



Illinois Trail Riders

Dedicated To Keeping Horses On Our Trails

E-mail: ILTrRdrs@illinoistrailriders.com
www.illinoistrailriders.com

May, June, July 2007

National Trails Day – June 2

American Hiking Society's National Trails Day® (NTD), held the first Saturday of every June, is America's largest celebration of trails and the outdoors. With more than 1,000 events by trail and community groups, public agencies, and businesses from coast to coast, there is something for everyone!

National Trails Day Background Information

Now in its 15th year, National Trails Day continues to inspire the public to flock to their favorite trails to discover, learn about and celebrate trails while participating in educational exhibits, trail dedications, gear demonstrations, instructional workshops and trail work projects.

NTD provides a perfect opportunity to thank volunteers, land managing agencies, and outdoor-minded businesses for their support in developing and maintaining trails.

Events take place in all 50 states, Washington, DC; Puerto Rico; Guam; the US Islands; and Canada.

In 2006, a record 1,210 events were registered with American Hiking Society for national sanctioning.

The official date of National Trails Day is always the first Saturday in June, however, NTD events can also take place at other times during the year.

15 Years of Celebrating Trails

The 15th Anniversary celebration of NTD embodies the values, principles, and strength of this important outdoor program. The celebration represents years of hard work, dedication, countless volunteer hours contributed by corporate sponsors, government agencies, non-profit groups and community organizations across America.

National Trails Day Photo Contest

Just Announced! American Hiking is offering the 2007 National Trails Day Photo contest. Get your cameras ready and hit the trail on NTD.

How Can National Trails Day Help Equestrians Build a Network of Trails and Greenways?

Simple. There is strength in numbers. Every local trail event has the opportunity to reach new people and broaden the support for trail initiatives. Together, trail community members can conserve existing trail resources while launching a new era in trail and greenway development.

National Trails Day brings trail groups and trail managers together for a common purpose. It's an opportunity for trail people to broaden their support.

How Can You Get Involved With National Trails Day?

One way is by volunteering to work on the trails we ride. Most riding clubs sponsor a workday to honor this event or know of an organized activity for this celebration – and it doesn't have to be on June 2.

Hit the trail with hundreds of other trail groups and agencies to show your support for trails by hosting a National Trails Day event or joining an event already planned.

It's fun – as anyone who has been involved with one can tell you.

It's easy! Many hands make a task simple

And when it's all over, **you'll be glad you did!**

For further information on National Trails Day, contact the American Hiking Society at (301) 565-6704, by e-mail at ntd@americanhiking.org or visit their website at www.americantrails.com.

Legislative Call to Action Congressional Horse Caucus

Shared by American Horse Council

The start of a new Congress offers the industry the opportunity to expand the Congressional Horse Caucus which began in the 107th Congress. We are asking all horse owners to write their Members of Congress and ask them to represent the interests of the horse industry.

The Congressional Horse Caucus is a bipartisan group chaired by Representatives Ben Chandler (D-KY) and Cliff Stearns (R-FL). It is any member of the House of Representatives with an interest in horses.

The Horse Caucus is a bipartisan group formed to educate Members of Congress and their staffs about the importance of the horse in the economic, agricultural, sporting, gaming and recreational life of the nation. It is a real opportunity to have a group of Representatives with an expressed interest in the industry and a willingness to support the issues important to us. There were more than 60 members of the Horse Caucus in the last Congress. Some of those individuals have been re-elected, some to other offices and others have left the Congress. Now is the time to contact the Members of the 110th Congress and ask them to join the Caucus.

The American Horse Council website has a draft letter that can be used by organizations and individuals to contact their Representative and ask them to join or re-join the Caucus. Please email the American Horse Council a copy of any letter you send to your Representative so we follow up on the invitation.

The email can be sent to kmccolaugh@horsecouncil.org.

Please visit www.horsecouncil.org for more information or contact the American Horse Council at 202 296-4031 with any questions.

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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 10th 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
CLASSIFIED: \$10.00 PER ISSUE, 40 WORDS OR LESS		

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

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

Meeting everyone and chatting at the Springfield Horse Fair in March is one of my favorite things. It seems like I have to rev up for the official meetings, which go well enough and have a good attendance. I am always surprised at the number of people who want to chat about trail riding, and the good, bad and ugly aspects of their favorite trails. The Fair goes by so quickly and I never get a chance to sit down until I am back in the car driving home. It doesn't end there though. The "follow through" lasts the rest of the year as I count on various ITR members to do their jobs and handle the extraneous work that pops up on a daily basis.

This spring has been difficult for me in some ways. The weather has been unpredictable and conditioning my horse hasn't been on schedule. Then the dog needed surgery for cancer and my best trail horse had to be put down due to an incurable and painful syndrome. Now I have to start training a younger, greener horse for the trail riding I need to do this summer. Right now I would be embarrassed to take her in public. I hope I can condition her in time for the UMECRA ride on the Hennepin Canal, the NATRC ride at Johnson Creek, and one of the many CMO rides I have been itching to try. Meanwhile, the high school where I teach science is closing this year, and I really should be hunting for next year's paycheck. As the cowboy's T-shirt stated, "If it isn't one bucking thing, it's another!"

The good news is that some of our friends at Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) seem to be responding more positively to equestrians. Peter's article tells of a meeting that later brought me feedback that Mr. Hickman did indeed appreciate the meeting. Frank and Peter offered up equestrians to continue to work proactively with IDNR on issues such as responsible trail use, education, and recruitment of volunteers. (That's you!) Peter expressed hopes that equestrians would join or develop "Friends of the Trail" groups and have input on trail designs and use. As always the Horse Council and ITR would continue serve as a conduit for information that IDNR might want to share with equestrians (notices about trail closures, new site information, rule changes, etc.). Saddle Clubs should continue their good works with State Park officials and send representatives to work with bicyclists, hikers, and other community trail users and advocates to make the most of trails in every region.

At a statewide Greenways and Trails meeting, it became obvious that IDNR is doing it's best to give higher priority funding to those trail projects which are truly multi-use and do include equestrians. Over the past three years the percentage of Recreational Trails Fund money given to trails which include equestrian use has increased. In 2008 there will be at least six IDNR state trails, one in Cook County and one in Kane County, which will receive federal grants that benefit equestrian interests. In 2007 there were only two projects that included equestrians.

IDNR and IDOT officials have repeatedly stated that although state bicycle path funds (collected from title transfer taxes statewide) may not be used to build horse trails, horses may indeed be included in the mix of users who would use a bicycle path or be allowed to travel parallel to it! Rail Trails are often funded with bicycle path grants. There are many examples of successful horse trails in the list of the 507 rail-trails nationwide that accommodate horses. Go to <http://www.trailink.com> to see the details. (*Unfortunately*

only 11 of the 51 Rail Trails in Illinois are sympathetic enough to allow equestrian access, even though many of them traverse suburban and rural landscapes with ample right-of-way land to accommodate a parallel path for horseowners who live nearby).

Illinois Trail Riders who want to be more proactive for trails should try to attend the Mid America Trails & Greenways Conference December 9-12 at the Renaissance Hotel in Chicago. Illinois Trail Riders will have a booth and will need your help to staff it and network with trail advocates and managers from at least nine other states. Check out the Southeastern Equestrian Trail Conference in Knoxville, Tennessee and the Ohio Valley Equestrian Trails Symposium in Norman, Indiana this summer to enhance your education (see last ITR newsletter or go online for details). Perhaps by becoming better educated and organized we could gain equestrian access to portions of our local treasures such as the Jane Adams, Madison County, Old Plank or Tunnel Hill Trails. The idea is connecting neighborhoods and people, along safe trails, to parks, healthy exercise opportunities, the outdoors, and each other. Urban, suburban and rural connections should include all of us.

The Trail Master Class being sponsored by the American Endurance Riders Conference in June at Jim Edgar Panther Creek is fully booked. People from five states will learn from the leading expert the latest in trail design, construction, maintenance and crew leadership. INDR is even sending one of their trail planners.

Don't forget to be involved in National Trails Day Celebrations June 2. Please join cyclists and hikers in your community to ride or work on a trail or start a trail trotter's project with your saddle club.

Enjoy the summer, stay safe and enjoy your horses and friends on the trails of yesterday and tomorrow.

May your trail never end!

Denise

Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting and Election of Officers was held on Saturday, March 3, 2007, at the Seminar Hall at the Livestock Center at the Illinois State Fairgrounds (during Horse Fair) in Springfield, IL.

Sarah Rhoades and Lee Ann Fouert were elected as new directors. Meet our new directors on page 5.

Re-elected as directors for an additional term are Carolyn Cushman, Gloria Heggy, Joanne Gernant, Jerry McKinley and Sandy Poletti.

Continuing their terms as directors are Denise Maxwell, Jean Greenlee, Lori Kennedy, Kelly Bland, Judy Griffith, Gary Hampsmire, and Peter Veit.

On behalf of the organization, THANK YOU to all our officers and directors for sharing your time, knowledge, and commitment to equestrian trails in Illinois.

Dick Manders of the Shawnee Trail Conservancy was the guest speaker at the meeting. He spoke about the work being done by the Forest Service and continuous work on the 325-mile designated trail system in the Shawnee National Forest. He feels that the Forest Service has listened to trail riders and that it is the Forest Service's desire to have the (continued on page 4)

US Trail Reports

Shared by Robert DeGraw

TrailReports.Info is now on-line. It is a website members can enter to post reports about trails they have used within the last year. After the report is posted, other members can read the trail reports almost instantaneously. That means better decisions about where to ride or hike.

The goal is to help trail users know what to expect on the trail they plan to use, e.g., trail closures, bridge/trail washouts, debris on the trail, animal activity, insect severity, slides, flooding, water information, dangerous conditions, points of interest, special rules, user fees, how to find disappearing parts of a trail, places to camp, parking conditions, vandalism, etc. Guide books are very general but member reports tell it like it was when last used. If someone is going there, we want them to know what to expect and what is unique about a trail they have chosen to use. Our focus is on trails used by foot, hoof or paws.

TrailReports.Info covers Canada and the United States and only accepts members from those two countries. We do allow members the ability to write reports about trails in most countries to which they have traveled. We do not edit our member's trail reports. We feel writers must be known by their own merits and honesty. Check us out! Contact information: Robert DeGraw at Rodeco36@Verizon.net.

ELCR

Shared by Kandee Haertel

It is with great pleasure that I let you know that ELCR's new office in the Kentucky Horse Park is OPEN! When you call 859 455-8383, you will be greeted by Bonnie Detzel, the Program Administrator. You will also find that Carolyn Orr, PhD., who serves as Acting Director, is ready to assist you just as I have.

While I completely and totally support to relocation of the national office to the Kentucky Horse Park, my family and I have no desire to leave the rolling hills of Galena and will not be making the move. After March 30, 2007 I will continue to help the Lexington staff as needed in their efforts to assist you.

Also – ELCR's brand new and upgraded website www.elcr.org is up and ready to use. It is still (and actually always will be) a work-in-progress, but I think you will find it a very interesting and informative site that you will want to bookmark.

Please, please – continue to contact ELCR as you always have. Carolyn's email is corr@elcr.org and Bonnie's is bdetzel@elcr.org. ELCR continues to be **THE** resource for you with your horse-related land and access questions.

Northern Illinois Horse Fest

Shared by Jean Greenlee

August 24th and 25th will be the dates of the 2007 Northern Illinois HorseFest to be held once again at the Boone County Fairgrounds in Belvidere. Plan to attend this up and coming affair that has a variety of clinicians, vendors, and items for sale. More information in the next *Newsletter*.

Of course, we'll be there at our booth talking up Illinois Trail Riders, trails, horses, barns, driving, etc. and selling *Handbooks*. Stop by and see us. Better yet, why not volunteer to help out at the booth? Give me a call at 815 292-3010.

Annual Meeting (continued from page 3)

Shawnee trails be a "premier trail system" or model trail system for trails throughout the US. Dick stated that once completed, all trails will be designated and being such will now be qualified for funding by grants, etc. Shawnee Trail Conservancy is now working on funding for maintenance and completion of the designated trail system.

Norm Stickler of Kane County spoke briefly about certified weed free grain and that research continues to not support the theory of horses transmitting weeds.

Sandy Poletti talked about 2007 legislation. There was a discussion about IFOR's involvement in equestrian issues such as the Recreational Use of Land and Waters Act amendments and the Illinois Forestry Plan, both affecting trail riding on private land. Also mentioned was the Right To Ride Bill which is dead and must be reintroduced in Congress. Meeting attendees were urged to contact their legislators about these bills.

Olympic Aspirations for Lakewood Forest Preserve

Reprinted from *Horizons* Spring 2007

Equestrian events for the 2016 Olympics could be hosted at Lakewood Forest Preserve near Wauconda based on a proposal approved by the Lake County Forest Preserve District.

After reviewing other potential locations, the Chicago 2016 Olympic Exploratory Committee selected and officially requested use of part of Lakewood Forest Preserve as an equestrian events venue.

The proposed Olympic Equestrian Center would be located south of Ivanhoe Road and west of Fairfield Road, in an area with nine miles of existing horse trails.

After the games, \$12.5 million of improvements to Lakewood Forest Preserve would remain for public use. The Lakewood Equestrian Center would provide a world-class venue for equestrian competitions, trail riding, horsemanship education classes, therapeutic riding for the disabled and other public events.

Funding for the improvements would come from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and other public and private sources.

A preliminary intergovernmental agreement with the City of Chicago to work together on plans for the equestrian center was approved by the Board of Commissioners at their January meeting. Chicago has won the right to represent the U.S. in the effort to host the 2016 Olympics and Paralympic Games. The International Olympic Committee will make a final determination among all locations nominated worldwide in fall 2009.

View the preliminary concept plan at www.LCFPD.org/olympics.

Plans for New Equestrian Campground at Oak Ridge Forest Preserve.

Shared by Jean Greenlee

Good News! The Winnebago County Forest Preserve District is moving forward to establish an equestrian campground at OakRidge/Deer Run. Completion is expected by 2008.

Meet Our New Directors

Shared by Sara Rhoades

I was born in Champaign, IL and still live on the family farm my grandparents bought in 1906. I bought my first horse, a green broke Appaloosa, at the age of 18 and I've been riding every since. My first ten years of horseback riding including Western Pleasure, games, and trail riding. At the age of 29, I took jumping lessons and was hooked big time. I ride hunter/jumpers but my first love is eventing with its exciting cross-country rounds. Trail riding has always been a part of the training experiences for all of my horses.

I attended Mahomet-Seymour Schools and received a B.S. in Microbiology from the University of Illinois. I became a registered Medical Technologist and completed all but the student teaching for a Masters Degree in vocational and Technical Education from the University of Illinois.

I firmly believe that Illinois Trail Riders is the organization that every trail rider should belong to and be active in.

Shared by Lee Ann Fouert

I began my trail riding career as a toddler riding in front of my older sister. It wasn't long before I insisted on doing it myself. Fortunately, the old Morgan mare we rode cooperated and gave me a positive and thorough education in horses at an early age. We had our own small farm, first in

Virginia, then North Carolina. I was fortunate to grow up with my horses near me learning all of the work and responsibilities that go along with the joy of owning horses (as well as an assortment of other farm animals).

I attended college at Louisiana State University where I graduated with a degree in Landscape Architecture. I practiced for some 20 years while moving around the country with my husband's career. He is a Vice President of Property and Casualty claims at State Farm Insurance at the home office. This will be the third time we have lived in Bloomington, IL and plan to retire here.

Last May we were fortunate enough to purchase a small farm and stable just 4 miles outside of Bloomington. Dreamcatcher Farms is truly my dream come true after years of moving and boarding my horses. At any given time we board around 10 horses, not including our two Tennessee Walkers and one Quarter Horse.

Trail riding is our passion and our joy. I want to be able to continue to pursue this passion in all areas of the country as well as here in Illinois. I believe organizations like ITR are instrumental in keeping the trails we love open and safe as well as opening new doors of opportunity in the years to come. I look forward to being an active part of that.

News From Wolf Creek State Park

Shared by Kelly Bland

The gully wash out on the main trail at the bridge crossing has been filled with rock to divert the water and the gully cut through the middle of the trail is now gone thanks to Ranger Steve (see photo).

The trails and horse camp opened at Wolf Creek April 1. The Rangers offer a couple of suggestions to help keep the trails fun: bring back what you take in and only water your animals at designated areas (the beach is NOT a designated area). You can find brochures and other interesting information at the park office.

The state has cut budgets in most recreational areas of the state so we need to do our part in maintaining the areas we ride. Rangers are professionals; they are there for our safety and for maintaining our parks. Rangers at Wolf Creek State Park have been extremely helpful and have noticed equine folks in most cases do more than their share of keeping the trails and camp clean. Thanks to all who visit, ride and help to maintain this beautiful park.

Many of you may know or have heard of Delbert Dick, a local icon at Wolf Creek. Last year on Labor Day weekend, we (a large group surrounding about 80 miles) decided to create a day in honor of Delbert named "Delbert Dick Day." It was a huge success as Don Runde hosted the campsite for a pot luck (campfire and all) after a 3-hour ride led by Delbert. Don and Trudy were there right beside Delbert as they have been for, well, let's say "many" years. We hope many of you who know or have heard of Delbert can join us this year same time same place. Even those without a horse or who cannot ride any longer have come and are welcome to share this honor. No one knows the trails here better than Delbert and his years of dedication to this park is well deserving of the "honor" of having a day named just for him. His labor of love for the horse and the land is appropriately given on "Labor Day."



Meeting With IDNR

Shared by Peter Veit

On Friday, April 13th, Frank Bowman, President of Horsemen's Council of Illinois, and the writer, on behalf of Illinois Trail Riders, visited with Illinois Department of Natural Resources' Tim Hickmann, Chief of Land Management. The purpose of the visit was to thank the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) for their many miles of equestrian trails and great horse campgrounds.

A second purpose was to develop a closer personal working relationship between the IDNR and the equine community. In the foreseeable future a good relationship is critical to keeping horses on the trails of Illinois and to do so with maximum enjoyment and minimum conflict.

Mr. Hickmann gave us a current statistical printout of equestrian activities on IDNR land, i.e., horse trail mileages, and equestrian campground use. Absolutely startling was their record of equestrian campers and equestrian camper days for the year 2005. **These listed a total of 210,913 equestrian campers accounting for 445,350 horse camper days.** One must add to this the number of **day riders** that go to other IDNR areas or do not camp. Even allowing for many repeaters, it soon becomes evident that we are indeed an important user of state facilities.

We know that there are more bicyclists and that the bicycle organizations are much better funded than the trail rider organizations (the Chicago Bicycle Federation alone has a multi-million dollar budget and five full-time employees). Nevertheless, we are a major off-road user and are recognized as such by the IDNR both in Springfield and by the site superintendents. In fact the IDNR has developed a separate "Illinois Horseback Riding Guide" as well as including equestrian trails in their general state park booklet.

Much of the bicycle organizations' efforts are directed specifically to road crossing safety considerations, cross-state long-distance bike trails, some via bicycle lanes along public roads, as well as connectors between various parks. (There is even a bicycle lane down Halsted Avenue in Chicago!) Thus, while we must continue to support and advocate for horse friendly connectors between preserves and stress our needs via the "Right To Ride laws," we should also develop better relations with the bikers. Most of them are really pretty considerate individuals, especially once they are aware of the nature of the horses. A Mountain Bike Club recently constructed a mountain bike trail in a Cook County Forest Preserve. We equestrians have been specifically invited to use that trail, providing it has not rained for several days. Lori Kennedy, ITR Treasurer, recently rode that trail and had a great time. Even the signage was horse friendly.

US Forest Service News

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced the selection of Abigail Kimbell as the 16th chief of the Forest Service. Kimbell succeeds Chief Dale Bosworth, who retired on February 2 after 41 years with the Forest Service.

Mike Johanns announced that more than \$385 million in Forest Service revenue will be distributed to 41 states and Puerto Rico for improvements to public schools, roads and stewardship projects. Illinois will receive \$304,247.26 and Pope County will receive \$122,534 of that.

Since 1908, 25 percent of Forest Service revenues, such as those from timber sales, mineral resources and grazing fees, have been returned to states in which national forest

lands are located. Because receipts from timber sales fluctuate, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-determination Act of 2000 was developed to stabilize payments to counties. The funds have been used for schools and roads as well as to create employment opportunities to maintain current infrastructure and enhance forest ecosystems, improving land health and water quality. Authority for the Forest Service to make the payments expired at the end of fiscal year 2006.

The Forest Service manages approximately 193 million acres of national forests and grasslands. For more information visit www.fs.fed.us.

Quandary

What could/should or would one say especially in this era of political correctness and hair trigger reactions?

We had just returned to our campsite to give the horses a well-deserved rest, a good drink of water, and a nibble of hay. Other groups were going out or coming in when we spotted "THE GROUP."

There were seven or eight riders who at first seemed well mounted, ready and eager to go. On closer look, we noticed two members that really left everyone speechless. The first of these was a man in a cowboy hat set well over his ears, fancy boots with big spurs, and a good and heavy western saddle. This regalia was combined with a body weight of no less than 275-300 lbs. - an ideal combination for a Shire, a Clydesdale, or a cross of any of the larger breeds. The little Palomino that we saw leaving the campground was thirteen-one at best! Our spiffy hatted cowboy had a companion, a "slip of a girl," on a tall horse - dead lame!

As an educated trail rider, **what could/should or would one say?**

Attention Illinois Trail Riders

Heartland Horseman is offering an exclusive one-year subscription to our monthly magazine for only \$9!

That's half price!

Each month *The Horseman* brings you the latest news from the Midwest Region - events coverage, what's happening at the legislative level on horse issues, where to ride, trail training and problem solving tips, classifieds and much, much more.

For the first time we are inviting members of Illinois Trail Riders to join our subscribers and take advantage of this great offer.

Call toll-free at 1-800-642-3564 and ask for the circulation department or email sicirc@sitradors.com to subscribe. Credit cards are accepted.

This half price offer is good only with this ad or by identifying yourself as a member of Illinois Trail Riders.

Linda Krutsinger, Heartland Horseman, P.O. Box 617, West Frankfort, IL 62896

Is My Barn Eco-Friendly?

By Betsy Gilkerson, Agriculture Extension Educator, University of Minnesota Extension Service in Hennepin County

Many livestock owners are concerned about their effect on our environment and natural resources. It doesn't matter what kind of livestock you have. They all can be quite easy on natural resources like our lakes and streams and forests. However, if the owner isn't careful, livestock operations can be quite hard on our resources. Take this quiz to determine how eco-friendly your livestock operation is.

____ Livestock Exclusion - 3 points for each yes

1. Y/N - Are your animals fenced 30-100 feet from ALL sensitive water features such as: well heads, creeks, streams, lakes, wetlands? The area between the animals and water is called a vegetative buffer strip or filter strip. Steeper slopes need a wider filter strip. (Ideally, they should also be kept off septic systems to prevent compaction and damage to the system.)
2. Y/N - Is the filter strip maintained in good vegetative cover like tall grass, not weeds? Trees and shrubs along surface water are encouraged.

____ Nutrient Management-3 points for each yes

3. Y/N-- Is your animal manure stored at least 150 feet from sensitive water features?
4. Y/N - Is the manure stored on a cement pad or compacted clay, or removed and relocated semi-annually?
5. Y/N - Is the manure utilized to prevent phosphorus levels from getting too high (e.g., soil test results are within U of M guidelines)?
6. Y/N - Do you follow a manure management plan?
7. Y/N - If you fertilize your lawn, are you using phosphorus free fertilizer and keeping it away from sensitive water features, driveways, and ditches?

____ Clean Water– 2 points for each yes

8. Y/N - Is clean water from the roof or surrounding area directed away from the manure pile and bare ground?
9. Y/N - Is the storm water from your property collected so it can infiltrate into the ground? This helps recharge our ground water.

____ Erosion Control – 2 points for each yes

10. Y/N - Are gullies on your property stabilized and soil erosion controlled?
11. Y/N - Is the amount of bare soil on the property minimized, possibly through pasture management?
12. Y/N - Is the runoff from bare and paved areas (e.g., arenas, driveways and parking lots) filtered through a vegetative buffer strip?

____ Chemical Safety – 2 points for each yes

13. Y/N - Do you follow the instructions for dilution rates, application rates and storage on labels for all chemicals (e.g., gasoline, pesticides, and fertilizers, etc)?
14. Y/N - Do you dispose of these hazardous chemicals according to their labels?
15. Y/N - Do you follow University of Minnesota guidelines for applying pesticides and fertilizers? This includes following setback guidelines and ways to avoid spray drift.

____ Wildlife Habitat Management/Biodiversity – 2 points for each yes

16. Y/N - Are noxious weeds controlled on your property? We are required by state law to control noxious weeds like Canada thistle, bull thistle, purple loosestrife, and others.
17. Y/N - Are non-native invasive plants controlled on your property? Examples of non-native invasive plants include common and glossy buckthorn, spotted knapweed, garlic mustard, siberian elms and others.

____ Bonus Question – 5 points for a yes

18. Y/N - Do you plant native plants (instead of non-native plants) whenever possible?

_____ Total	<u>Points Earned(48 possible)</u>	<u>Grade</u>
	0-20	Poor- call me, we have work to do
	20-30	I've seen worse- you can do better
	30-40	Good work- keep going
	40+	Child of nature- keep up the great work!

If you answered Yes to all of these questions, pat yourself on the back. You are eco-friendly. If you answered No to any of these questions, you know where to improve. The questions with higher point values have a greater impact on our water quality. If you are looking for areas to focus, they are a good place to start.

These are not all of the things you can do to be environmentally friendly. They are an overview of common issues around water quality and natural resources for livestock operations. I hope the quiz helped point you in the right direction. For more information, visit the Extension website at www.extension@umn.edu or contact Betsy Gilkerson at 612-596-1175 or eliza003@umn.edu.