



EQUESTRIAN SERVICES SUSTAINABILITY CHARTER

I. A Commitment to the Environment

Our goal as a company is to create a holistic approach to equestrian facilities based on sustainable economic, environmental, and social criteria. This approach includes not only safety protocols for horses and riders, but also criteria for facility planning, design and operations management. Through the creation of these standards, equestrian facilities can be recognized for following design and operational parameters that promote holistic sustainability.

Equestrian Services is committed strongly to leading its clients, associates, subcontractors, vendors and employees by example to promote stewardship that preserves and protects our environment, promotes healthy desirable working conditions for staff, and is based on a fiscal operating model that promotes long term sustainability

We recognize that our planning, design and management strategies for equestrian centers within communities, resorts and municipalities can ensure a positive impact on the environment. We will strive to achieve this commitment by:

1. Encouraging adoption and sharing of ideas with staff and clients that promote sustainable management practices through design within our sphere of influence.
2. Promoting within each project all feasible opportunities to encourage environmental stewardship through preservation and conservation to the maximum extent possible. In addition, working with the Equestrian Conservation Land Resource (ECLR) whenever possible to put aside land for equestrian activities. The ECLR is a Non-profit organization founded to promote national awareness of the importance of land conservation for equestrian sports and activity.
3. Striving to all feasible extents to preserve open space, bio-diversity and habitat protection (i.e. wildlife corridors and perimeters around grazing pasture) through planning, design and management practices built upon environmentally centered principles.

II. Sustainable Use of the Natural Environment

Equestrian Services is committed to influencing responsible stewardship of the land on projects with which we are affiliated. Our philosophy supports that commitment by providing design and operations management solutions. We recognize the importance of water, wetlands, wildlife, soils, recreation, open space and agriculture in maintaining a high quality of life for current and future generations. To this end:

1. We will encourage our clients to make sustainable use of renewable natural resources such as growing hay (or buying locally) for the horses if possible.

2. We will conserve wherever practical non-renewable natural resources through efficient use and careful planning.
3. We will promote and, where possible, participate in the efficient use of renewable energy.
4. Through individual project assessment, we will provide clients with inventories of natural features that can be accentuated and presented on individual sites when applicable.

III. Reduction of Wastes, Recycling and Composting

We will actively integrate recycling into each of our offices and managed facilities to encourage responsible collection and minimization of wastes. We will establish goals in each office and managed site that reduce waste through source reduction.

1. We will use only recycled paper products for our deliverables when available.
2. We will designate a recycling program administrator for each office and managed site that will implement and enforce responsible recycling measures.
3. We will minimize the use of disposable food containers, including encouraging vendors to change or reduce packaging and provide eco-friendly products. We will provide suitable drinking materials to reduce or eliminate the use of bottled water.
4. We will donate old trade publications and seek other ways to recycle printed materials.
5. We will recycle all printer cartridges.
6. At facilities we manage, we will work to create manure composting programs either by our own hands on equestrian sites we manage or work in cooperation with county or state regulators for composting manure. We will also recommend in all our designs the incorporation of manure composting equipment.
7. At facilities we manage, we will regularly remove manure from all pastures and paddocks.
8. To address all water quality issues (manure, fertilization, storm water, etc.), we will recommend and disseminate information for creating a Nutrient Management Plan (NMP) for all equestrian sites we work on – design and manage. One of our Principals within Equestrian Services, LLC previously has been licensed as a Nutrient Management Consultant for the State of Maryland.

Examples below.

Virginia

<http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/horse/406-208/406-208.html>

Maryland

http://www.mda.state.md.us/resource_conservation/nutrient_management/index.php

IV. Energy Conservation

We will strive to conserve energy, and use environmentally safe and sustainable energy sources. We will continually seek ways to reduce energy usage within our offices by promoting efficient and responsible conservation measures, including:

1. We will incorporate energy efficient light bulbs into all our lighting fixtures at both our offices and managed facilities.
2. We will identify internal “power bleeders” (power strips, computers, and chargers) and make provisions to minimize and avoid unnecessary leaks.
3. We will perform an annual evaluation of firm transportation needs to promote and minimize travel through “go-to-meetings” when possible, and provide suitable incentives to employees who utilize alternative transportation sources.
4. We will encourage our clients, customers and vendors to make intelligent energy choices through promotion and use of local products, suppliers and services that minimize transportation costs. We will attempt to buy goods and services locally whenever we can.
5. We will turn off light in areas that are not in use and keep the thermostat below 69 degrees in the winter and no lower than 75 degrees in the summer. We will also turn heat and air conditioning down substantially over weekends.
6. We will continue to promote the use of natural light in all our equestrian facility designs.

V. Risk Reduction

We will strive to minimize the environmental, health and safety risks to our employees and the communities in which we operate and those that we plan through utilization of safe technologies, facilities and operating programs, and also through suitable preparation for emergencies. We will continually seek to provide new concepts, practices and opportunities to our employees and their families that suggest daily habits that through collective action can make a positive difference.

1. We will provide our employees with adequate training and educational opportunities to minimize risk and impact on our environment on both an individual and collective basis.
2. We will provide incentives to employees who commit and regularly adopt sustainable practices that reduce the environmental footprint (preferred parking for low-emission vehicles, mass transit commuting, etc.).
3. We currently have in place safety standards and emergency protocols never before seen in the equestrian industry. Training and education is on-going.

VI. Sustainability of Products and Services

We are committed to providing services and using products that are sustainable and do not threaten or pose potentially negative impacts to our environment. To the greatest extent feasible, we will promote the use of alternative products that encourage reuse, and provide environmental, social and economic benefits.

1. We actively will seek where feasible the use of products in our offices that do not have an adverse impact on the environment. (cleaning products, inks, paper, and others)
2. We will inform our clients of alternate products when available that are not harmful to the environment for use on their projects.
3. We will continue to promote the use of natural means for fly control in our managed facilities.
4. We will create operational models for our managed equestrian facilities that are sound and provide for good working wages, housing and healthcare benefits for our employees.

VII. Public Education and Staff Empowerment

As part of our social responsibility to the communities that we touch and people with whom we come in contact, we are committed to delivering a sustainable cultural message. We will inform those around us of the importance of being good stewards of the environment and communicate by example the importance of practicing in a sustainable fashion.

1. We continue to educate through blogging and the publishing of articles about these principles.
2. We will initiate “Green Teams” for each office and managed facility that will serve as facilitators in educating staff and respective markets of the sustainable initiatives in which we are involved.
3. We will seek to promote to the general public the positive environmental and sustainable attributes that are a part of each project for which we are responsible.
4. We will seek to promote problem-solving strategies that identify and result in more sustainable projects and knowledge building, awareness, participation, networking and partnerships with local, national, and international organizations and groups.
5. We will continue to speak at seminars and trade shows about these principles.
6. We will continue to assist colleges with their curriculum regarding equine management and incorporate these principles whenever relevant.
7. We will continue to give back to the community by working on *pro bono* projects for non profit organizations.
8. We will continue to foster this environment by donating money and products to non profit organizations.

9. In conjunction with Audubon Lifestyles and the International Sustainability Council, we are currently developing the The Audubon Lifestyles Equestrian Facility Program. The program will include sustainability models for economic, environmental and social criteria. Our approach will not only include safety protocols for horses and riders, but also criteria for facility planning, environmental practices and operations. Through these standards, equestrian facilities will be recognized for following design and operational parameters that promote all aspects of sustainability.

This program is a collaborative effort while it is designed and refined, but once established, it will be a stand-alone program and rating system implemented and managed by Audubon Lifestyles, in conjunction with Equestrian Services.

The five categories currently include:

1. Economic/Business Model
2. Horse Care & Human Safety
3. Facility & Operations
4. Environmental Practices
5. Outreach & Education

Based on a point system, an equestrian facility can apply for an approval rating of anywhere between one to five stars. Any facility securing a 3-star rating or higher will also receive the International Sustainability Council “Seal of Sustainability”.

VIII. Management Commitment

It is imperative that the firm’s management team provide full support of this implemented Charter. A sustaining process, adequate budgets and employee access to information will be supported by Equestrian Service’s partners and principles.

1. We will implement this Charter and sustain a process that ensures that the firm’s leadership is fully informed about pertinent environmental issues and are responsible for environmental policy.
2. We will develop and sustain a process that encourages employee access and input to this Charter with the full support of the firm’s leadership team.
3. In selecting our employees, business partners, vendors and others with whom we elect to do business; we will consider demonstrated environmental commitment as a selection factor.

4. We recognize that sustainability must be an ongoing effort, and that there is not a singular or unique approach. As a result, Equestrian Services is committed to reviewing and refining its Charter annually.

IX. Audits and Reports

The implementation and management of this Charter will be ensured through consistent follow-up through a “checks and balances” review and reporting process. We recognize that success will be measured by achievable short- and long-term goals that establish new benchmarks for our firm and its individual members. We are committed to reporting our progress to our staff and clients as we move forward in practicing a more sustainable role.

1. Each office will conduct annual self-evaluation of its progress in implementing this Charter, performed by the Office Green Teams.
2. An annual summary of reports from each office and facility will be produced that recognizes significant goals achieved toward sustainable operations and practices, and identifies areas for improvement.
3. A final summarized company report will be produced annually conveying initiatives deployed and goals achieved. This report will be available to the public to show that we take seriously the objectives of creating and implementing sustainable solutions that have a positive impact on our world and its citizens.
4. Office policies, management programs, and implementation strategies for viewing by all employees, referred to as the “Equestrian Services Charlottesville (or other location) Office Green Program” will be included in our Employee Manual which is read and then accepted as part of all employment agreements. This section will be revised as needed by the Office Green Team.