

Trail-Watershed Connections along the D&L Trail: Results from a Survey of Trail Users

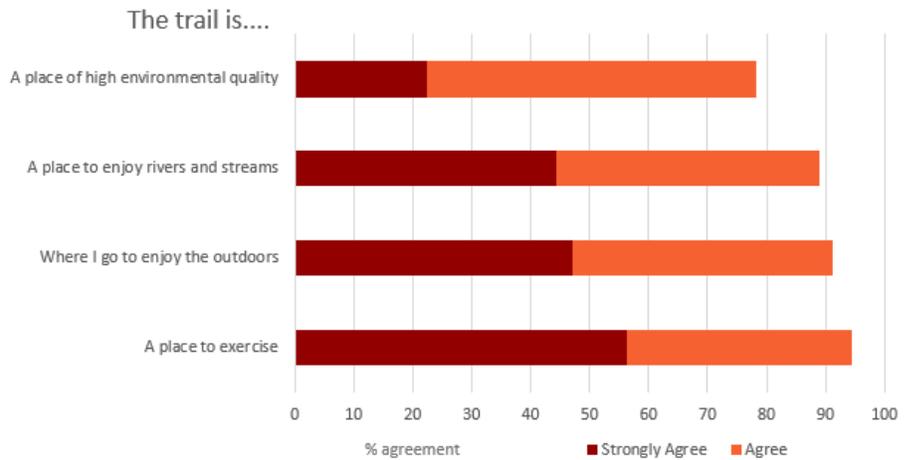
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Outdoor recreation trails provide place-based opportunities for people to connect with watersheds and the local environment. To understand the ways in which users of the D&L Trail relate to nearby waterways, we conducted an intercept survey of 408 trail users across five Lehigh Valley D&L Trail locations in summer 2018. Trail users responded to survey questions on their recreation behaviors, perceptions of and meanings about the trail, and select constituent actions, among other topics. Data were collected at randomized location-day-time combinations.

What does the trail mean to its users?

For the D&L Trail, rivers and streams are important aspects of trail users' place meanings. 89% of respondents believe that the trail is a place to enjoy rivers and streams.

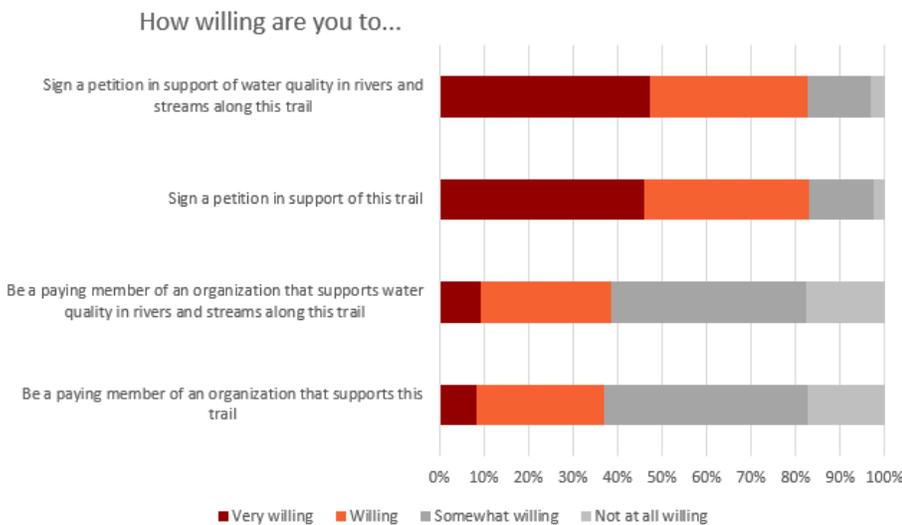


How willing are trail users to take constituency actions?

We considered two types of constituency actions: signing a petition and paying membership to a water-related organization.

Trail users exhibited similar levels of willingness to act on behalf of rivers and streams as willingness to act on behalf of the trail itself.

The differences in willingness to act are based on the type of action (signing a petition or org. membership) more so than the focus of the action (the trail or water quality).



In aggregate, the findings suggest that trail users see rivers and streams as intertwined with the D&L Trail, both in terms of place meanings and users' willingness to act in support of the trail and adjacent waters.



This project was conducted by Lafayette College in collaboration with the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor. Funding was provided by Lafayette College and a Lehigh Valley Greenways Minigrant from the PA DCNR, PA Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Environmental Stewardship Fund.