

---

# VOLUNTEER DATA COLLECTION: CT TRAIL CENSUS

---

Rebecca Pejinsky  
UConn Extension



<http://s.uconn.edu/cttrailcensus>

**Connecticut Trail Census**

A statewide multi-use trail user study and volunteer data collection program

# Presenter Information



Becky Pejinsky

Intern at UCONN  
Extension

Master of Public Health

Contact:  
[pejinskyr@gmail.com](mailto:pejinskyr@gmail.com)

# Presentation Overview



- Overview of the CT Trail Census
- Current Volunteer Trends
- Why People Volunteer
- Interviews
- Recruitment
- Training
- How to Motivate volunteers
- Problems & Solutions

# Overview of the CT Trail Census



- A statewide multi-use trail user study and volunteer data collection program
- Pilot funded by DEEP Rec Trails grant



# Overview of the CT Trail Census

## Volunteer Based Data Collection



- Promote active community participation in monitoring.
- Encourage data informed trail building and maintenance programs.

# Volunteer Responsibilities



# Volunteer Responsibilities



NAUGATUCK VALLEY  
COUNCIL of GOVERNMENTS

60 Leavenworth Street, 3rd Floor, Waterbury, CT 06702 • 203-757-0535 • 203-755-6686 • naugatuck.org

# \_\_\_\_\_

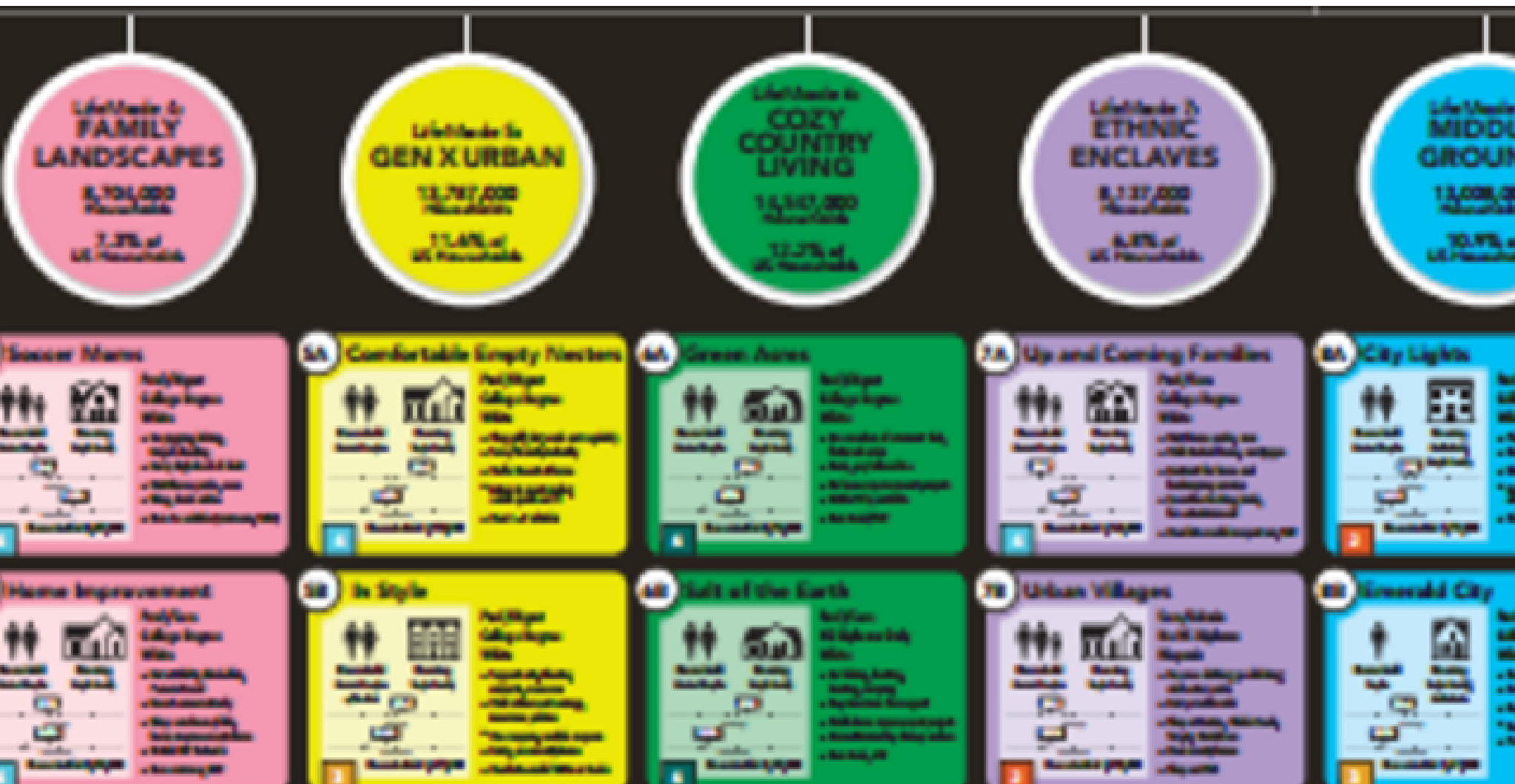
## Greenway Trail User Survey

*None of the information gathered in this survey will be used to identify you individually. All data will be kept confidential and will be aggregated for our analysis.*

1. What is your home Zip Code? \_\_\_\_\_
2. How did you get to the trail today?
  - ☐ Car/Motorcycle (alone)
  - ☐ Car/Motorcycle (with someone else)
  - ☐ Public Transit (Bus/ Train)
  - ☐ Bicycle
  - ☐ Walked
  - ☐ Run/ Jog
  - ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
3. How often, on average, do you use this trail?
  - ☐ Daily
  - ☐ 3-5 times/ week
  - ☐ 1-2 times/ week
  - ☐ 2-4 times/ month
  - ☐ 1-2 times/ year
4. During which seasons do you generally use the trail? (select all that apply)
  - ☐ All Year
  - ☐ Summer
  - ☐ Fall
  - ☐ Winter
  - ☐ Spring
5. What is your primary purpose on the trail today? (select all that apply)
  - ☐ Exercise
  - ☐ Recreation
  - ☐ Travel to work
  - ☐ Travel to school
  - ☐ Travel to shopping
  - ☐ Tourism/ sightseeing
  - ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
6. About how much do you spend each year on goods or services related to your trail use? Include gear, clothing, equipment rental, repairs, auto accessories, etc.? \$ \_\_\_\_\_
7. On this visit, about how much will you spend on the following (whole dollars):

Beverages	\$ _____
Snacks (energy bars, etc)	\$ _____
Meals at a restaurant	\$ _____
Gas	\$ _____
Retail (gifts, clothing, etc)	\$ _____
Equipment rental	\$ _____
Lodging	\$ _____
Nearby activities (recreation/ amusements)	\$ _____
Other _____	\$ _____
8. Do you consider the trail an asset to the local community?
  - ☐ Yes
  - ☐ No
  - ☐ Not Sure
9. Do you feel that the trail has impacted property values in the area?
  - ☐ Yes - Positively
  - ☐ Yes - Negatively
  - ☐ No
  - ☐ Not Sure
10. If there was one thing you could improve about the trail, what would it be?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
11. What is your age range?
  - ☐ Under 19
  - ☐ 20-24
  - ☐ 25-34
  - ☐ 35-44
  - ☐ 45-54
  - ☐ 55-64
  - ☐ 65-74
  - ☐ 75 or over
12. What interval best represents your household income?
  - ☐ Under \$24,999
  - ☐ \$25,000 - \$49,999
  - ☐ \$50,000 - \$99,999
  - ☐ \$100,000 - \$199,999
  - ☐ Over \$200,000

# Understanding Volunteers



# Volunteer Trends

## Nationally

Over 25% of  
Americans  
volunteer

62.2 million  
volunteers

7.8 billion  
hours

\$184 billion  
of service



# Volunteer Trends

## Connecticut

28.2% of  
residents  
volunteer

835,036  
volunteers

81.84  
million  
hours

\$2.2 billion  
of service

State  
Rank: 21

16%  
community  
services





# Why Volunteer?

- Learn something new
- Gain Experience
- Build resume
- New to the area
- Religious reasons

- For fun
- To explore a career
- Gain status
- To give back
- Interest in topic

# Interviewees

A rectangular card with a light blue background featuring white clouds and a green wavy base representing hills. The text is centered and reads:

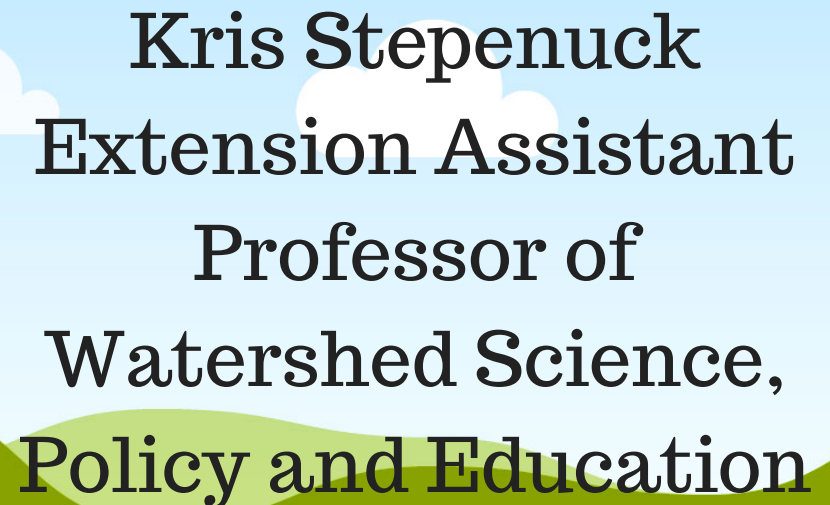
**Stacey Stearns:**  
**Program Specialist**  
**Agriculture**  
**UConn Extension**

A rectangular card with a light blue background featuring white clouds and a green wavy base representing hills. The text is centered and reads:

**Peggy Compton**  
**Natural Resource**  
**Educator**  
**University of**  
**Wisconsin- Extension**

A rectangular card with a light blue background featuring white clouds and a green wavy base representing hills. The text is centered and reads:

**Diane Ciano:**  
**CT Horse Council**  
**Trails Chairperson,**  
**Volunteer Horse**  
**Patrol Supervisor**

A rectangular card with a light blue background featuring white clouds and a green wavy base representing hills. The text is centered and reads:

**Kris Stepenuck**  
**Extension Assistant**  
**Professor of**  
**Watershed Science,**  
**Policy and Education**

# Volunteer Recruitment

## Use word of mouth



# **Volunteer Recruitment**

## Recruit volunteers locally





# Volunteer Recruitment

Wear uniforms, vests, or hats

*walkwayoverthehudson.com*



# Volunteer Training

## Face to face

## Practice

## Pair Up





# Training date close to start date



# Volunteer Training

## Training Videos

## Instructions

[cttrailcensus.uconn.edu](http://cttrailcensus.uconn.edu)



UConn Extension

# Volunteer Motivation

Recognize  
accomplishments  
Review hours  
Hold a small  
celebration for  
volunteers





# **Volunteer Motivation**

**Treat them as friends/ family**



# Feedback

What is the data being used for?  
Time is valuable

The screenshot shows the homepage of the University of Connecticut Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR). The header includes the UConn logo and navigation links. The main content area features a sidebar on the left with a link to the Connecticut Trail Census and a main section titled 'Connecticut Trail Census' with a description and goals.

**UCONN** UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR)

**CLEAR**

HOME ABOUT WATER LAND & CLIMATE MAPPING NEWS BLOG

Staff Webinars Publications Calendar Contact Support CLEAR

**Connecticut Trail Census**

A statewide multi-use trail user study and volunteer data collection program

**Connecticut Trail Census**

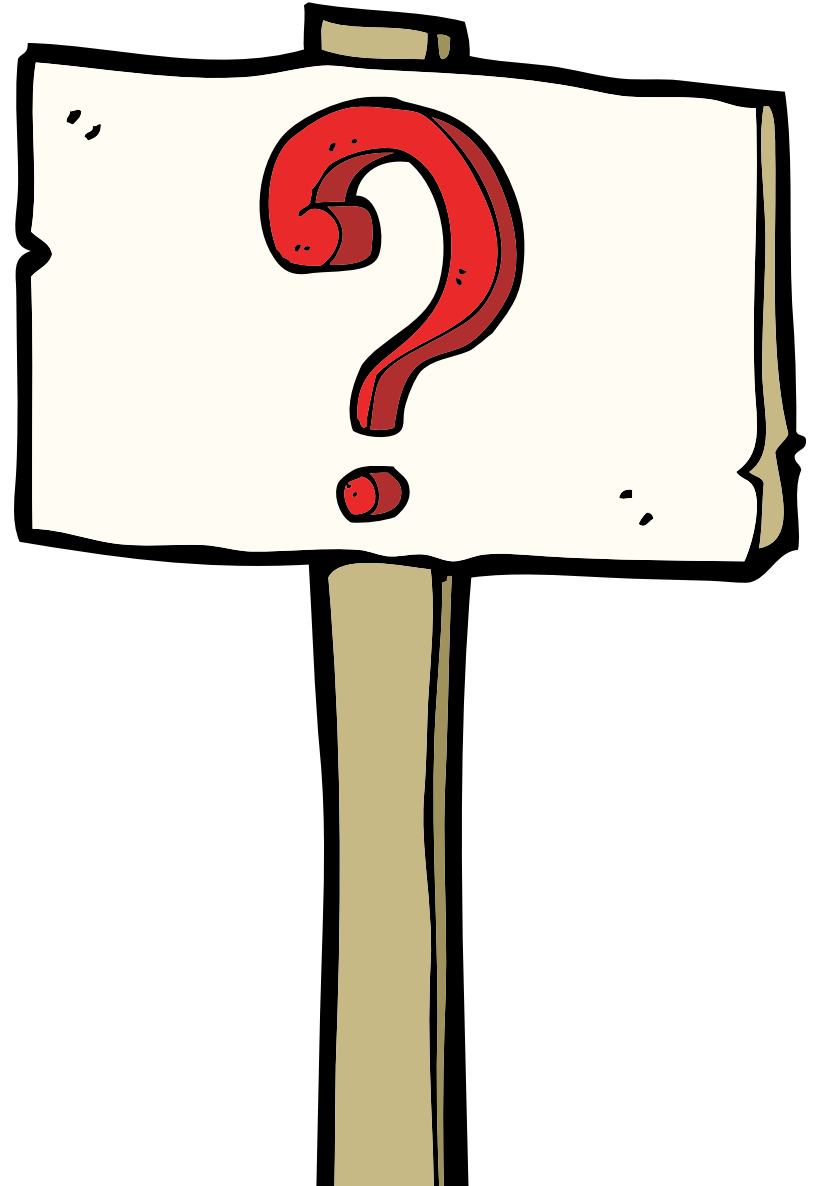
The Connecticut Trail Census is a statewide volunteer data collection program intended to inform a better understanding of multi-use trail use in the state of Connecticut and to make this important information available to trail user groups, administrators, government agencies and the general public. It is being funded by a CT DEEP Recreational Trails Grant.

**Goals**

- To understand who is using Connecticut's multi-use trails when, why and by what means.
- To educate trail user groups, administrators, state and local government agencies, and the general public about trails and their impacts.
- To obtain multi-year information about trail use, user demographics, economic impacts, and trail amenities for identification of patterns and trends.
- To promote active citizen participation in monitoring and understanding the value of trails.

# Problems & Resolutions

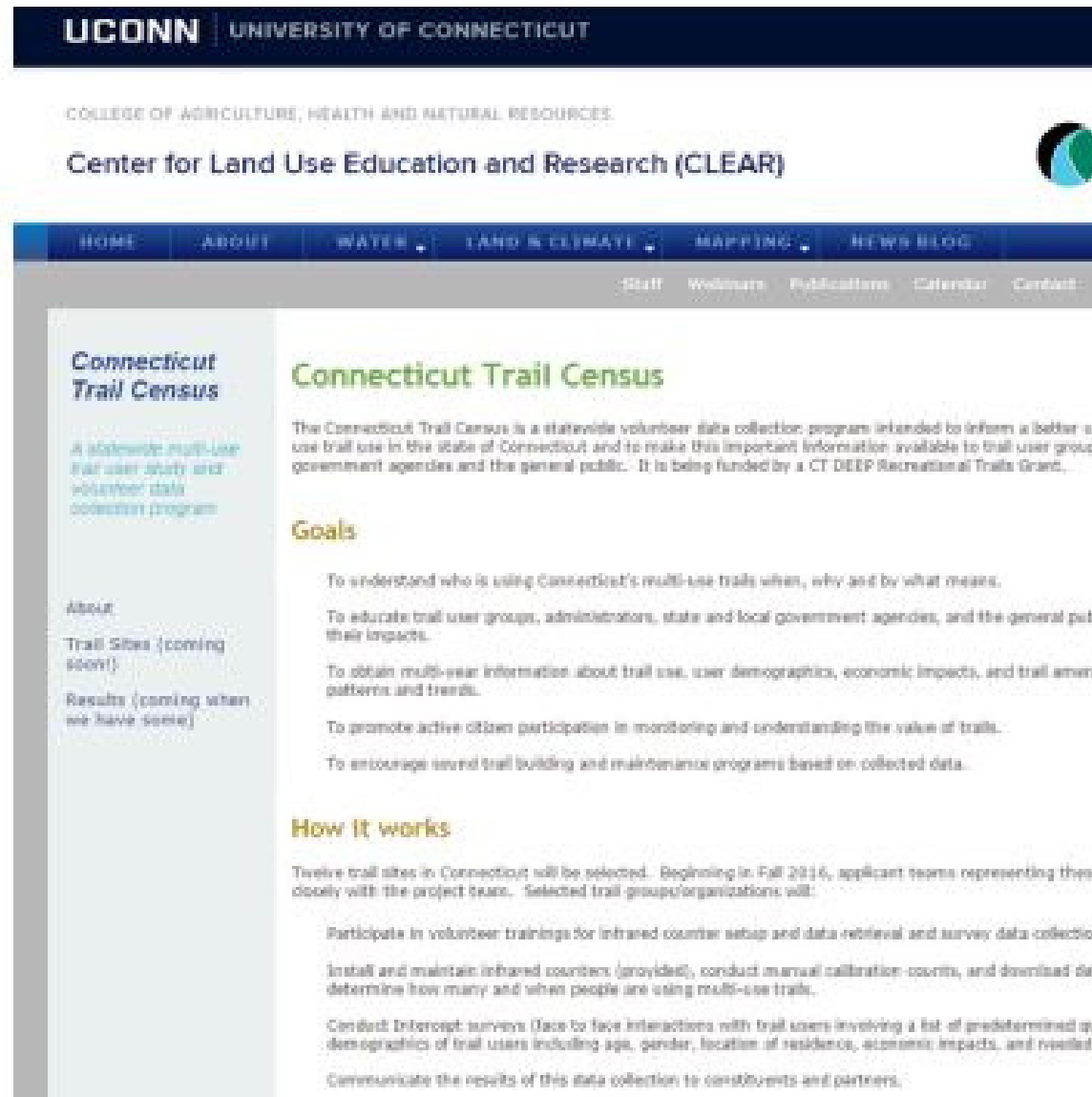
First time data  
collection





# Problems & Resolutions

## Inconsistency in data collection



The screenshot shows the website for the University of Connecticut (UConn) Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR). The header includes the UConn logo and the text "UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT". Below this, it says "COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES" and "Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR)". A navigation bar contains links for HOME, ABOUT, WATER, LAND & CLIMATE, MAPPING, and NEWS BLOG. A secondary navigation bar lists Staff, Webinars, Publications, Calendar, and Contact. The main content area is titled "Connecticut Trail Census" and describes a statewide volunteer data collection program. It includes a section for "Goals" and a section for "How It works".

**UConn** | UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, HEALTH AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR)

HOME ABOUT WATER LAND & CLIMATE MAPPING NEWS BLOG

Staff Webinars Publications Calendar Contact

### Connecticut Trail Census

A statewide multi-use trail user study and volunteer data collection program

About  
Trail Sites (coming soon!)  
Results (coming when we have some)

### Connecticut Trail Census

The Connecticut Trail Census is a statewide volunteer data collection program intended to inform a better use trail use in the state of Connecticut and to make this important information available to trail user groups, government agencies and the general public. It is being funded by a CT DEEP Recreational Trails Grant.

### Goals

- To understand who is using Connecticut's multi-use trails when, why and by what means.
- To educate trail user groups, administrators, state and local government agencies, and the general public on their impacts.
- To obtain multi-year information about trail use, user demographics, economic impacts, and trail amenity patterns and trends.
- To promote active citizen participation in monitoring and understanding the value of trails.
- To encourage sound trail building and maintenance programs based on collected data.

### How It works

Twelve trail sites in Connecticut will be selected. Beginning in Fall 2016, applicant teams representing these sites will work closely with the project team. Selected trail groups/organizations will:

- Participate in volunteer trainings for infrared counter setup and data retrieval and survey data collection.
- Install and maintain infrared counters (provided), conduct manual calibration counts, and download data to determine how many and when people are using multi-use trails.
- Conduct Intercept surveys (face to face interactions with trail users involving a list of predetermined questions) to determine demographics of trail users including age, gender, location of residence, economic impacts, and travel patterns.
- Communicate the results of this data collection to constituents and partners.

# **Problems & Resolutions**

**Conflicts between volunteers**



# References

State Rankings by Volunteer Rate. (n.d.). Retrieved January 20, 2017, from <https://www.nationalservice.gov/vcla/state-rankings-volunteer-rate>

Why Volunteer? (n.d.). Retrieved January 20, 2017, from <https://www.energizeinc.com/art/why-volunteer>

[cttrailcensus.uconn.edu](http://cttrailcensus.uconn.edu)



Thank  
you!