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November Preliminary Results for Cheese Country Trail Survey

Preliminary results for the year long Cheese Country Trail survey are beginning to add up. With the help of UW Extension, dozens of volunteers began collecting information regarding people who use the Cheese Country Trail. During the month of November, study volunteers completed 51 two-hour observation periods and conducted a total of 38 face-to-face interviews.

“On an average November weekend, Cheese Country Trail study volunteers observed about 5 users per hour,” said UW Extension Recreation Planning Specialist Dave Marcouiller.

“On weekdays they saw an average of 2 per hour. Four out of five users were on ATVs with the remaining 20 percent equally split between other types of motorized and non-motorized use.”

Higher levels of trail usage took place early in the month. Colder weather in mid- to late-November led to a drop off in trail usage. As the snowmobile season begins, trail usage is expected to pick up significantly.

Interestingly in November, 4 out of 5 trail users were day-trippers (not staying overnight). Although it is still too early to estimate overall user characteristics and local economic impact, November trail users who were surveyed spent, on average, about \$100 per person on trip-related items as a result of their use of the Cheese Country Trail.

The goal of the Cheese Country Trail Survey is to collect a representative sample of users and usage of the Cheese Country Trail along the more than 48 mile route from Monroe to Belmont and Mineral Point. Information is being collected using 1,000 randomly selected 2-

hour time slots during the 12 month survey period. Eight intercept locations have been chosen along the trail in Monroe, Browntown, South Wayne, Gratiot, Darlington, Calamine, Belmont and Mineral Point.

The Tri-County Trails Committee plans to use the results of the study to improve trail experiences for future users. The committee will also provide the resulting information to local communities, businesses and counties to help create economic development related to the trail and its users.

For more information, please contact Cara Carper at the Green County UW Extension Office at (608) 328-9440 or [.carper@ces.uwex.](mailto:carper@ces.uwex), or the website at [://green.uwex.edu/](http://green.uwex.edu/).

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