



PINELLAS TRAIL SECURITY TASK FORCE (PTSTF) MEETING AGENDA

January 9, 2024 - 9:00 a.m.

Pinellas County Emergency Services Center
12490 Ulmerton Road, Room 130
Largo, FL 33774
(Telephone: 727-582-2000)

THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

1. **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
3. **PINELLAS TRAIL COLLABORATION**
 - Enforcement Agencies Targeted Day in February
 - Palm Harbor Roundabouts
 - New Pinellas Trail Map
4. **QUARTERLY REPORT FROM PINELLAS TRAIL PARK RANGER**
5. **LAW ENFORCEMENT AND AGENCY REPORTS**
 - Sheriff's Office
 - Belleair
 - Clearwater
 - Gulfport
 - Largo
 - St. Petersburg
 - Tarpon Springs
 - Animal Services
 - Public Safety Services
 - Pinellas County Risk Management
 - Friends of the Pinellas Trail
 - Volunteer Patrol Programs and Updates
6. **REPORT ON TRAIL USER COUNT DATA**
7. **REPORT ON TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY**
8. **OTHER BUSINESS**
9. **ADJOURNMENT**

NEXT PTSTF MEETING – APRIL 9, 2024

- **Notice to Law Enforcement Representatives – If you are unable to attend the meeting, please e-mail your Incident/Offense Report to Kyle Simpson at ksimpson@forwardpinellas.org. If you would prefer, you can fax the report to the Pinellas County MPO at (727) 464-8212. *Thank You***

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact the Office of Human Rights, 400 South Fort Harrison Avenue, Suite 300, Clearwater, Florida 33756; [(727) 464-4062 (V/TDD)] at least three days prior to the meeting.

Appeals: Certain public meetings result in actions taken by the public board, commission or agency that may be appealed; in such case persons are advised that, if they decide to appeal any decision made at a public meeting/hearing, they will need a record of the proceedings, and, for such purposes, they may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

Forward Pinellas is committed to making our documents accessible to all audiences. If you have accessibility concerns, please contact info@forwardpinellas.org or call 727-464-8250. Visit <https://forwardpinellas.org/legal/website-accessibility-statement/> for more information.

Pinellas Trail Security Task Force – January 9, 2024

2. Approval of Minutes



SUMMARY

The summary minutes of the October 10, 2023, Pinellas Trail Security Task Force meeting are attached.

ATTACHMENTS: Pinellas Trail Security Task Force Summary Minutes – October 10, 2023

ACTION: Approval of the April Meeting Summary

**PINELLAS TRAIL SECURITY TASK FORCE
MEETING SUMMARY
OCTOBER 10, 2023**

The following is a summary of the October 10, 2023 Forward Pinellas - Pinellas Trail Security Task Force meeting, which was held in person in Largo. The Security Task Force meets at least quarterly during the year.

IN ATTENDANCE

Officer Ron Wolfson, Chairman	St. Petersburg Police Department & Volunteer Coord.
Officer Juliet Savagean	St. Petersburg Police Department
Detective A. Daniels	Belleair Police Department
Officer Jarred Stiff	Clearwater Police Department
Officer Keith Bowling	Largo Police Department
Officer Anthony Boone	Tarpon Springs Police Department
Deputy Matthew Skypack	Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
Sgt. Jordan Sinick	Pinellas County Animal Control
Chief Ranger Kent Cleveland	Pinellas County Parks, and Conservation Resources
Lyle Fowler	Pinellas County Parks and Conservation Resources
Scott Rintz	Pinellas County Risk Management
Joan Rice	Pinellas County Public Works - Transportation
John Rieman	Pinellas County Public Works - Transportation
Maika Arnold	City of St. Petersburg - Transportation
Scott Daniels	Friends of the Pinellas Trail
Stuart Schwartzreich	Pinellas Trail Auxiliary Ranger
Kyle Simpson	Forward Pinellas Staff

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Ronald Wolfson, St. Petersburg Police Officer, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked members to introduce themselves.

2. APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY – July 11, 2023

The summary from the July 11, 2023, meeting was approved with no corrections.

3. PINELLAS TRAIL COLLABORATION

Kyle Simpson, Forward Pinellas staff, shared that staff wants to collaborate on the different concerns and projects happening on the Pinellas Trail.

1 – Palm Harbor Roundabouts – The Pinellas County Sheriff's Department recently posted to social media about the traffic control for Trail users at the Palm Harbor Roundabout and local media outlets reported on it. Forward Pinellas would like to work with law enforcement partners on the potential use of law enforcement social media posts to address recurring issues on the Pinellas Trail, as it may be a more successful way to engage with the public on safety issues. The group discussed this approach and ideas for future coordination.

2 – Enforcement Agency's Targeted Day in February - This could be coupled with a High Visibility Enforcement (HVE) day on the Pinellas Trail and/or at trail road crossings. Saturday, February 17th, 2024 was selected as the HVE Day. Law enforcement was encouraged by this idea of being out on the Trail to promote safety and discourage

speeding. Forward Pinellas will work with law enforcement partners to broadcast on social media.

3 – Speed Feedback Signs - Speed feedback signs have been used on other trails around the country and could serve as an effective countermeasure to address speeding concerns. A concern about the signs encouraging riders to see how fast they could ride was raised, but the ability to set a cutoff speed at which they display “slow down” is an option.

Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

4. QUARTERLY REPORT FROM PINELLAS TRAIL PARK RANGER

Chief Ranger Kent Cleveland reported that on August 9, a trespass citation was issued for camping on the Trail in St. Petersburg. On July 20, a stolen vehicle, a Lexus sedan, was abandoned near the Trail and was towed away by Clearwater PD.

Stuart Schwartzreich shared that an elderly driver drove his vehicle on the Trail for about a half or three quarters of mile in Dunedin.

5. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND AGENCY REPORTS – 3rd Quarter, July 1, 2023 to September 30, 2023.

A. Sheriff's Office

Deputy Matthew Skypak shared 87 incidents occurred on the trail. 36 were directed patrols initiated by deputies. Two notable incidents: early July on Skinner Blvd and the Trail, a red-light runner hit a pedestrian with non-life threatening injuries; and a single scooter crash, rider found in the ditch, non-life threatening injuries.

B. Belleair

Detective Allison Daniels with Belleair PD shared that there were 71 First Information Reports (FIRs) for being on the Trail after dark. One medical issue was also reported with a person down but ended up being fine.

C. Clearwater

Officer Garrett Banks reported there were 125 directed patrols, mostly park walks-talks. Two medical calls, one noise complaint and one juvenile issue, as a result of several kids on bikes doing wheelies.

D. Gulfport

No report from Gulfport.

E. Largo

Officer Keith Bowling shared that there were less than a dozen calls for service. A decrease in homeless calls has been observed, with the help of the homeless team keeping eyes on the Trail. One crash was reported of a scooter vs vehicle at 8th Street and Mehlenbacher Road before the crossing guard came out. The crossing guard is only to cross youths, not everyone who comes to the intersection. Complaints have been received of golf carts in the morning taking kids to school.

F. St. Petersburg

Officer Juliet Savagean reported that there were 58 calls for service with four of those ending in reports. One person fled a traffic stop. The car used to flee was found abandoned. One petty theft was reported on the Trail and assistance was given from an outside agency.

G. Tarpon Springs

Officer Anthony Boone reported normal directed patrols. Two park benches on Stafford between Line Street and MLK Blvd have had people sleeping on them overnight. Office Boone was not sure if they are County or city benches, but they are not memorial benches. Lyle Fowler with Parks will investigate ownership. A request was made to trim bushes near Meres Blvd. as a line of sight is needed for the Trail.

H. Animal Services

Sgt. Jordan Sinick of Animal Services shared nothing to report.

I. Public Safety Services

Ms. Lynn Abbott was unable to attend.

J. Pinellas County Risk Management

Mr. Scott Rintz shared the next inspection will be in November 2023.

K. Friends of the Pinellas Trail

Scott Daniels shared and passed out business cards for Friends of the Pinellas Trail with personal contact information if a Friends of the Pinellas Trail member cannot be reached right away. Friends can also be reached through the Facebook site and www.friendsofthepinellastrail.com.

L. Volunteer Patrol Programs and Updates

Chief Cleveland shares that there are 40 cart certified volunteers, and they are welcoming in bike volunteers now as well. Chair Wolfson shared that SPPD volunteers are doing well. One volunteer really enjoys going out on the golf cart and patrolling and assisting in the area. This group had some abandoned vehicles towed from an area off the Trail to clean it up. Mr. Schwartzreich also mentioned an uptick in graffiti by the new apartment house being constructed, 16th Street S and the overpass at Gibbs High School. Members were reminded to use See-Click-Fix to report any incidents or issues.

6. AUTOMATIC TRAIL COUNTERS

Mr. Simpson shared the Trail user numbers are still higher than pre-COVID but have dipped a little over the summer. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

7. REPORT ON TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

Joan Rice shared the South Gap between Haines Bayshore to 126th Avenue has been pushed back for construction to 2026. Design is just finishing up.

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Simpson inquired of the committee their thoughts on meeting bi-yearly and the committee elected to continue meeting quarterly.

Mr. Simpson noted that a new chair needed to be elected and Officer Anthony Boone was unanimously elected.

Mr. Daniels shared a very nice sentiment to Chair Wolfson.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wolfson adjourned the meeting at 9:40 a.m. The next PTSTF meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2024.

Summary

Enforcement Agency's Targeted Day in February

At the October 2023 meeting, PTSTF members identified Saturday, February 17, 2024, as the joint targeted education and enforcement day. Forward Pinellas, in collaboration with our partners, is working to develop a joint communications strategy and additional engagement opportunities to complement law enforcement activities. We will discuss expected location and duration for law enforcement partners and identify any additional needed resources.

Palm Harbor Roundabout

In September 2023 construction on the roundabout on Alt. US 19 at Florida Avenue in Palm Harbor was completed. Preliminary crash data before and after construction is being analyzed and will be shared with members.

New Pinellas Trail Map

The new version of the Pinellas Trail Bicycle Map and Guide was completed in the fall of 2023. Highlights of the changes will be shared.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None Required, Informational Item Only

Pinellas Trail Security Task Force – January 9, 2024

4. Quarterly Report from the Pinellas Trail Park Ranger



Summary

Pinellas County Park System is responsible for the care and maintenance of the County-owned parks and preserves, trails, campgrounds, boat ramps, rights of way and roads. This department also provides maintenance, operations, and oversight for the Pinellas Trail. Their role is vital to keeping people using the Pinellas Trail safe and informed. At each Pinellas Trail Security Task Force meeting, the Park Ranger provides an overview of any security topics which arose during the previous quarter. The information helps everyone attending understand any concerning behavior on the Pinellas Trail that can be addressed by the appropriate parties in attendance.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None Required; Informational Item Only

5. Law Enforcement and Agency Reports



- **Sheriff's Office**
- **Belleair**
- **Clearwater**
- **Gulfport**
- **Largo**
- **St. Petersburg**
- **Tarpon Springs**
- **Animal Services**
- **Public Safety Services**
- **Pinellas County Risk Management**
- **Friends of the Pinellas Trail**
- **Volunteer Patrol Programs and Updates**

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None Required; Informational Item Only

SUMMARY

This item will include the monthly data summary reports for the automatic trail counters along the Pinellas Trail. Note that average hourly data has been included with the reports.

ATTACHMENT: Pinellas Trail User Count Data Summary Reports:

- September 2023
- October 2023
- November 2023

ACTION: No Action Required, informational item only

Pinellas Trail Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period:
September 1st-30th

September 2023*

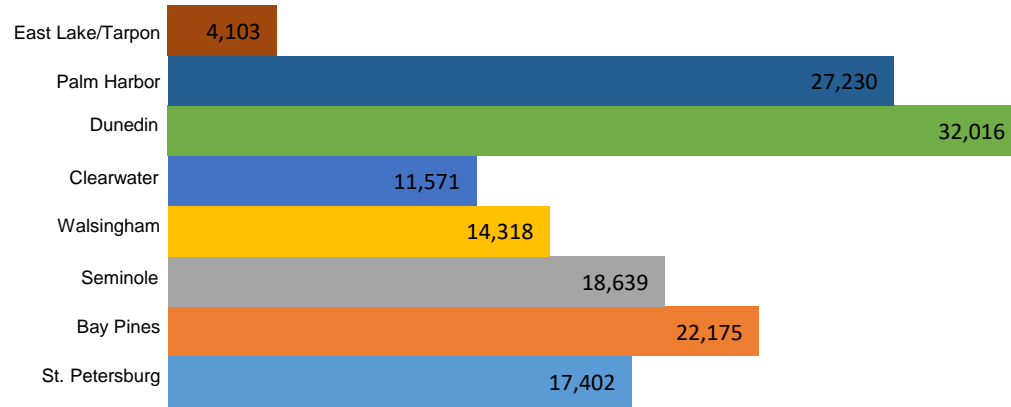
30-Day Count Total: 143,351

Daily Average Count: 4,778

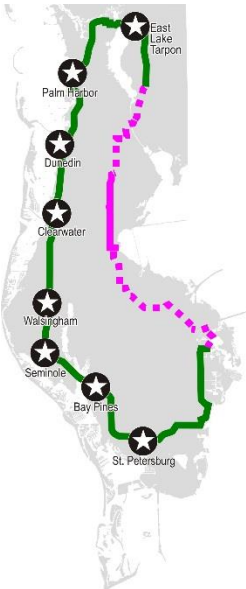
Highest Daily Totals:

- #1 – Saturday, September 9th (Seminole – 966)
- #2 – Saturday, September 23rd (St. Petersburg – 936)
- #3 – Saturday, September 23rd (Walsingham – 741)

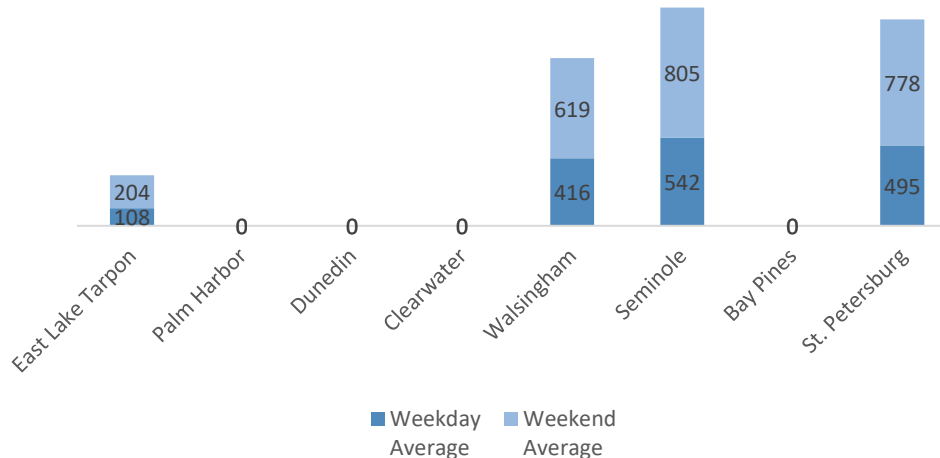
September Totals by Counter Location*



Counter Locations



Weekday & Weekend Profile*

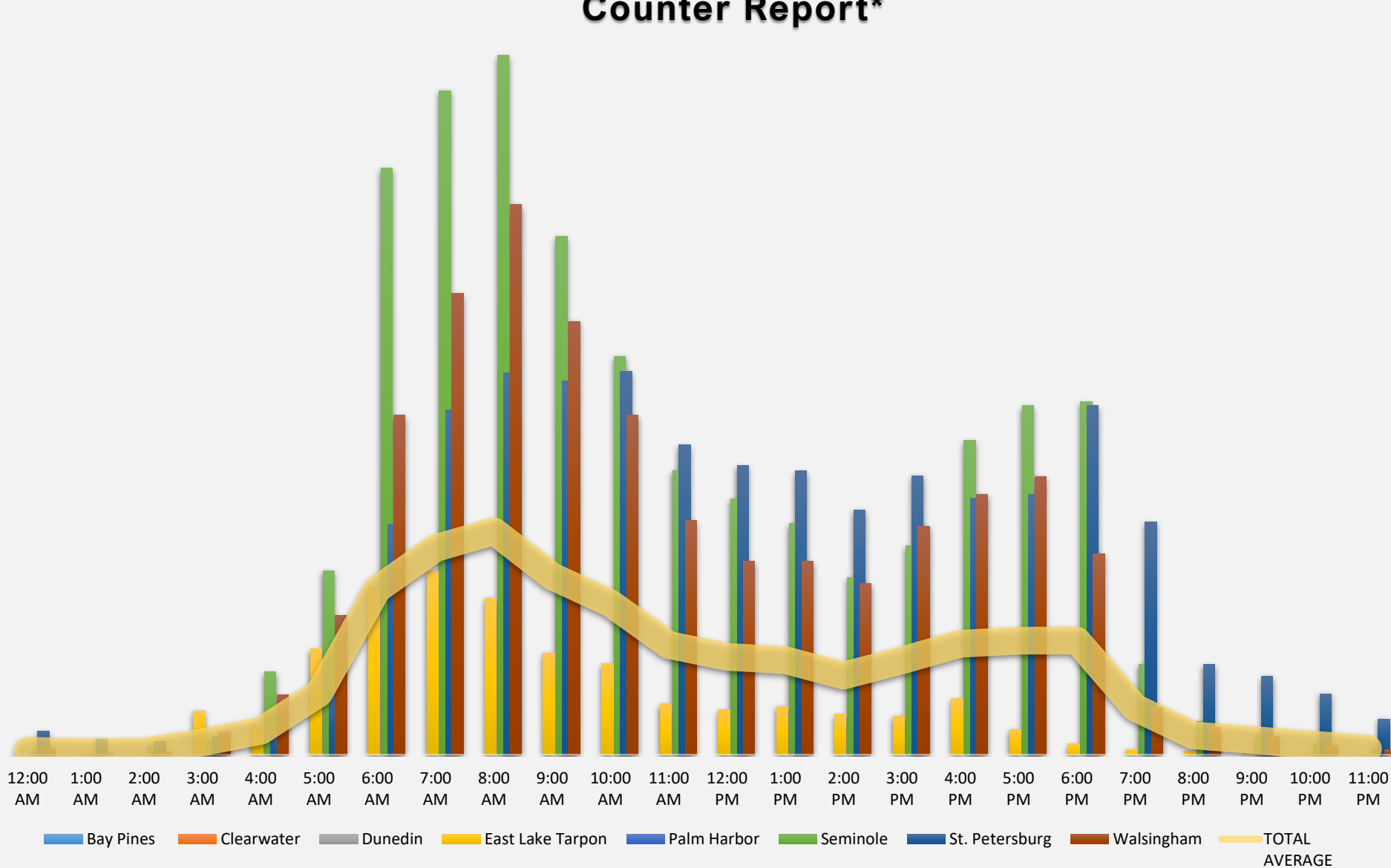


Trail User Mode Split*

Counter Location	Walking (Pedestrian Icon)	Bicycling (Bicycle Icon)
Palm Harbor	N/A	N/A
Dunedin	N/A	N/A
Clearwater	N/A	N/A
Walsingham	6%	94%
Seminole	22%	78%
Bay Pines	N/A	N/A
St. Petersburg	14%	86%
East Lake/Tarpon	7%	93%

Source: Forward Pinellas September 2023

September 2023 Average Hourly Counter Report*



Pinellas Trail Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

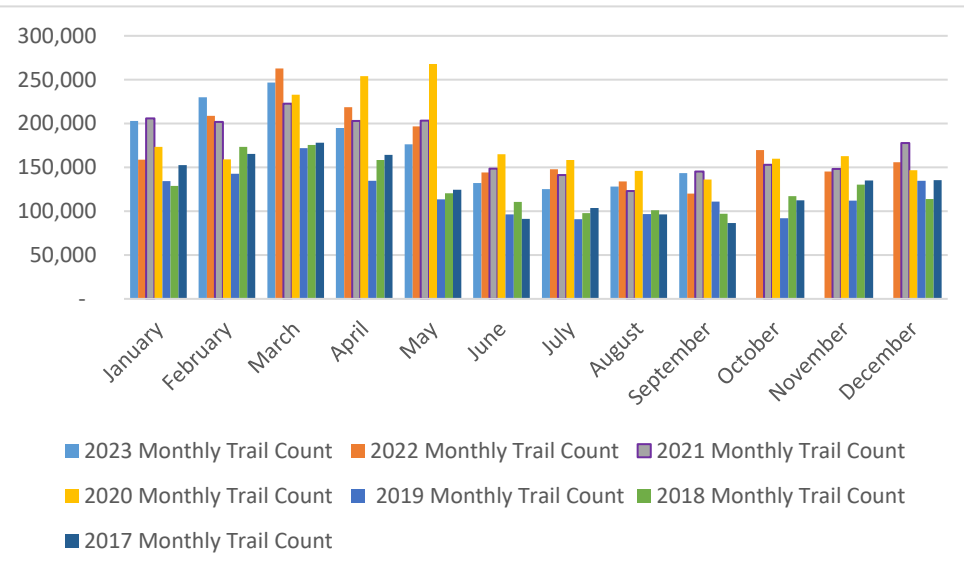
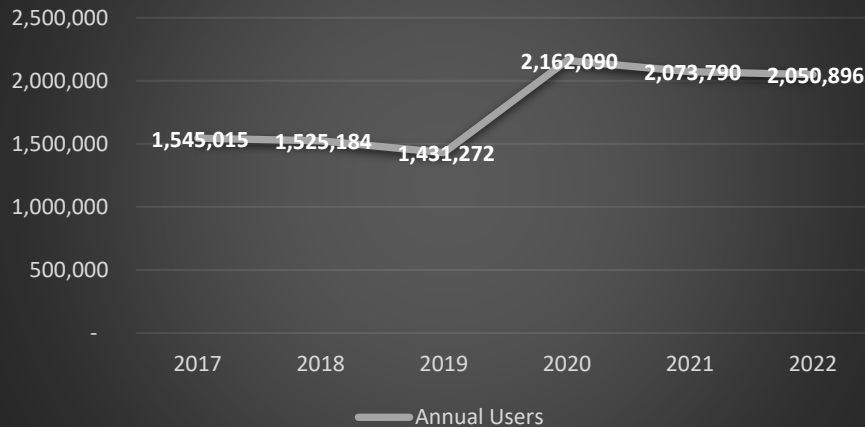
Period: January 2017 – September 2023



**2023 Total Count:
1,579,436**

Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2023

Pinellas Trail Counts 2017 - 2022



Note:

- *Due to technical issues with the Palm Harbor, Dunedin, Clearwater, and Bay Pines counters, historical data was used to develop monthly count estimates through a linear regression formula. Daily, hourly, and mode split data is not available.
- Data in this report represents total counts from each count station located along the Pinellas Trail system. Each datapoint does not necessarily represent a unique trail user.

Pinellas Trail Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period:
October 1st-31st

October 2023*

31-Day Count Total: 170,021

Daily Average Count: 5,485

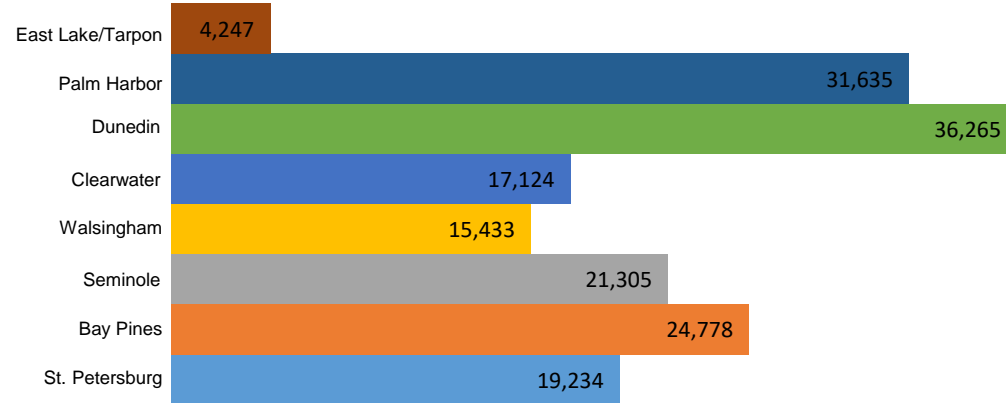
Highest Daily Totals:

#1 – Saturday, October 21st (Dunedin – 2,022)

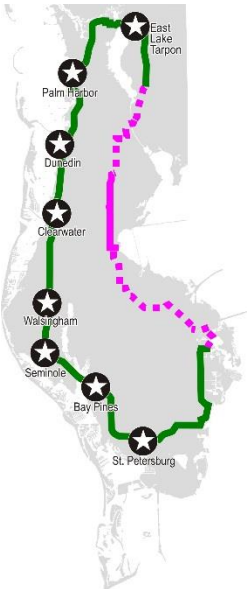
#2 – Saturday, October 21st (Palm Harbor – 1,423)

#3 – Saturday, October 21st (St. Petersburg – 974)

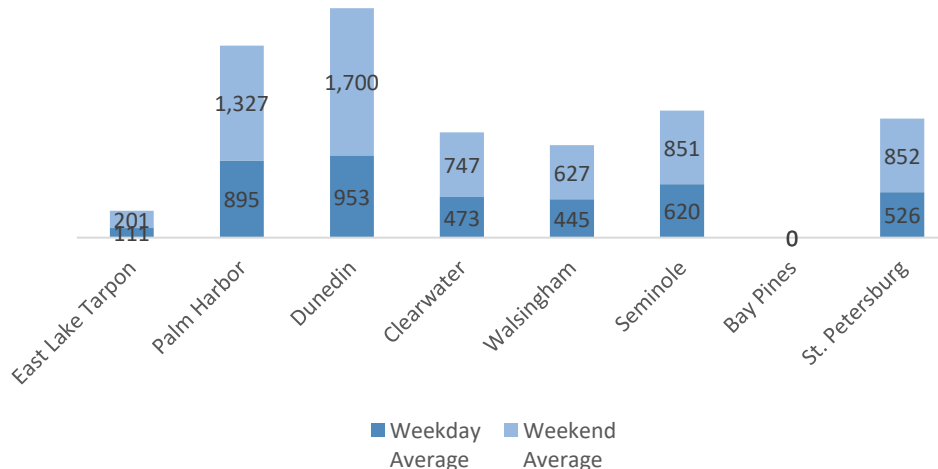
October Totals by Counter Location*



Counter Locations



Weekday & Weekend Profile*

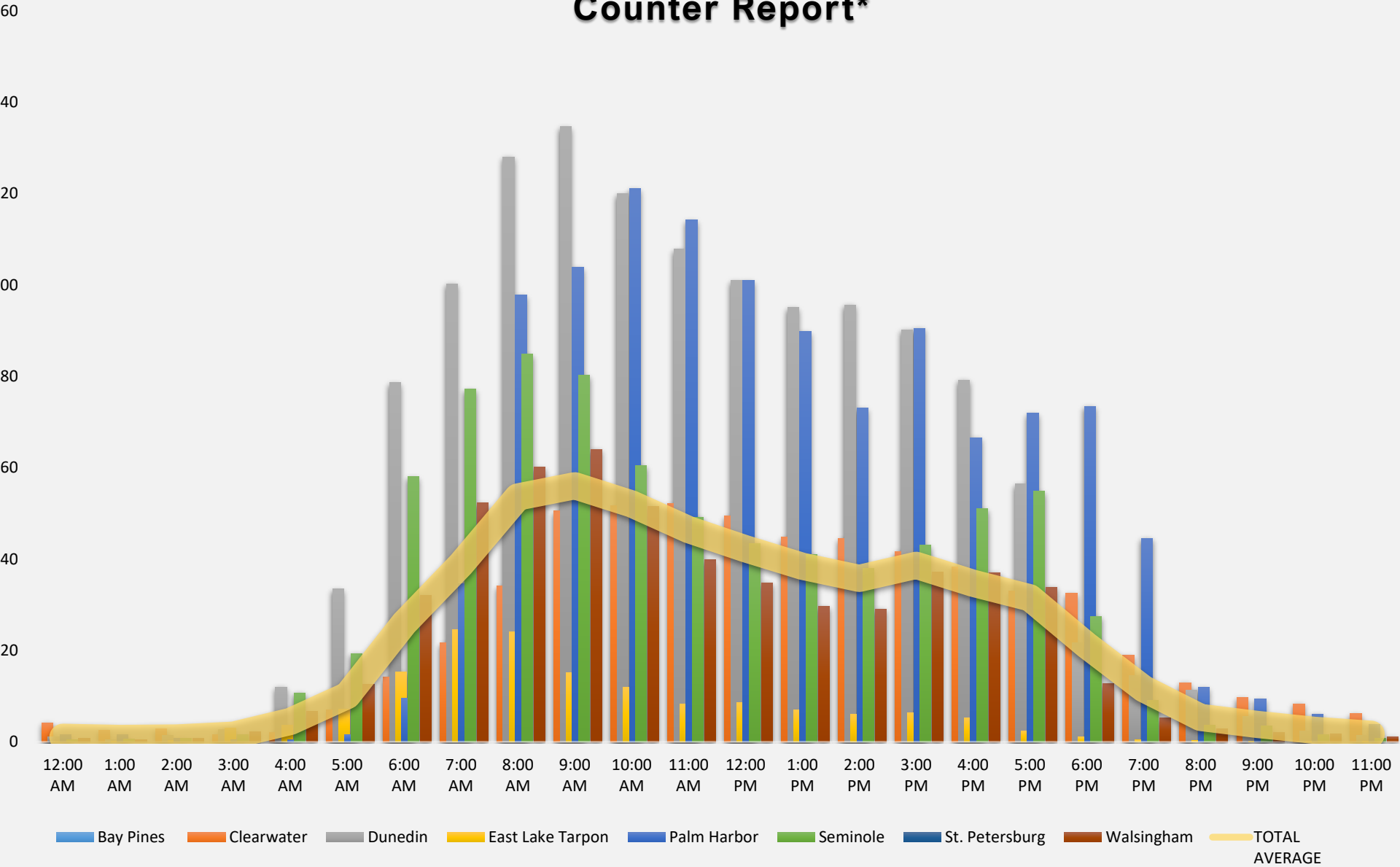


Trail User Mode Split*

Counter Location	Walking (Pedestrian)	Bicycling (Bicycle)
Palm Harbor	28%	72%
Dunedin	16%	84%
Clearwater	68%	32%
Walsingham	5%	95%
Seminole	25%	75%
Bay Pines	N/A	N/A
St. Petersburg	N/A	N/A
East Lake/Tarpon	7%	93%

Source: Forward Pinellas October 2023

October 2023 Average Hourly Counter Report*



Pinellas Trail Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

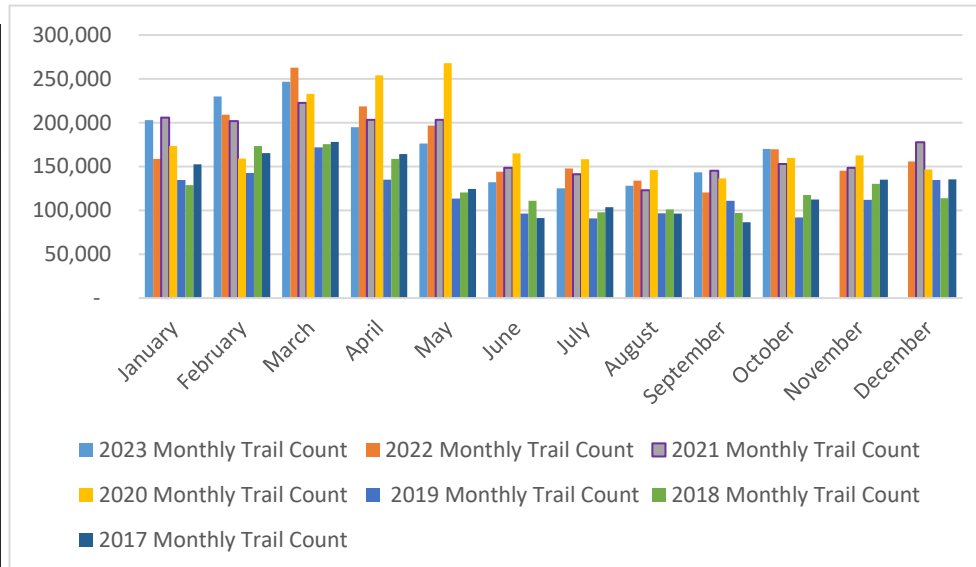
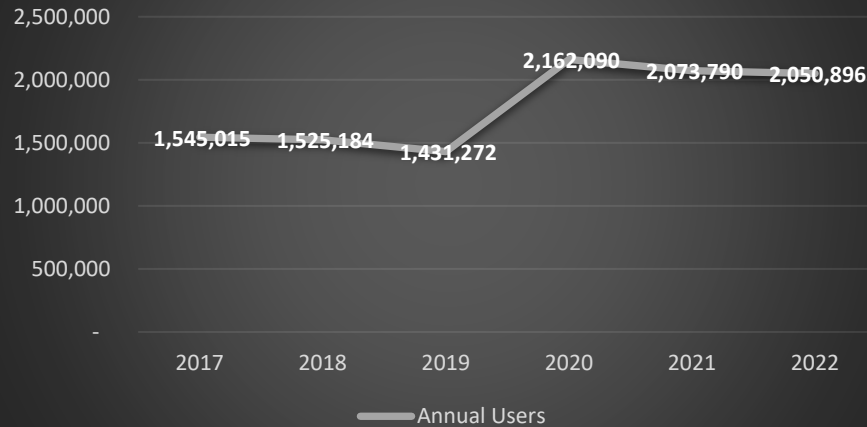
Period: January 2017 – October 2023 Data



2023 Total Count:
1,749,457

Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2023

Pinellas Trail Counts 2017 - 2022



Note:

- *Due to technical issues with the Bay Pines counters, a monthly estimate was produced based on historical data. Due to technical issues on October 1st at Clearwater and October 28-31 at St. Petersburg, daily averages from October 2023 were used to cover data gaps.
- Data in this report represents total counts from each count station located along the Pinellas Trail system. Each datapoint does not necessarily represent a unique trail user.

Pinellas Trail Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period:
November 1st-30th

November 2023*

30-Day Count Total: 162,718

Daily Average Count: 5,424

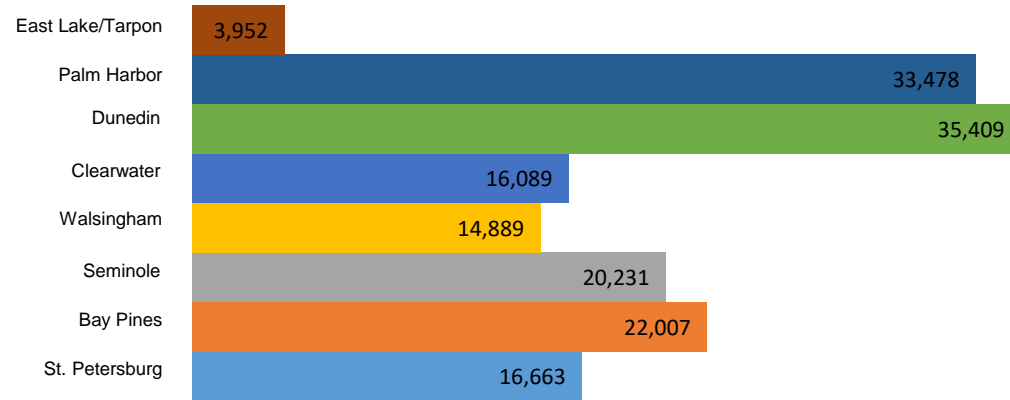
Highest Daily Totals:

#1 – Saturday, November 11th (Dunedin – 2,321)

#2 – Sunday, November 19th (Palm Harbor – 2,048)

#3 – Sunday, November 19th (Seminole – 1,007)

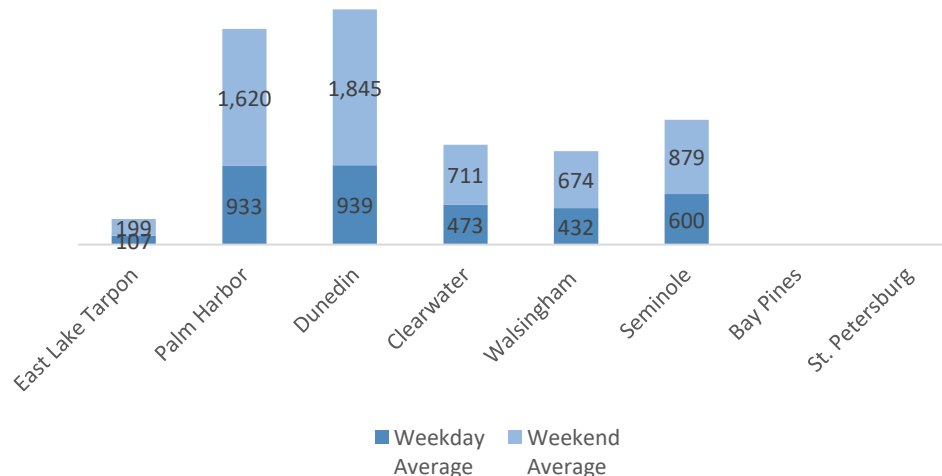
November Totals by Counter Location*



Counter Locations



Weekday & Weekend Profile*



Trail User Mode Split*

Counter Location	Walking (Pedestrian)	Bicycling (Bicycle)
Palm Harbor	31%	69%
Dunedin	17%	83%
Clearwater	66%	34%
Walsingham	6%	94%
Seminole	26%	74%
Bay Pines	N/A	N/A
St. Petersburg	N/A	N/A
East Lake/Tarpon	9%	91%

Source: Forward Pinellas November 2023

Pinellas Trail Count Data Summary

Automated Trail Counter Data Collection

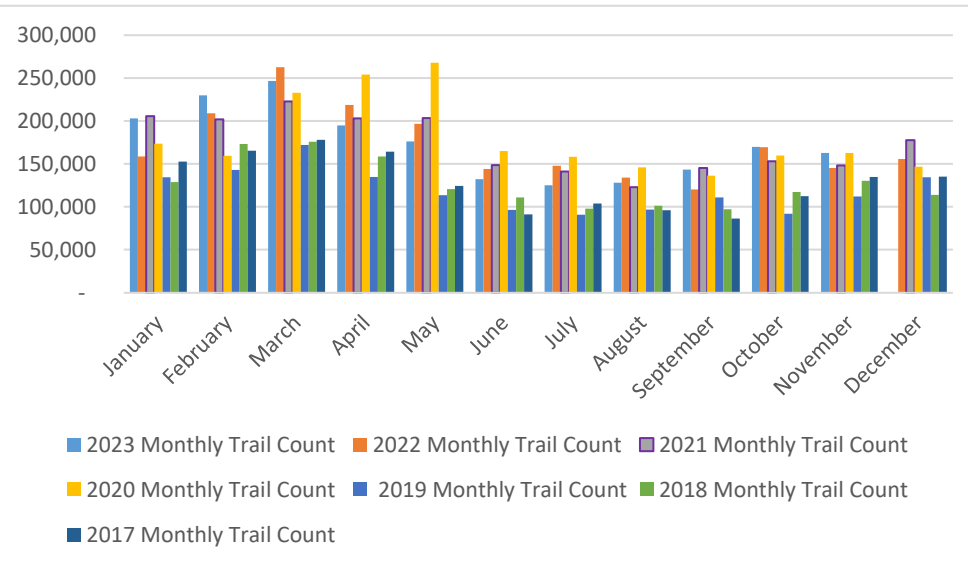
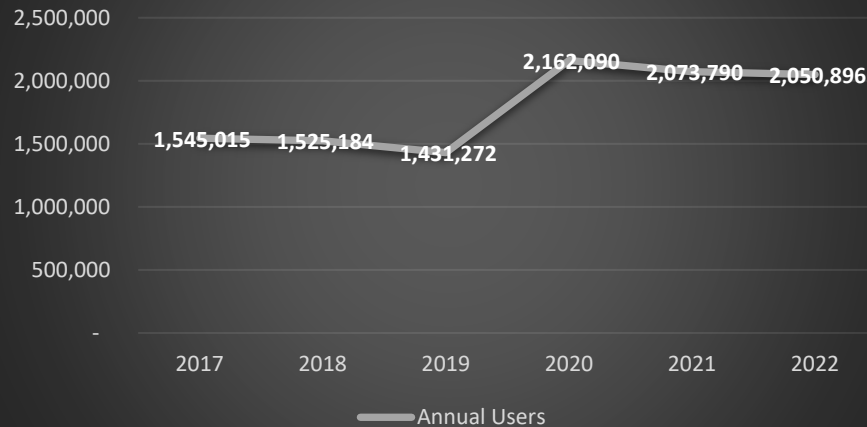
Period: January 2017 – November 2023 Data



**2023 Total Count:
1,912,175**

Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2023

Pinellas Trail Counts 2017 - 2022



Note:

- *Due to technical issues with the Bay Pines and St. Petersburg counters, monthly estimates were produced based on historical data and daily/hourly data is not available.
- Data in this report represents total counts from each count station located along the Pinellas Trail system. Each datapoint does not necessarily represent a unique trail user.

7. Trail Construction Activity Report

TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
PROJECTS JANUARY 2024

Pinellas Trail North Loop Gap Countryside	Bridge over Lake Tarpon Canal north of Tampa Road, construction will begin Spring 2024 (link)
Pinellas Trail South Loop Phase 3 & 4	Haines Bayshore to Ulmerton Rd to 126th Ave; Segment of South Loop has will receive SUN Trail and FDOT Funding; Design underway; Construction 2026 (link)
71st Street Trail Connector	Pinellas Trail to 38th Avenue N; Design underway, Construction 2024
San Martin Bridge & Trail connection	Bridge Replacement; Design 2023; Construction 2026
Courtney Campbell Trail Overpass	Trail Overpass at S.R. 60/Bayshore Blvd; SUN Trail; Design Underway; Construction Fall 2024 (437498-1-52-01 SR 60 Courtney Campbell Causeway Pedestrian Overpass (fdottampabay.com))
Howard Frankland Bridge Trail	FDOT include trail with new bridge construction; Design-Build Project; Construction underway; Est. completion late 2025 (link)
Gandy Bridge Trail	FDOT to include trail with new bridge construction; PD&E Study Underway
Harn Boulevard Overpass	Pedestrian Overpass; Construction Underway; Est. Completion Early 2024 (link)

8. Other Business



A. Correspondence, Publications, Articles of Interest

People Are Riding More Than Ever – September 2023

B. Suggestions for Future Agenda Topics

- Trail Planning
- Trail Operations
- Trail Enhancements

C. Other

If any member has other business to discuss, they may address it under this item.

Good News, Everyone! People Are Riding More Than Ever

A NEW STUDY REPORTED THAT CYCLING HAS BEEN ON THE RISE SINCE 2019—AND WAS PUSHED EVEN FURTHER BY THE PANDEMIC



BY [MOLLY HURFORD](#) PUBLISHED: SEP 26, 2023 1:32 PM EST

Wondering if that bike boom we talked about so much during the height of the pandemic is still a thing? Survey says: Yes, it really is. According to a recent report from StreetLight based on data from their Active Transportation Monitor, ridership in the US is up a whopping 37 percent since 2019. In fact, every metropolitan city with about 5 million people or more saw *at least* a 25 percent increase in bicycling activity during that time.

The biggest growth came in dense urban areas, likely spurred on by the desire to avoid public transportation like trains, buses and subways at the height of the pandemic in 2020. San Diego, California, saw the biggest bump in the bike commuter rankings by city, while NYC and San Francisco enjoyed steady growth as well.

NYC was the real pandemic cycling hotspot though, topping the city ranks for cycling growth with the number of trips by bike actually almost doubling between 2019 and 2022. This isn't surprising, given the constraints of subway travel during the pandemic, and the relatively short distance required to pedal from point to point in Manhattan.

Oddly enough, the bike haven that is Portland, Oregon, was one of the six cities in the U.S. that experienced a lower rate of cycling growth in this time.

Outside of cities, states overall are seeing a rise in ridership. StreetLights noted that all of the top 10 U.S. states by population saw at least a 25 percent increase in biking activity between 2019 and 2022. States with serious cycling momentum included New Jersey, Rhode Island, Delaware, New York, Massachusetts, California, and Kentucky.