



Town of Loxahatchee Groves
Roadway, Equestrian Trails & Greenway
Advisory Committee Meeting
Tuesday, September 27, 2016 at 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon
Meeting Location: Town Hall, 155 F Road

Committee Member Jo Siciliano
Committee Member Holli Proesel
Committee Member Nina Corning
Committee Member Katie Davis
Committee Member Bill Louda
Council Liaison Vice Mayor Tom Goltzené

Town Manager William F. Underwood II
Town Clerk Virginia Walton

PUBLIC NOTICE/AGENDA

*Vision: To Develop a Recreational Greenways and Equestrian
Trail Network for the Rural Town of Loxahatchee Groves.*

1. OPENING

- a. Call to Order & Roll Call
- b. Approval of Agenda
- c. Appointment of Chair
- d. Appointment of Vice-Chair
- e. Resolution No. 2013-03A Policy and Procedures for Meetings.

2. MINUTES - NONE

3. OLD BUSINESS

- a. Canal Maintenance Easement Survey 2016 – Review for Proposed Trail Locations

4. NEW BUSINESS

Bill Louda:

- a. Discussion on one-lane road/horse trail combination in front of Sunsport Gardens
- b. Small Scale Horse Operations: Best Management Practices for Water Resource Protection in Florida FDEP Publication
- c. "Protect Your Trails" Organization

5. CLOSING COMMENTS

- a. Public
- b. Committee Members
- c. Concluding Administrative Remarks

6. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting is to be determined.

Comments Cards: Anyone from the public wishing to address this Committee must complete a Comment Card before speaking. This must be filled out completely with your full name and address and given to the Town Clerk. During the meeting, before public comments, you may only address the item on the agenda in which is being discussed at the time of your comment. During public comments, you may address any item you desire. Please remember that there is a three (3) minute time limit on all public comment. Any person who decides to appeal any decision of this Committee with respect to any matter considered at this meeting will need a record of the proceedings and for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made which included testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based. Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations in order to participate should contact the Town Clerk's Office (561-793-2418), at least 48 hours in advance to request such accommodation.

Follow upon Mr. Morley Schloss's proposal

Nov 7 2008

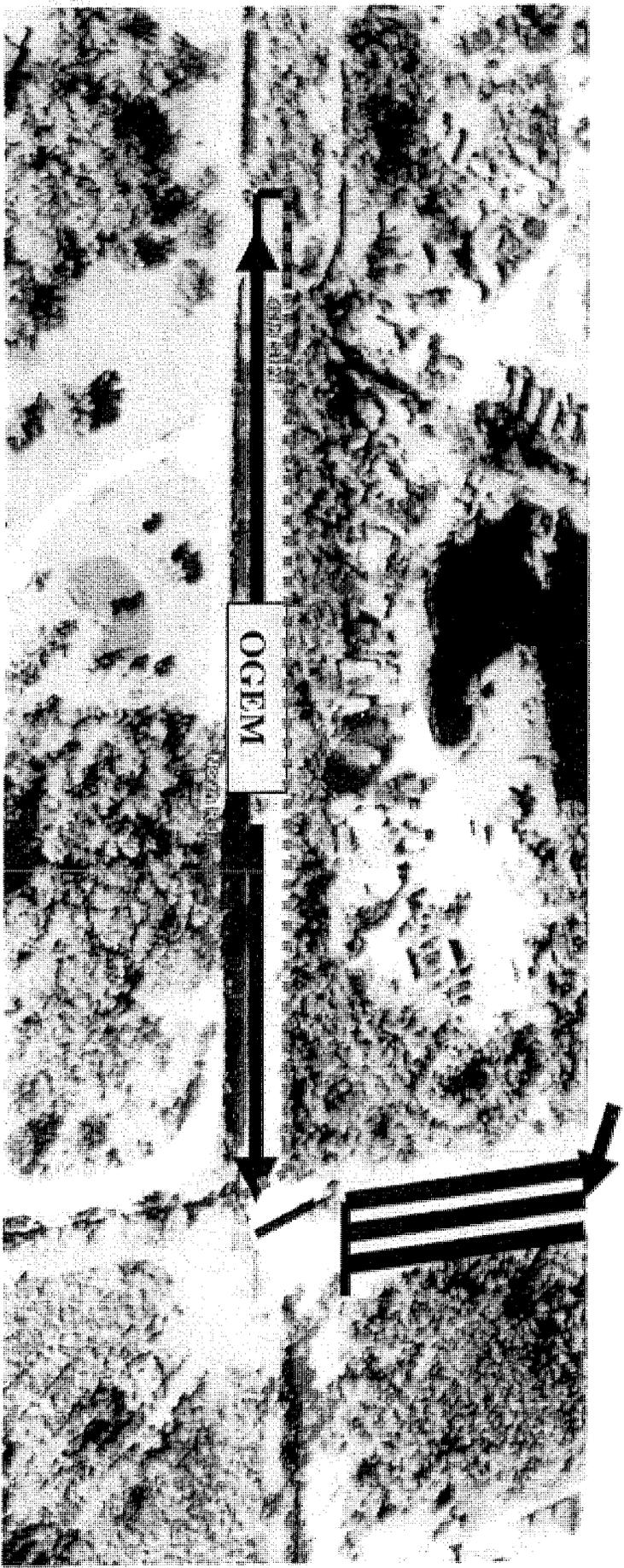
Morley Schloss of Sunsport Gardens offered to provide an easment for both the road and an equestrian trail in front of Sunsport Gardens.

This is 40th Street N. from E-rd (aka 140th Avenue) west approximately 0.15 mile (~ 800 ft) to the culvert crossing onto North Road.

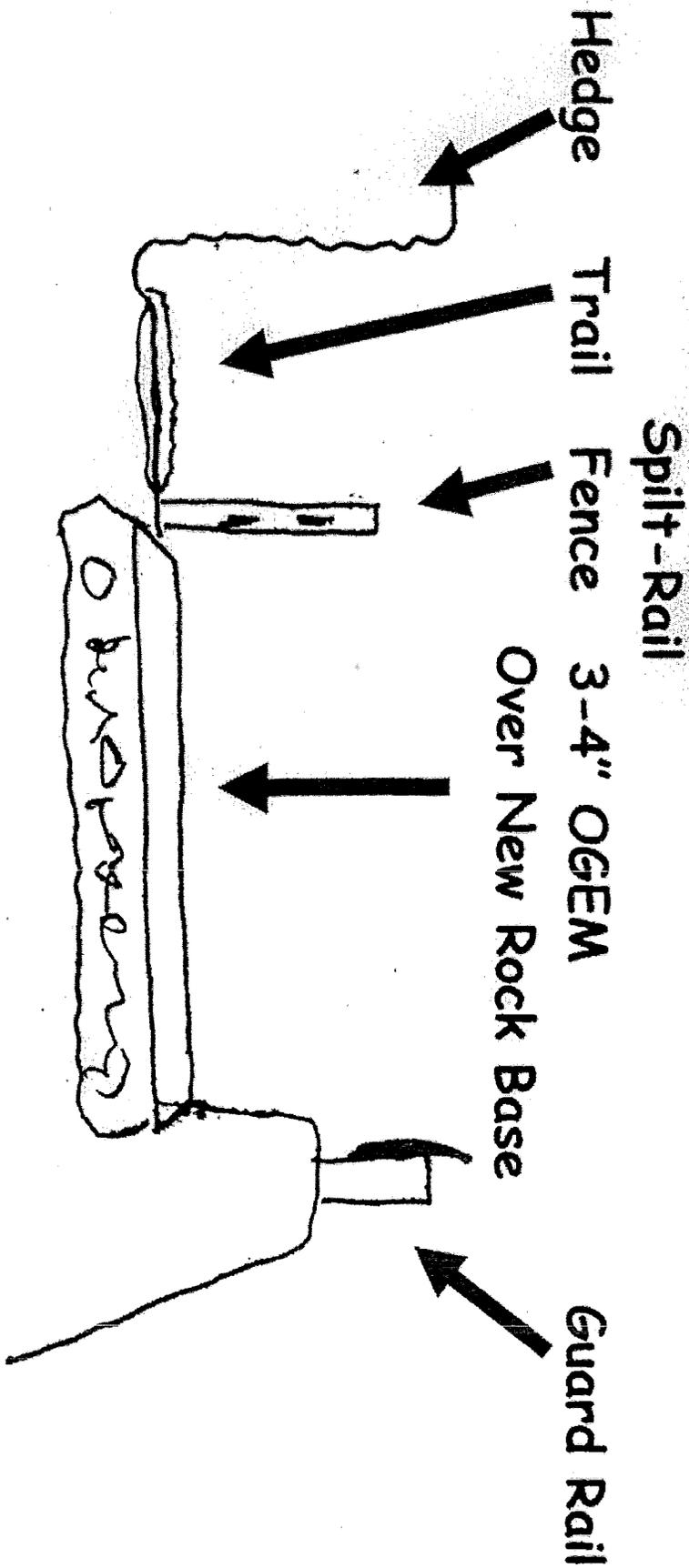
Google Earth View of 40th Street N east of 140th Ave / E-Road
(Sunspout Gardens) Red dotted line = trail connectivity.
SIGNAGE: Stop Signs with-Do not proceed if oncoming traffic has entered road way.

0.15 mile (~ 800feet)

140th Ave-Paved to 40th. St.N. (TTID)



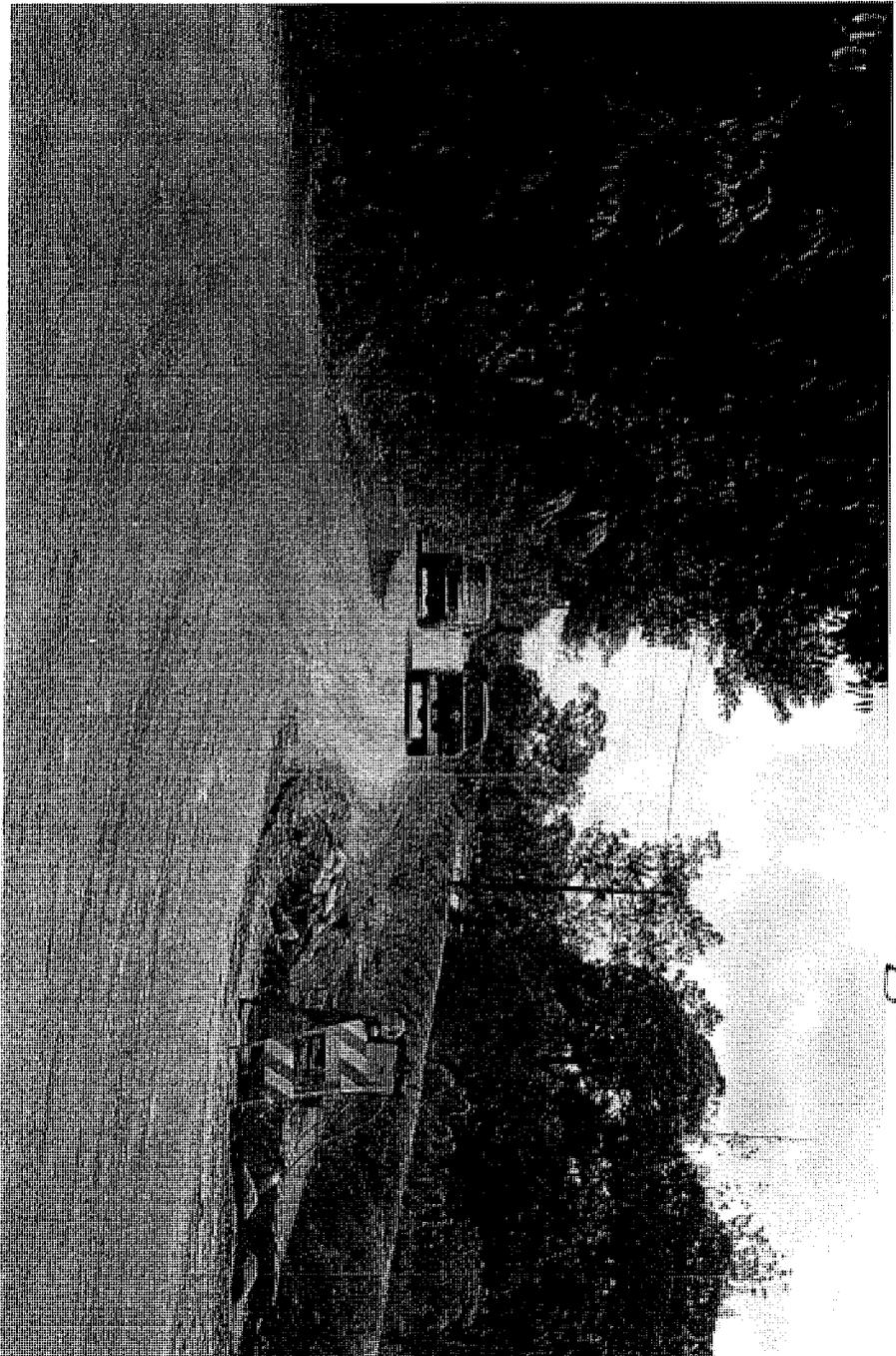
Proposed cross section:



JW/mL 10/04/08

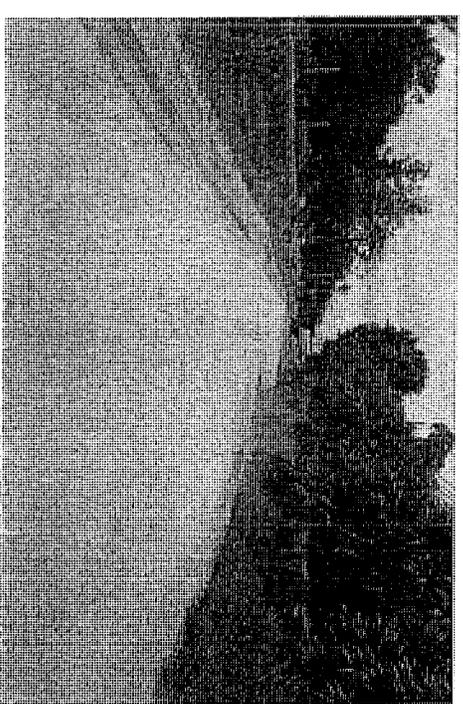
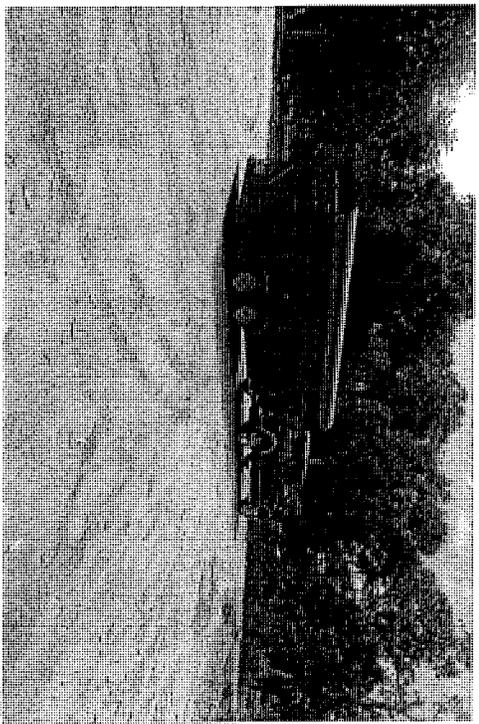
WHY NOT A ~~2~~-LANE ROAD with Equestrian / walking trails?

- NO ROOM and 1-Lane will slow traffic and dissuade cut through.

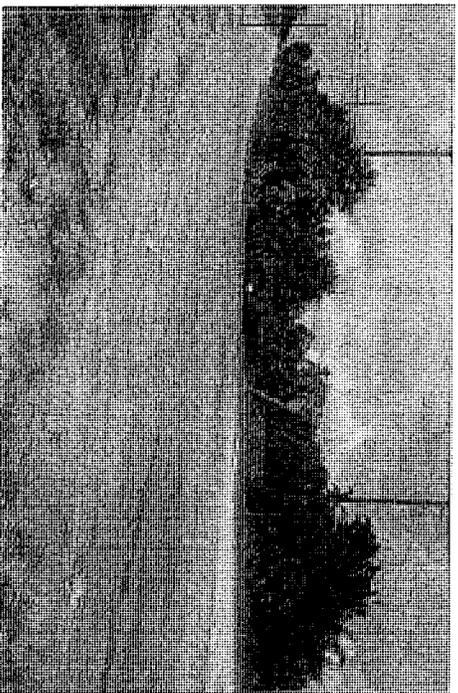
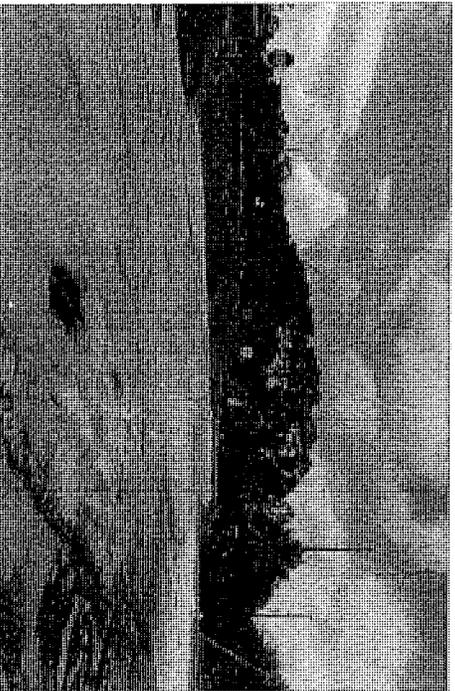
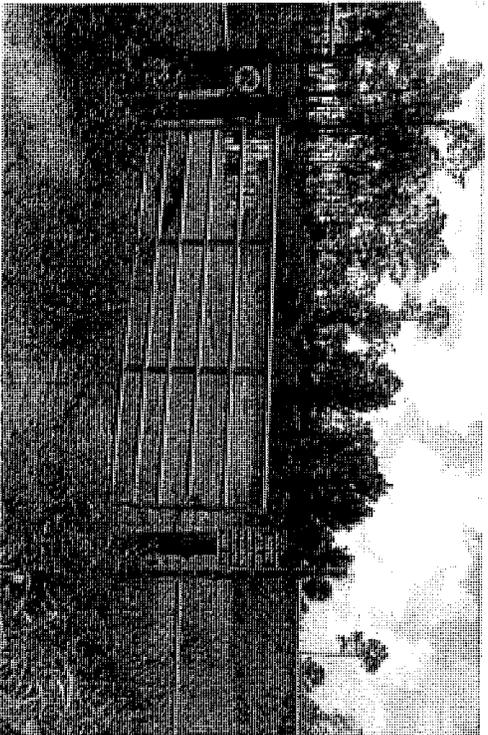


1-lane
DO NOT
ENTER
IF TRAFFIC
TOWARDS YOU

School buses and horse trailers will have plenty of turn radius clearance.

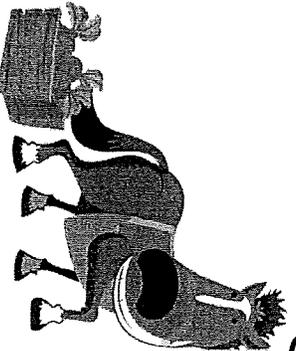
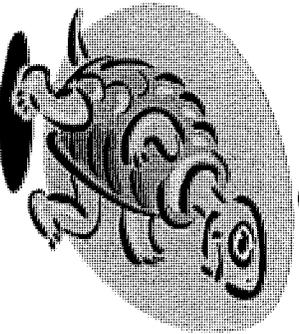


Gate from RPPBNA and intersection of 40th and 140th (ITTD)



WHY ?

- Upgrades our northern entrance / exit without encouraging additional traffic.
- Initiates an equestrian and walking trail link from F-Road through RPPBNA and onto the north side of North Canal (being finished by P.B.Co. / LGWCD now).
- Puts gas-tax monies to a good community use.



PROTECT YOUR TRAILS

Support your **TRAIL SYSTEM** by developing a local trail organization.

BY DOT MOYER



This article has been condensed from the Equine Land Conservation Resource, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping protect and conserve land for equestrian uses. See the full article, which includes much more detailed information, at elcr.org.

In 2001, my quest was to find horse paradise. I moved myself and my horses south to an equestrian area, tempted by the miles of trails advertised in the listings.

What the listings failed to mention was that the unprotected trails were disappearing rapidly.

My first step was to volunteer with a trail organization that had made progress in slowing the loss. Subsequently, our trail mileage has increased, our trails are more connected, our number of involved landowners has doubled, and permanent trail protection has been established on important hub trails.

Given the dismal national trends in maintaining trail networks, the question often asked is, "How did you do that?"

There are many ways to build a successful trail system and organization, but this is how we did it.

RECRUIT STRONG LEADERS

It takes committed, talented, and positive people to make a trail system work, especially in its early stages. Be ruthless about who you get and keep on the

board. Good people do not like to waste time. They want to see results—not listen to complaints and gossip or handle minor issues.

Everyone on the board should be there for a purpose. Do they have good local connections? Are they well respected, effective, and resourceful? Can they represent large landowners and/or different areas of the trail system? Do they have heavy equipment and know-how? You need lawyers, financial people, insurance professionals, realtors, business people, donors, writers, graphics people, and techies. Effective people are usually busy and in demand, so get on their dance card early. Large landowners, especially, should always be invited.

A VISION

Every organization has to have a vision of what it wants to be before it can sell itself. Find that vision first, and stick with it. Our original founders wanted to preserve the area's tradition of friendliness and open riding. This vision guided the decision to create a nonprofit organization where landowners are voting members, but riding membership is open to anyone willing to make a relatively small contribution and follow our simple rules.

MAKE LANDOWNERS HAPPY

It is all about your landowners. It is

their land, and nothing happens without them. Recognize that their interests and concerns are the most important thing. Building trust is essential. Landowners generally have three main concerns you must address:

1. *How will their land and the people and animals on it be impacted by riding?* Even if they have horses and ride, landowners have legitimate concerns about their property, damage, litter, animals, and people, and that they will be treated with courtesy and respect.

The best way to ensure this is to establish reasonable, understandable usage rules and enforce them fairly, uniformly, and consistently. Having the landowners' participation in developing the rules helps them realize that they retain control over their land and gives them ownership of the system.

Riders must be convinced of the importance of putting the landowners' interests above their own. A rider's failure to live by the landowners' reasonable requirements is the fastest way to lose trails.

2. *Why would I want to allow these people on my land?* Reasons will vary depending on the individual. You will have to be prepared to answer that question differently for each landowner. Focus on their interests and concerns. Some arguments to support the trail system that have been

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PROTECT YOUR TRAILS

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convincing in our area include: preserving tradition and a providing a community asset; protecting a place to enjoy a traditional hobby; and maintaining a horse culture, which can be important to the community. Trails are a huge amenity to real estate and generally raise property values, and they can be a big draw to the area, creating jobs. Trails impact other organizations too—the carriage club, the hunt, the hunter pace are all beneficiaries, as are the neighbors who walk in the area.

If the trails disappear and the horse people leave, the type of community you have will change, and land may be more likely to be developed. Having a community asset like a trail system preserves low density for everyone's benefit.

3. *What is their legal liability?* In an era of rampant litigation, liability is the single biggest obstacle to creating and maintaining a trail system. This is a very serious consideration for every landowner and should be treated with great respect. Because laws vary by state, you need to get your own attorney.

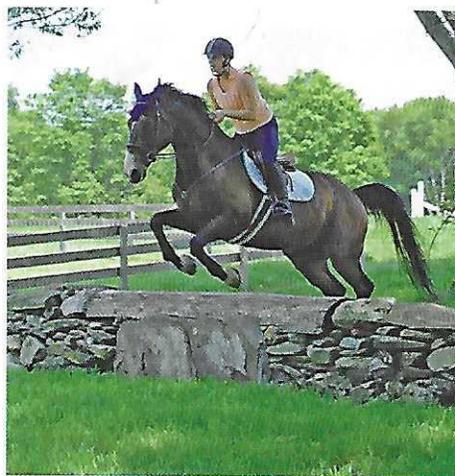
We use a three-pronged strategy of prevention, legal savvy, and insurance to limit our landowners' liability to the best extent possible.

PREVENTION

Good risk management is key. Look at your highest risk factors and limit them effectively. Usage rules can reduce risk dramatically. Helmet use is a must. Closing trails when they are dangerous (poor footing, storm damage, alternate uses like a foxhunt, or deer-hunting season) and notifying riders about problem areas will all limit the opportunity for accidents and injuries.

Our standard is that an advanced beginner ought to be able to safely navigate our trails, and if they are dangerous and we cannot fix them, those trails do not need to be on the system.

Risk management not only prevents accidents but demonstrates that we have



acted with due care if we were involved in a liability suit.

LEGAL SAVVY

Again, specialized professional help is a must, but in a nutshell, legal liability for accidents/injuries depends on whether the landowner was negligent. Negligence depends on a determination of what law applies; what is the legal duty of care to the injured party under the law; has the duty been met; and (in some states) did the injured party cause or contribute to the accident.

This is how we deal with these legal issues. We try to identify and understand applicable law. We strive to comply with the language and court rulings relating to recreational use statutes, which establishes a much lower duty of care by uncompensated landowners. Our goal is to meet the requirements of equine activity statutes, even if we are not sure they apply to landowners or how to meet the posting requirements. We include it with the annual membership and post it on important trailheads.

Our rules agreement and waiver stipulate that rules violations are contributory negligence by the rider, and accidents resulting from violations are foreseeable risks assumed by the rider.

We move the relationship from the jurisdiction of negligence law to contract law by requiring all members to sign an

inclusive liability release each year. This also applies to guests each time they ride. This releases for liability for negligence, holds harmless, and indemnifies the landowner, the trail system, the officers and directors, contractors, etc. and accepts the standard care provided by the recreational use statute as the applicable level of care required.

Riders only have landowner's permission if they abide by our rules agreement. Breaking the rules downgrades a rider's status from authorized user to trespasser. Trespassers are owed little duty of care. We require riders to sign and return the rules agreement, which establishes reasonable rules for their safety. If they break them, that is their choice, and they are trespassing.

INSURANCE

Good liability coverage in adequate amounts is expensive and difficult to find. If individual coverage for landowners is unattainable, there are other things that can be done. First, see what that lawyer or insurance person on your board can do. At the very least, consider club insurance to pay your landowner's legal defense fees and get directors and officers insurance (if you incorporate) to protect board members. 

Dot Moyer, a lifelong equestrian and trail rider, is on the board of directors of a nonprofit trail association formed in 1993 to preserve her area's equestrian trails. The association, located in a growing area of western North Carolina, faces the typical problems causing trail losses everywhere. Currently, the association's 180-plus voting landowners host approximately 400 riding members on 150 miles of trails connecting about 1,500 acres of private property.