

September 2005

P.O.Box 245
Agoura, CA 91376

www.gotorec.org



REC NEWS

RECREATION & EQUESTRIAN COALITION

President's Message



Well, it's sure been quite awhile since you've heard from us. However, we're still very much here. We just needed a time out, a time off, a sabbatical, a vacation from the bits and pieces of life. After all, we are part horse, and in that regard we needed some time in the pasture of open spaces doing nothing. Okay, we're back, so let's get caught up with communicating some of the equestrian happenings - what's been happening and what needs to happen.

Just as we have certain values that we use in relation to our horses - Commitment, Consistency, Conditioning, Communication - so, too, must we keep these values in the forefront as we strive to retain our way of life. Politicians know that horse people have a commitment to their horses; and politicians should also know that we are committed to retaining horse keeping areas without burdensome restrictions. Our consistency in training horses is evidenced in how well they do as we ride and use them; and politicians must also understand that we will remain consistent in our goal to preserve equestrian zoning and land use. Conditioning our horses to reach their peak takes time, effort and money. Politicians must realize that we are conditioned to remain focused on keeping and acquiring equestrian facilities that are residential and commercial. Communicating with our horses and understanding their language bonds us all, irrespective of the disciplines that we may engage in. Each of you must take the time to communicate with your politicians to be sure there is total understanding of your equestrian lifestyle and how important it is for you and your family and friends. Do it today to ensure that you can keep and ride your horses tomorrow.

Ruth

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6th Annual REC Ride

REC RIDE - OCTOBER 8, 2005 - . - . Information flyer is included in this newsletter and on the website. www.gotorec.org . Start riding your horse!

This year's ride promises to be another great one, a repeat of the past rides. There will be several trail routes, and a new trail is added. The Phantom Trail loop is now in reasonable condition and the views are terrific. That trail route will be for horses really in condition for hills and who can trot right along. The Calamigos Ranch BBQ is without comparison, so you know the food is outstanding. Malibu Valley Farms has again graciously provided us with the perfect setting with its beautiful green pastures, a crop of cute foals, and great facilities for us to enjoy. Be sure to join us for some good riding, meeting new people, seeing old friends, admiring the variety of horses, and just having a good time. If you need a horse to rent, call Lee Graham 760-245-7695. If you do not ride, I hope you will still come and have lunch and enjoy the camaraderie. Our flyer with details is enclosed, on our website and at several feed stores. Save the date, condition your horse or rent one, and join us.

No New News on Horses and Water Pollution— a reminder

The California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region, held a meeting almost 2 years ago on Oct. 22, 2003 in Malibu to consider a proposed amendment to the Basin Plan that would incorporate a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) to reduce bacteria in the Malibu Creek Watershed. After their presentation, at which they acknowledged that less than 1% of bacteria comes from horses and livestock, questions were allowed. Less than 1% in bureaucratese means “undetectable”. This is good news for horsemen, and bad news for those who want to restrict and ban horses from our open spaces because they seemingly pollute our rivers and streams. When questioned on the board’s source of information, they responded that the information was “ based on literature and a prior study of the number of horses” and they “drove by streams and counted the number of horses nearby.” Their “literature” was a 1995 study by NCRS, and we have no idea how accurate or scientific that is. However, we do know that there are no known streams in the SM Mountains or anywhere in the region’s area that anyone can “drive by and count the horses” alongside. Their “study” was apparently a guesstimate. Has the CRWQCB done any scientific testing to determine the DNA of e.coli of any animals? Asked how the CRWQB determined specific sources and percentages, they replied that they “calculated”, which is semantics for guessed. Mitigation measures may be different for TMDLs for bacteria and for nutrients. We are pleased that their findings were consistent with what we already know – horses are NOT a major contributing factor to bacteria in the watershed. Comments may be sent to Rod Collins at rcollins@rb4.swrcb.ca.gov or 320 W. 4th St., #200, LA 90013. 213-576-6600 , fax 213-576-6640 website is www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb4

REC SECRETARY

Let me introduce you to Donna Flint, our new secretary. She handles the membership, the data base, and related matters. Our office hours are limited and vary, another description for erratic and not regular. It’s probably easier for you to reach her by email at Recoffice2@aol.com and leave a message. You can also call Ruth at 818-991-1236 and she will forward the message. Donna will be at the ride and is looking forward to meeting you to connect the names she has been seeing with the faces.

EQUESTRIAN CAMPGROUND

REAGAN EQUESTRIAN CAMPGROUND

The horse campground project is inching along at a snail’s pace. It will be located in Malibu Creek State Park on the land where President Ronald Reagan had his Yearling Row Ranch. It is at the southeast corner of Mulholland Hwy and Cornell Rd in Agoura. The project is being spearheaded by ETI Corral 63.

When the conceptual plan is done, we will be showing it to organizations, businesses, and at many events. The first phase of the plan has 15 campsites, each with 2 pipe corrals, picnic table, stove, barbeque, hitching rail, hose bib, and parking for a rig plus another vehicle. There are also restrooms with showers, a host campsite, a campsite for disabled, a group campfire gathering place, 5 extra corrals, and a 60 ft round pen for turnouts.

Some corrals have already been donated, and we welcome more donations of corrals in good condition. Donations of funds have also begun to trickle in. If you are inclined to do so at this time, please send your checks made out to ETI FOUNDATION with a note in the memo line that it is a donation for the Reagan Equestrian Campground, and mail to ETI, Corral 63, P.O. Box 367, Agoura, CA 91376. They are a tax exempt, non-profit organization. State Parks will make the final decision as to the name of the campground. Ron Schafer, State Parks Superintendent, Woody Smeck, National Park Superintendent, and our legislators Senator Kuehl and Assemblymember Pavley all have written letters of support for the campground.

If anyone has ideas or would like to help the committee in any aspect, please contact us at 818-991-1236 or at 818-222-2566, or you can send an email through the website with the subject Horse Campground to ruth@gotorec.org or ruthger-son@aol.com

TRAILS

TRAILS were devastated by the rains this last winter, and every trail needs some kind of work. There's lopping of branches, filling eroded treads, cutting back weeds, repairing water crossings, moving rocks, and so on. The Santa Monica Mountains Trails Council (SMMTC) has a volunteer trail maintenance program in which everyone is welcome to help work on the trails. There is always a leader supervising the work, tools are supplied, and you can work at your own pace and level. They work every Saturday on a public trail in the Santa Monica Mountains. Your support of their work is also appreciated with an annual donation for membership. You can check their website to see when and where they are working and if your schedule will fit, or you can call them. 818-222-4531 www.smmtc.org

COWBOYS

DID YOU KNOW that July 23rd was named National Day of the COWBOY? The president remarked, "We celebrate the cowboy as a symbol of the grand history of the American West. The cowboy's love of the land and love of the country are examples for all Americans." Sen. Thomas commented that our country looks to cowboys as role models with an enduring code of conduct that includes integrity, courage, respect for others, a strong work ethic, and loyalty to their country. I remember when 'they' said that Westerns were too violent. But, fortunately, life does have some twists and turns, and now the cowboys are back on film again.

CCC – CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

California Coastal Commission has been unrelenting in working to get rid of horses in Monte Nido, Calabasas, as well as in other places. For years now, they have been harassing as many people as they can; and, unfortunately, they have been successful in some cases. It's a crying shame the way they have focused on eliminating horses, a cultural and historic resource, from the lands that the horses have been on for hundreds of years. How do people working for the CCC justify policies and rules that create economic, emotional and financial hardships for people trying to live a simple, rural life? Why doesn't the commission recognize the historic and cultural contribution of the horse, which is a native species to our country? Can someone explain to me how certain areas where horses have been stabled for umpteen years are now an ESHA, and that whatever lives there has to be protected from a horse? It is apparent that whatever is living there now has survived and thrived due to the relationship with other plants and animals, as well as due to the whims and destructive forces of Mother Nature. I wonder what criteria public agencies utilize to decide what to change and what to leave alone.

MISCELLANEOUS

RIGHT TO RIDE LEGISLATION—To preserve the use and access of pack and saddle stock animals on public lands, including wilderness areas, national monuments, and other specifically designated areas, administered by the National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, or the Forest Service where there is a historical tradition of such use, and for other purposes.

Please Contact your Congressmen to Support This Important Legislation About Access to Public Lands.

We are working continually to preserve our rural equestrian lifestyle from the assault that is upon us. We must be ever vigilant and alert to problems that will erode our way of life. Do your part to elect people to public office who will protect equestrian communities. Every loss of an equestrian facility is a loss for all of us, as horses are displaced and dispersed farther away. It is imperative that we safeguard the historic and cultural fabric that is perpetuated through our rural ways. Work with us to protect public access to public lands and to educate government officials.



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Horse Boarding Ordinance STILL in Limbo??

Can you believe that It has been over 4 long years since Supervisors Antonovich & Yaroslavsky introduced a motion to the Board of Supervisors which was supposedly to clear up ambiguities in the interpretation of the County's zoning code with regard to backyard boarding? Despite numerous discussions with the Regional Planning staff, no new draft is available. While that is good news on the one hand, because it means all enforcement efforts are suspended, it does little to encourage horse keeping in our rural areas since no one knows what the new rules will be. During our last discussion with staff last year, it was made very clear that many of their suggestions would be strongly opposed to by the equestrian community. Staff was dwelling on issues such as parking requirements, event control and other non-issues for the small backyard boarding situations.

Please join REC in requesting assistance from the Supervisors and Regional Planning in bringing this matter to a satisfactory revision and conclusion for equestrians, without further delay.

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M. Antonovich—ph818-993-5170/fax818-993-5764— ph213-974-5555/fax213-974-1010

Regional Planning Commission (RPC) — 213-974-6467 fax 213-626-0434

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