



# San Elijo Lagoon CONSERVANCY

*Preserving, protecting, and enhancing San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve and its watershed*

## **Safety Tips for Sharing Trails with Horses**

**San Elijo Lagoon Ecological Reserve is a multi-use recreational area used by thousands of visitors each year. It is important that all users of the Park's trails: hikers, runners and equestrians alike, cooperate to not only keep each other safe, but to ensure that the privilege of using this beautiful trail system is maintained.**

*Some trails in the reserve are narrow,  
requiring the mutual courtesy and cooperation of all trail users.*

***Please remember that horses have the right-of-way.***

Surprised horses can injure you or their riders. Horses are prey animals and can be spooked easily. Backpacks, helmets, sunglasses or unusual posture can also be confusing to horses. Friendly greetings to the rider will help the horse identify you as a human and therefore not a mysterious predator. If you are on a trail and can hear a horse coming toward you, start talking or singing so you don't surprise the horse.

***When you see a horse and rider approaching, step off trail if possible to allow them to pass.***

Don't hide yourself and, once again, speak to the rider – a simple "Hello" can help. On hills, it is helpful to position oneself below the horse, rather than above it – a frightened horse is much less likely to bolt or run downhill.

***Passing: If you need to pass a horse on the trail, slow down and alert the rider by letting them know you'd like to pass on the right.***

Give the rider the time to convey the message to the horse.

***Horses and dogs often don't know what to make of one another.***

Holding the dog on a short lease and keeping it calm and still will help keep both animals and their human friends safe.