

Schmeeckle Reserve and Green Circle Trail Visitor Use Evaluation 2013

Producing and maintaining an estimate of visitor use can greatly benefit parks, reserves, and trail systems. It allows managers to predict and prepare for trends in visitor use, as well providing useful figures for interpretative literature, newsletters, and grant requests. This continuing observational study monitors trail traffic at Schmeeckle Reserve and on the Green Circle Trail (GCT) in Stevens Point, WI. Visitor counts were generated via TrafX Infrared trail counters. Twelve total counters were installed in camouflaged, PVC pipe housing at key locations on the GCT and in Schmeeckle Reserve in accordance with management objectives of the GCT Board of Directors. Data were collected and analyzed using TrafX DataNet software to analyze trends in hourly, weekly, monthly, and yearly trail use as well as traffic comparisons at each individual site. In addition to data generated by infrared trail counters, observational data and surveys were also collected. Observational data collected included visitor gender, mode of use, and time recorded. Surveys included trail use habits, motives for trail use, and visitor age group and gender, as well as a line for any open-ended comment. Surveys were administered near each counter, and also at key locations along the trails. Response rates at each site were recorded as well. Trends in visitor use versus weather conditions and the academic school year became visible.

Poster

Advisor: Dr. Laura Anderson-McIntyre

Consider for Judging.



Phillip Bau

Major: Forestry Recreation

Minor: Land Use Planning