

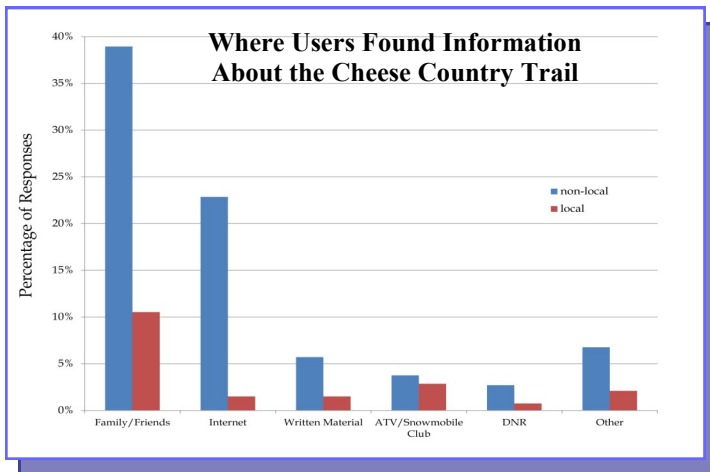


Cheese Country Trail Study Results



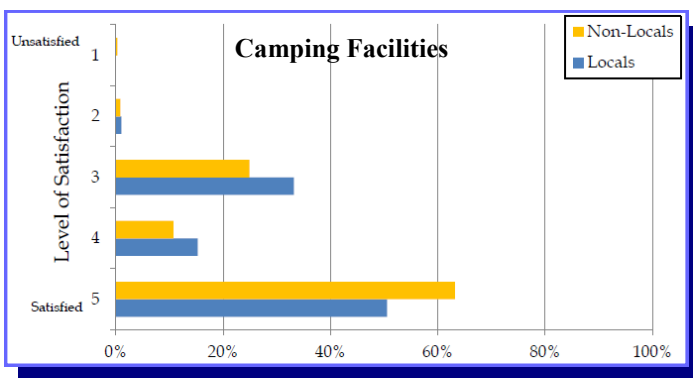
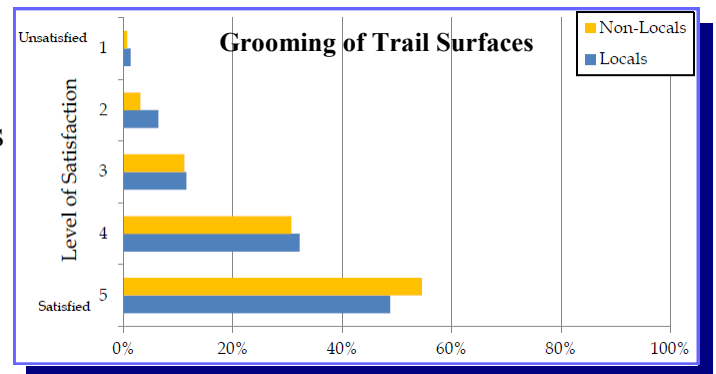
This is one in a series of three fact sheets regarding the year-long study of the Cheese Country Trail (Nov. 2010-Oct. 2011).

Future Directions

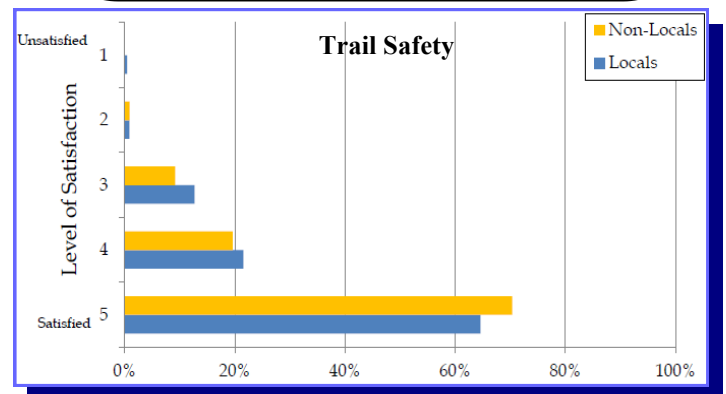


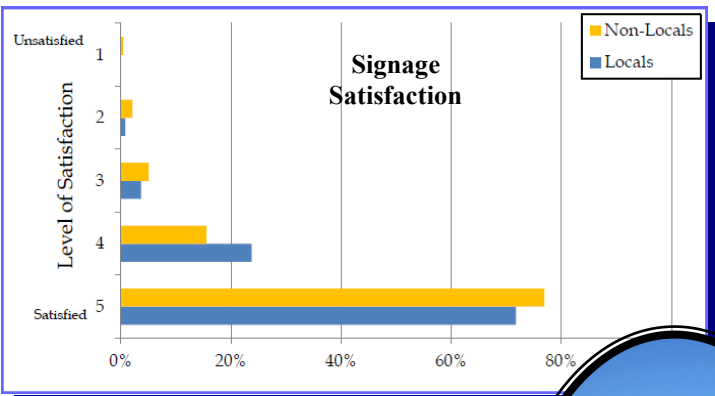
The Cheese Country Trail is a valuable economic, cultural and recreational asset, bringing thousands of people to the area and injecting millions of dollars into local economies. Most non-local trail users found information about the trail from family, friends or the Internet.

During some weekends and holidays, the trail nears capacity. To relieve this congestion and to attract other motorized recreational users to the area, intensive use areas should be developed. Additional grooming of the trail surface and its right of way, as well as additional camping opportunities, were cited as needs during the study.



Safety concerns including speed and intoxicated operations of machines were expressed. Additional patrols and signage are needed, along with the required use of headlights.



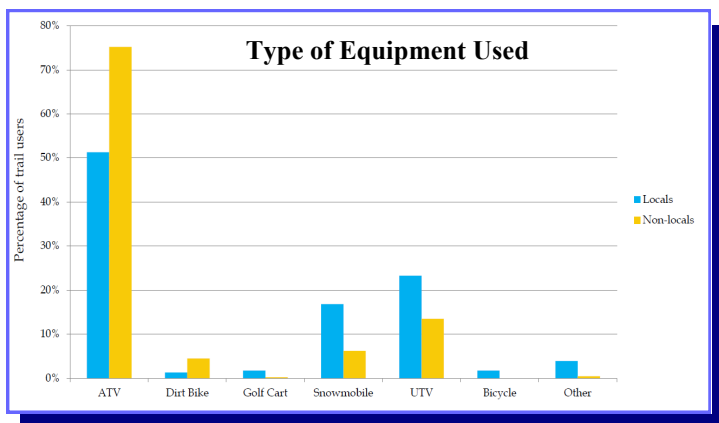
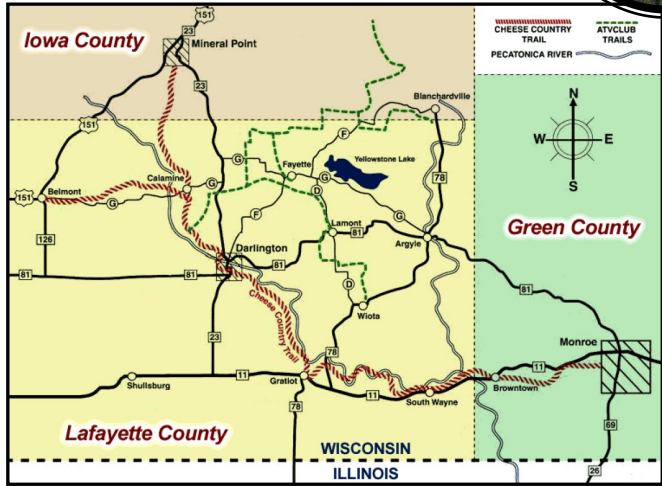


During the study, users cited the need for better signage off the trail to nearby community services and attractions.



At a Glance:

- The Tri-County Trails Commission (TCTC) is not organized or staffed to develop and carry out all suggestions from this study. A partnership of public and private organizations, from throughout the three county region, is needed.
- Additional revenue is needed to enhance the trail experience for its users. Funding is needed for grooming, maintenance and signage, including directions to nearby community attractions and businesses off the trail.
- The trail use permit policy for both in-state and out-of-state users needs to be less confusing.
- There is a genuine concern the trail will be eliminated if rail becomes operational again in this area. Well informed decisions will include an understanding of how important the trail is to the region's economy to develop and market this regional asset.



This fact sheet provides a brief summary of the final report of the year-long study of the Cheese Country Trail. This collaborative effort of local groups and Cooperative Extension was designed to assess how many people are using the trail, the user characteristics and the user perceptions of trail conditions. Results of the study are intended to be used to improve recreational experiences for future trail users and to assist local businesses and units of government in creating economic development strategies related to tourism. The final report, an overall evaluation of local economic impacts of this important recreational asset, is available online at the Green County UW Extension website <http://green.uwex.edu/>. Two additional fact sheets, *Characteristics of Users* and *Economic Impact* are also available.

During the 12 month study period (November 2010-October 2011) seventy four local volunteers spent more than 1,400 hours collecting data summarized in the report. They conducted 683 randomly allocated two hour trail observations and a total of 730 face-to-face interviews. Results of their work highlight several important implications for outdoor recreation planning and local economic development.

The Cheese Country Trail is a multiple-use trail system meandering through 48 miles of rural countryside from Monroe to Belmont and Mineral Point. It is open to all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), utility terrain vehicles (UTVs), snowmobiles, off-road dirt bikes, mopeds, motorcycles, and non-motorized uses (horses and horse-drawn conveyances, bicycles and hikers). For more information regarding the trail, go to the Tri-County Trails website at www.tricountytrails.com.