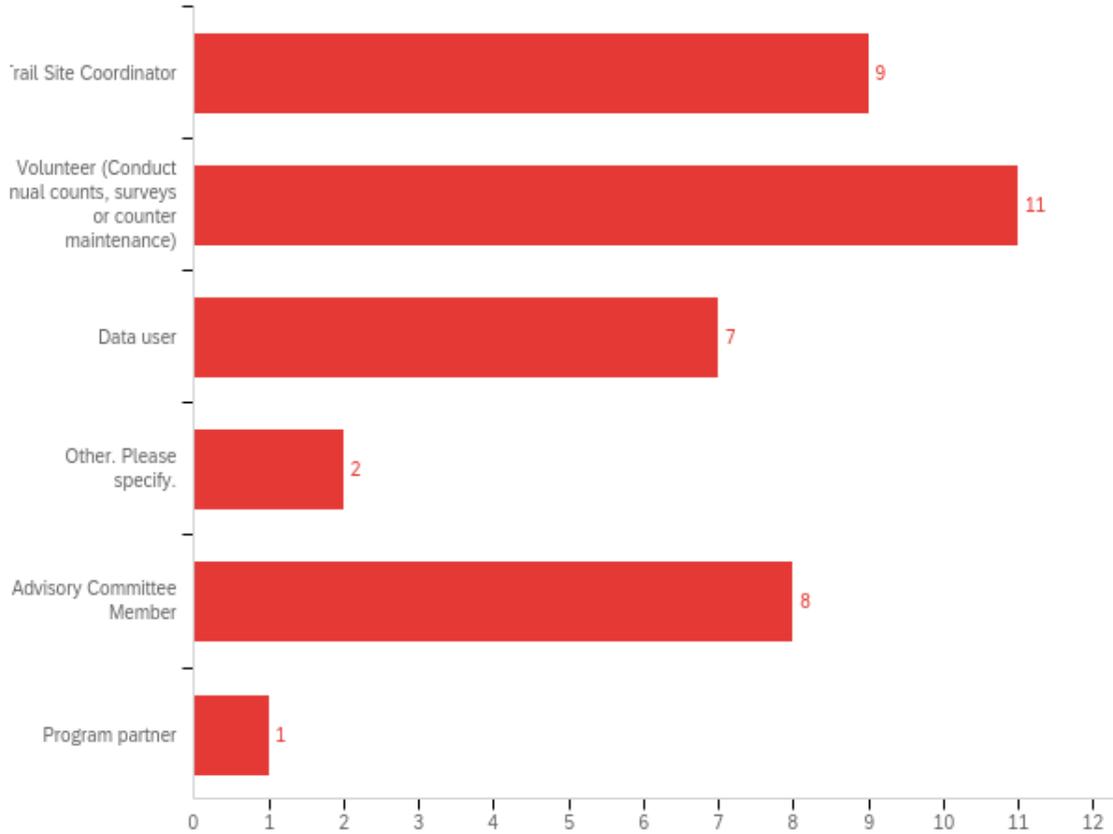


# Connecticut Trail Census Participant Evaluation

Report- by Laura Brown

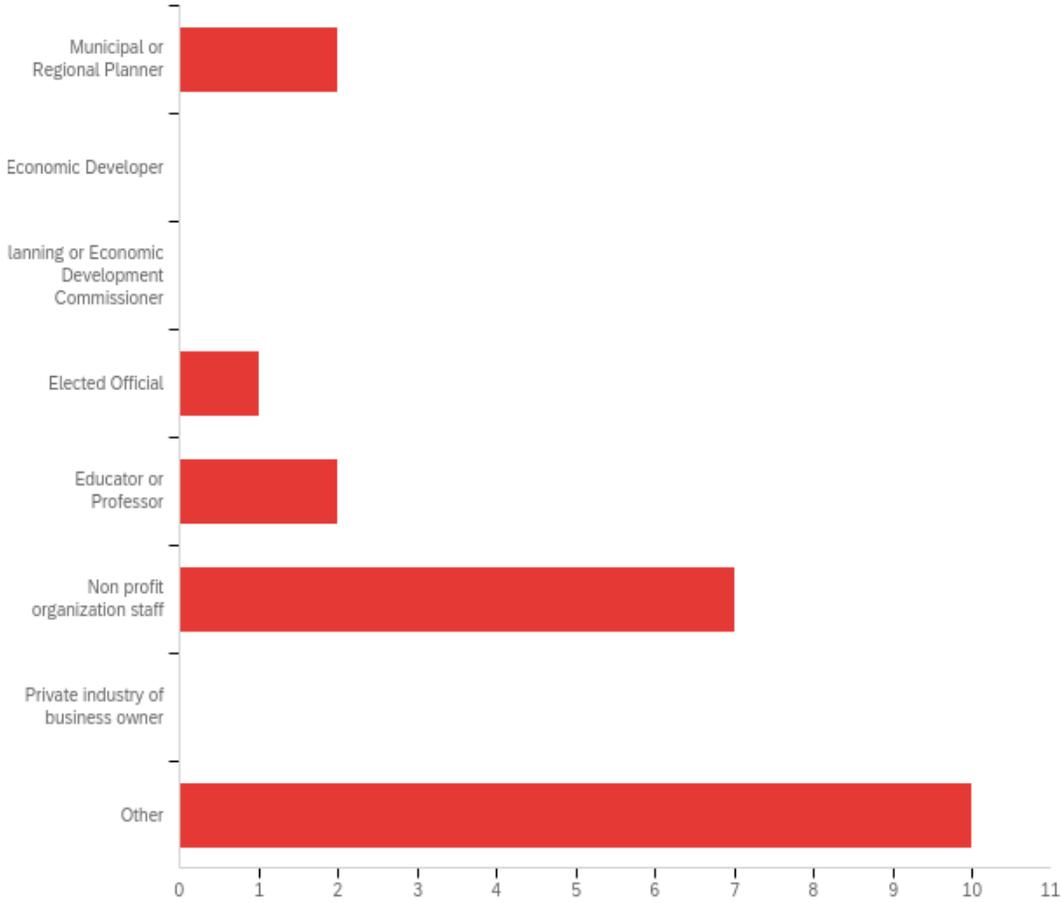
August 12th 2020, 12:28 pm EDT

**Q2 - Which of the following best describes your role with regard to the Connecticut Trail Census? Select all that apply:**



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Trail Site Coordinator	23.68%	9
11	Volunteer (Conduct manual counts, surveys or counter maintenance)	28.95%	11
12	Data user	18.42%	7
13	Other. Please specify.	5.26%	2
14	Advisory Committee Member	21.05%	8
15	Program partner	2.63%	1
	Total	100%	38

**Q3 - What is your professional role with regard to the Connecticut Trail Census? Select all that apply.**



#	Answer	%	Count
1	Municipal or Regional Planner	9.09%	2
2	Economic Developer	0.00%	0
3	Planning or Economic Development Commissioner	0.00%	0
4	Elected Official	4.55%	1
5	Educator or Professor	9.09%	2
6	Non profit organization staff	31.82%	7
7	Private industry of business owner	0.00%	0
8	Other	45.45%	10
	Total	100%	22

## Q48\_8\_TEXT - Other

Other - Text

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Co-chair NRG

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Trails committee

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Municipal conservation

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chair of local advocacy group for trails

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Advocate in Westfield, MA

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Non-profit organization board member (volunteer)

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Organizer and manager of trail maintenance team that manages the trail system in Vernon, Ct.

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Advocacy group

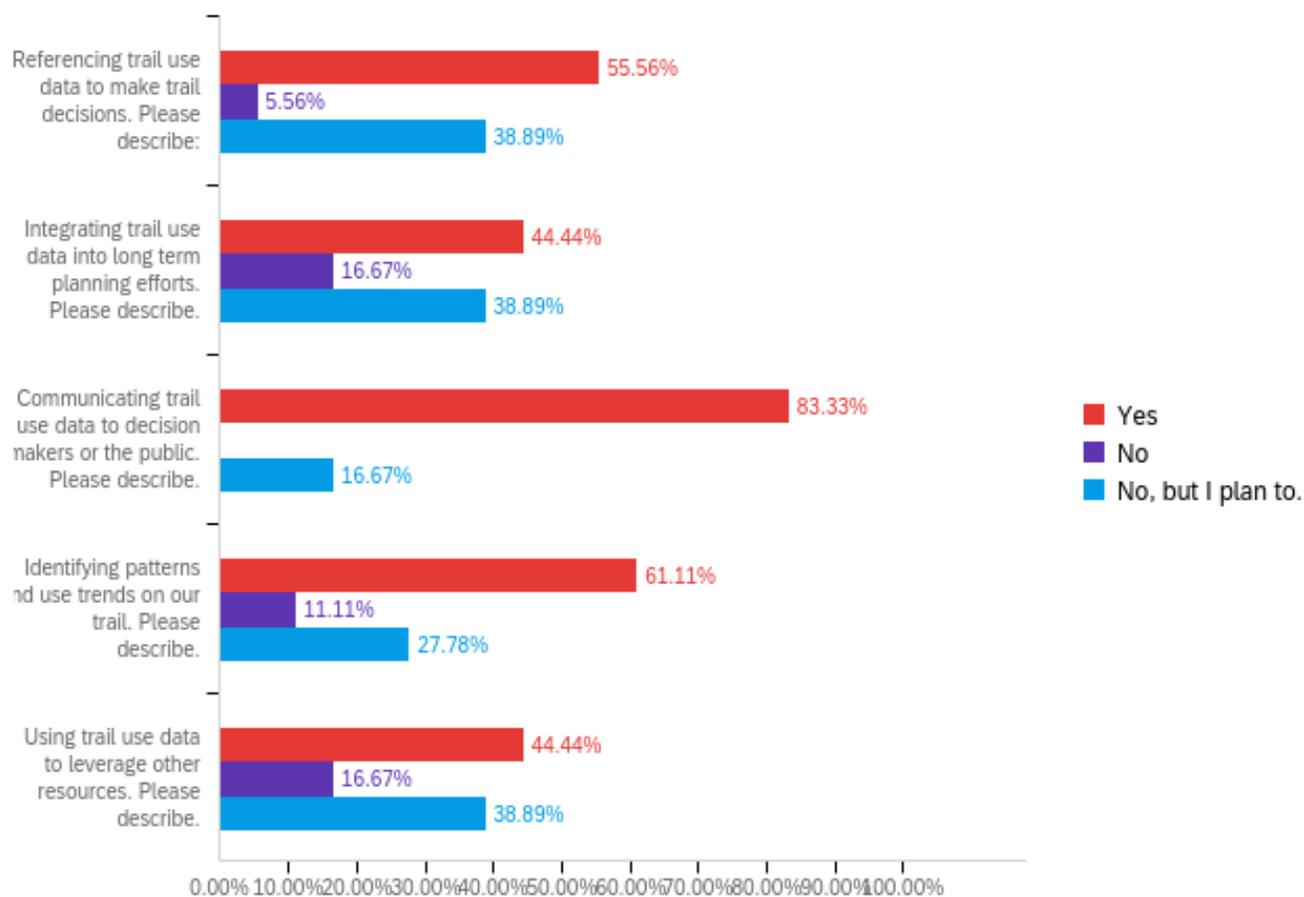
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member of bicycle advocacy group

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volunteer

**Q3 - As a result of your participation in the Trail Census have you done any of the following? Please explain your answers using full sentences and examples if applicable.**



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Referencing trail use data to make trail decisions. Please describe:	1.00	7.00	3.61	2.93	8.57	18
2	Integrating trail use data into long term planning efforts. Please describe.	1.00	7.00	4.17	2.85	8.14	18
3	Communicating trail use data to decision makers or the public. Please describe.	1.00	7.00	2.00	2.24	5.00	18
4	Identifying patterns and use trends on our trail. Please describe.	1.00	7.00	3.22	2.80	7.84	18
5	Using trail use data to leverage other resources. Please describe.	1.00	7.00	4.17	2.85	8.14	18

#	Question	Yes		No		No, but I plan to.		Total
1	Referencing trail use data to make trail decisions. Please describe:	55.56%	10	5.56%	1	38.89%	7	18
2	Integrating trail use data into long term planning efforts. Please describe.	44.44%	8	16.67%	3	38.89%	7	18
3	Communicating trail use data to decision makers or the public. Please describe.	83.33%	15	0.00%	0	16.67%	3	18
4	Identifying patterns and use trends on our trail. Please describe.	61.11%	11	11.11%	2	27.78%	5	18
5	Using trail use data to leverage other resources. Please describe.	44.44%	8	16.67%	3	38.89%	7	18



■ Yes
 ■ No
 ■ No, but I plan to.

#	Question	Yes		No		No, but I plan to.		Total
1	Referencing trail use data to make trail decisions. Please describe:	55.56%	10	5.56%	1	38.89%	7	18
2	Integrating trail use data into long term planning efforts. Please describe.	44.44%	8	16.67%	3	38.89%	7	18
3	Communicating trail use data to decision makers or the public. Please describe.	83.33%	15	0.00%	0	16.67%	3	18
4	Identifying patterns and use trends on our trail. Please describe.	61.11%	11	11.11%	2	27.78%	5	18
5	Using trail use data to leverage other resources. Please describe.	44.44%	8	16.67%	3	38.89%	7	18

**Q5 - What other outcomes have occurred as a result of your participation in the Trail Census for you individually or your community? (Please use full sentences and use examples if applicable).**

What other outcomes have occurred as a result of your participation in the Trail Census for you individually or your community? (Please use full sentences and use examples if applicable).

I've used the data to continue to develop community support for the Derby Greenway and to convince city officials of the value. City recently spent \$1126,000 replacing posts along the trail.

Too early to report at this time

One of most important outcomes is connecting with other community and funding partners. We are also looking forward to working with the Trail Census on community engagement in the planning process as we work to expand our trail system.

We met a lot of wonderful people and learned much about how to use the trail, and what they would like to see improved.

I have really enjoyed speaking to trail users during the trail census taking efforts. I have learned a lot about why people are on the trail and what they enjoy and what amenities would be helpful. It is clear to me that we have to start thinking of these resources as not just recreational opportunities and start to consider how they can be used for transit or facilitate multimodal transit. This will be more viable if we consider how we can connect to them (not only by designated parking lots) and break down barriers to legal and safe access by cyclists. Also I have become very aware of the issue of difficulty in access to the trails due through the many gates that do not allow wheel chair and adaptive bike users access from the parking lots nor persons with strollers or carriers towed by bikes along the Hop River trail in Bolton, Coventry and Andover as the trail crosses the many roads. In the effort to keep four wheelers off the trail, we are limiting access to those who should be able to use the trail. As a trail user for over 30 years and long before this section of trail was improved by the Arm Core of Engineers. it is very obvious to me that the increase in persons using the trail in a passive manner (walking, running, cycling, cross country skiing etc...) is the primary reason for the major reduction in motorized vehicles on the trail as we are in the way! Thanks for this opportunity to have counters on the trail. They are VERY important to help all understand trail usage.

People taking the survey are pleased to participate in this state-wide initiative, and I think it brings a sense of local pride as well.

We are creating vision awareness in the community through the intercept survey activity. This is a great opportunity for interested parties (Bike New London, Bike Stonington, SCCOG) to interface with the public to show how the vision of CTTC and the adjacent organizations align, what projects are in the works, how to get involved, etc.

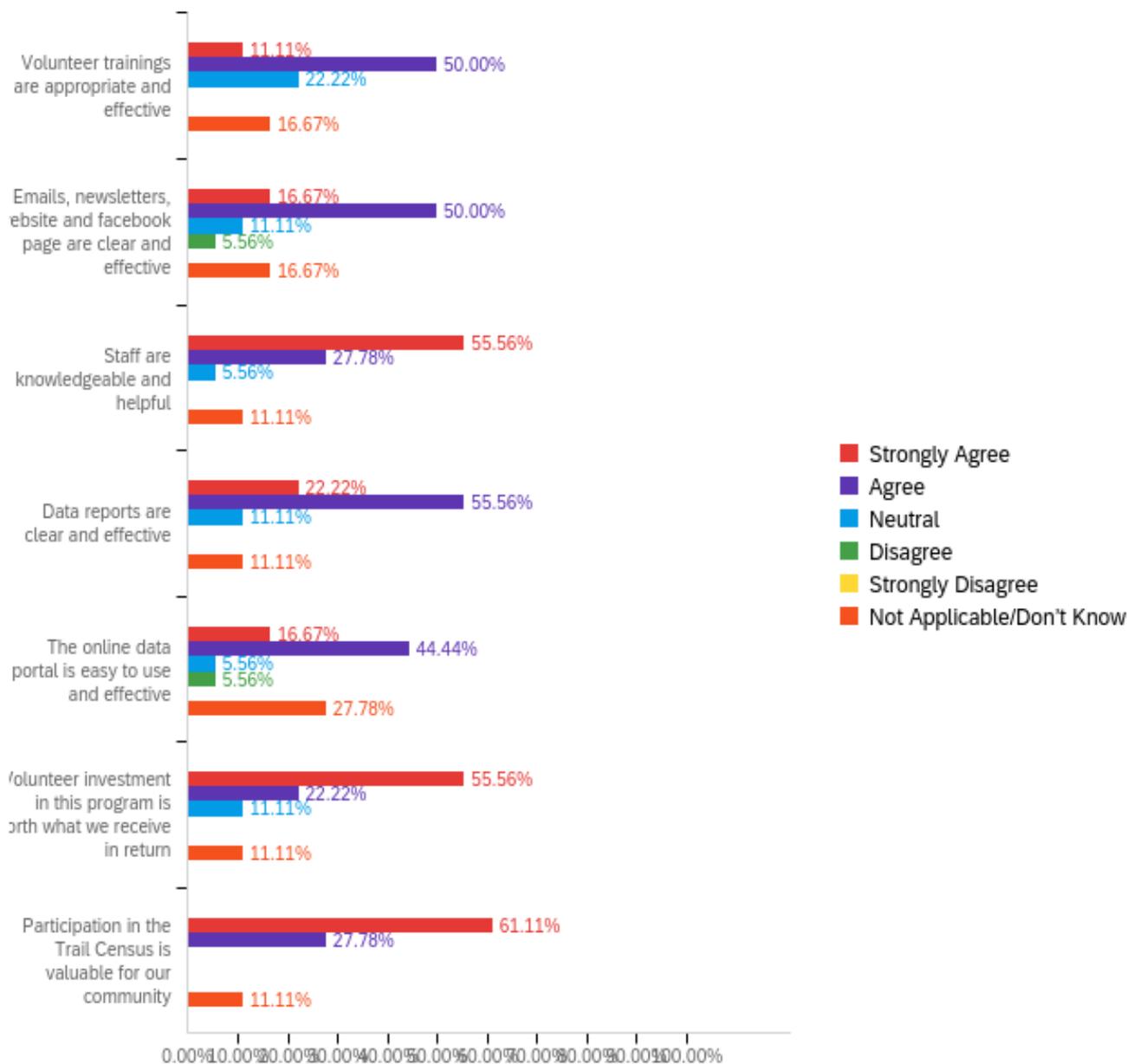
The trail census has helped raise the profile of the trails in our state as an asset and form of recreation for everyone.

Public recognition for non-trail users and town officials to show the importance of the trail system to the success of the town.

It has given me insight into the joy brought to people as they are on the trail.

I've become more familiar with various sections of the trail (I'm not a local resident/regular trail user). This helps me better understand how the trail can be leveraged as to related community goals/objectives (land use, transportation, social engagement, business development/retention, etc.).

**Q6 - Please describe your level of agreement with the following aspects of the program.**



#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	Volunteer trainings are appropriate and effective	1.00	10.00	6.33	2.36	5.56	18
2	Emails, newsletters, website and Facebook page are clear and effective	1.00	10.00	6.06	2.68	7.16	18
3	Staff are knowledgeable and helpful	1.00	10.00	3.72	3.25	10.53	18
4	Data reports are clear and effective	1.00	10.00	5.44	2.67	7.14	18
5	The online data portal is easy to use and effective	1.00	10.00	6.44	2.95	8.69	18

6	Volunteer investment in this program is worth what we receive in return	1.00	10.00	3.78	3.29	10.84	18
7	Participation in the Trail Census is valuable for our community	1.00	10.00	3.39	3.20	10.24	18

#	Question	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable/Don't Know	Total
1	Volunteer trainings are appropriate and effective	11.11% 2	50.00% 9	22.22% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	16.67% 3	18
2	Emails, newsletters, website and Facebook page are clear and effective	16.67% 3	50.00% 9	11.11% 2	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	16.67% 3	18
3	Staff are knowledgeable and helpful	55.56% 10	27.78% 5	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 2	18
4	Data reports are clear and effective	22.22% 4	55.56% 10	11.11% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 2	18
5	The online data portal is easy to use and effective	16.67% 3	44.44% 8	5.56% 1	5.56% 1	0.00% 0	27.78% 5	18
6	Volunteer investment in this program is worth what we receive in return	55.56% 10	22.22% 4	11.11% 2	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 2	18
7	Participation in the Trail Census is valuable for our community	61.11% 11	27.78% 5	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 2	18

## Q7 - Please comment on any of your answers above:

Please comment on any of your answers above:

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I have not directly reviewed the data on line or in reports. Others on our committee do that.

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I have had a few problems with access to the data. I am not sure why.

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I am on the board and I didn't know we had a Facebook page! The written report is nicely stylized and concise. The tableau format for interactive data is AMAZING. I will note that 100 surveys is a lot harder to gather than I had assumed. I would love to see an opportunity to use a digital survey which might address low vision trail users or could be more attractive to users who are unwilling to make a 7 minute interruption to their walk. A QR code launched survey would allow users to stop for only a moment, scan a code, continue their walk, and fill out the survey in the warmth of their car or at home. One additional support that would be helpful would be a brainstorming session with trail coordinators to develop a robust stable of volunteers.

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Fabulous program, keep building and growing it.

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Appreciate the interaction for advancing the trail service group I manage and the positive affect it has on the town officials with which we are either closely or less closely aligned.

## Q8 - What is the most valuable aspect of the Trail Census?

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Data proves that trails are heavily used and worth the investment

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Data on trail use

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Knowing that people are using our trails in town

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The data

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Having local data to communicate information to local stakeholders

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Documentation of procedures used to collect and compile data.

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There is much misunderstanding and bias in our communities regarding the use of the trails. These data are helping to educate our communities and the decision makers.

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Having data to understand usage is very valuable to help promote and improve this type of infrastructure that makes CT a better place to live. The first time we presented the trail numbers to the BOS they all just about fell out of their chairs. They had NO idea that so many people used the trail.

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Ammunition for maintenance, gap closure

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Gathering info about what people like about the trail and how we might improve it is very helpful. It's also very useful to know how people are using it - i.e. walking, walking dog, cycling, etc.

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This is the first permanent counting program for pedestrians in the state. This data

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The data available to help communicate the impact of the trails statewide.

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Spreading the word of the high usage of our trail system.

It informs decision making and is concrete evidence for those who insist "No one uses the trail." Because it is a linear trail it's hard for people to understand they won't see a pile up of people as they would on a beach.

to show number of users

use with government officials and potential funding sources

Real data that can used for practical purposes.

## Q9 - What could be improved about the Trail Census?

More frequent updates posted

Don't know

mmmmmmmmmmmm

We need to get out more to get better demographics of who uses our trails

Doing all the manual counts and surveys s difficult

I have not used it enough to answer this question fully.

Any sense of nighttime usage?

More counters. At Bolton Notch, users typically go one way or the other, and there is only a counter in one of the directions.

We would love to have the temporary counter back as the trial usage at the temporary counter captures a whole different group of users. The ones that go towards Vernon!

Additional on-site real time full day user counts for TrafX data correlation/ adjustment

Can't think of anything.

digital survey. explore a more robust counting program - if we doubled the number of counters what technology would make that scalable(identify alternative counters that have a cellular data upload, cluster counters and use a single volunteer network)? How many surveys are needed to be statistically relevant if we built out the counter program? Dig into some site metadata (land use, socioeconomic, amenities, surface type...) and try to understand what makes trails successful...safe...enjoyable...provides a transportation benefit... I would love to see this data be presented to CTDOT, OPM, DECD, CTTourism, SNEAPA, APA, TRB and other venues. I think that it is really valuable and unique. My impression is that what sets this apart from other national models is our commitment to intercept surveys.

Include more multi-use trails and those open to equestrians. It could be a tool to help build conversations among different trail user groups.

How I use the data is satisfied by the current distribution.

I would like individual reporting for each trail including survey results. Many hours are invested in the surveys and results are specific to each trail. Leaders should be notified when the data is ready. Trail data should be kept as an announcement at the top of the Facebook page.

Try to communicate #'s who use it to get to work

The survey is long and people seem to grow impatient when filling it out. Also I am not sure we are getting reliable information.

We need help doing intercept surveys. Also, it seems to me that State resources for this program are limited, and do not allow it to be more fully integrated into other State efforts in a mutually supportive way (i.e. economic

development for instance). Perhaps also, more general publicity to make citizens aware the data is available, how it is used, opportunities for partnerships etc.

**Q10 - As a “citizen science” based program, the Trail Census depends on volunteers. Please describe any successes or challenges you have had recruiting, retaining, or working with volunteers to conduct the intercept surveys, manual counts, or monitor the IR counter.**

It's always a challenge to find people who commit to doing something and then follow through.

There is not enough volunteers to do the amount of work needed to be done. Not sure how we increase that it is an issue everywhere

We had a wonderful dedicated volunteer who helped us during the first year. When he got sick and then had a change in employment, we had difficulty replacing him.

We tend to have the same folks doing it each year. It's a bit of a challenge to get new people to join. Perhaps a new flyer that outlines benefits of the trail census would help, or even better an email template for recruiting new volunteers.

Recruiting and managing volunteers takes time and effort. The default is just to do it yourself, this is something that I will work on in the new year. I also have the concern that not all volunteers are exact in their carrying out of the task (if you are verifying the count it is important to count the individual when they crossed the counter not after they leave after talking to you for 3 minutes. Finding people who are available on a weekend (which is our peak) is challenging.

No problems. I have an active participatory group with an email number of 105 so have access to volunteers to cover anything we need to do. One member of my group and I manage the project.

We were successful in this.

All our work is done by volunteers.

**Q11 - Is there anything the program could provide in terms of support, education, or tools that would help you be more effective?**

It would be very helpful to have portable signage to use when conducting surveys clearly indicating that the census is being conducted

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Education and meetings in different areas. No one from our area can attend meetings more than an hour away during the day time. Maybe someone comes to our meetings to give us more information on the program or how we can be better using it.

No

not at this time

Not sure on this.

Seminar with TrafX data users to compare methodology, adjustment factors, lesson learned. Include: UConn Farmington Valley Rail Trail Council Pioneer Valley Planning Council in MA Friends of Southwick Trail in MA Friends of Greenway in Westfield, MA Friends of Northampton Trail in MA

See above

I would like to work on brand recognition, if we could get stickers or magnets with the website on them for survey respondents that may provide an ROI in volunteering and exposure.

Not at this time

I am satisfied with what we are currently getting.

Quarterly (or more) reports. Notification when the reports are ready.

An easier to use survey

See answers above.

**Q12 - If you could put a dollar value on the information, training, or support you receive from the Trail Census overall, what would it be?**

#	Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
1	If you could put a dollar value on the information, training, or support you receive from the Trail Census overall, what would it be?	0.00	5000.00	1025.13	1566.56	2454118.86	8