



Trail Counter Report

As of April, 2021



About the Trail Counter

Background

In early 2020, the Waltham Land Trust purchased a trail counter which uses infrared light to count how many people (and larger critters) pass by.

Program Goals

The key goals of the trail counter program are to:

- Bolster conservation efforts with hard data on trail usage.
- Learn which areas of Waltham's trails receive the most usage.
- Understand daily and monthly usage patterns to aid with event planning and stewardship.

See [About the Trail Counter](#) for detailed info



Counter Data Findings

9/1/2020 – 4/30/2021



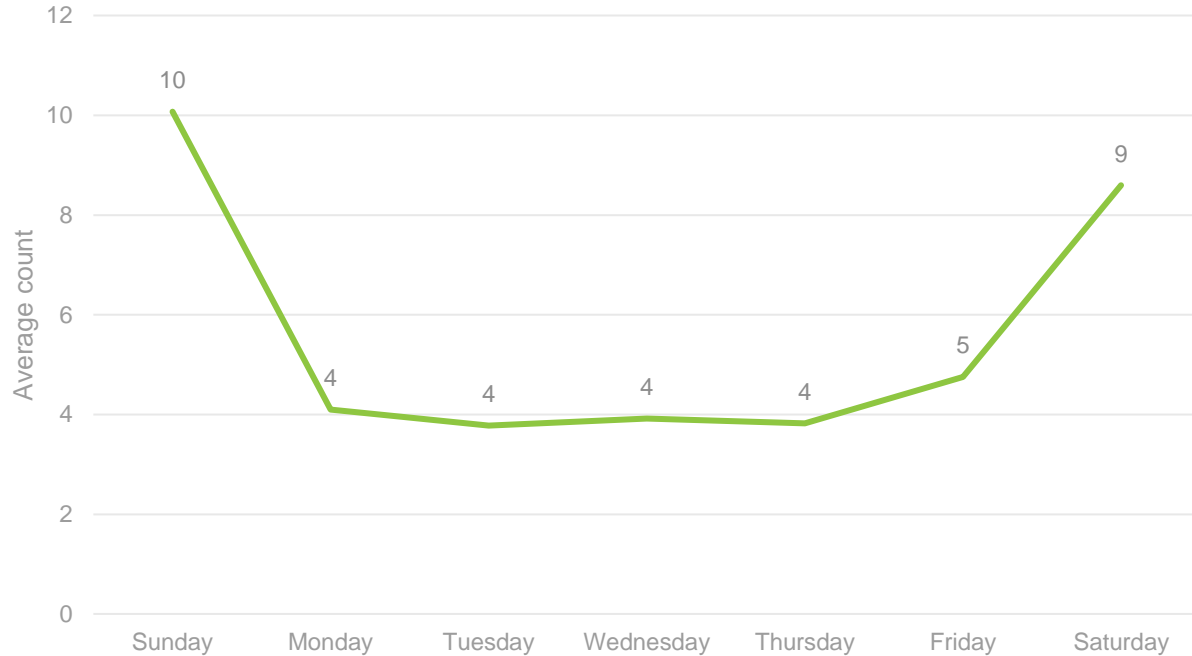
POPULAR DAYS

The most popular dates of the year appear to be weekend holidays:

| Holiday | Date | Day | Count |
|--------------|------------|----------|-------|
| | 10/18/2020 | Sunday | 420 |
| | 11/21/2020 | Saturday | 353 |
| Thanksgiving | 11/27/2020 | Friday | 312 |
| | 11/28/2020 | Saturday | 336 |
| | 11/29/2020 | Sunday | 331 |
| New Years | 1/1/2021 | Friday | 374 |
| | 1/10/2021 | Sunday | 375 |
| MLK Day | 1/17/2021 | Sunday | 306 |
| | 1/18/2021 | Monday | 319 |
| | 3/21/2021 | Sunday | 343 |
| | 4/4/2021 | Sunday | 342 |

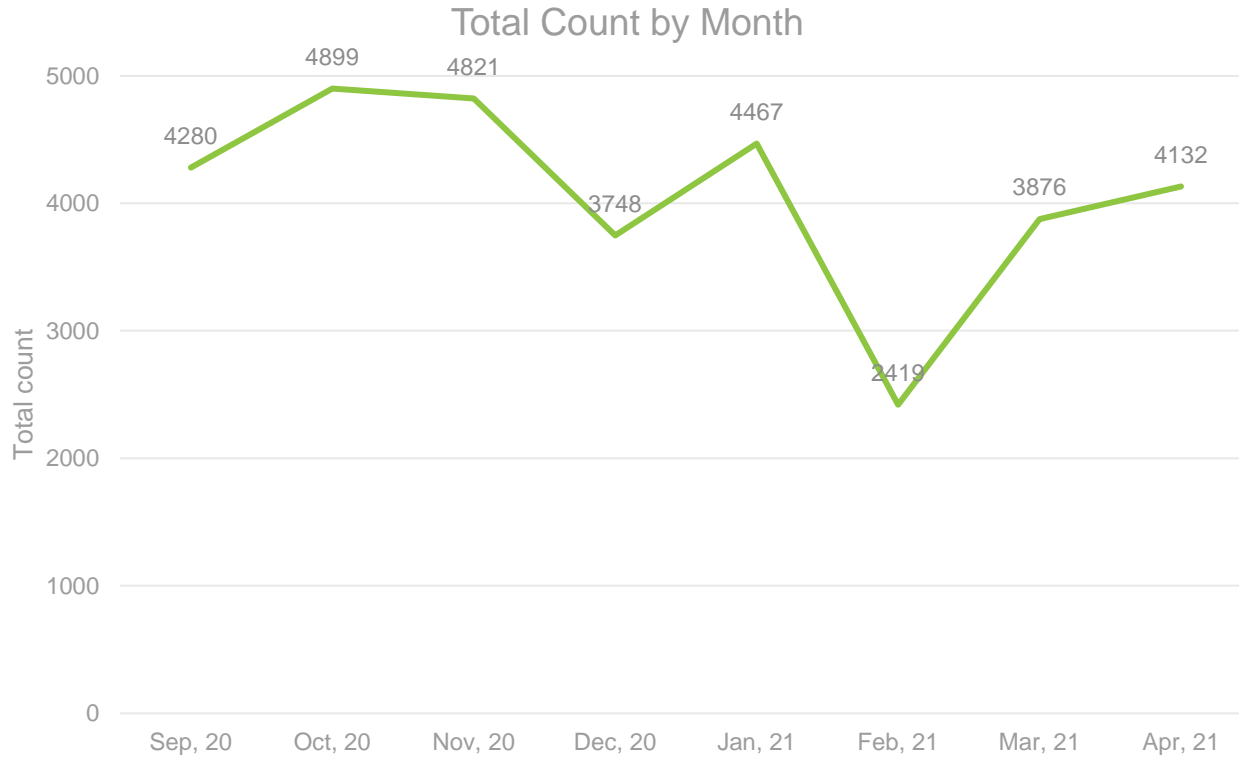
Trail Counter Data 9/1/2020 to 4/30/2021 – By Day

Average Count per Day



- Unsurprisingly, the weekends are the most popular
- Weekday counts are otherwise consistent

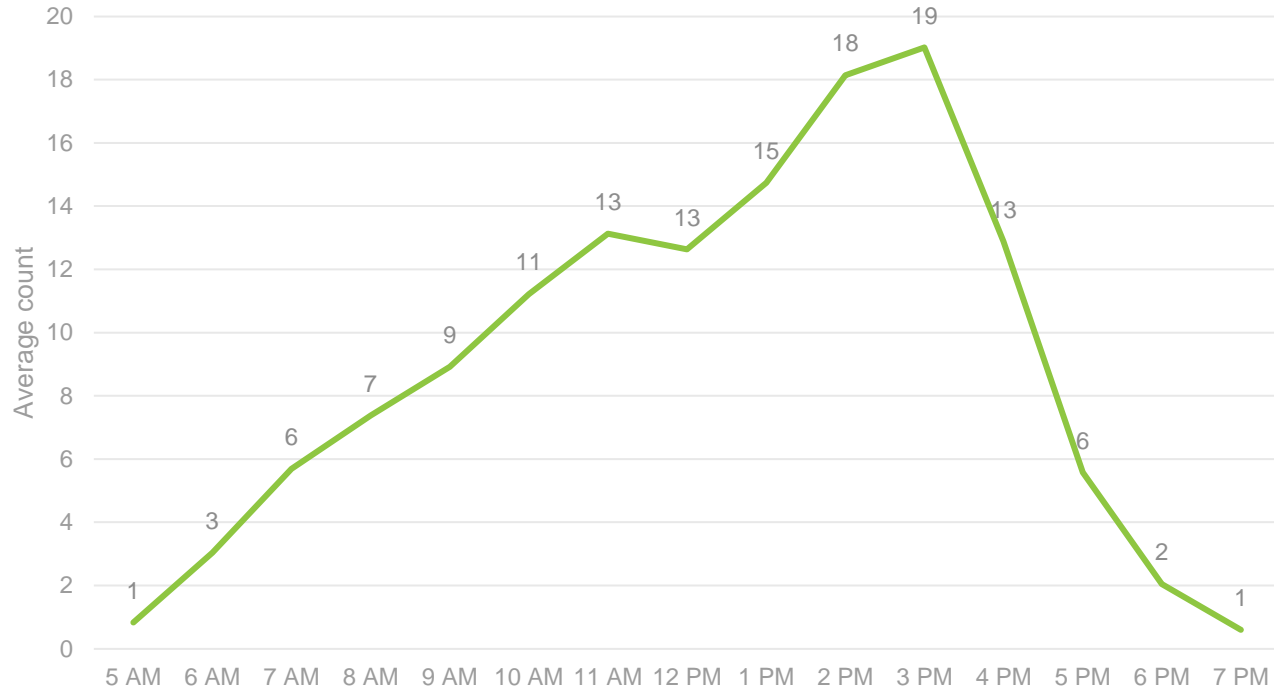
Trail Counter Data 9/1/2020 to 4/30/2021 – By Month



- Activity dropped in February
- October and November had the highest usage

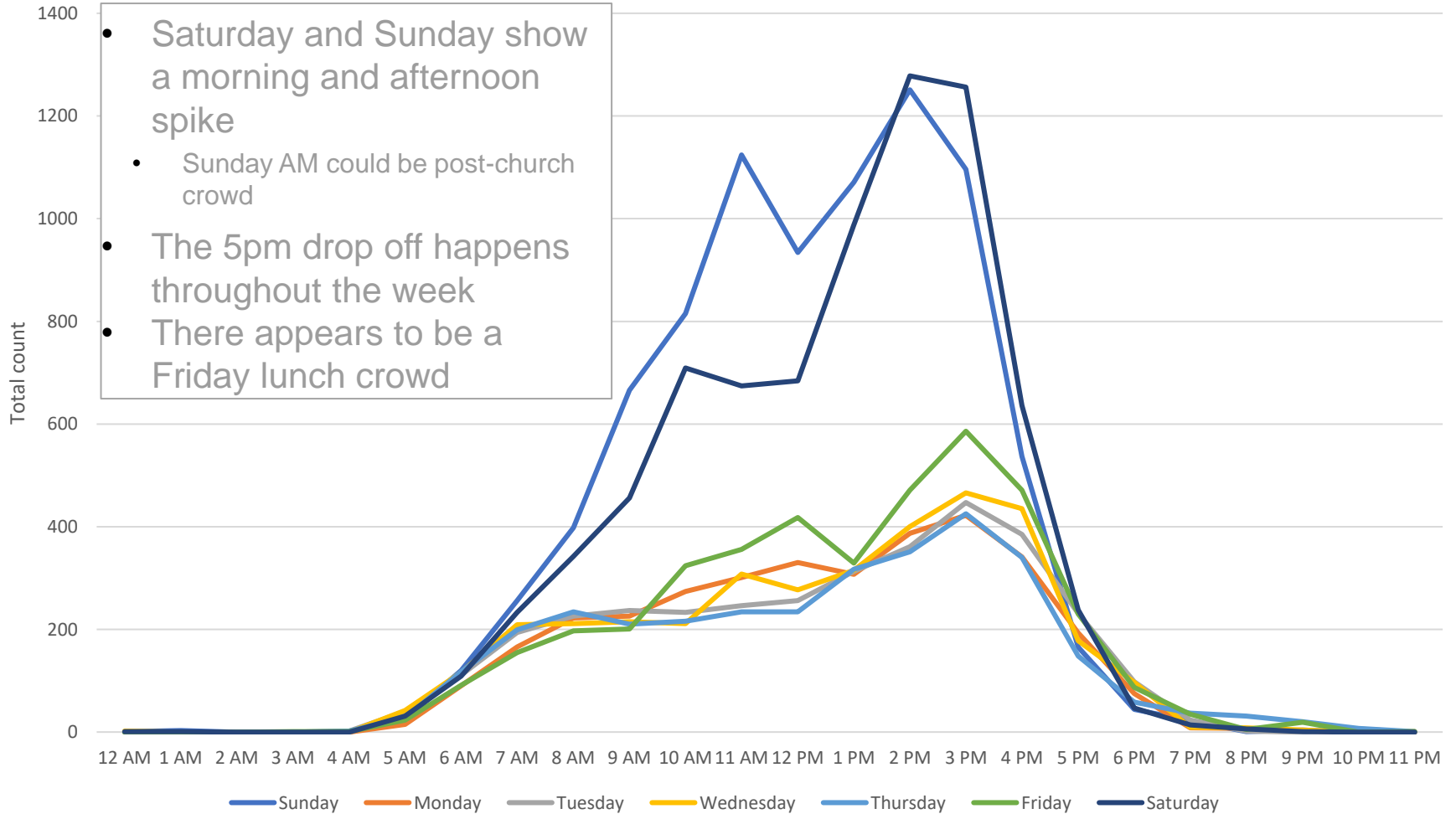
Trail Counter Data 9/1/2020 to 4/30/2021 – By Hour

Average Count by Hour



3pm appears to be the most popular time, with a stark drop off at dinner time

Total Count by Hour and Day





About the Trail Counter

How it works and where it is



HOW IT WORKS

After looking at different options and emailing with people at other conservation organizations, including the Application Mountain Club, we decided the trail counter from **Trafx** would be our best option. It has two components:

Infrared Camera and Field Case



Docking Station



- The camera is installed in the field and uses infrared light to detect people who pass by **within 10 feet.**
- The docking station is used to collect data and bring it back to a computer.
- The docking station can **collect the data from multiple cameras**, so if we expand the program, only additional cameras are required.



CAMERA LOCKBOX

To fend off vandals and other curious critters, we built a lockbox according to Trafx's guidance:

Sandwich bag to protect from water damage





CAMERA LOCKBOX

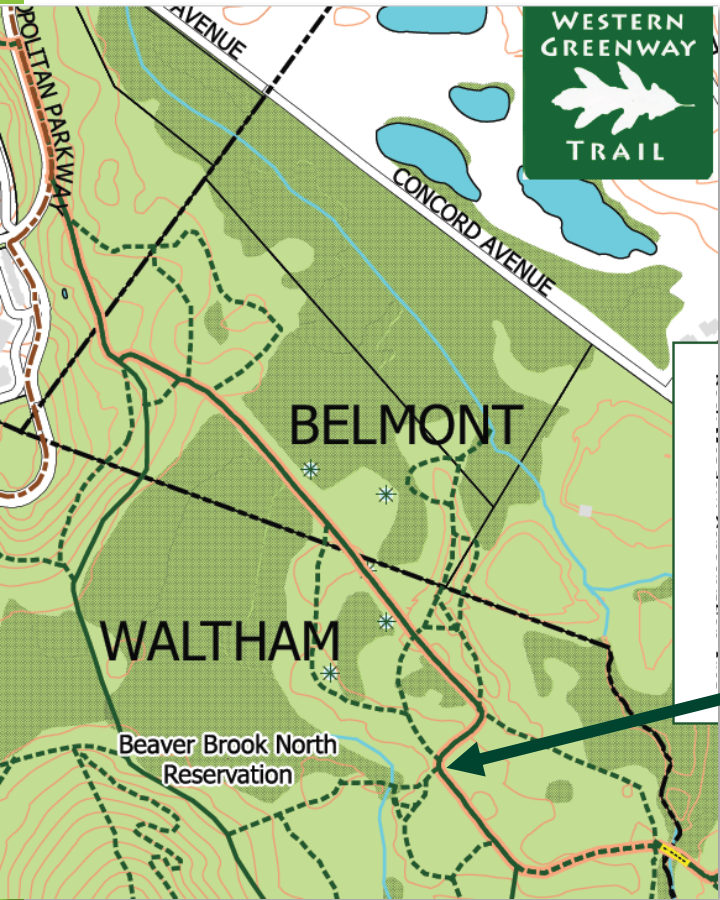
To fend off vandals and other curious critters, we built a lockbox according to Trafx's guidance:



A message on top to allay concerns



Obligatory picture of Shadow



LOCATION

- The chosen location is at a crossroads between other trails and the Western Greenway
- The counter will capture people using the Greenway going to and from Rock Meadow