

# Connecticut Trail Census

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

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.

### Goals

- To understand when, who, how, and why people make use of Connecticut's multi-use trails
- 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
- To encourage sound trail building and maintenance programs based on data

### How it works

Twelve trail sites in Connecticut will be selected to participate. From Spring 2016 – Winter 2017, applicant teams representing these twelve trails will work closely with the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments and UCONN-Extension. Selected trail groups/organizations will:

- Participate in volunteer trainings for manual counter setup and data retrieval and survey data collection
- Install and maintain infrared counters, conduct manual counts, and download data quarterly 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 understand demographics of trail users including age, gender, location of residence, economic impacts, and needed trail amenities
- Communicate the results of this data collection to constituents and partners

UConn's Center for Land Use Education Action and Research will host the collected data and develop tools to disseminate the information freely and openly through interactive maps, a data download portal or interactive data visualization tools.

Participating trails must be paved or stone dust multi-use trails. Trails will be prioritized based on: demonstrated ability to identify a community based project leader, demonstrated capacity and ability to identify 3-5 volunteers who will participate in training, ability to administer infrared counters, an ability to collect data in May/September on a designated schedule, connectivity to other trails and amenities, trail length, ability to demonstrate how they will make use of and communicate the data. Please review the program application for more details.

### Learn more

**For more information about this program or to inquire about how your community or trail can be included, contact: Aaron Budris, [abudris@nvcogct.org](mailto:abudris@nvcogct.org) 203.757.0535 or Laura Brown, [laura.brown@uconn.edu](mailto:laura.brown@uconn.edu) 608-213-4503.**

*This project is a partnership of the Connecticut Greenways Council, Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG), UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources - Department of Extension and the Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR)*



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## APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATING COMMUNITIES/TRAIL GROUPS

<b>Name of trail:</b>	
<b>Contact person / coordinator name:</b>	
<b>Organization affiliation:</b>	
<b>Phone:</b>	<b>Email:</b>

Please check the boxes below to indicate your understanding of the following expectations should you be selected to participate. I understand that if selected to participate I and members of our group/organization will:

### Coordinator Responsibilities

- Participate in a 1-2 hour face-to-face or online training for manual counter setup and data retrieval (to be scheduled Summer 2016)
- Install and maintain infrared counters at designated points on the trail. Regular checks of counter function and immediate reporting of issues is required.
- Recruit 2 volunteers per site to conduct manual counts (to be scheduled Summer 2016)
- Download data from counters quarterly (at designated times) and email data within 1 week to Counts Coordinator Aaron Budris
- Recruit volunteers to conduct intercept surveys (Winter 2017). Data will be collected during designated week long windows in May and September, 2017. Data must be collected on one weekend day and one weekday for three hour time periods. Your group/organization must identify at least 2 trained data collection volunteers per collection site.
- Ensure that intercept survey data collection volunteers participate in required training (2 hour face-to-face or online training scheduled at regional sites March 2017)
- Send completed intercept surveys by post within 1 week to Intercept Coordinator Laura Brown OR enter data into online survey within 2 weeks of collection.
- Use and communicate the results of this data collection to constituents and partners

**Why is your group/organization is interested in participating in this program? Please provide background on this trail or segment and relationship to the applying group/ organization (*type of trail, year built, average use, marketing website or map if available*).**

**Has any count or survey data been collected on this trail in the past? If possible note when data was collected, where it is available and how it has been used.**

**Describe how you or your organization will recruit volunteers. If you have recruited volunteers already please provide their names and contact information.**

**What specific sites on your trail might be appropriate to collect manual counts or intercept data? Sites should not be part of regularly traveled "loops" and should be chosen to accurately represent average trail use along the segment. Sites with sign or fence posts for counter mounting are preferable. Please list Lat/Long and geographic description of each potential location.**

**How do you/your group or organization expect to use the data collected? Is there any specific information that you feel would be most useful to collect?**