



A SURVEY OF USERS OF
THE KAWARTHA TRANS-CANADA TRAIL, ONTARIO

By

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INTRODUCTION

The Kawartha Trans-Canada Trail (KTCT) organization considers it necessary, to ensure the best management of its trail and the greatest satisfaction of users, to survey users from time to time. Accordingly, during the summer of 2015, an interview survey was undertaken of people on the Kawartha Trans Canada Trail, Ontario. The survey was conducted mainly on weekends at the end of July and throughout August. The interviews occurred at ten locations along the trail: Memorial Park, Pickseed shelter, St. Mary's cemetery, Ackison Road, Doube's trestle bridge, Omemee, Jackson Park, the Lindsay lilac garden, Emily Park road, and Fleming College, Lindsay. The number of people interviewed at each location is indicated in the following table.

Location	Number of Respondents	%
Memorial Park	12	12.3
Pickseed Shelter	26	26.5
St. Mary's Cemetery	4	4.1
Ackison Road	17	17.4
Doube's Trestle Bridge	19	19.4
Jackson Park	1	1
Lilac Gardens	4	4.1
Emily Park Road	7	7.1
Fleming College, Lindsay	6	6.1
Omemee Rail Trail	2	2

A total of 57 questionnaires were completed covering 98 trail users. However, many respondents did not answer all the questions, especially the later ones. The number of responses (n) to each question is indicated after each question in the Results section. Where multiple responses were allowed, the number of responses exceeds 98. Only the 83 respondents age 16 years and over were asked questions 14 to 24.

The questionnaire comprised 24 questions. They covered the characteristics of the respondents, their use of the KTCT and other trails, travel to the KTCT, activities on the trail, the experience sought, money spent on their trail trip and how the trail and their experience could be improved. The interviews lasted up to 15 minutes.

The survey was initiated by Al MacPherson of KTCT. Interviews were conducted by Thomas Vaneyk. Analysis of the interview responses was undertaken by Laura Stinson and John Marsh of the Trail Studies Unit, Trent University.

RESULTS

Question 1: What is your permanent place of residence?

n=98

Place of Residence	Number of Respondents	%
Uxbridge	2	2
Quebec	2	2
Peterborough	29	30
Fowlers Corners	2	2
Mississauga	2	2
Selwyn	5	5.2
Omeme	5	5.2
Elora	2	2
Fairburn?	2	2
Ennismore	2	2
Kitchener	2	2
Whitby	2	2
Cavan	3	3.2
Thunder Bay	3	3.2
Orono	2	2
Hanover	2	2
Lindsay	13	13.4
Milbrooke	4	4.2
Janetville	4	4.2
Ajax	1	1
Hong Kong	1	1
London	4	4.2
Little Britain	3	3.2

Question 2: Ontario Residents Only: Are you going to be travelling more than 80km from home or staying the night on this trip?

n=84

	Number of Respondents	%
Yes	20	23.8
No	64	76.2
Did Not Respond	14	

Question 3: How many different Ontario trails did you use in the last 12 months (including this one)?

n=96

Number of Trails Used	Number of Respondents	%
1	21	21.9
2	19	19.8
3	16	16.7
4	5	5.2
5	10	10.4
6	2	2.1
7	1	1
8	2	2.1
10	13	13.5
12	4	4.2
150	3	3.1
Did Not Respond	2	

Question 4: How many times did you use a trail outside of Ontario in past 12 months?

n=96

Number of Trails Used	Number of Respondents	%
0	74	77
1	8	8.3
2	4	4.2
3	2	2.1
5	2	2.1
10	2	2.1
50	2	2.1
All The Time	2	2.1

Question 5: What kind of experience were you seeking from this trail today?

n=95 (287) (multiple responses allowed)

Experience	Number of Respondents	%
Mental/Physical health benefits	70	24.4
Family outgoing (outing?)	22	7.7
Be with people	16	5.6
Solitude	18	6.3
Experience wilderness	50	17.4
Explore new places	7	2.4
Develop skills	7	2.4
Nature appreciation/study	13	4.5
Pleasure/fun	63	21.9
Challenge to abilities	10	3.5
No single experience	1	0.3
Other: Commune with God	1	0.3
Other: Dog Walking	7	2.4
Other: Geocaching	2	0.7

Question 6: Do you live within 30-minute drive by car of this trail?

n=86

	Number of Respondents	%
Yes	68	79.1
No	18	20.9

Question 7: How much influence, if any, would you say that this particular trail had in determining your visit to this area. This area is defined as the area within a 30-minute drive of this trail. Using this scale between 1 and 10 where 0 is no influence and 10 is that this trail is the single main reason for visiting this area.

n=46

Influence	Number of Respondents	%
0	14	30.4
1	0	0
2	5	10.9
3	9	19.5
4	1	2.2
5	4	8.7
6	7	15.2
7	1	2.2
8	0	0
9	0	0
10	5	10.9

Question 8: How did you find out about the KTCT Trail?

n=98 (147) (multiple responses allowed)

Method	Number of Respondents	%
Word of Mouth	30	20.5
Tourism info. center	5	3.4
Signage/driving past	26	17.7
Road Map	11	7.5
Brochure	0	0
Newspaper or magazine story/advertisement	0	0
Book	0	0
Radio	0	0
TV Advertisement	0	0
Internet	13	8.8
General Knowledge	57	38.8
Other: Rec Center	2	1.3
Other: Doctor	1	0.7
Other: Google Maps	2	1.3

Question 9: How much time did you spend on the KTCT trail today or expect to travel?

n=96

Time	Number of Respondents	%
10 minutes	1	1
20-45 minutes	2	2.1
30 minutes	2	2.1
1 hour	47	48.9
1.5 hours	14	14.6
2 hours	18	18.8
2.5 hours	3	3.1
3 hours	3	3.1
3.5 hours	2	2.1
4 hours	4	4.2

Question 10: How many times did you use KTCT in the last 12 months?

n=54

Frequency	Number of Respondents	%
0	10	18.5
1	4	7.4
2	1	1.9
3	2	3.7
5	5	9.3
6	2	3.7
8	5	9.3
12	1	1.9
20	6	11.1
24	1	1.9
25	4	7.4
50+	4	7.4
100+	9	16.7

Question 11: How often do you use the KTCT Trail?

n=83 (multiple responses allowed)

Frequency	Number of Respondents	%
<i>Summer</i>		
Never Used	17	20.5
Once Per Month	12	14.5
Once per week	15	18.1
Twice per week	5	6
3-6 times per week	25	30.1
Daily	9	10.8
<i>Fall</i>		
Never Used	14	17
Once Per Month	27	32.5
Once Per Week	6	7.2
Twice Per Week	7	8.4
3-6 Times Per Week	21	25.3
Daily	8	9.6
<i>Winter (n=75)</i>		
Never Used	50	66.6
Once Per Month	8	10.6
Once Per Week	3	4.1
Twice Per Week	3	4.1
3-6 Times Per Week	9	12
Daily	2	2.6
<i>Spring (n=78)</i>		
Never Used	12	15.4
Once Per Month	16	20.5
Once Per Week	15	19.2
Twice Per Week	5	6.4
3-6 Times Per Week	22	28.2
Daily	8	10.3
<i>Totals (Per Category, All Seasons)</i>		
Never Used	93	29.2
Once Per Month	63	19.7
Once Per Week	39	12.2
Twice Per Week	20	6.3
3-6 Times Per Week	77	24.1
Daily	27	8.5

Question 12: Could you please check yes or no whether you did the following activities on the KTCT trail today?

n=218 (multiple responses allowed)

Activity	Number of Respondents	%
Walking	53	24.3
Hiking	40	18.3
Jogging	6	2.8
Backpacking	2	0.9
Photography	18	8.3
Picnicking	5	2.3
Bird Watching	12	5.5
Wildlife Viewing	43	19.7
Nature Study	10	4.6
Other: Geocaching	2	0.9
Other: Bike	21	9.6
Other: Dog walking	6	2.8

Question 13: Are there any other activities you undertake generally on trails?

n=345 (multiple responses allowed)

Activity	Number of Respondents	%
Walking	74	21.5
Hiking	63	18.3
Jogging	16	4.6
Commuting	1	0.3
Backpacking	3	0.9
ATV	13	3.8
Fishing	20	5.8
Snowshoeing	12	3.5
Snowmobiling	5	1.5
X Country Skiing	30	8.7
Horseback riding	4	1.2
Swimming	10	2.9
Photography	16	4.6
Picnicking	7	2
Bird-watching	18	5.2
Wildlife Viewing	23	6.7
Nature Study	4	1.2
Other: Geocaching	2	0.6
Other: Bike	18	5.2
Other: Dog walking	2	0.5
Other: Tennis	2	0.5
Other: Golf	2	0.5

Question 14: Including yourself, how many males and females in your group fall into the following age categories?

n=97 (multiple responses allowed)

Age Group	Number of Respondents	%	Male	Female	Unknown
14 and Under	14	14.4	8	6	
15-19	3	3.1	2	1	
20-24	3	3.1	2	1	
25-34	5	5.2	1	3	1
35-44	11	11.3	5	6	
45-54	23	23.7	10	13	
55-64	23	23.7	14	9	
65-74	14	14.4	7	4	3
75 and Over	2	2.1	1	0	1

Question 15: Out of province visitor nights only. How many nights do you plan to spend in Ontario on this trip?

n=0

Number of Nights	Number of Respondents
Did not respond	83

Question 16: Ontario residents only. How many nights do you plan to spend away from home in Ontario on this trip?

n= 14

Number of Nights	Number of Respondents	%
0	9	64.3
3	3	21.4
2 Weeks	2	14.3

Question 17: Local area spending.

n=29(multiple responses allowed)

Category of Spending	Spending (\$)	Total (\$)
Fixed roof accommodations	\$100, 150	\$250
Meals and beverages in restaurant	\$20, 45, 10, 50, 100, 50, 20, 25, 20, 40, 200, 100, 20	\$700
Auto repairs/gas/oil	\$10, 20, 50, 25, 20, 50, 60, 60	\$295
Groceries/liquor	\$20, 10, 100, 50	\$180
Other shopping purchases	\$10, 5	\$15

Question 18: Ontario (beyond 30 minute drive) spending.

n=0

Question 19: Trail Condition (A = adequate, I = Inadequate, N = No.
n=68 (multiple responses allowed)

Trail Condition	Number of Respondents (Adequate)	%	Number of Respondents (Inadequate)	%
Location of Trail Head	64	26	0	0
Trail Signage	62	25.2	2	16.7
Trail Condition	63	25.6	1	8.3
Edge of Trail	57	23.2	6	50
Other: Bridge	0	0	1	8.3
Other: Parking	0	0	2	16.7

Question 20: Are there any other improvements, additional services, or changes that you would like to see offered on this trail that would increase your usage of this trail?

EX: bridge maintenance, etc.

n= 21 (multiple responses allowed)

- Appreciate vegetation in Omemee (2)
- Garbage cans (4)
- Poison Ivy at Doube’s Trestle Bridge (1)
- Better signage for locations in the city (ex: hotels, food, local advertising) (2)
- Chips on bridge (Doubles Trestle) makes it hard to hike (1)
- Grooming the sides of the trail (1)
- Poor parking (2)
- Safety – it can be dangerous at night/evening and early morning for women (suggest emergency stations such as the ones at Trent) (1)
- Maintenance (2)
- Wider gaps between gates for bicycles (1)
- Drinking fountains (1)
- More benches (2)
- Portapotties (1)

Question 21: One of the issues related to the use of this trail concerns its multi-use designation whereby different kinds of users such as hikers, bikes, horses, dog walkers, cross country skiers, and snowmobiles share the same trail. What has been your experience with other types of users on this trail?

n=19 (multiple responses allowed)

- Sleds damage bridge (2)
- People do not pick up after their pets (2)
- No parking at entrance way (4)
- Keep motorized vehicles off trail - ATVs and Snowmobiles (4)
 - They pack snow down
- Friendly experiences with other trail users (3)
- Other joggers and runners who are like me with goals for exercise to improve physical/mental health (2)
- Walk in their tracks (snowmobiles) in the snow (2)

Question 22: How do you think this trail should be managed to accommodate different types of users?

n=21 (multiple responses allowed)

- No noise (4)
- Keep motorized noisy vehicles off the trail (2)
- No snowmobiles (2)
- Keep electric scooters off (2)
- Against the parkway through the park (2)
- Pack snow down (2)
- Be able to use ATVs on trail (2)
- Speed signs (3)
- Safer means of traveling uphill/downhill with small children (2)

Question 23: Which category best describes your highest level of education?

n=73

Highest Level of Education	Number of Respondents	%
High School Incomplete	3	3.8
High School Complete	3	3.8
Some Tech. School/College/University	27	33.8
University Complete	40	58

Question: 24: In which category does your total household income (before taxes) fall?

n=66

Household Income (\$)	Respondents	%
Under \$10,000	3	4.5
\$10,000 to 19,999	4	6.1
\$20,000 to 29,999	2	3
\$40,000 to 49,999	2	3
\$30,000 to 39,999	0	0
\$50,000 to 59,000	4	6.1
\$60,000 to 69,999	4	6.1
\$70,000 to 79,999	6	9.1
\$80,000 or Over	22	33.3
Retired	19	28.8

SUMMARY

The survey respondents came to this trail from 23 different places around Ontario and internationally. The furthest permanent residence stated by a respondent was Hong Kong. The furthest residence in Ontario reported by a respondent was Thunder Bay. The majority (25) of the respondents resided in Peterborough. The permanent place of residence with the second most respondents is Lindsay with a total of 11. More than half the respondents travelled under 30km to use the trail. The majority of the respondents using this trail reside locally so do not have to travel more than 80km or stay overnight to use the trail. Many respondents avidly use other trails in Ontario but only a few use trails outside Ontario.

The main reasons respondents use the trail are: mental/physical health, for pleasure/fun, and to explore wilderness.

The respondents know about the trail mainly from general knowledge from living in the area or by word of mouth, the Internet and signage.

The influence of the trail on bringing people to the area is not very high. The majority of respondents said the trail had no influence on them coming to the area.

There is a range of times that respondents are on the trail or plan on being on the trail. The main time range is between 1 and 2 hours on the trail. Far fewer people go on, or plan to be on, the trail for less or more than that. Many of the respondents have used the trail more than once in the past year, with the highest amount being 100+. However, the majority of respondents stated that this was their first time on the trail this year. The majority of respondents use the trail more frequently in the summer months, and then in spring, fall, and winter respectively. In the summer months, many respondents use the trail daily or 2 or 3 times per week.

The most popular activity on the trail mentioned by respondents is walking. Wildlife viewing, hiking, and biking closely follow in popularity. When asked about what activities the respondents generally participate in on any trail, the main answer was also walking, followed by hiking, cross-country skiing, wildlife viewing, biking, and fishing. Two respondents even mentioned that they use trails for tennis and golfing. Fifteen of the respondents mentioned using motorized vehicles, which are prohibited on the KTCT, on other trails.

The majority of the respondents are in the age groups 45-54 and 55-64 and are mainly males. The respondents are also primarily university graduates with an annual income of \$80,000 and over or retired.

Not many respondents using the trail were planning on staying overnight. Only five respondents, who are residents of Ontario, planned to stay overnight. The 29 reported trip expenditures totaled \$1,440. This mainly comprised meals, beverages and automobile expenses.

The majority of the respondents were pleased with the condition of the trail. However, some would like to see more adequate parking, grass cutting and maintenance of Doube's Trestle Bridge. Overall, it seems respondents want more trail maintenance, signage, amenities, garbage cans and benches along the trail. Some respondents made it very clear they were against sharing the trail with motorized vehicles. Respondents also raised safety issues of the trail and suggested speed limit signs and emergency call buttons.

CONCLUSION

The survey has some limitations due to question wording, sample size, small response to later questions and the distribution of interviews. However, it still provides a considerable amount of information from users of the KTCT that should be useful in managing it and meeting the expectations of users.

The KCRT is enjoyed over the summer months by a wide variety of people and enables them to enjoy a variety of activities and improve their mental and physical health. The great majority of the respondents using the trail are local, relatively well educated and affluent. They generally are satisfied with their trail experience but better maintenance, benches, grass cutting, garbage cans and parking are recommended. Much more promotion of the trail is likely required if it is to attract tourists and increase its economic impact.

The survey should be improved but shortened to increase response and repeated in other seasons and future years to provide ongoing guidance in managing the KTCT.

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