

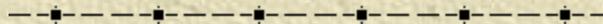
*Connecticut Horse Council
Volunteer Horse Patrol
2003-2016*

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UConn | COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE,
HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES

EXTENSION & ANIMAL SCIENCE

Trail User 14 Year Study

- ✦ The Connecticut Horse Council (CHC) partnered with Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection (DEEP) in 2003 to create the Volunteer Horse Patrol (VHP) to ride and serve in state parks & forests.
- ✦ The establishment of this Patrol Unit came to fruition for Connecticut when drastic cuts on our state budget caused layoffs, along with staff & supervisor reductions. That situation forced the closure of many state parks & forests and reduced services because of this lack of state funding. This situation still continues with the DEEP today.
- ✦ This program helps to protect and preserve the trails of the state. Since its beginning, the Patrol expanded to include, land trusts, open spaces, town lands, city parks and private lands.

Trail User 14 Year Study



- ✦ 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.
- ✦ By providing a community service to land owners in exchange for usage of the lands creates a win- win situation by providing trail patrols and maintenance at no cost.
- ✦ During the 14 year period, members recorded statistics pertaining to the activities they encountered, volunteer patrol & trail maintenance hours, along with assistance given to other trail users, including information, education on trail etiquette, directions to lost persons and first aid.

Shocking Statistics

- ✦ 15 year history
- ✦ 38,043 hours of patrol over 14 years
- ✦ 88 areas throughout the state
- ✦ 14-year statistics collected from:
 - 21 state forests
 - 28 state parks
 - 7 Wildlife Management Areas
 - 9 land trusts
 - 15 town and open spaces
 - 8 private lands



Patrols and Value

- ✦ Members contributed 37,980 hours of patrols and trail maintenance, and also donated the use of their equipment, including chainsaws and tractors
- ✦ The Independent Sector valued volunteer time at \$19.50 per hour, for a total of \$740,610 in volunteer service contributed by VHP members over the 14 year period from 2003-2016



Volunteer Horse Patrol Contributions

- ✦ There were between 50-100 members of the patrol over each of the past 14 years
- ✦ 30-40% of these members submitted reports on patrols and trail maintenance
- ✦ VHP members gave directions 380 times
- ✦ VHP members provided general information 6,598 times



Horses on Trails

- ✦ Collected data show a large number of horses utilize state, town, and private lands, and work to patrol and maintain trails
- ✦ 27.7% of trail users recorded were equestrians
- ✦ Over the 14-year period there were 33,357 horses out on the trail during the patrols and an average of 1.75 other horses per patrol
- ✦ 30% of the 8,279 trail users recorded by the VHP in 2016 were equestrians



Volunteer Horse Patrol – Dog Walkers

- ✦ The highest number of walkers and dogs were reported in 2009 – the year with the highest number of patrols
- ✦ Most dog walkers (74%) were in compliance with the law that dogs need to be leashed



Volunteer Horse Patrols

- ✦ The number of patrols totaled 19,106. The average length of patrol hours varied over the years, for example 1.5 hours per patrol in 2010, versus 2 hours in 2011
- ✦ There were fewer patrols in 2011, although members spent more time on the trail during each patrol.



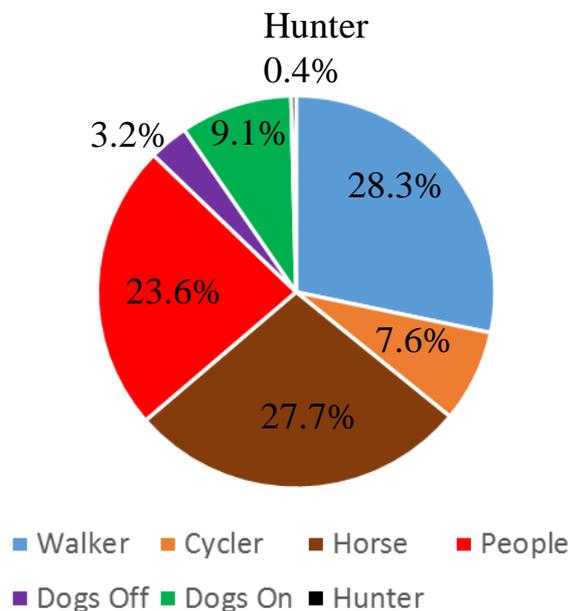
Recorded Visitors without Motorbikes or ATVs 2003-2016

(Total Patrol Hours 37,980)

Year	Walkers	Cyclers	Horse	People*	Dogs OFF	Dogs ON	Hunter
2003	335	138	151	168	145	8	13
2004	940	294	485	231	96	253	78
2005	1628	798	1272	421	197	424	12
2006	3400	1254	2905	1880	374	988	33
2007	2337	909	3310	2706	331	772	23
2008	2668	837	2367	3847	382	868	48
2009	3224	666	2902	3254	446	1144	23
2010	3015	649	3450	3170	351	1123	45
2011	3420	794	3254	3318	285	940	130
2012	3294	838	2795	3279	366	1167	15
2013	2088	484	2318	1275	180	478	8
2014	2660	462	3017	2304	201	719	42
2015	2746	456	2655	803	242	1,290	9
2016	2282	590	2476	1755	314	769	41
Totals	34,087	9,169	33,357	28,411	3,910	10,943	520
Average	2431.2	654.9	2382.6	2029.4	279.3	781.6	37.1

People are those noted doing other activities, including: fishing, swimmers, kayakers, picnickers, campers, bird watchers, photography, snow shoes, skiers, etc

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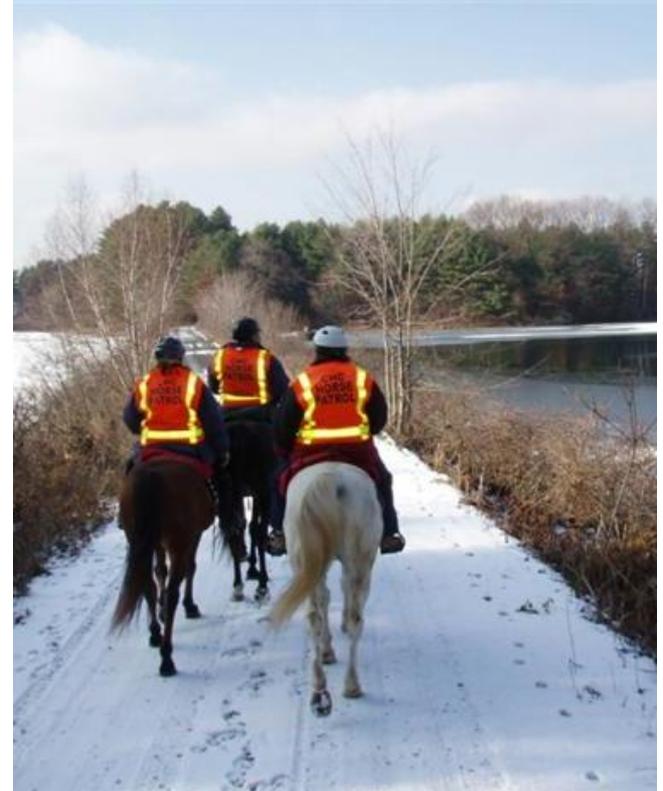
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Summary

- ✦ Priority areas for Connecticut Horse Council and equestrian groups include:
 - Maintaining and creating multi-use trails that are open to equestrians
 - Constructing parking areas suitable for horse trailers
 - Promoting safety on the trails among all trail user groups
 - Encouraging trail use and outdoor recreation among all Connecticut residents



Thank you and be safe!!



Happy Trails !!!