



# Illinois Trail Riders

*Dedicated To Keeping Horses On Our Trails*

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## ***Proposed Recreation User Fees for the Shawnee National Forest***

The US Forest Service has announced a proposal to collect recreation user fees for equestrian use of designated trails forest wide, as well as for use of eight popular day-use recreation sites. The proposed fees are authorized by the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act of 2004 which also directs that a minimum of 80% of the revenue be spent improving the trails or recreational facilities where the fees are collected.

The Shawnee is proposing fees as a means to secure long-term funding for trail improvements in the forest. The Shawnee proposal would ask riders over 16 years of age to pay a fee of \$5.00 per day to use any of the 379 miles of forest trails designated for equestrian use. A proposed \$50.00 yearly permit would be available for frequent users. The permits would be issued to individual equestrians and would be valid for whatever horse or mule they wish to ride. Equestrian use of forest roads, as well as cross-country use (where authorized), would remain free. Horses or mules which are not ridden, such as pack stock or those being led for training purposes would not require a permit.

The Shawnee National Forest is committed to use the revenue generated by the proposed fees to improve trails forest wide. Examples of the type of projects the forest intends to complete can be seen on the Shawnee NF website, <http://www.fs.fed.us/r9/forests/shawnee/> (look for the "Trails Weekly Accomplishment Reports" on the right side of the front page).

For maps of the Shawnee designated trail system, or additional information about proposed fees for trails, picnic, boating or beach areas on the national forest visit the "Passes and Permits" section of the Shawnee website.

The Shawnee NF is asking for public comments concerning the proposed fees through April 15, 2008. **Please mail comments to Hurston A. Nicholas, Forest Supervisor, Shawnee National Forest, 50 Highway 145 South, Harrisburg, IL 62946. Comments may be emailed through the "contact us" link on the Forest website.** The Shawnee will consider the comments to determine if changes should be made to the fee proposals. Final approval of the proposed fees will require review by the Region 9 Recreation Resource Advisory Committee (R9 RRAC). The R9 RRAC is a citizen's advisory group mandated by the Recreation Enhancement Act to advise the Forest Service on fees for recreational use of national forests. The Shawnee intends to submit fee proposals to the R9 RRAC in September 2008. Questions about the proposals can be addressed to Tim Pohlman, Recreation Program Manager, Shawnee National Forest, 50 Highway 145 South, Harrisburg, Illinois 62946, 1-800-699-6637 or 618-253-1043; voice 618-253-1060, email: [tpohlman@fs.fed.us](mailto:tpohlman@fs.fed.us).

## ***10 Steps to Help Save Our Outdoors That Every Equestrian Can Work With!***

The following is a list of recommendations for the future of trails and greenways in America as drafted by American Trails. Illinois Trail Riders hope that you will work in your community to ensure horses are always part of the trail system.

1. Promote Connections In Our Communities – Trail and greenway infrastructure that connects people and places in our neighborhoods, towns, cities and regions readily accessible within 15 minutes of every American.
2. Create a National Trails Network/System – An integrated trails network at all levels: linking cities, states, and regions of North America, as well as trails accessing National Parks, National Forests and other public lands.
3. Commit Sustainable Funding – Ongoing, sustainable revenue stream to fund and offer incentives to create trails and greenways. Includes federal funds & programs: Transportation Enhancements, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ), National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program, The Recreational Trails Program, U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) programs, Land & Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), Safe Routes to School, and Complete Streets.
4. Expand Environmental Education – an integral part of a national and local school curricula at every level.
5. Associate Trails with Health and Fitness – Trails are a significant part of community health and fitness programs.
6. Encourage All Americans to Participate – Opportunities for the American People to give back—helping to plan, fund and work on trails in our neighborhoods, parks, as well as on state and federal lands.
7. Promote Sustainable Transportation – Alternative modes of travel that lessen dependence on foreign oil and reduce CO2 emissions contributing to climate change.
8. Engage, Motivate Youth – Promote stewardship with youth conservation/trail building corps.
9. Promote Access and Accessibility – An accessible, safe system for all abilities within easy reach of all homes and places of employment.
10. Build Trail and Greenway Partnerships – Trails and greenways created as vital infrastructure; working with homebuilders and developers, transportation, utility, flood and fire control agencies and others with mutual benefit.

In an era of diminishing wild spaces, American Trails is striving to create a legacy of places of outdoor recreation and solace readily accessible to All Americans.

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**Illinois Trail Riders Handbook  
Of Trails, Camps and Services**

Over 300 pages of information on  
Illinois trails and trail riding!  
More than 10,000 rideable miles!



The book is divided by area with each site listing giving directions, detailed trail map and description, and information on camping facilities.

This is a must for your trail rides.

**All this For Only \$20.00  
(plus \$3.00 p&h)**

**Order Form On Back Page**

**Illinois Trail Riders  
Goals and Purposes**

*Encourage the development of year-around horse trails with improved trailer parking and horse camping facilities.*

*Establish/maintain communications throughout all stages and levels of trail or land planning and management.*

*Utilize education programs to help trail developers provide safe multi-use trail facilities and all trail users to understand trail etiquette.*

*Work with legislators to illustrate the importance of trail-based recreation to the horse community and Illinois.*

*Meet with environmental and conservancy advocacy groups to encourage an unbiased approach to trail development (saddle, carriage and pack).*

*Work to keep existing trails open and monitor changes in trail use to protect equestrians and defend our right to be on trails and roads throughout Illinois.*

**Advertising**

Promote your event or sell your items through the *Newsletter* which reaches over 2,000 riders around the State of Illinois on at least a quarterly basis (February, May, August, November).

Ad deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month preceding publication date. Ad copy along with payment must be received by that date and are subject to approval. See rates alongside.

Ad Type	One-Time Rate	Per Issue Four-Time Rate
Business Card	\$18.00	\$13.00
Quarter Page	\$25.00	\$21.00
Half Page	\$35.00	\$28.00
Full page	\$50.00	\$40.00
<b>CLASSIFIED: \$10.00 PER ISSUE, 40 WORDS OR LESS</b>		

Send your camera ready copy and prepayment to Bobbi Glab, 4006 Oak Avenue, Unit 3W, McHenry, IL 60050-6311, 815 578-8960.

**We Are Participating in the Country Care Program**

Supply Shop at the Country Supply website:

[www.countrysupply.com](http://www.countrysupply.com)

and they will donate a percentage of your purchases to us! Simply enter our Care Code when you complete your order. Our Care Code: IL Trail Riders

## *From the President*

It has been a busy quarter, since the last newsletter was published.

As you can see from Peter and Sara's report, we had a great turnout at the Mid America Trails and Greenways Conference despite the cold Chicago weather (see article on Page \_\_\_). We greatly appreciate the local horse trail advocates (including the Horsemens Council of Illinois) who gave their time and money to help out. Our information went out to many trail managers and generated information exchanges and partnerships that should carry on as new trails are developed and old ones revitalized.

Since the Conference, I have received information on new trail ideas such as a trail extending down the Kaskaskia River on port district property from Fayetteville to the Mississippi River, and opening the Lotus Group Campground to include equestrian camping with horse trails around Carlyle Lake. Ideas such as these require a group of equestrians working with landowners, be they Federal, (such as Army Corp of Engineers), state (IDNR) or private (utility companies or individuals). Stakeholders work together to develop a proposed plan of action, get all of the approvals, find the funding, and have the trail acknowledged in the records of the landowner, the county, or the state. Much must happen before dirt can be moved or trees pruned back. We need to document our volunteer efforts and expenses. Many of the existing places to ride are only horse trails as long as the current land manager allows it. Trail riders need to make these resources permanent before they are lost! Hopefully, our board can help with information, networking, and resources while our members participate in meetings and do the hard work necessary to eventually get it done in their communities.

I learned more about the process of applying for RTP trail money at the January Trails and Greenways Advisory Council meeting. It starts with the planning process, finding the up-front funds, and then paperwork submission for a project. Waiting for the project's approval and the Governor to announce the awards can be nailbiting. Completing the trail project on a timetable and receiving a reimbursement check can draw the process out for years. Some groups and agencies who might build a recreational trail that includes equestrians may be dissuaded by the process alone.

Good Luck to the best trail improvement idea I have heard this year. It is an effort that brings together various moneys, agencies, and trail users in projects that benefit the horse industry and the citizens of the country. ITR commends **Patti Laubscher** of the Shawnee Trail Conservancy, Grant Committee Chair, and **Tim Pohlman**, the Recreation Program Manager of the Shawnee National Forest, for joining forces to apply for grants to improve trails in the Shawnee. Projects that can help resolve ecological problems and portray equestrians, as productive, deserving members of the trail community are most valuable. Since it is only January, I hope I hear of more worthy trail projects throughout the state.

Illinois Trail Riders supports every effort to improve, preserve or increase the number of sustainable year-around trails open to horses, so do not neglect to contact us for support on your projects throughout the state. We get more accomplished when we network effectively.

May your trail never end.

Denise

## *Don't Forget*

The Illinois Trail Riders general meeting. We expect to see you there because we have a lot of information to share and work to do!

Due to popular demand we have ordered T-shirts to sell at the 2008 Horse Fair Booth. You'll want to stop by the booth and look at the selection on your way in and out of the Open General meeting. As always you can also purchase a handbook or share your concerns with other members at the booth.

Again we will be looking for workers at the booth for all three days. Contact Jean Greenlee to volunteer at 815-292-3010. The Fair runs Friday Feb. 29- March 2 and the busiest day for the booth is Saturday, so keep that in mind when you call Jean to volunteer at 815 292-3010.

## *Notice Of Annual Meeting*

The Annual Meeting of Illinois Trail Riders will be held on Saturday, March 1, 2008, at 11:00 a.m. in the lower level meeting room of the Livestock Exhibition Center at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield, IL, the site of the Illinois Horse Fair.

According to the By-Laws, the purpose of the meeting is for the "election of directors and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting."

## *Preserving our Equine Heritage On Public Land Act*

(Introduced in Senate November 1, 2007)

**S 2283 110th CONGRESS is replacing the Right-To-Ride bill.**

Its purpose is:

To preserve the use and access of pack and saddle stock animals on public land administered by the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, or the Forest Service on which there is a historical tradition of the use of pack and saddle stock animals.

From this website one can read the bill, comment on it and vote on it: [http://www.washingtonwatch.com/bills/show/110\\_SN\\_2283.html#toc3](http://www.washingtonwatch.com/bills/show/110_SN_2283.html#toc3).

Read more about this and other important equine issues at [www.horsecouncil.org](http://www.horsecouncil.org) or find out how to contact your politicians and voice your opinion by looking at the legislation link of [www.horsemencouncil.org](http://www.horsemencouncil.org).

We need to let our politicians know how we feel about these issues and ask them to support trail riders and the horse industry. This will be particularly important in this upcoming election year.

***Some Considerations and Opinions on the Shawnee User Fee Proposal*** (Compiled by Denise Maxwell from emails and phone conversations) ***As You Make Your Comments*** to Hurston A. Nicholas, Forest Supervisor, Shawnee National Forest, 50 Highway 145 South, Harrisburg, IL 62946. Comments may be emailed through the "contact us" link on the Forest website.

So far there are a total of 379 miles of designated trail and 79 miles of wilderness trail (some in each of seven areas) throughout the Shawnee National Forest. The east side is more heavily used by equestrians than the west side.

Designated trails are important for perpetuity of trails. If they aren't "designated" there is no way to protect and maintain them for future use. Money cannot be spent on "undesigned trails."

The idea is to get trails designated where they need to be on the ground to make the system work and to have a stable (designated) source of funding (recreation fees) that creates the capacity to build and maintain the trails and trail heads. The initiation of a system (trail designation or user fee system) is always the most difficult. but keeping the momentum going in the right direction can be a challenge as well.

**Remember**, some people don't trust the "government" no matter what is going on or they think of individual employees as "the government." Some people don't like paying any recreational fee. It feels like double taxation (since we already gave the government our tax money). Unfortunately, the "government" doesn't see the same priorities in spending our tax money as we have when we pay it. Some people don't believe that trails need maintenance. They think that trails will just happen and erosion, down timber, pitting and spreading are not important. They despise limitations within wilderness areas about where one can camp, rules about group size or rain closures. Some understand the need for recreational fees but want to address the "real costs and benefits."

**We all have a right** to be concerned about how our money is being spent by any governmental agency at federal, state or local levels, but we must remember the big picture may look different depending on our diverse points of view. The user fees can create a specific fund for horse trails and the local land managers or local employees need not beg for the ability to do what needs to be done. It must be assured that fees collected for horse riding will go back to horse riding and not get lost in a "general fund."

If fees are collected, will the existing budgets for trails be lost or reallocated? Will user fees replace existing funds or supplement them?

The better question is what do we get for our recreation fee? What do we need and where do we need it? Specific amenities (such as hitching rails, mounting blocks, toilets, trail heads, campgrounds, parking areas, water, maps, signage, a growing trail system with more connecting mileage across the state) can only be discussed when a budget is established for them. How much of the collected money will actually go to trails on the ground since some of the fee will undoubtedly cover administrative costs such as printing, education, enforcement or salaries of the workers. What if fees continue to go up every year?

Then there is the normal confusion about administrative issues associated with a bridle tag fee (user fee). Who will sell them? Can they be ordered online or over the phone? Does the tag seller get a percent for the administrative hassle? How does one get a tag on nights or weekends? Does the tag go with the rider or the horse? Can one purchase one tag and use it no matter which horse is ridden? Can we pass one tag around depending which family member rides the horse at a given time? Who is enforcing the tag? Do riderless horses need a tag? How does it affect those that already have outfitter guide or special use permits?

The issue of equity always rears its head. Do hikers, birdwatchers, environmentalists doing survey work, or hunters have to pay an individual fee if they use a trail (mountain bikes and ATV's haven't any officially designated trails in the Shawnee)? Do senior citizens get a discount and are the handicapped accommodated properly?

It is VERY IMPORTANT that you continue to call, write, and pester your federal Senators and Representatives. Tell them how important Forest and community trails are.

### **Horseback GPS Treasure Hunt Adventure**

Equicaching is a new and entertaining adventure game for trail riders that use a GPS (Global Position Satellite) portable unit. The concept is based on the popular online geocaching game or sport. The original geocaching was targeted at hikers, but a treasure hunt via horseback is a natural evolution of an exciting outdoor sport. Participating in a horseback treasure hunt is a great way to take advantage of the wonderful features and capability of GPS units while enjoying a trek on your favorite trails. The basic idea is to have **individuals and organizations set up treasure caches** all over the globe and share the locations of these caches on the internet. Other GPS trail riders can then use the location coordinates to try and find the caches. Once found, a cache may provide the finder with a wide variety of rewards. All the finder is asked to do is to leave something for the cache to replace what they might take.

"After all, the true treasure is our trails" says Bethany Caskey, creator and director of Equicaching LLC. Everyone can enjoy the thrill of hunting for "treasure" while enjoying the outdoors and their horses. As the concept develops and grows, more games and variations will be offered to participants. **Let's start in Illinois.**

There are no fees or no membership dues. A love of trail riding and adventure is all that is required. For more information and details on Equicaching, please visit [www.equicaching.com](http://www.equicaching.com).

Ad

## Success At MATAG

By Peter Veit and Sara Rhoades

Thanks to the members of six different equestrian organizations, the attendees and exhibitors at the 2007 Mid-America Trails and Greenways Conference at the Renaissance Hotel in downtown Chicago became acquainted with the desire of horse people to "Share the Trail" with other users. Together, we set up and staffed an exhibit booth for three days. Everyone was pleased with the results!

Four **Illinois Trail Riders** board members, Denise Maxwell, Sara Rhoades, JoAnne Gernant, and Carolyn Cushman came from out of town. Peter Veit of **Horsemens Council of Illinois**, who is active with all of the groups, helped to motivate Greg and Donna Malenca of **Will County Trail Riders**, Lynn Richardson of **Horse Promoters, Inc.**, Sue Collins of **Palos Trail Riders**, and Kathy Ranchida and Sharon Nolan of **TROD** to work in the exhibit hall and sit in on concurrent sessions to be sure that the equestrian presence was felt and appreciated.

Special thanks go to the Horsemens Council of Illinois for the use of their beautiful display booth. It was one of the most professional display booths in the Exhibit Hall and attracted many visitors.

We handed out information on the horse industry, trails and trail rider concerns to every participant.

The Conference was opened by Illinois Lt. Governor Pat Quinn, who emphasized the benefits of trails and greenways to communities and individuals in his speech. The "No Child Left Inside" movement has been furthered by the diagnosis of "Nature Deficit Disorder" which, in turn, has given more importance to trails and greenways issues in many communities.

Following Lt. Governor Quinn's speech, representatives of the eight states (Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, and Wisconsin) gave the State of the State report on the conditions of the trails and greenways programs in their state.

The concurrent sessions were then divided into Urban, Suburban, and Rural areas and addressed the topics of: 1. Challenges and Opportunities, 2. Nuts, Bolts, Funding, Design, Construction, Operation, and Maintenance, and 3. Building Active and Healthy Communities with Trails and Greenways.

The primary conference sponsors were the IDNR, The National Park Service, The Chicago Bicycle Federation, and Openlands. Dick Westfall, and staff of the IDNR were instrumental in making the conference work. Land managers and planners of eight states were on the planning committee and served as session chairmen and/or speakers.

We had many, many, visitors to the booth (total conference registration was close to 250). Some came back to our booth more than once. Many useful new contacts were made, older relationships were reinforced, and possibly several doors were opened. Since the area was very small, our booth was very visible and all attendees walking into the exhibit area were aware that **HORSES DO EXIST AND WE NEED TO SAVE OR CREATE HORSE TRAILS.**

The bottom line for Illinois Trail Riders at this multi-state conference was that equestrian trail users were visible and were heard as trail users who should have equal importance with other trail users.



## ***Equestrian Use of Highways, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Facilities***



According to the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) Task Force on geometric design, *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities*, Page 59, 1999 Edition:

“It is usually not desirable to mix horse riding and bicycle traffic on the same shared use path. Bicyclists are often not aware of the need for slower speeds and additional operating space near horses. Horses can be startled easily and may be unpredictable if they perceive approaching bicyclists as a danger. In addition, pavement requirements for bicycle travel are not suitable for horses. For these reasons, a bridle trail separate from the shared use path is recommended to accommodate horses.”

AASHTO's statement is true, but the reality is that equestrians, like bicyclists and pedestrians, do need to use transportation corridors. Equestrians would prefer the safety of a Shared-Use Path or a separate bridle trail in the verge of the open roadway teeming with speeding cars, large trucks, and motorcycles. AASHTO needs to “soften language” on “shared use” and provide alternatives or resources for accommodating various trail users in an effort to keep us all safe.

Illinois Trail Riders is concerned that motorists and law enforcement officers are not aware that horses have road rights. Many riders live in areas where there are no trails. Often they do not have access to a trailer and are forced to ride along road shoulders and cross busy roads to get to their favorite riding place. As responsible riders, we must take all action necessary, including education, to insure that safe places are provided for the pleasure and trail rider. When riding along roads, common sense, not legal rights, must be used. Following are the printed rules and regulations covering horses being ridden along roads. Most states have similar laws.

### ***Horses Have Road Rights***

625 Illinois Compiled Statutes 5/11-206

Para. 11-206: “Traffic laws apply to persons riding animals or driving animal-drawn vehicles. Every person riding an animal or driving any animal-drawn vehicle upon a roadway shall be granted all the rights and shall be subject to all the duties applicable to the driver of a vehicle by this chapter, except those provisions of this chapter which by their very nature can have no application.”

*Rules of the Road* published by the Illinois Secretary of State, states:

“Horseback riders may use our public roadways. Exceptions are limited-access highways and most expressways. Here are points for motorists to keep in mind when sharing the road with a horseback rider.

**LANE USAGE:** Horseback riders must ride with traffic as far to the right as possible.

**SUDDEN NOISES:** Never sound a horn when you are near a horse. The sound might frighten it and cause an accident.

**APPROACH:** When meeting or passing a horseback rider, do so with caution and be prepared to stop.”

*Rules of the Road* also gives specific requirements for emblems, lights, and lane usage for vehicles drawn by animals and other slow-moving vehicles.

The *Rules of the Road* booklet is available at any driver's licensing facility.

### **Federal Highway Administration Clarifies Horse Use on Shared Use Paths**

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has publicly clarified that “Equestrians and other non-motorized recreational use may be allowed on shared use paths and trails that use Federal-aid transportation funds.” FHWA posted language on its website specifically addressing equestrians on shared-use paths. They posted the policy to point out that there is no prohibition on equestrian use.

This notice is a positive step forward in acknowledging equestrian activity on public land. Because equestrians are not specifically listed as potential users of shared-use transportation paths, many riders believe that some land managers use this to deny equestrians access to these paths, even though that is not the intent of the federal law.

The FHWA notice encourages trail management practices to serve a wide variety of trail users, including equestrians. This philosophy of trail sharing should extend to other trail projects using Federal-aid highway program funds.

### **FHWA Position**

**Equestrian and other non-motorized recreational use may be allowed on shared-use paths and trails that use Federal-aid transportation funds.** Federal transportation laws and regulations do not prohibit the use of shared use paths or trails by equestrians, in-line skaters, cross country skiers, snowshoe users, or other nonmotorized users. Various design options may allow equestrian use, such as providing both a paved path and an unpaved path within the same right-of-way.

### **Resources**

National Trails Training Partnership website resources: [www.nttp.net/resources/index.html](http://www.nttp.net/resources/index.html).

National Trails Training Partnership website on Trail Design and Construction: [www.nttp.net/resources/trailbuilding/index.html](http://www.nttp.net/resources/trailbuilding/index.html).

Presentation from Anne O'Dell, *Designing Shared Use Trails to Include Equestrians*. Go to: [www.nttp.net/resources/trailbuilding/index.html](http://www.nttp.net/resources/trailbuilding/index.html) and select the publication.

*Trails for the Twenty-First Century*, from the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. See RTC's bookstore at <http://railtrails.tranguard.com/>.

HWA's Recreational Trails Program publications (includes trail-related publications from the USDA Forest Service): [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/publications.htm](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/publications.htm).

Recreational Trails Program: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/).

Transportation Enhancement Activities: [www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te/).

## Resources for Building Great Equestrian Trails

Hancock, Jan; Vander Hoek, Kimberly K. Jones; Bradshaw, Sunni; Coffman, James D.; Engelmann, Jeffrey. (2007). Equestrian Design Guidebook for Trails, Trailheads, and Campgrounds. The emphasis on highly developed facilities and programs such as those in urban, rural, and wildland areas. 16 Chapters. *Tech Rep. 0723-2816-MTDC*. Missoula, MT. U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, Missoula Technology and Development Center. 307 p.

MN DNR Trail Guidelines Minnesota Bookstore: www.minnesotasbookstore.com. 651-297-3000 or 1-800-657-3757 Stock No. 9-66 (Available in CD format, Adobe Acrobat PDF)

International Mountain Bicycling Association (2004) Trail Solutions: IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack (Available from IMBA, PO Box 7578 Boulder CO 80306)

Tabor, N.K., Trauth, K.M., & Hartman, G.W. (2007). Equestrian Trail Guidelines for Construction and Maintenance. (Available from the Missouri Department of Conservation, P.O. Box 180, Jefferson City, MO 65102-0180.)

Wood, Gene, et.al. (2007) Recreational Horse Trails in Rural and Wildland Areas: Design, Construction and Maintenance. In full color with 256 numbered pages covering 14 chapters and 6 appendices that contain 214 figures and 23 data tables. www.clemson.edu/forestres/

## Statewide "Share the Trail" Brochure Gets "Go Ahead"

By Ed Barsotti, Executive Director, League of Illinois Bicyclists

The main project would be to collaboratively develop a "Share the Trail" brochure for distribution and a mini-poster for display at trail kiosks, display cases, etc. around the state. The PDF files will be available for user group and agency websites, too.

The content would include sharing-the-trail tips applicable to each user type plus some trail/user pictures. Also, Illinois Greenways & Trails Council user groups' websites will be listed for more education, local club information, maps, etc.

A League of Illinois Bicyclists (LIB) staff person would be in charge, performing the following tasks:

- interview each user group to get their share-the-trail perspectives and tips and then synthesize it into text for the pamphlet/brochure
- gather good Illinois trail photos that already exist or get new photos if needed
- subcontract the graphics layout work and printing to produce the brochures and posters
- make phone calls around the state to trail-maintaining agencies and distribute the brochure to those agencies that will use the brochures and/or posters

We're looking at 90,000 full-color, tri-fold brochures and 1,000 color posters. Work will take place over the year, with end of year as a deadline.

All Illinois Trail Riders should start thinking about the content that equestrians would like to see included and take/send in a variety of pictures of equestrians sharing trails with others.

Email those comments and pictures to [President@illinoistrailriders](mailto:President@illinoistrailriders).

## Newsbits

**Kandee Haertel**, a past president of ITR, has been named Director of Development for the Back Country Horsemen of America (BCH). You can learn more about BCH and all of the great things their members do on the website at [www.backcountryhorse.com](http://www.backcountryhorse.com) call 1-888-893-5161.

From past president Sue Perina:

If you ever ride in Shawnee, or hope to, please consider joining Shawnee Trail Conservancy (STC). We do keep you abreast of what's going on in the Shawnee and speak up. We have been active in this advocacy for over 20 years. For you folks that don't live in Illinois - we are trying to keep up the work so that you can ride with us! You don't have to live in Illinois to ride here or to join STC. It's free! Currently we are involved in the controversy over "user fees." See the articles on Pages 1-4. Also, please check out the STC website at [www.shawneetrailsconservancy.com](http://www.shawneetrailsconservancy.com).

Before the **Fall 2008 Illinois Trails & Greenways Summit** (which is the successor to the workshops IDNR sponsored in 2006), we will be asking all of you to submit your top concerns and issues with trails or trail riding in Illinois. Take some notes as you enjoy your horse this season. Email them to [President@illinoistrailriders](mailto:President@illinoistrailriders). I can begin to compile our concerns throughout the state and contribute the "trail rider point of view" to a collective discussion between all user groups. Perhaps this will provide more unity and strengthen our ability to enjoy all of the benefits of trails and greenways throughout Illinois.

It is about time for IDNR to write a **new Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)** use this link to see a copy of the 63-page 2004 version: [www.dnr.state.il.us/OCD/scorp/scorpform5.htm](http://www.dnr.state.il.us/OCD/scorp/scorpform5.htm). After your review, let your desires/concerns as an equestrian be known. Include anything about federal, state and local public spaces where we recreationally ride or camp with our horses, arenas or fair grounds, parks and rail trails or forests and roads. If we are not speaking with one voice, no one will hear us! Your comments are important so don't forget to email them to [President@illinoistrailriders](mailto:President@illinoistrailriders).

**Kelly Bland** attended the Central Region Summit Meeting for HCI on Saturday, December 1 in Springfield; and **Sara Rhoades** attended the Northern Region Summit Meeting in Oakbrook on Sunday, December 2. Both Kelly and Sara represented the Trails division of equestrian disciplines. Representatives from 18 different equestrian disciplines were invited to attend and discuss the concerns currently facing each individual area of horse activity.

American Trails is at it again!! Make plans to attend the 2008 National Trails Symposium in Little Rock, Arkansas, November 15-18, 2008. The theme of the 2008 Symposium is **Innovative Trails: Transforming the American Way of Life**. This year there is going to be even more emphasis on equestrian trails. Jacques Alexander, an Arkansas Back Country Horseman, has been selected to represent equestrian interests throughout the planning process for the Symposium. You can keep up with the call for presentations and the program at [www.AmericanTrails.org/2008](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/2008).