

**Introduction  
to  
Natural Resource Conservation Policy  
for  
Recreational Horse Trail Riders**

**This series of papers is being prepared for trail riders who are or expect to be involved in serious, constructive discussions aimed at shaping and implementing trail management policy on federal lands. The series is modeled after a senior-graduate level conservation policy course taught by Professor Gene Wood at Clemson University for many years. Thus, the content is meant to inform, but is unlikely to entertain in the recreational reading sense.**

**We will first introduce readers to the fundamental elements of conservation policy and how it is made and implemented. Second, we will provide current and historical descriptions of federal agencies that manage lands with equestrian trails. And, third we will explain the basic elements of various federal statutes that mandate how the agencies will care for the publicly owned lands and serve the people of the United States who collectively own these lands and resources.**

**These papers are not light reading and are not intended to be such. However, any person that reads publications such as *Smithsonian*, *Discover*, *Newsweek*, *Equus*, *Horse and Rider* and other magazines and books written for normal intellects and those with a real “want to know” will be able to read and understand what we are writing here. Further, such people will be motivated to discover the “sideboards” set by federal statutes and within which agencies must work. They also will learn where there is room to work constructively to shape or reshape policy and the implementation of policy.**

**As it will take us more than a year to complete the entire series of papers we are planning, the obvious question is “Why bother?” Under current conditions and trends that may last long into the future, federal land management budgets and**

agency staffs are shrinking. Vital land management work that needs to be done is going undone due to a lack of adequate staffing and money that might be used for contracted work. As we stare at bare bones to meet operational needs, at least 40% of the congressional budget for management of the National Forest System goes into planning, addressing appeals of plans, and dealing with litigation of planned actions. Even 100% of an inadequate budget is still inadequate; 60% of an inadequate budget leaves land management agencies struggling to be something more than paper-shuffling bureaucracies.

We sincerely believe that the best way into a productive future in management of the public's lands and resources is going to come from meaningful and productive discourse between the land managers and the people who have a wide array of values for these lands. Citizens, managers and scientists must undertake to learn from each other, treat each other with mutual respect, and seriously undertake collaborative efforts to manage for a wide array of values and accommodation of uses while still serving the natural resource conservation goals as set forth in statutory law.

Finally, when a user group is able to discuss policy in an informed manner, it is going to be more highly respected by both managers and other users with different agendas for the direction of land management.

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Our Natural Resource Conservation Policy (NRCP) series for trail riders has a tentative outline of topics. At this point, we do not expect major changes in the list, but it could change in order of presentation. The planned topics in order of planned presentation are as follows:

- I. Introduction
  - A. Defining natural resource conservation policy
  - B. A brief history of conservation policy in the United States



## **A Brief Introduction to the NRCP Series Authors**

### **Gene W. Wood**

**Dr. Wood taught a senior-graduate level natural resources policy course at Clemson University from 1994 until he retired in 2006. He served on forestry and natural resource faculties at Penn State and Clemson universities for a combined total of 40 years. He also worked as a consultant to the forest products industry from 1989 to 1997, including a one-year sabbatical leave to work with Georgia-Pacific Corporation on endangered species – timber conflicts and the associated conservation policy issues. He is Professor Emeritus, Dept. of Forestry and Natural Resources, Clemson University, principal author and editor of Design, Construction and Management of Recreational Horse Trails (see this website), and has a trails consulting business, Windwalker Horse Trails, Inc.**

### **Stacy K. Taylor**

Mr. Taylor is a partner of Nelson, Mullins, Riley & Scarborough LLP who practices in Columbia, South Carolina. With a background grounded in the sciences, including wildlife biology and forestry, Mr. Taylor has a national legal practice that is primarily focused in the environmental and natural resources arena but also includes other areas, such as consumer product law, that involve toxic materials, the related impacts to human health and the environment, and the accompanying regulatory controls.

In the environmental and natural resources arena, Mr. Taylor has helped guide national and international clients through multi-million dollar remedial efforts, large real estate and corporate transactions, and environmental compliance issues upon which continued operations hinged. He has experience in all aspects of environmental and natural resources law ranging from the Clean Air and Clean Water acts to the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act to

laws that are more at play in land management issues such as the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. Mr. Taylor is also experienced in land use management, including the incorporation of endangered species management, wetland preservation, and other land use restrictions into economic land use management decisions.

In addition to his legal experience, Mr. Taylor has advanced undergraduate and/or graduate experience in wildlife biology, forestry, physical chemistry, organic chemistry, genetics, and physics as well as environmental and natural resource economics.

Mr. Taylor is the Chairperson-Elect for the Environment and Natural Resources Section of the South Carolina Bar; a member of the ABA Section of Environment, Energy, and Resources; and a member of the ABA Section of Administrative Law and Regulatory Practice. He is also a member of the Products Liability Committee of the American Bar Association and the Committee's Consumer Products Subcommittee. He is admitted to practice before the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals and the U.S. District Court for the District of South Carolina. He is a member of the American Bar Association, the South Carolina Bar, the Richland County Bar Association, the South Carolina Defense Trial Attorneys' Association, and the Defense Research Institute (DRI).

Mr. Taylor earned a Juris Doctor from the University of North Carolina School of Law in 2000; a Master of Forest Resources from the University of Georgia in 1997; and a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Biology, *summa cum laude*, from Clemson University in 1995.