



THE MARYLAND HORSE COUNCIL

Trails & Greenways Committee

Spotlight on Queen Anne's County Trails *by Katherine O. Rizzo*

When we polled *Equiery* readers in 2021 about their favorite public parks to trail ride in, the votes for Queen Anne's County were tied between the Conquest Preserve and the Nemo Equestrian Trail at Price Creek Environmental Area. This month, we will highlight both parks.

Conquest Preserve

The Conquest Preserve is located on Spaniards Neck near Comegys Bight on the Chester River. The park entrance is located at 500 Conquest Beach Road in Centreville. Although it is a public park, the land, including the trails, is currently only available for use by reservation. The park features a main pavilion, clubhouse, smaller park pavilions, stage, bleacher and several trails.

Trail access is available for groups and organizations to rent for special events and/or fundraisers, but rental does not give groups exclusive use on the day of the rental. A rental deposit fee of \$100 is required and will be refunded if no damage and/or trash is found on the park property at the end of the rental day.

The park offers a total of 31 miles of multi-use trails, all of which offer spectacular views of the river and fantastic bird watching opportunities. The trail surface and lengths vary but the main Conquest Equestrian Trail is a 1.5 mile natural surface trail.



photos from Queen Anne's County Tourism

Blue Heron Nature Preserve

Price Creek Environmental Area was recently renamed the Blue Heron Nature Preserve and contains the popular Nemo Equestrian Trail. The Preserve is 300 acres and is located to the east of Rt. 8 South/Romancoke Rd. The park's entrance is just south of Blue Heron Golf Course on Romancoke Road in Stevensville. The multi-use trails are all natural surface and wind through wetlands, pollinator habitats, meadowlands and forest areas.

The Preserve is protected through a Maryland Environmental Trust Easement. Trail riders can see waterfowl and migratory birds as well as an abundance of native flora and fauna.



Little Bennett Bridge Work

Equestrian trails in Little Bennett Park are now safer thanks to a Maryland Horse Industry Board grant provided to Trail Riders of Today (TROT). TROT gathered all the materials and volunteer support to spend a weekend partnering with Montgomery County Parks participating in a pilot program to make bridges less slippery in parks for equestrians, mountain bikers, and hikers. Two bridges were painted with a marine quality paint called Deck Correct that contains Polycarbonate Everbeads to create a skid-resistant surface, and protects the wood from splintering, and the growth of mildew, algae, and mold. A third bridge had sand added to the paint to increase the tooth of the surface. Little Bennett and Montgomery Parks will continue the program. We thank Potomac Bridle Hiking Trail Association (PBHTA) for providing lunch and additional volunteers. Please reach out to boardmember01@trot-md.org if you would like to volunteer during our next trailwork opportunity.



Piney Run Workday

On June 18, the Carroll County Equestrian Council hosted a crew of 11 volunteers to work on the trails on the undeveloped side of Piney Run Park. The goal was to cut back encroaching vegetation and maintain safe access to these trails. Freedom Lions Club and Environment Improvement & Trash Removal also participated in the workday. The next Piney Run Workday will be August 27. Email Stephanie Brennan at dadslilcobra@yahoo.com to sign up.

Many Hands Make Light Work!

It takes an army of volunteers to keep Maryland's extensive system of equestrian trails safe and open to the public. Please consider signing up with your local park to help with trail clearing and trail maintenance. Everyone will thank you for it!