



# WISCONSIN STATE HORSE COUNCIL, INC.

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A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION REPRESENTING THE INTERESTS OF HORSES AND HORSEMEN IN WISCONSIN

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### NEW TRAIL DIRECTORY AVAILABLE

**COLUMBUS, WI** - Time for horse trail trivia:

- \* How many counties in Wisconsin have public horse trails?
- \* How many of those public horse trails include equestrian camping areas?
- \* How many of those public horse trails can accommodate horse-drawn vehicles?
- \* How many public horse trails in Wisconsin require horses to cross a wooden bridge?

The general answer is – more than you'd think. For specifics, turn to the Wisconsin State Horse Council's 2007 trail directory.

Wisconsin Horse Trails, the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the directory, will be introduced at the Midwest Horse Fair, April 20-22 at the Alliant Energy Center, Madison. After the Midwest Horse Fair, the book will be available at many retail outlets and may be ordered from the WSHC Web site, [www.WisconsinStateHorseCouncil.org](http://www.WisconsinStateHorseCouncil.org).

Work on the project began almost a year ago, with visions of a publication that would provide even more information on what Wisconsin has to offer horseback riders.

"It wasn't that past directories were lacking anything," said Dan Catherman, chair of the WSHC Trails Committee. "Past directories have been great, and we heard only good comments about them. But we decided, as a committee, to offer a directory that would go beyond anything that's been available in the past."

A new feature is a "Rider's Remarks" section, Catherman said. Many of the trail entries include comments and observations from people who have ridden the trails.

The new description of the Lake Wissota Trail in Chippewa County, for example, offers good news for riders who want to take to the trails in July, when biting insects are at their peak in most parts of the state:

"When the bugs drive horses and people indoors, the riding is usually still pretty good at Lake Wissota," a local rider offered. "It's a very relaxing place to enjoy a short ride on a mid-summer evening."

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Some of the entries are new, describing trails developed or discovered since the last directory was printed. The Pelishek Nature Trail in Rock County is one example. The 7-mile trail was made possible through the generous work of two individuals and a snowmobile club, and is now open to horseback riders on a trial basis.

Walla Hi County Park in Manitowoc County is another example. The extremely challenging trail draws endurance riders who say the hills help condition their horses. Local riders offer sensible advice: "Please remember to have the right equipment on the horse to keep the saddle from sliding too far forward or back as you ride up and down the steep hills."

Many entries also include listings of area business and services, including restaurants, gas stations, veterinary clinics, and more.

Each trail listing includes directions to parking or camping areas and a map of the area and the trail. Maps are standardized so they're easy to interpret, Catherman said.

"This is the first time we've been able to offer maps that are all in the same format, to make the directory easier to use," Catherman said. "The updated maps alone make this a valuable guide for people who like to ride Wisconsin's trails."

When possible, trail entries include contact information for the volunteers who have accepted responsibility for creating or maintaining the trails.

"We were able to give specific contact information on more than two dozen trails," Catherman said. "Most of the more than 70 other listed trails are aligned with some kind of volunteer group, and we gave those groups credit where we could. These folks work really hard to make sure that all of us have a place to ride."

As public dollars get tighter, state and county governments are going to rely even more heavily on horseback riders to take care of the trails, Catherman said.

"We owe all of those volunteer groups a big 'thank you' for the work they're doing, and we encourage other riders to help out as they can," he said.

The trail directory is an ongoing project of the WSHC, Catherman said. The council's Trails Committee welcomes information about trails that were not listed in the new directory, rider's comments on trails, and updates from groups that are working to establish new trails.

"One focus of the book was the stories behind the trails," said Mindy Krolick, coordinator of the team that

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assembled Wisconsin Horse Trails. "We'd like to hear more of that history so we can all learn how private groups can work with public agencies and either open more land to horseback riding or maintain the trails we have now."

To submit information, contact the WSHC, attention Trails Committee, at 132A S. Ludington St., Columbus, WI 53925, or e-mail [info@WisconsinStateHorseCouncil.org](mailto:info@WisconsinStateHorseCouncil.org).

So, how many counties in Wisconsin have public horse trails?

"As far as we know right now, 62 of the 72 counties in the state have public horse trails available," Catherman said. "I think some people may be surprised that they have public places to ride near where they live. The state's got a great network of equestrian trails. By working together, we can make it even better."

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