Clearing Trail C16  
Kara Echternacht, C3  
Elaina Grayson, HB  

Brookfield Conservation Award Overview  
Two members of Miami Valley Pony Club developed a land conservation project as part of their HB certification process. The project expanded to include involvement from two local equine groups, the Indian Hill Equestrian Club and the Camargo Hunt. The Village of Indian Hill also supported the project. The project exceeded expectations and was greatly appreciated by the community. The trail is frequently used by local equestrians.  

What is Land Conservation?  
The act of preserving the environment around us for equine related needs.  
THE ISSUE: According to the USDA, the US is losing 6,000 acres of open land every day. Large open spaces and contiguous tracts of land are critical to providing the space we need to support our nation’s equestrian heritage and economy. With the current rate of loss, we may not have enough land to support our horses and equestrian-related activities in as little as 15 years (ELCR Webpage). There are many ways to get involved and stop the spread of misused/underused land and uneducated communities. It is our duty as an equine community to protect future generations.  

Project Proposal Overview  
Kara Echternacht and Elaina Grayson were the Project Managers, working towards national United States Pony Club Certification, HB. The Land Conservation Project is a required component of the HB certification.  

Project Proposal Description  
Background: Historically, a path to connected Clippinger Field to the Miami Bike Trail. Currently, equestrians must cross busy Shawnee Run Road.  
Proposed Action: Clear a new trail to allow access between Clippinger Field and the Miami Bike Trail.  
Support: Indian Hill Equestrian Club has walked area and is open to supporting project.  

Project Proposal Project Goals  
Goal #1: Provide safer equestrian access from Clippinger Field to the Miami Bike Trail to allow equestrians to avoid busy Shawnee Run Road to enter trail.  
Goal #2: Increase equestrian use of Clippinger Field and Miami Bike Trail to maintain open space for equestrian use.  

Clearing Trail C16 Project Steps  
Step 1: Identify Key Contacts  
Diana Rich: Equestrian Trainer, Village of Indian Hill resident, Trail expert  
Clara Blair: Trail expert, employed by Indian Hill Public Works, Camargo Hunt Honorary Whipper-In  
Pam Middendorff: Trail Preservation Chairman of the Indian Hill Equestrian Club, Village Of Indian Hill resident, Camargo Hunt member
Pete McAdams: Chair of the Trail Maintenance Committee of the Indian Hill Equestrian Club
Kerry Daus: Miami Valley Pony Club District Commissioner, Village of Indian Hill resident, member of Hill Equestrian Club and Camargo Hunt
Jon West: Assistant City Manager of the Village of Indian Hill

**Step 2: Conduct Viability Meeting**
Determine if trail project is a possible project for the HB project
Met on Sunday, January 28, 2018 to walk potential trail with: Diana Rich, Clara Blair, Pam Middendorff, Pete McAdams.

**Step 3: Evaluate Findings**
Proposed trail will provide safe access to State Park’s Bicycle Trail
Current access from Shawnee Run Road has resulted in several horse deaths/car accidents
Trail has potential strong value to riders
Trail placement seems possible and worth further study
Indian Hill Equestrian Club is interested in supporting project

**Step 4: Obtain Project Approval from the Village of Indian Hill**
On February 7, 2018, met with Jon West, Asst. City Manager, Village of Indian Hill, and his team.
Reviewed Project Proposal.
Requested approval and support to proceed.
Obtained preliminary approval to move forward pending waiver resolution, which was provided later.

**Step 5: Plan Work Day to Clear Trail**
Set date for March 10, 2018 from 9 AM – 12 noon
Identified necessary tools and equipment
Determined volunteer sources:
  ◦ Miami Valley Pony Club
  ◦ Indian Hill Equestrian Club
  ◦ Camargo Hunt
  ◦ Friends & Family
Provide lunch for all volunteers

**Step 6: Request volunteers**
Write letters requesting volunteer participation in trail clearing work day including IHEC, MVPC, and Camargo Hunt.
Develop SignUp Genius sheet and include link with letter.
Communicate necessary information to volunteers.

**Step 7: Create Trail C16**
Meet at 8:30 on March 10, 2018 at Clippinger Field
Welcome 27 volunteers
  ◦ Kara—Welcome & Introductions
  ◦ Elaina- Review guidelines
  ◦ Assign responsibilities
  ◦ Clear trail
  ◦ Lunch
  ◦ Kara-discusses Pony Club
  ◦ Elaina-discusses HB specifics
Thank all volunteers!
Follow up with thank you notes
Project Proposal Status Checklist
- Step 1 Brainstorm Projects (Complete)
- Step 2 Identify Key Contacts (Complete)
- Step 3 Conduct Viability Study (Complete)
- Step 4 Evaluate Findings (Complete)
- Step 5 Obtain approval from Village of Indian Hill (Complete)
- Step 6 Plan Work Day (Complete)
- Step 7 Request Volunteers (Complete)
- Step 8 Create Trail C16 (Complete)
- Step 9 Create/mail thank you cards (Complete)

Work Day Photos
REVIVING AN HISTORIC INDIAN HILL BRIDLE TRAIL

On a crisp and sunny Saturday morning in March, members of the Miami Valley Pony Club, Indian Hill Equestrian Club, Camargo Hunt and Village of Indian Hill joined forces to renovate a deteriorating trail off Clippinger Field.

In the pursuit of land conservation, recreational enjoyment, and National Certification from the United States Pony Club, Kara Echternacht and Elaina Grayson from Miami Valley Pony Club organized the day of trail clearing and restoration. Ms. Echternacht shared: “Our goal is to help ensure the future of land available for equine uses in our area. We saw a way that we could help do that by contributing to the Indian Hill bridle trail system and its users.” The revived trail will allow riders a valuable connection between southern Clippinger Field, the bike path and Camargo Field offering contiguous riding without using the roadways.

Pete McAdams, Trail Maintenance Committee Chairman of IHEC, provided expert guidance to the volunteers to create a wide gently sloping trail that will be sustainable for many years to come. In addition to trail clearing, the group also removed invasive honeysuckle bushes along the way to reduce maintenance.

The Indian Hill area is built on a tradition of land conservation. Why protect and nurture our collective green spaces? They filter pollutants from the air, lower temperatures, and even reduce soil erosion into our waterways. Maintaining the bridle trail system furthers these goals and helps to ensure a thriving natural ecosystem for the enjoyment of generations to come.

Our thanks go out to all that contributed to a fun, safe and successful day. The Volunteers included: (Miami Valley Pony Club) Elaina Grayson, Kara Echternacht, Leah Schwartz, Macy Grayson, Payton Butts, Neko Duvall, Maggie Williams, Grace Ooi, Ryan Echternacht, Katrina Echternacht, Amy & Ryan Grayson, Diane Echternacht, Dale Williams, Phil Hinklo, Wendy Duvall, Missy Sauer, (IHEC members) Pete McAdams, Pam Middendorf, Cheryl Steele, Johann Kunts, Jim & Barbara Beamer, Rita Strong, Margie Rennie, Diana Rich, (Camargo Hunt) Christie Ellers, Clara Blake.

Article submitted by Kim Pierce on behalf of the Indian Hill Equestrian Club. For more information about IHEC please contact ihequestrianclub@gmail.com or visit our site at www.ihequestrianclub.com.