at 8:45 pm. Seconded by Diane. Unanimously passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Ruth Beardsley
Acting Secretary, EAC