

Understanding Crowding at Utah's National Parks

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<https://www.youtube.com/embed/BnK9lrEhaFU560314allowfullscreen>

Utah has one of the highest concentrations of protected land in the world, with millions of people hiking, driving and visiting the state's parks, forests, and recreation areas every year. A high amount of use requires a high level of management to keep the experience enjoyable ... but basic tasks like tracking how many people walk a trail, and how crowded a trail feels to those visitors, are still difficult for managers to calibrate.

IORT's Zach Miller and Wayne Freimund are finding ways to answer basic questions for park managers about crowding and trail use. [A short video](#) describes trail counting efforts at Arches National Park, one of the busiest in the nation. Infrared counters are paired with cameras to calibrate feet on the ground with accuracy. Miller and Freimund are looking for ways to apply what they've learned from these techniques, and the insights of the data, to other national parks.