

PINELLAS TRAIL SECURITY TASK FORCE (PTSTF) MEETING AGENGA

October 10, 2023 - 9:00 a.m.

Pinellas County Emergency Services Center 12490 Ulmerton Road, Room 130 Largo, FL 33774

(Telephone: 727-582-2000)

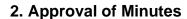
THE PLANNING COUNCIL AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION FOR PINELLAS COUNTY

- 1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS
- 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
- 3. PINELLAS TRAIL COLLABORATION
 - Palm Harbor Roundabouts
 - Speed Feedback Signs
 - Enforcement Agencys Targeted Day in February
- 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
- 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

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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.

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SUMMARY

The summary minutes of the July 11, 2023, Pinellas Trail Security Task Force meeting are attached.

ATTACHMENTS: Pinellas Trail Security Task Force Summary Minutes – July 11, 2023

ACTION: Approval of the July Meeting Summary

PINELLAS TRAIL SECURITY TASK FORCE MEETING SUMMARY JULY 11, 2023

The following is a summary of the July 11, 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 Osvaldo Sicairos, Interim Chair - St. Petersburg Police Department

Detective A. Daniels
Officer Garrett Banks
Deputy Melanie Stickney
Sgt. Jordan Sinick
Belleair Police Department
Clearwater Police Department
Pinellas County Sheriff's Office
Pinellas County Animal Control

Chief Ranger Carol Gray Pinellas County Parks, and Conservation Resources Ranger Joshua Townsend Pinellas County Parks, and Conservation Resources

Lynn Abbott Pinellas County Public Safety Service

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
Maria Kelly Forward Pinellas Staff

1. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

Interim Chair Osvaldo Sicairos, 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 - April 11, 2023

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

3. PRESENTATION: SPEED ENFORCEMENT

Kyle Simpson, Forward Pinellas staff, shared a presentation on the Pinellas Trail User Survey conducted in March 2023 by Forward Pinellas staff, in collaboration with Pinellas County Parks, Pinellas County Public Works and staff from jurisdictions along the Trail. The purpose of the survey is to see what users like about the Trail, how they use the Trail and their overall opinion of the Trail. Twenty five yard signs were placed along the Trail in early March as a start to the survey, with a QR code linked to the online survey. The online survey was open between March 9th and April 6th. On March 24th and 25th, staff was present on the Trail in two, three-hour shifts conducting in-person surveys at five locations. Over 2,000 surveys were received. Also of note: this survey coincided with some operational changes to the Trail with the latest 'Stay Right' campaign. Comparing the results over the years the survey has been conducted, the number of responses has increased. The distance traveled to access the Trail and the number of people driving to the Trail has declined since the 1999 survey. Most people would use more trails if they were built around the county. The Trail is mostly used for recreation and exercise. Traveling by bike is the highest travel mode used. Respondents reporting that they feel safe on the Trail has declined over the years, and the largest concerns centered around

speeding and poor etiquette. Better markings and signs were the highest rated improvements needed. Results also showed that 80% of the Trail users were Pinellas County year-round residents. Going forward, Forward Pinellas plans to repeat the survey on a four-to-five-year basis. A GIS story map will soon be available for public view. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

4. TRENDS AND CONDITIONS DISCUSSION

Mr. Simpson polled the law enforcement members of the committee regarding trends and conditions seen or experienced on or around the Pinellas Trail that may have not necessarily been captured on police reports. One of the trends being experienced by St. Petersburg and Clearwater PD are homeless people camping along the Trail. Law enforcement will attempt to assist in getting shelter for these people, but some will decline assistance and move on, only to find some place else to camp. Another trend is juvenile misbehavior especially in St. Petersburg, Clearwater, Dunedin and further north in Palm Harbor according to the Sheriff's Office. Speeding on the Trail and running stop signs is a great concern with Belleair PD especially around Melenbacher Road, at the Largo city line where there are no Trail stop signs. Belleair PD would like to know who they can reach out to in Largo to discuss additional stop signs for safety reasons. Chief Ranger Carol Gray shared that camping on the Trail is a consistent concern and they reach out to law enforcement for assistance. Lyle Fowler with Parks shared that from a department perspective, speeding is a concern and there might be value in this group coming together collectively with a position statement, as there are contradicting opinons about what constitutes enforcement. The citizens and Trail visitors are starting to circle the wagons, so to speak, in their claims about speeding. It was defined by this group at the last meeting as a perception and that no enforcement is necessary. Patrons are linking it to safety and that their safety is at risk because of speeding. That gets disguised as opposition to e-bikes and micromobility, but when the issue is further explored, it generally comes out to be a speeding concern at the end of the day. The suggestion was made to set up speed traps on the Trail and issue warnings or citations, as the survey results are showing evidence that speeding is becoming an increasing concern amongst users. Risk Management is inspecting the Trail twice annually, but they do see bikers and trail users exceeding the 20 mph. Lynn Abbott shared an EMS/Fire Administratios prespective that there are very few condition related events due to the condition of the Trail as most of them have been a human component. Scott Daniels shared a suggestion to create a public service commercial presentation that can be used on websites as well as social media, discussing the issue of enjoying the Trail but be considerate of others and remind users of the basic safety rules.

5. QUARTERLY REPORT FROM PINELLAS TRAIL PARK RANGER

Chief Ranger Carol Gray, Parks, and Conservation Resources (PCR) reported that since the last quarter, there have been some modifications to the patrol methods within the work group of four trail rangers that patrol 67 miles of trail, starting with evaluating peak attendance on the Trail, which is roughly between 7:30 am to 2:30 pm. Rangers are to interact with the public, answer questions, be a presence in an effort to discourage discourteous behavior and educate patrons on the rules and regulations of the Trail and ask Trail users to be mindful of any maintenance work being done by . On April 21st at PT627, a subject apparentely fell riding their bike; Sunstar responded. April 30th, at PT0067, a transient subject camping on the Trail became aggressive when told they

cannot camp on the Trail; St. Petersburg Police responded. May 8, the same transient from April 30th was seen still camping and putting on clothes; St. Petersburg Police responded. May 28th, PT262-263, a subject fell riding their bike; EMS responded. Also, at PT206 a subject fell riding their bike; EMS responded. June 14th, Rangers met with PCSO to clear a transient area adjacent to the Trail and behind Target on Bay Pines Blvd. Trail Raners are monitoring adjacent properties for transient activities in multiple municipalities to determine need for response due to the close proximity to the Pinellas Trail.

6. LAW ENFORCEMENT AND AGENCY REPORTS

A. Sheriff's Office

Deputy Melaine Stickney reported from April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023, there were 102 individual calls of which a majority were self-initiated directed patrols by the deputies. Of the 102, 26 were first information reports (FIR) of persons on the Trail after dark, bike violations and juvenils with no helmets. Five incident reports, 2 incident reports resulted in arrests, one was drug related, one was trespass. Four traffic citations or warnings, mainly in the Dunedin area. The Sheriffs Office conducted three initiatives from the late afternoon into the night hours in the Dunedin area. The first one was on April 22nd where a trespass warning was issued to a juvenile for doing wheelies in a congested area. The Sheriff also issued two citations to juveniles for helmet violations. Second one was an overnight detail on the Trail on May 26th, which there were no incidents and the third initiative, on June 9th, resulted in one juvenile arrest and helment violations.

B. Belleair

Detective Allison Daniels with Belleair PD shared a report from April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023 there were 65 First Information Reports (FIR) and one arrest for trespass after a warning.

C. Clearwater

Officer Garrett Banks reported from April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023, there were 230 calls for service, most of the complaints were for juveniles coming down from Dunedin causing chaos and Trail users running the stop signs. CPD has increased the patrols at night on bikes from Dunedin to Belleair. Cathy Han, who is with the City Outreach program, has gotten with Code Enforcement to monitor the Trail to help with the homeless camps and addressing those issues. There was one death on the Trail between Drew and Seminole, but it was not suspicious in nature. The opening of the Sound in Coachman Park has had a big impact on the Trail as people are using the Trail to head to Coachman Park for events.

D. Gulfport

Representative emailed there was nothing to report.

E. Largo

Officer Keith Bowling sent a printed report for April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023: there were 4 calls for service. One vehicle crash on West Bay near the Trail and a pedestrian complained that that they were almost hit by a car on West Bay near the Trail. Someone was dropping items from the overpass West Bay/Pinellas Trail overpass, but the

individual was not located. There was a bicycle violation at 8th Ave/Pinellas Trial and one golf cart stop advising the individual that golf carts are not allowed on the Trail.

F. St. Petersburg

Officer Osvaldo Sicairos reported from April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023; there were issues with generating the report and he stated that he will email the report to add it to the minutes. There have been complaints at the 34th Street crossing; high school juveniles harassing trail crossers. SPPD is also adding two traffic enforcement positions to the unit to handle traffic and speeding complaints.

G. Tarpon Springs

Representative not in attendance.

H. Animal Services

Sgt. Jordan Sinick of Animal Services shared that there was nothing to report.

I. Public Safety Services

Ms. Lynn Abbott, Pinellas County EMS & Fire Administration provided a report from April 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023; Lynn wil be sending her report to be entered into the minutes. There was a request to differentiate between bikes, Ebikes and motorcycle incidents on the reports from Public Safety Services, and she will accommodate that request on the report.

J. Pinellas County Risk Management

Mr. James Abaka shared that the Trail Safety Inspection had very few issues regarding risk on the Trail. The Trail overall looks good and he gave a special thank you to the Rangers and the volunteers who help with keeping the Trail safe and clean. The next inspection will be in November 2023.

K. Friends of the Pinellas Trail

Stuart Schwartzreich, shared that the Friends produces a Trail guide for visitors with information regarding parking, restaurants, bike shops, etc along the Trail. It is available for purchase at most bike shops and through the Friends of the Pinellas Trail website.

L. Volunteer Patrol Programs and Updates

Chief Gray shared that there are 43 active Trail volunteers at this time. They range from volunteer bike patrols to cart patrols. They report issues to the Rangers and through SeeClickFix, depending on the issue. She also shared a special thank you to Friends of the Pinellas Trail for all the assistance they give to the Park Rangers.

7. AUTOMATIC TRAIL COUNTERS

Mr. Simpson shared that through May of 2023, Forward Pinellas has counted over a million Trail users. Questions were taken and appropriately answered.

8. REPORT ON TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY

Joan Rice provided the Public Works Trail Construction Activity Report, showing projects that are planned, in design and upcoming construction dates. At this time, Public Works is

traveling all over the Trail replacing signs with the lastest standard "keep right" signs, striping in the roads and replacing bollards and will continue for the next year and a half. As for the rest of the loop, the segment between Haines Bayshore, south to Ulmerton to 126th Avenue is in design and construction will start next year. Regarding the piece in East Lake just north of Tampa Road, a bridge is going in over the Lake Tarpon Outfall Canal that is currently out for bid.

9. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business to discuss.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Interim Chair Sicairos adjourned the meeting at 10:00 a.m. The next PTSTF meeting is scheduled for Octoer 10, 2023.

3. Pinellas Trail Collaboration



Summary

Palm Harbor Roundabout

With the opening of the Palm Harbor Roundabout, PCSO recently posted to social media about the traffic control for trail users at the roundabout. The post was subsequently picked up by several local media outlets and reported on. There will be a discussion with partners on the potential use of law enforcement social media posts to address recurring issues on the Pinellas Trail.

Speed Feedback Signs

Speed feedback signs are a common countermeasure deployed in response to speeding complaints and can be temporary or permanent. With the rise of e-bikes, some trail management agencies have begun using speed feedback signs on trails to address speeding concerns. There will be a discussion around potential use of speed feedback signs on the Pinellas Trail.

Enforcement Agency's Targeted Day in February

As the number of people using the Pinellas Trail has increased over the past few years there has been an increase in the number of transportation safety-related complaints. In an effort to respond to the concerns raised, Forward Pinellas is seeking to organize a coordinated day of high-visibility enforcement along the Pinellas Trail and at key intersections in February. This initial discussion will gauge partner agency capacity and support for such an event, and work to identify any important logistical needs to be addressed.

ATTACHMENT(S): None

ACTION: None Required, Informational Item Only

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

6. Report on Monthly Trail User Count Data



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:

- June 2023
- July 2023
- August 2023

ACTION: No Action Required, informational item only



Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period: June 1st-30th (30 days)

June 2023

30-Day Count Total: 132,054 Daily Average Count: 4,402

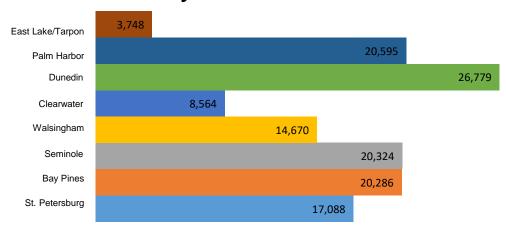
Highest Daily Totals:

#1 – Saturday, June 3rd (Dunedin – 1,883)

#2 – Saturday, June 3rd (Palm Harbor – 1,331)

#3 - Saturday, June 3rd (Seminole - 1,023)

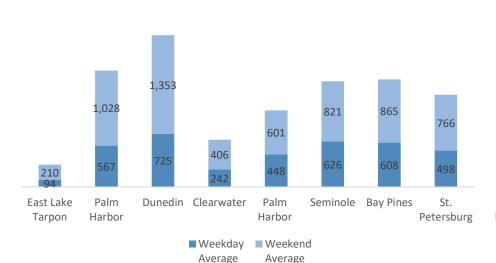
June Totals by Counter Location



Counter Locations

Weekday & Weekend Profile

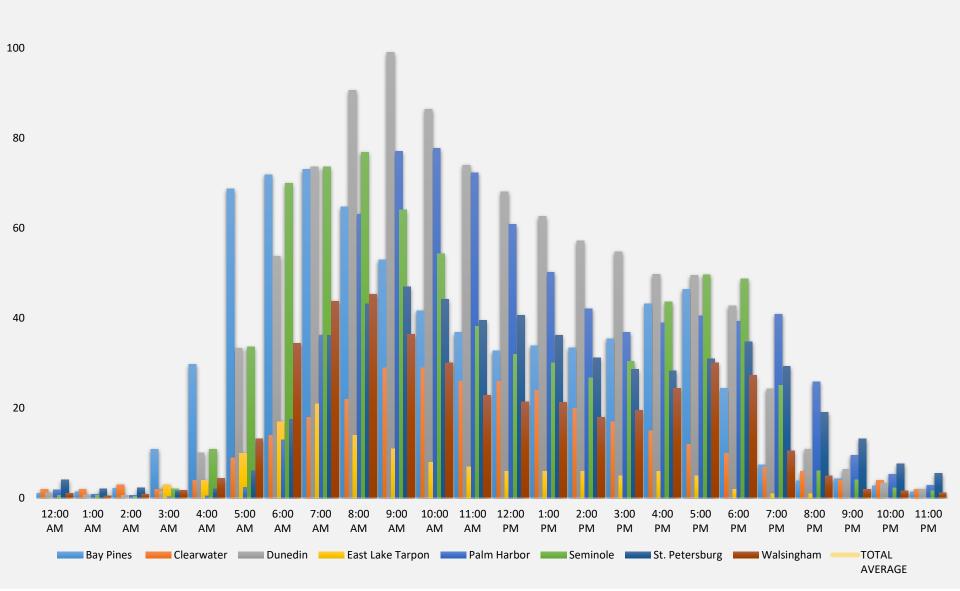




Trail User Mode Split

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Palm Harbor	12%	88%
Dunedin	3%	97%
Clearwater	42%	58%
Walsingham	13%	87%
Seminole	27%	73%
Bay Pines	12%	88%
St. Petersburg	18%	82%
East Lake/Tarpon	12%	88%

Source: Forward Pinellas June 2023



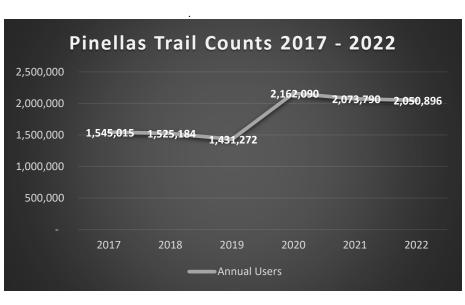
Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period: January 2017 – June 2023 Data

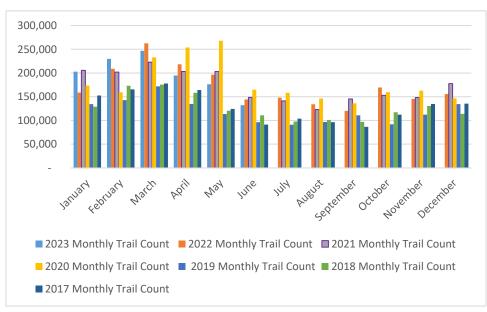


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2023 Total Count: 1,182,965







Note:

• 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.



Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period: July 1st-31st (31 days)

July 2023

31-Day Count Total: 125,104 Daily Average Count: 4,036

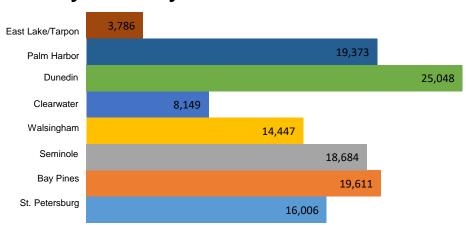
Highest Daily Totals:

#1 – Saturday, July 29th (Dunedin – 1,307)

#2 – Tu/Sa, July 4th and 15th (Palm Harbor – 956)

#3 - Tuesday, July 4th (Bay Pines - 944)

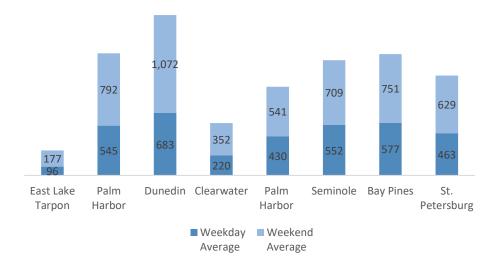
July Totals by Counter Location



Counter Locations

Weekday & Weekend Profile

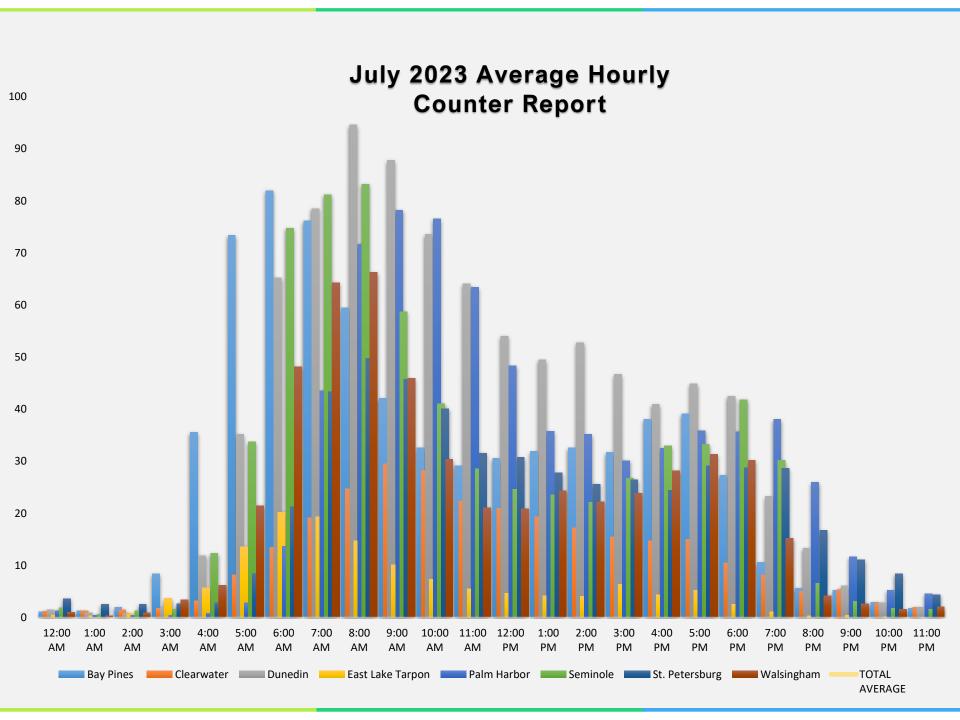




Trail User Mode Split

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Palm Harbor	8%	92%
Dunedin	1%	99%
Clearwater	34%	66%
Walsingham	9%	91%
Seminole	23%	77%
Bay Pines	8%	92%
St. Petersburg	14%	86%
East Lake/Tarpon	7%	93%

Source: Forward Pinellas July 2023

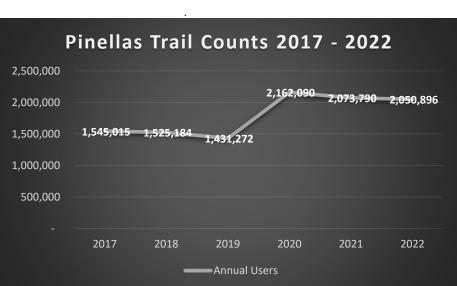


Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period: January 2017 – July 2023 Data

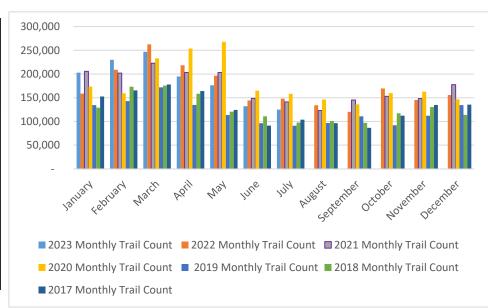


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2023 Total Count: 1,308,069



Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2023



Note:

• 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.



Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period: August 1st-31st (31 days)

August 2023*

31-Day Count Total: 128,016 Daily Average Count: 4,130

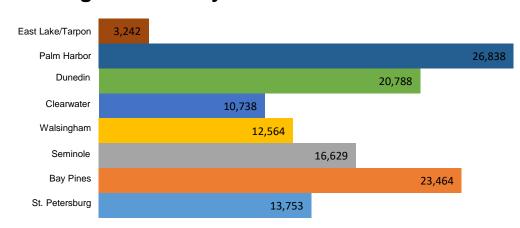
Highest Daily Totals:

#1 – Saturday, August 5th (Dunedin – 1,202)

#2 – Saturday, August 26th (Seminole – 793)

#3 - Saturday, August 26th (Bay Pines - 698)

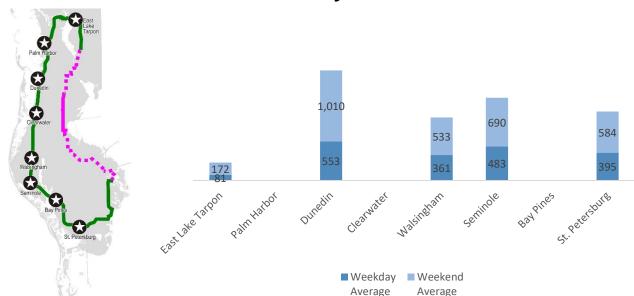
August Totals by Counter Location



Counter Locations

Weekday & Weekend Profile*

Trail User Mode Split*

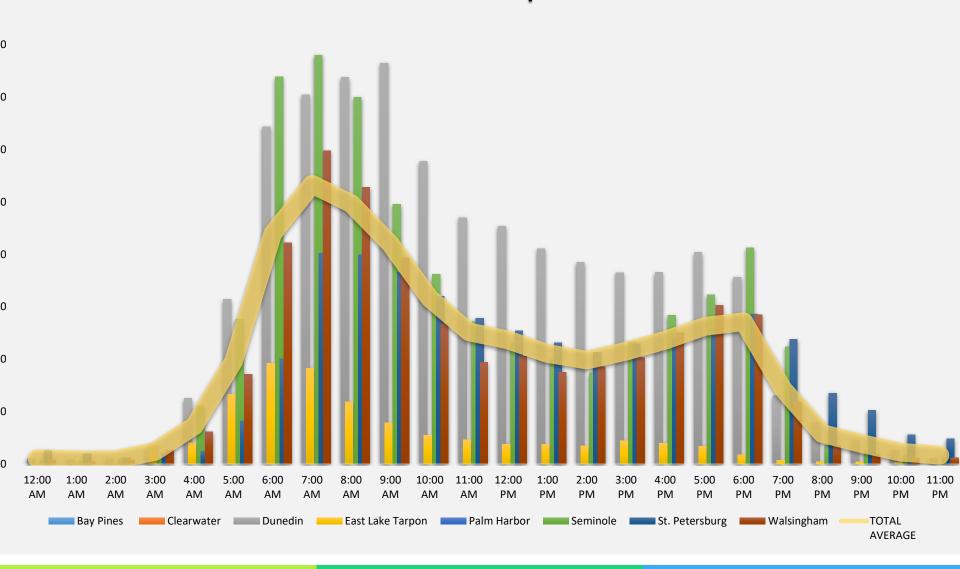


	7	940	
Palm Harbor	N/A	N/A	
Dunedin	1%	99%	
Clearwater	N/A	N/A	
Walsingham	8%	92%	
Seminole	22%	78%	
Bay Pines	N/A	N/A	
St. Petersburg	12%	88%	
East Lake/Tarpon	8%	92%	

Source: Forward Pinellas August 2023

August 2023 Average Hourly Counter Report*

0



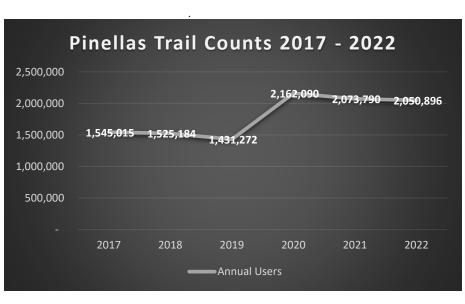
Automated Trail Counter Data Collection Period: January 2017 – August 2023 Data

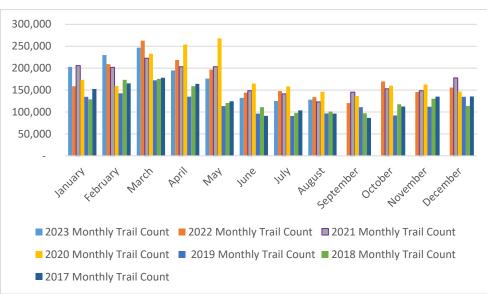


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2023 Total Count: 1,436,085

Monthly Trail Counts 2017 - 2023





Note:

- *Due to technical issues with the Palm Harbor, 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.





TRAIL CONSTRUCTION
PROJECTS JANUARY 2023

PROJECTS JANUARY 2023		
Pinellas Trail North Loop Gap Countryside	Enterprise Rd to Chesnut Sr. Park; SUN Trail; Construction underway, Est. Complete Fall 2022 (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 in 2022; Construction 2024 (link)	
71st Street Trail Connector	Pinellas Trail to 38th Avenue N; Design 2022, Construction 2024 (link)	
San Martin Bridge & Trail connection	Bridge Replacement; Design 2022; Construction 2024	
Courtney Campbell Trail Overpass	Trail Overpass at S.R. 60/Bayshore Blvd; SUN Trail; Design Underway; Construction 2024	
Howard Frankland Bridge Trail	FDOT include trail with new bridge construction; Design-Build Project; Construction underway; Est. late completion 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 2023 (link)	
Bayway Trail South	SR 679/Pinellas Bayway from north of Bunces Bridge to north of Madeira Circle. New two-way bicycle lane. Design underway; Est. construction start 2022	
Oldsmar Trail Phase 6	Douglas Rd (Stevens Avenue to Race Track Rd) Design complete; Est. Construction end of 2020; section from Hayes Rd to Stevens Avenue postponed.	

8. Other Business



A. PTSTF Meeting Schedule

Initial discussion about moving to a biannual meeting schedule in 2024

B. Correspondence, Publications, Articles of Interest

C. <u>Suggestions for Future Agenda Topics</u>

- Trail Planning
- Trail Operations
- Trail Enhancements

D. Other

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