

TRAILS NETWORK PLAN

Wisconsin Trails Network Plan



Open/Established Trail



Proposed Trail

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources



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Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources



WISCONSIN 2003 TRAILS NETWORK PLAN

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BACKGROUND

The *Wisconsin State Trails Strategic Plan* (1993) clarifies the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) role and mission of providing all types of trails, and spells out strategies for carrying out this mission. The 1993 plan foresaw the need for a blueprint for implementing the strategies that would contain specific recommendations for a statewide network of state-owned or state-designated recreational trails. Thus, the *State Recreational Trails Network Plan* identifies a series of potential trail corridors across



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Wisconsin that would link existing trails, public lands, natural features, and communities. It describes a vision of a statewide network of interconnected rail trails into which smaller state, partnership, county, municipal and private trails feed. Preserving corridors for future use is a very important consideration when converting a rail line to a recreational and alternative transportation corridor. Under current Federal Law, once preserved

the corridor will remain available for future rail use.

Once the Wisconsin Trails Network Plan is approved by the Natural Resources Board it becomes an amendment to the *Wisconsin State Trails Strategic Plan* and provides authorization for the DNR to pursue acquisition of any abandoned rail grade or other corridor identified in the plan. The plan will also be incorporated into the DNR's Land Legacy Study which will identify recreational land acquisition needs for the next 50 years.

Once the DNR negotiates with the rail company or the Department of Transportation (DOT) to acquire abandoned rail lines, project staff will need to prepare abbreviated feasibility studies that address issues of converting the corridor to a recreational trail, and identify local support for the trail, economic impact, manageability and potential uses of the trail.

After the feasibility study is completed, a master plan that identifies allowable trail uses is developed with public input. The feasibility study and development of the master plan should consider other plans and planning processes, including comprehensive plans that are required under the Smart Growth legislation.

This network mainly consists of rail-based trails and utility corridors that occasionally employ road connections. Existing state and county converted rail corridors, "rails-to-trails," are integral parts of the proposed statewide trail network. Natural feature corridors such as the Ice Age National and State Scenic Trail are also an important component of the overall network.

Many of the existing state trails are developed and operated in successful partnerships with counties. By agreement the DNR acquires the corridor and the county government(s) develop, operate, and maintain the trail. Many counties have taken the initiative to provide rail-trails with little or no assistance from the DNR beyond the initial acquisition.

PURPOSE

This plan identifies a statewide network of trails and provides guidance to the DNR for effectively utilizing its limited funding for land acquisition and development. Maps in this plan detail the potential trail network for each of DNR's five regions and tables provide information on each trail segment, followed by more detailed descriptions of each trail segment and reasons why these segments are important to the overall trail network in the state.

WHAT IS A TRAIL?

For this plan the definition of a trail encompasses trails that range from facilities such as a rail trail with at-grade or separated grade crossings such as a bridge over a road or a box culvert under a road, to roadside shoulders or a path beside a roadway. On-road trails are limited to bicyclists, or in many cases occasional hiker use, whereas other, "separated" state trails accommodate various non-motorized and motorized users to include hikers, wheelchair users, bicyclists, equestrians, cross country skiers, in-line skaters, skiers, snowmobiles, all terrain vehicles, snowshoes, dogsledders and four-wheel drive vehicles. The uses of separated trails are determined during the master planning process, which considers the physical characteristics of the trail, compatibility of users, local ordinances and public input.

The department is committed to expanding trail opportunities for people with disabilities during the trail feasibility and master planning processes. The DNR will comply with the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Accessibility Guidelines.

Trail segments within the corridors will change over time, as some opportunities open and others fail to materialize. Therefore, this plan should be continually updated and improved. If one corridor becomes available,

another similar or parallel corridor may no longer be necessary and can be removed from an updated version of this plan. Due to the uncertainty of future rail abandonment it is important to list all corridors that could link to the statewide network. It is highly unlikely that all the rail corridors identified in this plan will ever be abandoned or available for trail use.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER PLANS

COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL PLANS

This plan, which focuses on major corridors statewide, acknowledges that many local units of government have or are working on plans to develop trail systems through their communities to provide citizens the opportunity to recreate and commute safely. The intent is to look at the big picture and due to the scale of this plan it therefore does not include many of the segments that local units of government are currently working on. The DNR, however, acknowledges their importance at both a regional and statewide level. DNR will continue to work with counties and municipalities to develop and incorporate these important local links within the network. Local governments should continue working on the development of their local trail systems as they have in the past looking for opportunities to connect to the statewide network.

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (DOT) PLANS

In keeping with DNR's mission for providing outdoor recreation, this plan focuses on recreational trails. However, often no clear distinction exists between recreation and

transportation uses of trails. Most recreation trails can also be used for transportation, just as most trails planned primarily for transportation can also be used for recreation. For this reason DNR and DOT are consulting with one another on their respective trail and pedestrian-bicycle plans.

The DOT completed the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* in December 1998. The plan highlights seven key inter-city trails that are important links to the state trail network. Many other inter-city bicycle connections were also presented in the plan. Paved shoulder improvements in combination with the identification of low volume roadways were recommended as appropriate ways to make these connections. The seven trails considered to be key linkages on state highways include:

1. Urban Trail from Eau Claire to Chippewa Falls
2. Badger State Trail from Madison to Belleville
3. Wild River Trail from Rice Lake to Cameron
4. Lakefront Trail from South Milwaukee to the Racine County Trail
5. Wiouwash Trail from New London to the Waupaca/Shawano County Line
6. Hurley to Upson Segment
7. North Hudson to Houlton

The *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* also recommends urban and community trails and endorses the 14 metropolitan area bicycle and pedestrian plans. All the plans make recommendations for bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities. Lastly, the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* makes a strong recommendation to consider "safe and convenient bicycle access (likely to be paved shoulders) to trailheads that are located within reasonable distances of communities." Connections were not specified project-by-

project in the plan, but are recommended for the statewide trail network based on the above language.

The DOT has both a *State Highway Plan* and a *Six-Year Highway Improvement Program*. The latter identifies projects, planned year of work and the anticipated nature of the work (e.g., re-paving, reconstruction, etc.) for state highways. The vast majority of projects are relatively simple improvements, such as re-paving a highway or existing two-lane roadway. In these cases the construction of a separated, freestanding trail is impractical.

DNR LAND LEGACY STUDY

The State Trails Plan focuses on meeting recreational trail demands and is not intended to address ecologically based corridor needs. These are addressed in the DNR's assessment of future needs for public land ownership, a project under way in the DNR's Land Legacy Study. The Land Legacy Study evaluates the land and area types possibly appropriate for public ownership to meet conservation and recreation needs over the next 50 years. The Wisconsin Trails Network Plan will be an important component in identifying recreation needs and opportunities, and will be a component of the Land Legacy Study.

DNR STRATEGIC PLAN

The Wisconsin Trails Network Plan supports the concept of sound planning with communities and other state agencies along identified corridors and segments to provide the citizens of the state access to trails that provide a long list of benefits. These benefits are consistent with the goals of the DNR's Strategic Plan to provide outdoor recreation and to sustain healthy ecosystems.

BENEFITS OF TRAILS

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ENVIRONMENTAL AND AESTHETIC BENEFITS

Trails provide people alternative transportation routes that can reduce automobile use and provide alternatives to solo driving, resulting in improved air quality. By providing safe, pleasant places to walk and bicycle, trails encourage people to use non-motorized means of getting to work, school, play, and shopping which result in reduced traffic congestion, noise, and air pollution.

When rail lines are converted to trail use, the state generally acquires a 100-foot wide corridor, of which a 10-foot strip is surfaced for the trail. Most of the rest of the land is left in its natural state, providing habitat for birds and other wildlife as well as diverse plant communities that include prairie remnants. The corridors are also extremely important as wildlife corridors which protect species diversity and diverse plant communities such as prairie remnants.



Wisconsin Department of Tourism

The *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* states: “the most frequent, comfortable, and practical trips for bicyclists—those under five miles—produce the greatest environmental benefits since trips under five miles in length are the least fuel efficient and produce the highest emissions per mile.”

Trails also provide a unique facility to serve a diverse population that may otherwise have limited opportunities to access natural areas due to financial or transportation constraints.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Trail users spend money on bicycles, snowmobiles, other durable goods and equipment maintenance related to their recreation, often in the areas near the trails. Local hotels, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, bakeries, gas stations, and other businesses also benefit from tourists’ spending.

The state Department of Tourism developed numerous publications that promote statewide trail use. Studies show that long trails, which attract users from far away, represent the

most spending per user. Shorter, urban trails generally get more users, so they also have a high economic impact. This spending results in higher sales tax revenues for the state and counties.

For example, the communities along the Elroy-Sparta State Trail have seen an increase in tourism since the trail opened in 1968. The city of Sparta now proclaims itself the “Bicycling Capital of America.” Promotions by the cities of Elroy and Sparta attracted businesses to serve trail users. The *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* cites data from a 1988 study of the Elroy-Sparta trail that indicated a per person spending of \$25.00 per day. Once adjusted for inflation and assuming 60,000 visitors annually, users of this trail spent in excess of \$2 million per year on trail-related activities.

The presence of trails often increases the value of properties adjacent to the corridors, especially those through residential neighborhoods. The National Association of Home Builders cites trails as the second and third most important amenity that would influence people to move to a new location.

Quality of life is an increasingly important factor in attracting and retaining businesses in a community, and trails are important contributors to the quality of life. Corporations bring jobs to communities and help support other businesses.

Additionally, health improvement due to outdoor exercise can help control medical costs in the long run.

SOCIAL BENEFITS

Trails can provide a sense of place and a source of community pride. When integrated with features such as historic sites, commercial or residential areas, and parks, they can improve the overall character of a region. They are beautiful places for people to enjoy the natural beauty of our state.

Trail corridors can become outdoor classrooms where children and adults can observe and learn about their natural and cultural environment.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Trails provide pleasant places for people to walk, run, bicycle, ski, skate, or do other exercises, all of which help control weight, blood pressure and cholesterol levels, builds strength and endurance, and help prevent osteoporosis, diabetes and depression.



Phillip G. Olson



The Wisconsin Trails Network Plan accomplishes the following:

1. Clarifies the DNR's intent to establish a statewide network of trails
2. Identifies the system of trails that create the statewide rail-trail, utility corridor and connector network, amending the *State Trails Strategic Plan*.
3. Identifies rail corridors in which the DNR may have an interest if and when abandonment is considered.
4. Shortens the land acquisition approval process for new trails.
5. Encourages inter-agency planning between the DNR, the DOT and other highway departments for potential trail corridor links on public roadways.
6. Encourages local governments, DNR and DOT to consider connections between recreational trails and roadway routes to provide a comprehensive and seamless system for bicyclists traveling from their homes to employment, commercial and recreational facilities.
7. Encourages local governments to work together toward a common goal and encourages partnerships between local governments and DNR. The plan would be a tool for local government's use in planning and developing trail systems connecting with the statewide network. The plan should be considered when developing the transportation element of local comprehensive plans.

SELECTION OBJECTIVES

The DNR's choice of potential recreational trail corridors is based on the following objectives:

1. Proximity to population centers that offer connections to a statewide network of recreational trails.
2. Existing rail corridors with a high potential for abandonment, utility and natural feature corridors as described below.
3. Existing historical sites, tourist attractions, state and county parks, and other significant features.
4. Links to existing federal, state, county and municipal trails.
5. Links to interstate trails in Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota and Michigan.
6. "Natural feature" corridors tied to rivers and other scenic landscape patterns, including major topographic features.

Separate and distinct from this list are ecological habitat corridors that allow for the movement of animal species and plant colonization. These corridors will be discussed in the Land Legacy Study (described above).

CORRIDOR TYPES

Five types of corridors are described.

- ◆ Rail corridors
- ◆ Utility corridors.
- ◆ Potential routes of streets, roads, and major highways or easements as connectors.



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- ◆ Natural features trail corridors, such as the Capital City and Ice Age trails.
- ◆ Trails within the water, i.e. lakeshore or parallel waterways i.e. rivers and streams, to provide water-based recreation, such as canoeing and kayaking along rivers

RAIL CORRIDORS

Of the state's 4,100 miles of operating rail line, this plan identifies more than 1,800 miles as *potential* trail corridor. In 1979, the Natural Resources Board directed the DNR to refrain from taking a position on any proposed rail corridor abandonment. Often, however, the DNR has 180 days in which to act *if and when* a rail line is abandoned. Identifying corridors for potential trail development enables the DNR to act more quickly by shortening the process for land acquisition approval.

Some trails are created under the "interim trail use" authority. The Surface Transportation Board, once rail line abandonment is approved, can allow the railroad to negotiate with a public agency for conversion of the corridor to trail use. This process essentially "railbanks" a corridor for possible future rail use. The Surface Transportation Board assigns interim use of the corridor to a qualified public or private agency if that agency agrees to manage the trail and cover all associated expenses, including taxes and liability.

Consideration should also be given to the "rails-with-trails" approach. This involves constructing a multipurpose public pathway beside an active rail line, within the same corridor, designed for safety for all users and acceptable to the railroad.¹

Currently, the DNR is working with the state Attorney General's office and the federal Bureau of Land Management to determine who owns a discontinued railroad grade that was part of a federally granted right-of-way. The grant requires a formal declaration of abandonment from a court of competent

jurisdiction or an act of Congress, instead of the usual Surface Transportation Board determination. Once this case is resolved the DNR will know how, and if, to proceed on other federally granted right-of-ways in Wisconsin.

UTILITY CORRIDORS

Utility corridors can provide excellent off-road trail opportunities. They are generally more abundant in the populated areas of the state where trail demand is often the greatest. In southeast Wisconsin, a number of existing and potential trail routes are located on utility corridors.

CONNECTORS: ROADS OR EASEMENTS

This plan identifies potential connectors or links to abandoned rail corridors that would be made via road or easement. Once the DNR has the opportunity to purchase a rail corridor requiring a connector, the DNR will work with appropriate agencies, local government or citizens to create these connections, which will be considered case by case as needed in view of the overall system.

Appropriate "trail" improvements within a highway corridor could range from a separate path to a paved shoulder to no additional treatment at all on lightly traveled roads. The eventual recommended treatment would depend on traffic volume, width of the right-of-way, highway geometrics, cost, the number and type of anticipated users, and maintenance considerations. Most of the identified highway corridor connections will likely be served by providing paved shoulders that benefit bicyclists and walkers.

The DNR and DOT have an opportunity to coordinate during the trail feasibility planning process by actively working with highway departments and taking advantage of any

¹For more information, see Kraich, Patrick (1996). *Rails-with-Trails: Sharing Corridors for Transportation and Recreation*. Washington, D.C.: Rails to Trails Conservancy.

opportunities to address connections in highway planning efforts. This is especially important since most road-based links can be achieved most efficiently during highway reconstruction projects.

Where corridors are in private ownership, the DNR and other entities have the potential to work out easements that would allow the trail to pass across private lands.

NATURAL FEATURES TRAIL CORRIDORS

A natural features trail corridor is a naturally occurring linear corridor such as along a river (e.g. Nine Springs Creek beside the Capital City Trail) or related to a landscape or major topographic feature such as the glacial footprints along the Ice Age Trail.

The Capital City Trail in Dane County capitalizes on state, county and university owned properties within the Dane County Nine Springs E-way Corridor. Specific ecological landscape and/or scenic features are likely to be the basis for natural features trails that may emerge as part of the Land Legacy Study.

The Department is currently a partner on two natural features trail corridors: the Ice Age and North Country National Scenic Trails. The 1,200 mile route of the Ice Age Trail, designated a State Scenic Trail in 1987, generally follows the end moraine of the most recent glaciation through local, county and state-owned lands. At this time about 500 miles of this premier-walking trail are open for public use. The general route of the trail, set in a 1983 comprehensive plan still requires considerable land acquisition before the 1,000-mile route is in place.

The Department's Five-Year Land Acquisition Plan identified projects that needed to be completed by June, 2000. These included feasibility studies for the Ice Age Trail through Marathon, Sauk, Polk, Northern Columbia, Sheboygan and

Manitowoc. The prioritization of all pending feasibility studies, to include the ones listed above, will be considered in the Land Legacy Study process next year.

The North Country National Scenic Trail was approved as a DNR project in October 2000, with the Natural Resources Board approval of a trail corridor plan for three of its four counties. Approval of the trail as a project will allow expenditures by the Department for land acquisition, as lands become available from willing landowners. The North Country National Scenic Trail runs for 4,200 miles, crossing seven states from Crown Point State Historic Site in New York to Sakakawea State Park on the Missouri River in North Dakota, where it joins the Lewis and Clark National Forest and various state and county lands. The trail crosses Wisconsin for 390 miles. Of that amount, 170 miles is on public land, such as the Chequamegon National Forest and various state and county land. About 180 miles will be located on privately owned land in the project area. Another 40-mile section of the trail that runs east from Copper Falls State Park to Hurley will be added to the project area at a later date once a trail corridor planning process is completed.



Wisconsin Department of Tourism

WATER TRAILS

Wisconsin's lakes and streams, great and small, have provided transportation, commerce, and recreation, throughout the State's history.

The Department, in partnership with local interests and regional or statewide organizations, will help to build a stronger coalition around the educational and recreation opportunities provided by Wisconsin's water trails, as part of the State Trails Network.

The demand for water-based recreation opportunities in Wisconsin continues to increase. The DNR Strategic Plan has a major goal of Providing Outdoor Recreation. One strategy for achieving that goal encourages the agency to promote and improve recreational opportunities on state waters and on public and private lands through partnerships with people, governments, tribes, businesses and other organizations.

By the end of 2001 the Department will improve the identification of water trail opportunities within, along, and near state lands, and will collaborate with others interested in improving educational and recreation water trail opportunities.

IMPLEMENTATION

As the identified potential trail corridors become available for conversion to recreational trails, the DNR will work in partnership with the state Department of Transportation, local and county governments, regional planning commissions, user groups and others to implement the Wisconsin Trails Network Plan. Important connections between these trails will be developed by working with DOT and local highway departments as appropriate or via easement as described above, case-by-case.

As segments become available the DNR will help facilitate acquisition, and in some instances development, as funding and grant availability allow. Cooperative trail partnerships will continue to be an important part of the state trail system. In these situations DNR acquires the trail grade, and local partners develop,

maintain and operate the trail. Various sources of funding are available for local governments interested in cooperative trail partnerships.

DOT and DNR will consult one another when trails, consistent with this plan, are ready for a connection via a state highway. The feasibility and timing of incorporating different types of trails will be evaluated project-by-project by comparing the statewide trail needs with the DOT's *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*, the *State Highway Plan*, *Six-Year Highway Improvement Program* and the Wisconsin Pedestrian Plan along with the priorities established through the DNR's Land Legacy Study.

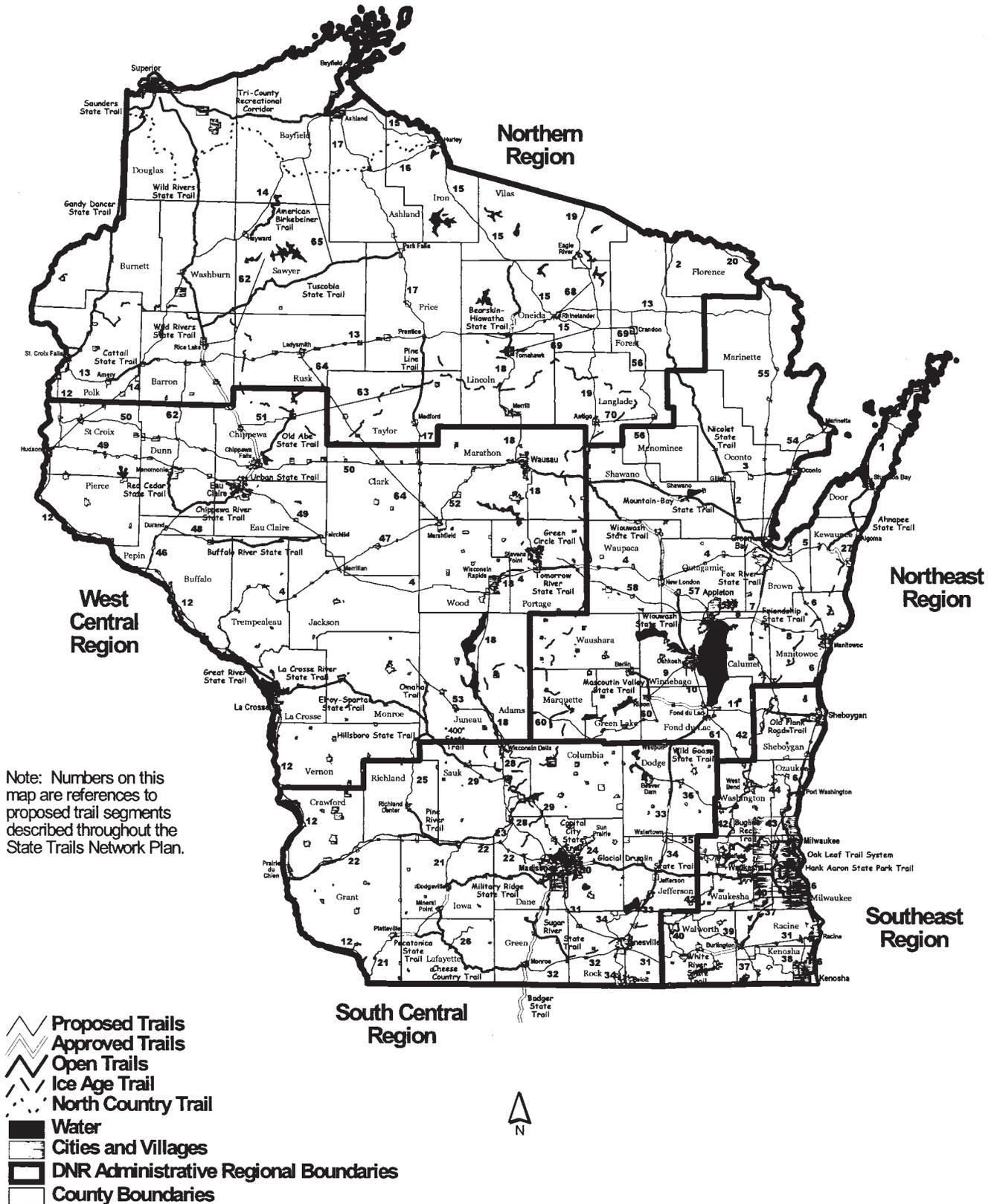
SUMMARY

This plan describes a vision of a statewide network of interconnected trails that feed into smaller state, county, municipal, private and state partnership trails. To make progress on the network the DNR will continue working with local units of government, the Department of Transportation and other partners to create the connections that will continue providing citizens the opportunity to recreate and transport safely.



Gene Stover

STATEWIDE TRAIL NETWORK



EXISTING AND APPROVED STATEWIDE NETWORK

The following table delineates the existing system of state and locally owned trails that are critical links in the overall network. The table includes trails that have been approved by the Natural Resources Board but are not yet constructed. Additionally, the table includes information regarding ownership and operations.

Following the table a Statewide map shows the existing and approved trails as well the potential trails which are then identified and described by DNR region. Each region has a map zooming in on the existing and potential trails within the region, a table describing the existing trails shown on the map and another table which describes the proposed network.

State Trail	Owned by	Operated by	Status
"400" State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Ahnapee State Trail	DNR	County	Not Open from Kewaunee to Luxemburg
American Birkenbeiner Trail	Private	Private	Open
Badger State Trail	DNR	DNR	Not Open
Bearskin-Hiawatha State Trail	DNR	DNR/County	Open except for connector between Bearskin & the Hiawatha State Trails
Buffalo River State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Bugline Recreational Trail	County	County	Open
Burlington Trail	County	County	Open
Capital City State Trail	County/City	County/City/ DNR	Open
Cattail State Trail	DNR	County	Open from Amery to Almena
Cheese Country Trail	County	County	Open
Chippewa River State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Elroy-Sparta State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Fox River Trail	DNR	County	Open
Friendship State Trail	DNR	County	Not Open
Gandy Dancer State Trail	DNR	County	Open; section of trail is in Minnesota



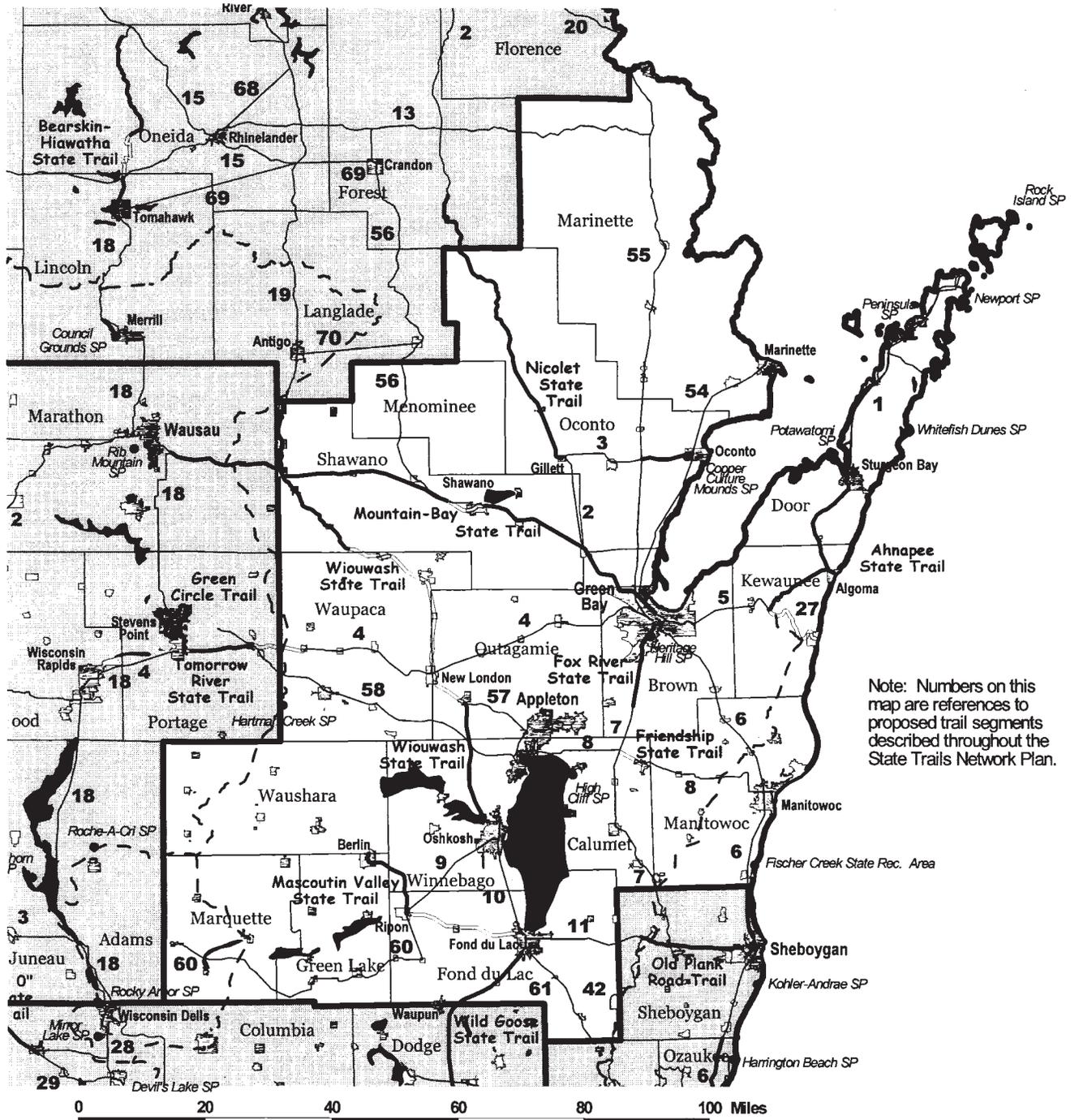


State Trail	Owned by	Operated by	Status
Glacial Drumlin State Trail	DNR	DNR	Not open from Cottage/Grove to Madison
Glacial River Trail	County	County	Open from FortAtkinson south to Rock County border
Great River State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Green Circle Trail	City/Private	Cooperative	Open
Hank Aaron State Trail	DNR	DNR	Under Construction
Hillsboro State Trail	DNR	Cooperative	Open
Ice Age National & State Scenic Trail	Private/Public	IAPTF, NPS, DNR	525 miles of 1200 open statewide
La Crosse River State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Lake Country Trail	Private	County	Open
Mascoutin Valley State Trail	DNR	County	Open
Military Ridge State Trail	DNR	DNR	Not open from Dodgeville to Mineral Point
Mountain-Bay State Trail	DNR	County	Open
MRK Trail	County	County	Open
New Berlin Trail	County	County	Open
Nicolet State Trail	DNR	County	Not Open
North Country National Scenic Trail	Private/Public	NPS/Local Chapters	Open
North Shore Trail	County	County	Open
Norway Trail	County	County	Open
Oak Leaf Trail	County	County	Open
Old Plank Road Trail	County	County	Open
Oconto-Stiles Junction State Trail	DNR	County	Open
Old Abe State Trail	DNR	County	Open



State Trail	Owned by	Operated by	Status
Omaha Trail	County	County	Open
Ozaukee County Trail	County/Local	County/Local	Open
Pecatonica State Trail	DNR	County	Not open from Belmont to Platteville
Pine Line Trail	County	County	Open
Pine River Trail	County	County	Open
Racine Sturtevant Trail	County	County	Open
Red Cedar State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Saunders State Trail	DNR	County	Open
Sugar River State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Tomorrow River State Trail	DNR	County	Under Construction
Tri-County Recreational Corridor	DNR/County	County	Open
Tuscolobia State Trail	DNR/DOT	DNR	Open
Urban State Trail	DOT	County	Not Open
White River State Trail	DNR	Pending	DNR working with counties
Wild Goose State Trail	DNR	County	Open
Wild Rivers State Trail	DNR	County	Open from Rice Lake to Ambridge; not open from Rice Lake to Chippewa Falls
Waterford-Windlake Trail	County	County	Open
Wiouwash State Trail	DNR	County	Not open from Hortonville north to Shawano County

NORTHEAST REGION



Note: Numbers on this map are references to proposed trail segments described throughout the State Trails Network Plan.

- Proposed Trails
- Approved Trails
- ... Open Trails
- - - Ice Age Trail
- State Parks and Recreation Areas
- Water
- Cities and Villages
- ▬ DNR Administrative Regional Boundaries
- ▭ County Boundaries

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EXISTING AND APPROVED TRAIL NETWORK FOR NORTH- EAST REGION

Trail Name	Owned by	Operated by	Status
Ahnapee State Trail	DNR	County	Not Open from Kewaunee to Luxemburg
Fox River Trail	DNR	County	Open
Friendship State Trail	DNR	County	Not Open
Ice Age National & State Scenic Trail	Private/Public	IAPTF, NPS, DNR	525 miles of 1200 miles open statewide
Mascoutin Valley State Trail	DNR	County	Open
Mountain-Bay State	DNR	County	Open
Nicolet State Trail	DNR	County	Open
Oconto- Stiles Junction State Trail	DNR	County	Open
Tomorrow River State Trail	DNR	County	Under Construction
Wild Goose State	DNR	County	Open
Wiouwash State Trail	DNR/County	County	Not open from Hortonville north to Shawano County



Wisconsin Department of Tourism

POTENTIAL TRAIL NETWORK
FOR THE
NORTHEAST REGION

Map Key	Segment	Regional Miles	Type of Corridor
1	Northern Door County (Sturgeon Bay to tip of Door County)	42	Off and on Various Roads
2	Pulaski to Michigan	50	Rail, Abandoned
3	Stiles Junction to Gillett	22	Rail; Various Town Roads
4	Green Bay to Mississippi River	65	Rail, Active & Abandoned
5	Green Bay to Luxemburg	45	Rail, Active & Abandoned
6	Green Bay via Manitowoc to Sheboygan	46	Rail, Active & Abandoned
7	Green Bay via Chilton to Kiel	40	Rail, Active & Abandoned; Highway 57
8	Manitowoc to Fremont	45	Rail; Highways
9	Oshkosh via Ripon to Oxford	75	Rail, Active; Various Town Roads
10	Oshkosh to Fond du Lac	10	Rail, Active; Trolley, Abandoned
11	Berlin via Fond du Lac to Sheboygan	46	Rail, Abandoned; Highway US 23
27	Kewaunee to Luxemburg	16	Rail, Abandoned
54	Green Bay to Marinette	50	Rail, Active
55	Green Bay to Michigan	100	Rail, Active
56	Shawano to Crandon	22	Rail, Announced for Abandonment
57	Fox Valley to Hortonville	15	Rail; Roadway
58	Appleton to Plover	60	Rail
60	Ripon to Oxford	35	Rail; Roadway
61	Fond du Lac to Washington County	17	Rail, Active & Abandoned

NORTHEAST REGION

This region harbors more than 275 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, additional frontage on Lake Winnebago which is Wisconsin's largest inland lake and hundreds of miles of river and stream. Besides these dominant water features, the Door County peninsula has five state parks which add to the charm and popularity of this area. Five other state parks exist in the region, as well as Point Beach State Forest, the Nicolet National Forest, numerous county forests and community parks and 224 miles of established state trail.

Existing or authorized state trails in this region are the Ahnapee, Wiouwash, and Mascoutin Valley, portions of the Mountain-Bay and Wild Goose trails, the Friendship Trail (Forest Junction to Brillion), Fox River Trail (Green Bay to Greenleaf) and the Nicolet Trail (Pulaski to Wabeno).

SEGMENT 1 - NORTHERN DOOR COUNTY

The Door County Chamber of Commerce initiated this proposed segment to extend the Ahnapee State Trail off-road from Sturgeon Bay north to the tip of the county. Intended as a safe, scenic travel alternative to busy roads, this long-term objective will become more difficult to accomplish as more of the Door County landscape is developed. As an alternative, and to provide immediate assistance to potential trail users, the Chamber developed a map to help navigate in Northern Door County. State Highway 42 from Egg Harbor to Gills Rock is also listed in the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* as a priority linkage, making this highway a good candidate for wider paved shoulders. The DOT, DNR and the Chamber of Commerce will work cooperatively to create this connection.

SEGMENT 2 - PULASKI TO MICHIGAN (NORTHEAST REGION)

The Nicolet State Trail portion of this corridor passes through a mixture of farmland to mature woods in the Nicolet National Forest. The corridor intersects the Mountain Bay Trail at Pulaski. The potential exists for extending the trail further north into Forest County.

Most of the segments of this potential trail corridor in Shawano County were sold to private interests, but public support exists for conversion to a public trail. The DNR owns a few parcels of the corridor and land acquisition continues. The section of corridor in Oconto County, the Nicolet Trail, is being transferred from DOT ownership to the DNR. Oconto County will remain the operating partner.



Wisconsin Department of Tourism

SEGMENT 3 - STILES JUNCTION TO GILLETT

The Stiles Junction to Gillett Trail would connect the Oconto, Stiles Junction, and Oconto Falls to the Nicolet State Trail described in Segment 2. Part of the corridor from Stiles Junction to the Oconto is DNR-owned and operated by the county. The remaining portion to the Nicolet State Trail connection can be best accomplished by placing signs on roads scheduled for widening and upgrading.

The Oconto to Stiles Junction portion of the trail parallels the Oconto River, a popular water for float trips and fishing. Users can float part of the river and safely hike or bike back on the trail to retrieve vehicles.

SEGMENT 4 - GREEN BAY TO MISSISSIPPI RIVER (NORTHEAST REGION)

The city of Green Bay could serve as a hub for a number of potential trail routes. This segment is a 65-mile link from Green Bay to the Waupaca-Portage county line. It would connect with the Wiouwash Trail in New London (Outagamie County) and the Tomorrow River Trail west of Scandinavia. It is also an important link in a long-distance east/west corridor across the state. At present, the Waupaca County line to Scandinavia portion is DNR-owned with Waupaca County as the operating partner. The reach from Scandinavia to Manawa is being appraised for purchase, and the railroad owners recently announced the abandonment of the rail from Green Bay to New London. This trail would connect many population concentrations for both recreational and transportation benefits.

SEGMENT 5 - GREEN BAY TO STURGEON BAY

The Ahnapee State Trail, an existing rail trail from Sturgeon Bay to Casco via Algoma, would complete a Green Bay to Sturgeon Bay link with an extension from Casco to Green Bay. The Ahnapee State Trail was the first state-owned trail in the region and has been greatly enhanced and expanded in the past five years. The trail now extends into the urban centers of Sturgeon Bay and Algoma.

SEGMENT 6 - GREEN BAY TO SHEBOYGAN VIA MANITOWOC (NORTHEAST REGION)

This trail corridor boasts of some of the most significant elevation changes in the region, offering beautiful vistas.

This rail trail would extend south from Green Bay to Sheboygan, mostly on abandoned rail corridor. Efforts are now under way to acquire a section from Denmark in Brown County to Rockwood in Manitowoc County that was abandoned several years



Chris Dries

ago. Recently, rail owners announced the proposed abandonment of the corridor from Manitowoc to Cleveland and efforts are under way to acquire this portion as well.

SEGMENT 7 - GREEN BAY TO KIEL (NORTHEAST REGION)

The northern portions of this corridor offers spectacular views of the Fox River, then continues on for many miles in the shadow of the Niagara Escarpment. Besides significant recreational opportunities, it will serve as a major non-motorized transportation corridor for workers in the Green Bay-Allouez-DePere metro area.

The first section of this trail to come into DNR ownership extends from Green Bay to Greenleaf. Recently, rail owners announced the proposed abandonment of the rail corridor from Greenleaf to Forest Junction. A multi-use trail between New Holstein and Kiel is under construction in the State Highway 57/32 right-of-way at the south end of the corridor. This trail could continue from Kiel south on rail corridor (see Segment 7 in the Southeast Region).

SEGMENT 8 - MANITOWOC TO FREMONT

This corridor includes an approved state trail segment between Brillion and Forest Junction, known as the Friendship Trail; a pending purchase in Menasha known as the Little Lake Butte des Morts connection; and a highway corridor trail from the town of Menasha to Fremont along newly reconstructed U.S. Highway 10. This trail connects with Segment 7 at Forest Junction. From Manitowoc to Brillion abandoned rail corridor exists as well as a potential roadway connection. From Forest Junction west to Menasha, the trail will consist of a mixture of abandoned rail, local roads and local public trail systems that are part of the Fox Valley Green Way Program. Moving through large, congested, urban areas is always a challenge and this trail's goal is to accomplish that in a safe and scenic manner.

SEGMENT 9 - OSHKOSH VIA RIPON TO OXFORD

Beginning in Oshkosh, this trail would connect to Ripon, Brandon, Markesan and Oxford. It would make use of a combination of rail corridor and local roads. This trail would connect or bisect the Wiouwash and Mascoutin Valley state trails. Several small urban centers exist that this trail can connect to as well as affording key junctions with two other state trails.

SEGMENT 10 - OSHKOSH TO FOND DU LAC

This trail would connect the Wiouwash Trail, which now ends in Oshkosh, to the Wild Goose and Mascoutin Valley trails near Fond du Lac. The rail corridor between Oshkosh and Fond du Lac went through abandonment several years ago, only to be reclaimed by the owners. Other possible connections might include old trolley right-of-ways and utility right-of-ways. This trail would become a significant alternative transportation corridor for workers in this part of the state.

SEGMENT 11 - BERLIN TO SHEBOYGAN (NORTHEAST REGION)

This segment on State Highway 23 right-of-way from Sheboygan to Greenbush is known as the Old Plank Road Trail. The DNR owns the Mascoutin Valley Trail portion, between Berlin and Fond du Lac, which is operated by county government. All but seven miles of this trail runs through abandoned rail corridor. The gap between Fond du Lac and Greenbush will probably be best accomplished along various roadways. This trail bisects key DNR wildlife areas and

takes advantage of large highway right-of-way expanses.

SEGMENT 27 - KEWAUNEE TO LUXEMBURG

This segment will link with the trail from Green Bay to Sturgeon Bay. The owners have abandoned the rail corridor and the DNR is in the process of negotiating for the purchase of the land. This trail is considered to be one of the most scenic in the state.

SEGMENT 54 - GREEN BAY TO MARINETTE

This segment would connect Green Bay to Marinette and bisect Segment 3 in Oconto.

SEGMENT 55 - GREEN BAY TO IRON MT., MICHIGAN

This segment would connect Green Bay to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan near Iron Mountain, Michigan and bisect Segment 3 near Stiles Junction.

SEGMENT 56 - SHAWANO TO CRANDON

The owners recently announced intentions to abandon this rail corridor. A key portion of the rail line, just outside of Shawano, was withheld from the current abandonment proposal. Much of the corridor proposed for abandonment lies within the Menominee Indian Reservation. As yet, no efforts have been made to determine if this corridor is of interest as a trail to the Menominee Nation.

SEGMENT 57 - FOX VALLEY TO HORTONVILLE

This segment would connect the existing portion of the Wiouwash State Trail to the Fox Valley communities, including an important link over Little Lake Butte de Mortes.

SEGMENT 58 - APPLETON TO PLOVER (GREEN CIRCLE TRAIL)

This 60-mile-long segment will connect Appleton to the Green Circle Trail in Plover. From Appleton, this route would follow a rail corridor northwest through New London, south of Manawa, then to Odgensburg, Amherst Junction, then to Plover where it connects with the Green Circle Trail

SEGMENT 60 - RIPON TO OXFORD

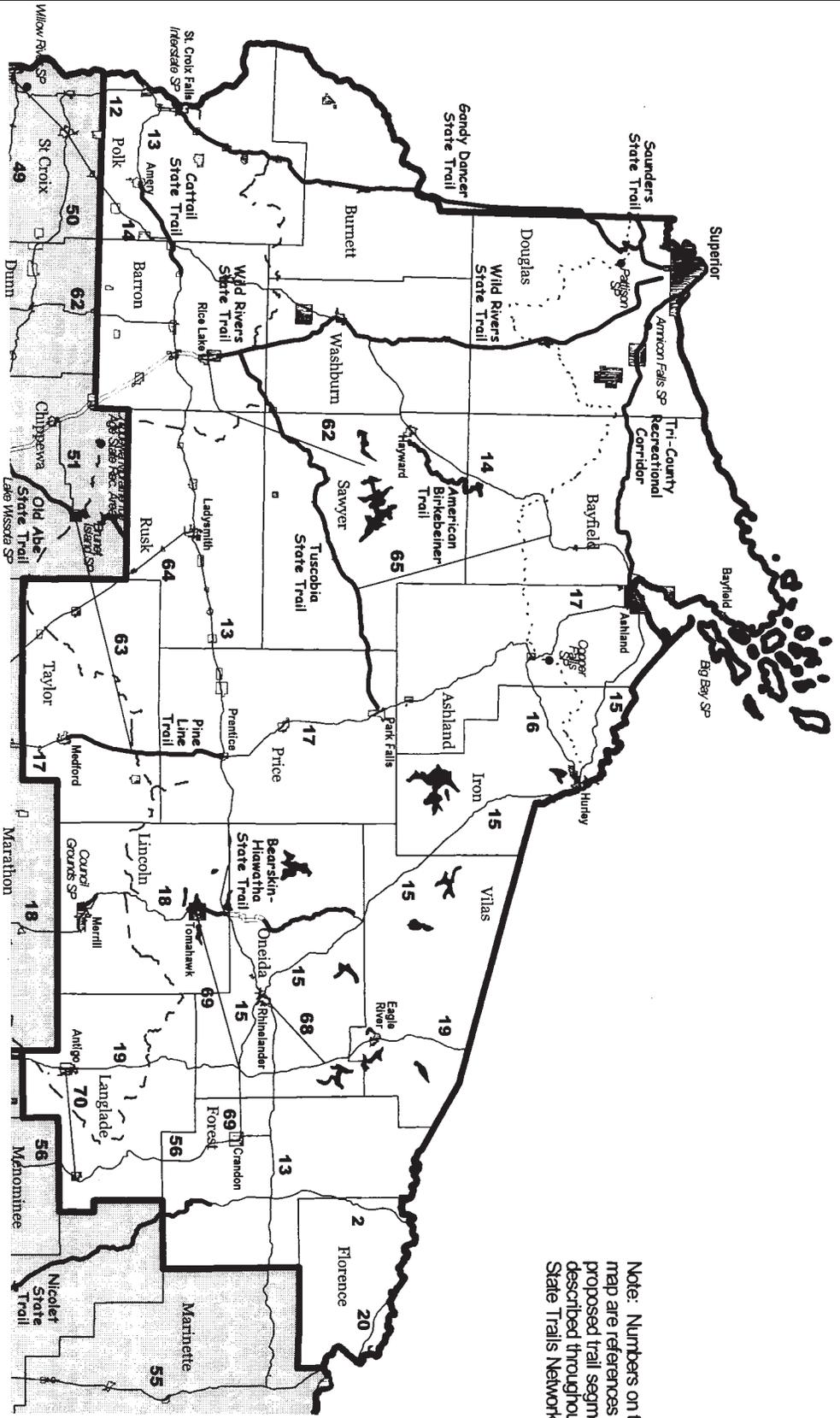
Beginning in Ripon, this trail would follow rail corridor and roadways to Oxford. Heading south out of Ripon, the trail follows the rail line through Markesan, then west to Kingston, to northwest through Glen Oak and Packwaukee to end up in Oxford.

SEGMENT 61 - FOND DU LAC TO WASHINGTON COUNTY

This segment of rail corridor would connect Fond du Lac with Washington County via the Fond du Lac area communities of Eden and Campbellsport. Currently, the portion of rail corridor between Eden and West Bend in Washington County has been abandoned and is being appraised for DNR purchase following significant public interest in the project.

NORTHERN REGION

NORTHERN REGION



Note: Numbers on this map are references to proposed trail segments described throughout the State Trails Network Plan.

- Proposed Trails
- Approved Trails
- Open Trails
- Ice Age Trail
- North Country Trail
- State Parks and Recreation Areas
- Water
- Cities and Villages
- DNR Administrative Regional Boundaries
- County Boundaries



Produced By:
 Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
 Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Trails Section
 January 2001

EXISTING & APPROVED TRAIL NETWORK NORTHERN REGION

Trail Name	Owned by	Operated by	Status
American Birkebeiner Trail	Private	Private	Open
Bearskin-Hiawatha State Trail	DNR	DNR/County	Open except for connector between Bearskin & the Hiawatha State Trails
Cattail State Trail	DNR	County	Open from Amery to Almena
Gandy Dancer State Trail	DNR	County	Open; section of trail in Minnesota
Ice Age National & State Scenic Trail	Private/Public	IAPTF, NPS, DNR	525 miles of 1200 miles open statewide
Nicolet State Trail	DNR	County	Open
North Country National Scenic Trail	DNR	County	96 miles of 200 miles open statewide
Pine Line Trail	County	County	Open
Saunders State Trail	DNR	County	Open
Tri-County Recreational Corridor	County/DNR	County	Open
Tuscobia State Trail	DNR/DOT	DNR	Open
Wild Rivers State Trail	DNR	County	Open from Rice Lake to Ambridge; not open from Rice Lake to Chippewa Falls



Connie Loeven

POTENTIAL TRAIL NETWORK
FOR THE
NORTHERN REGION

Map Key	Segment	Regional Miles	Type of Corridor
2	Forest Co. to Michigan state line	40	Rail
12	St. Croix - Mississippi river corridor	13	Roadway, Various
13	Dresser to Michigan State Line, Includes Rhinelander to Monico	250	Rail; Roadway; Existing Trail
14	Bayfield to Hudson	180	Rail, Abandoned (now used by snowmobiles)
15	Ashland to Rhinelander	150	Rail, Abandoned; Roadway; Existing Trail
16	Mellen to Hurley	25	Rail, Abandoned
17	Washburn to Abbotsford	130	Rail, Active; Existing Trail
18	Tomahawk to Wisconsin Dells	39	Rail, Roadway; Utility corridor
19	Langlade Co. to Michigan state line	85	Rail, Abandoned; Southern Connections to Wiouwash Trail
20	Florence County - Michigan to Michigan link	14	Rail, Abandoned
56	Argonne to Shawno	65	Rail, Abandoned
62	Reserve to Wheeler	52	Rail, Abandoned
63	Cornell To Chelsea	40	Rail, Abandoned; Roadways
64	Ladysmith to Marshfield	38	Rail; roadways
65	Loretta to Grandview	30	Rail, Abandoned; County & National Forest Roadways
68	Rhinelander to Three lakes	15	Rail, Abandoned
69	Tomahawk to Crandon	40	Rail, Abandoned
70	Antigo to White Lake	20	Rail, Abandoned

NORTHERN REGION

The 18-county Northern Region could be well described as the “land of lakes.” Many miles of trail in the region take advantage of this scenic landscape. State-owned rail trails account for about 260 miles of the region’s trail, including the Bearskin, Tuscobia, Wild Rivers, Saunders, and Gandy Dancer State Trails. County-owned and operated rail trails add another 170 miles. In addition, hundreds of miles of other trails exist on federal, state, and county lands.

The following describes potential trail corridors in the region that would fit into a state trails network. A number of segments in these corridors may become available within the next several years, opening possibilities for developing new, extensive rail trails to connect the northern part of the state both east-west and north-south.

SEGMENT 2 - FOREST CO. TO MICHIGAN, NICOLET TRAIL (NORTHERN REGION)

The DNR has partially acquired the Nicolet State Trail corridor from Gillett to Wabeno. The rest of the rail corridor in Forest Co., from Cavour to Wabeno, remains largely DOT-owned, with portions used for private rail by term agreement. The tracks from Wabeno to Laona have been removed as well as the tracks north of Cavour to the Michigan border, and this grade may be available for trail acquisition in the near future. A large segment of the corridor falls within the boundaries of the Nicolet National Forest. Numerous streams, lakes and wetlands lie adjacent to the grade as the scenic corridor runs north from Forest County to Florence County. See the Northeast Region section for a description of the southern reaches of this proposed trail.

SEGMENT 12 - ST. CROIX - MISSISSIPPI RIVER CORRIDOR (NORTHERN REGION)

A connector along highway corridors to the south end of the Gandy Dancer State Trail near St. Croix Falls would link with West Central Region’s Segment 12 at the St. Croix/Polk county line. The segment includes State Highway 35 in St. Croix county and a combination of roadways in Polk County.

SEGMENT 13 - DRESSER TO MICHIGAN

This 250-mile-long east-west corridor consists of rail line, the Cattail Trail, which is owned by the DNR and operated by Polk and Barron counties, and an optional highway right-of-way. It has the potential to link with the Gandy Dancer, Wild Rivers, and Bearskin-Hiawatha state trails, the Pine Line Trail, Nicolet State Trail, Ice Age National and State Scenic Trail, and three proposed segments—2, 15, and 17. It would also link with the proposed Hiles to Crandon snowmobile trail in Forest County. The use of roadways in Oneida and Forest counties are an alternative to the rail line. The rail line from Dresser to Amery was abandoned and negotiations are ongoing between the county and the railroad to acquire the segment for trail purposes.

The corridor runs from a hilly, rolling agricultural landscape in Polk Co. through level agricultural and forested areas in Rusk and Price counties, to predominately lake and pine forest landscapes in Oneida and Forest Counties.

The short 14-mile segment from Rhinelander to Monico connects the Tri-County Trail originating in Bayfield County to the Michigan corridor by way of the proposed Washburn to Rhinelander trail

corridor. Connection can also be made to the Mountain Bay Trail to the south through the proposed Langlade corridor.

SEGMENT 14 - BAYFIELD TO HUDSON, (NORTHERN REGION)

The abandoned rail grade from Hudson to Spooner could link the Wild Rivers and Cattail trails and connect to trails in Minnesota near the state line. The corridor from Spooner to Hayward is an active rail line. The proposed trail continues on old, abandoned rail grade from Hayward to Bayfield. The Hayward to Bayfield portion of the corridor would connect to the Tri-County Recreational Corridor and link to Hayward area trails already in place. Parts of it, particularly in the Chequamegon National Forest and county forests, are used now as snowmobile trails.

Much of this corridor runs through typical northern lakes and forest landscapes.

SEGMENT 15 - ASHLAND TO RHINELANDER

Beginning in Ashland and extending southeast to Gurney near the Ashland/Iron County line, this potential corridor includes a section of abandoned rail line mostly owned

by the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa.

From Gurney to Hurley, Iron County's 22-mile Iron Horse Trail is part of this segment.

The section from Hurley to Manitowish, a rail line abandoned in the early 1980s, is a state-funded snowmobile and ATV trail for which Iron County has oral or written easements. The county is interested in improving the trail for mountain biking.

From Manitowish, a potential trail corridor extends southeast through Vilas County to the City of Rhinelander. The route includes



Wisconsin Department of Tourism

abandoned rail corridors, roadways and existing trails in the Northern Highland State Forest. The segment in Iron County is an existing snowmobile trail. Iron County would like to cooperate with the state forest to repair bridges so the trail can be opened for bicycling.

Part of this segment includes a proposed loop route on abandoned rail line that from Manitowish to Woodruff. From Woodruff, the loop extends north to Boulder Junction and

returns to Manitowish. In addition to abandoned rail line, the loop consists of Boulder Junction's community trail, roadways and/or existing forest trails. A spur connector to Sayner is also proposed using forest trails and/or low-use roadways.

Continuing south, a route through Woodruff/Minocqua would connect with the Bearskin/Hiawatha State Trail. From these same communities, an old abandoned rail corridor near the route of State Highway 47 may provide the opportunity to connect to the City of Rhinelander. If the rail corridor is not intact, it may be feasible to use roadways and existing trails, since the northern half of the route is through the Northern Highland/American Legion State Forest.

SEGMENT 16 - MELLEN TO HURLEY

The rail line from Mellen to Hurley could connect the two communities, Copper Falls State Park, and the northeast terminus of the Iron Horse Trail in Hurley. It would also connect up to the proposed Washburn to Spencer and Washburn to Fond du Lac grades, (Segment 17). A portion of the grade follows Highway 77, winding through the rugged hills of the Gogebic Range in Iron County. Highways 77 and 13 were identified in the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* and are likely candidates for wider paved shoulders improving accommodations for bicyclists and hikers.

This grade is a federally granted right-of-way that is under study by the Federal Bureau of Land Management and the Wisconsin Attorney General's Office. Once ownership is clarified, the DNR will know how, and if, to proceed on other federally granted right-of-ways in the state.

The Iron County Board favors this acquisition and will assume development and operation of the trail if acquired. The

proposed route of the North Country National Scenic Trail approximately parallels the Mellen to Hurley corridor its entire length.

SEGMENT 17 - WASHBURN TO ABBOTSFORD (NORTHERN REGION)

This is a major, 135-mile-long, north-south corridor that uses rail line from Washburn to Ashland to Prentice, the 26-mile-long Pine Line Trail from Prentice to Medford, and rail line from Medford to Abbotsford where it links with Segment 50 in the West Central Region.

This segment also links to the Tri-County Trail in Ashland, the Mellen to Hurley grade, the North Country National Scenic Trail, Copper Falls State Park near Mellen, the Tuscobia State Trail in Park Falls and the Dresser to Cavour line. This corridor, if acquired, would be a major link in the Northern Region to many of the other proposed trail routes. Right now most of corridor is active rail line.

This proposed corridor runs from the Bayfield Peninsula of Lake Superior through heavily forested lands in Ashland and Price Counties, and the Chequamegon National Forest. The proposed corridor crosses many streams and runs adjacent a great majority of northern landscape features such as bogs, lakes, and wet and dry forests.

SEGMENT 18 - TOMAHAWK TO WISCONSIN DELLS (NORTHERN REGION)

From the end of the Bearskin/Hiawatha State Trail in Tomahawk, this corridor would go south to Merrill, and then into the West Central Region terminating in Wisconsin Dells. Part of State Highway 107 has wide shoulders to accommodate bicycles and was identified

in the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*. When the remaining section of highway is reconstructed, wide shoulders will be included. Going south this corridor links to Wausau, it could link up to Mountain Bay Trail from there via road corridors.

SEGMENT 19 - LANGLADE CO. TO MICHIGAN

This abandoned rail corridor links the State of Michigan with the Mountain Bay Trail near Eland in Marathon County. It passes through a few state wildlife areas and some county forests. This corridor also links to the proposed Three Lakes to Rhinelander and Crandon to Tomahawk abandoned rail corridors, the Washburn to Rhinelander corridor at Monico and the Antigo to White Lake proposed corridor. The segment includes a loop to the Crandon to White Lake proposed corridor. The grade runs through portions of Langlade County Forest, the lake area around Kempster in Langlade County and the popular tourist areas of Three Lakes and Eagle River in Vilas County.

SEGMENT 20 - FLORENCE COUNTY - U.P. MICHIGAN TO U.P. MICHIGAN THROUGH FLORENCE CO. LINK

This abandoned rail corridor is owned by DOT with a few possible reversions. Florence County uses the corridor for trail purposes via a use agreement with DOT. A partnering effort with the State of Michigan could allow a connection between the two state trail systems via this corridor, including the Cavour to Michigan corridor, the Langlade County to Michigan corridor, the Mellen to Hurley corridor, and the Washburn to Hurley corridor. This allows trail users loop connections in Wisconsin to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

SEGMENT 56 - ARGONNE TO SHAWANO

This is an active rail corridor with abandonment expected in fall of 2000 on the segment from Crandon to White Lake. Argonne is on the Dresser to Michigan corridor in the north, and Shawano links to the Mountain Bay Trail in the south of the corridor. The Crandon to Tomahawk corridor and the White Lake to Antigo corridor link to the Langlade County to Michigan corridor to form a loop. An old abandoned corridor east of White Lake in the future could link this corridor to the Nicolet State Trail or connect it to road routes. This corridor runs along the east shore of Lake Metonga at Crandon, then runs south through forested lake areas of the Nicolet National Forest. In Langlade County it follows the Wolf River for about seven miles and continues south through the Northwest portion of the Menominee Indian Reservation, terminating at Shawano and its connection to the Mountain Bay Trail.

SEGMENT 62 - RESERVE TO WHEELER

This segment's abandoned rail corridor is largely privately owned. From Wheeler to Ridgeland the trail corridor would follow various roadways. From Ridgeland through Barron to Rice Lake the rail grade is still intact in many places. Some of this corridor serves as city street in Rice Lake or County Trunk Highway F in Barron and Sawyer Counties. The northern terminus of the trail occurs on the Lac Court Orielles Reservation in Sawyer County. This corridor connects with the Dresser to Cameron proposed corridor, the Wild Rivers, and Tuscobia trails. It passes through county forest, by a few state wildlife areas, the lakes area of Rice Lake and rolling agricultural lands in southern Barron County.

SEGMENT 63 - CORNELL TO CHELSEA

Beginning at the Old Abe Trail in the West Central Region, this abandoned rail corridor passes through some state wildlife areas and a portion of the Chequamegon National Forest to connect with the Pine Line Trail between Prentice and Medford. Since this corridor was abandoned many years ago portions of the grade may not be available due to property reversions. Road routes may be the only way to connect significant portions of this corridor from Cornell to Chelsea.

SEGMENT 64 - LADYSMITH TO MARSHFIELD

This abandoned rail corridor from Ladysmith to Marshfield intersects the Cornell to Chelsea corridor in Taylor. This corridor passes a few state wildlife areas and crosses the Jump River. This small segment is a medium priority for acquisition in the Northern Region.

SEGMENT 65 - LORETTA TO GRAND VIEW

This abandoned rail corridor starts from the Tuscobia Trail in Loretta and heads north through the Chequamegon National Forest to Clam Lake and Grand View where it then would connect with the Bayfield to Hudson corridor. Some of this corridor is now used for roads and these possibly could be up graded for trail use. This corridor passes through the area where elk reintroduction began.

SEGMENT 68 - RHINELANDER TO THREE LAKES

This abandoned rail corridor would link these two communities via an off-road

connection. At Rhinelander, links to the Washburn to Fond du Lac corridor, and at Three Lakes links to the Langlade County to Michigan corridor are possible. Significant bike trail interest has occurred in Oneida County in the last three years. Strong support can be expected for this connector trail.

SEGMENT 69 - TOMAHAWK TO CRANDON

This abandoned corridor would link these two communities via an off-road connector. This corridor intersects the Langlade County to Michigan corridor at Pelican Lake and links the Argonne to Shawano corridor in the east with the Tomahawk to Wausau corridor in the west. This short linking corridor provides opportunity to access the very popular Hiawatha-Bearskin Trail from other corridors to the east. The corridor runs through primarily heavily forested lands in Lincoln and Langlade Counties.

SEGMENT 70 - ANTIGO TO WHITE LAKE

This abandoned rail grade links these two communities via off-road connector. At Antigo it connects to the Langlade County to Michigan corridor and at White Lake it connects to the Crandon to White Lake rail segment about to be abandoned. The corridor runs through the Antigo flats to the Wolf River at White Lake.

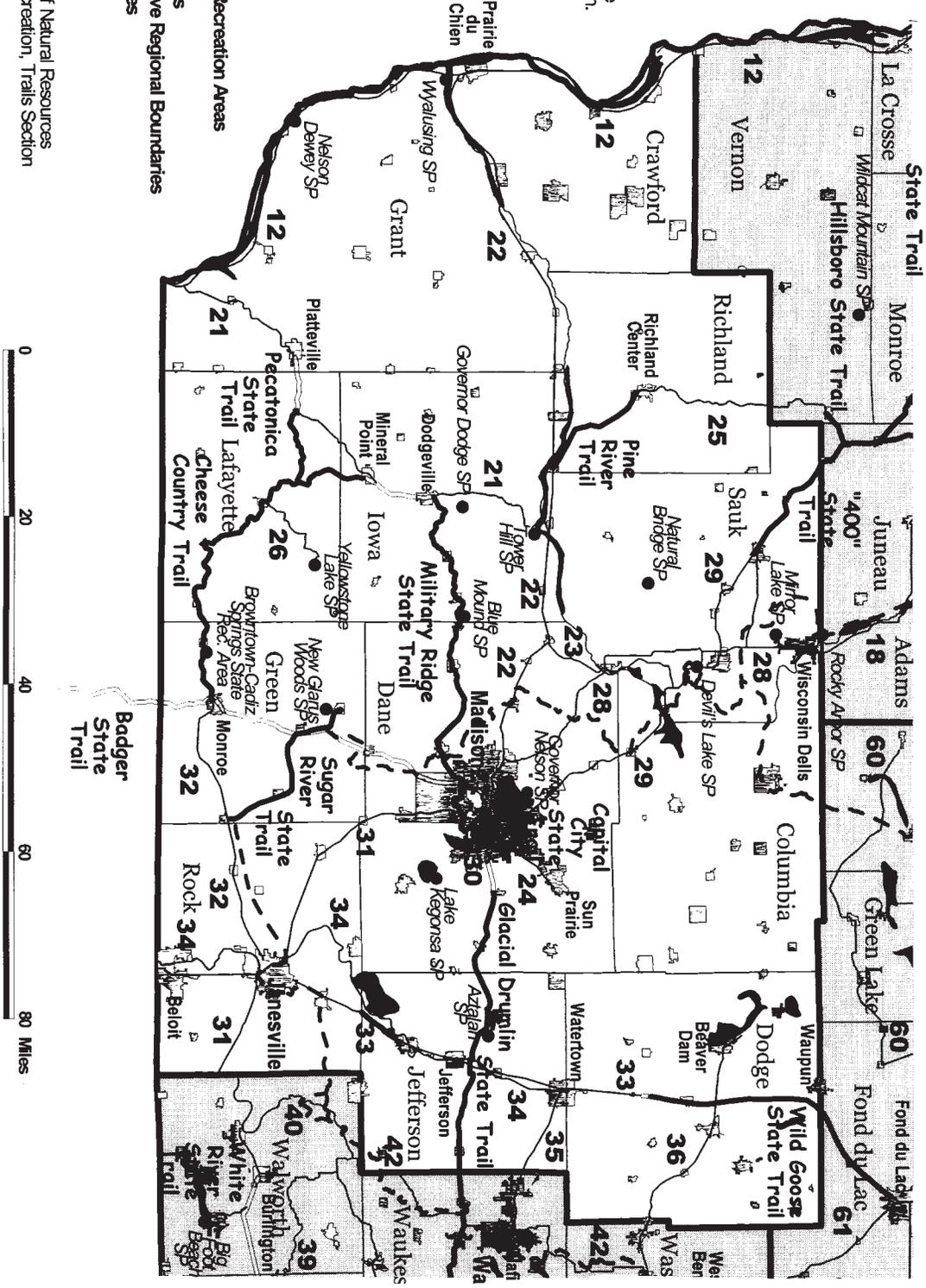
SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Note: Numbers on this map are references to proposed trail segments described throughout the State Trails Network Plan.

-  Proposed Trails
-  Open Trails
-  Ice Age Trail
-  State Parks and Recreation Areas
-  Water
-  Cities and Villages
-  DNR Administrative Regional Boundaries
-  County Boundaries

Produced By:
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Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Trails Section
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EXISTING & APPROVED TRAIL NETWORK SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Trail Name	Owned by	Operated by	Status
"400" State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Badger State Trail	DOT	DNR	Not open
Capital City State Trail	County/City	County/City/ DNR	Open
Cheese Country Trail	County	County	Open
Glacial Drumlin State Trail	DNR	DNR	Not open from Cottage Grove to Madison
Glacial River Trail	County	County	Open from Fort Atkinson south to Rock County border
Ice Age National & State Scenic Trail	Private/Public	IAPTF, NPS, DNR	525 miles of 1200 miles open statewide
Military Ridge State Trail	DNR	DNR	Not open from Dodgeville to Mineral Point
Pecatonica State Trail	DNR	County	Not open from Belmont to Platteville
Pine River Trail	County	County	Open
Sugar River State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Wild Goose State Trail	DNR	County	Open



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**POTENTIAL TRAIL NETWORK
FOR THE
SOUTH CENTRAL REGION**

Map Key	Segment	Regional Miles	Type of Corridor
12	St. Croix - Mississippi river Corridor	84	Rail; Various Roadways
21	Spring Green to Wisconsin/Illinois/Iowa state line	62	Roadways
22	Prairie du Chien to Madison	97	Rail; Roadways
23	Mazomanie to Devil's Lake	19	Rail
24	Madison to Sun Prairie	9	Rail
25	Lone Rock to Hillsboro	39	Rail; Roadways
26	Darlington to Yellowstone Lake State Park	10	Roadway
28	Madison to Lake Delton	50	Roadways
29	Madison to Reedsburg	53	Rail
30	Madison to Cottage Grove (Glacial Drumlin State Trail)	27	Existing Trail; Rail; Natural Resource Corridor
31	Madison to Racine	45	Rail; Roadway
32	Monroe to Janesville	34	Rail, Ice Age Trail
33	Janesville to Clyman Junction	48	Rail
34	Rock River, Watertown to Beloit	60	Rail; roadway; natural resource corridor
35	Watertown to Delafield	11	Utility corridor; Rail
36	Beaver Dam to Pike Lake	26	Rail
69	Tomahawk to Crandon	40	Rail, Abandoned
70	Antigo to White Lake	20	Rail, Abandoned

SOUTH CENTRAL REGION

Among natural features in this region are the Mississippi, Wisconsin, and Rock rivers, and their respective watersheds, much of which are dominated by Driftless Area topography, an area that escaped glaciation in the last glacial advance. Edward Daniel, the first state geologist, described the Driftless Area in the 1850s: "About one-third of the surface is prairie, dotted and belted with beautiful groves and oak-openings."

Other topographic features include a group of five mounds described as outliers of the Niagara escarpment. Blue Mound, the highest at 1,716 feet, is protected within Blue Mound State Park near the Village of Blue Mounds. The Baraboo Bluffs also carry significant geologic importance as the remnant of an ancient mountain range that is also home to Devils Lake State Park.

Recreational resources in the 12-county region consist of 238 miles of established

rails-to-trails, 94 miles of Ice Age Trail corridor, 16 state parks and recreation areas, and the 90-mile Lower Wisconsin State Riverway. Existing state trails are the Military Ridge, Pecatonica, Sugar River, and part of the Glacial Drumlin Trail.

The following describes 16 potential trail corridors.

SEGMENT 12 - ST. CROIX - MISSISSIPPI RIVER CORRIDOR (SOUTH CENTRAL REGION)

Following the Mississippi River in Grant and Crawford Counties, this 84-mile potential trail route is part of a state-long Mississippi River corridor that extends southward into a similar trail system in Illinois, and could link up with a similar trail system in Iowa and Minnesota. The *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* identifies a 150-mile-long segment of State Highway 35 as a "priority corridor" that is resulting in wider paved shoulders for bicyclists and walkers

The Mississippi River provides a national natural resource corridor and this segment would serve up a high quality, river's edge experience through diverse uplands and lowlands from broad, spectacular panoramic views of the river valley to intimate views of less extensive landscape features. Users could visit the villages and towns and many other cultural features along the river and encounter the wide variety of ecosystems that characterize the river valley.

The eventual completed segment could be pieced together in a variety of ways, using primarily corridors incorporating state, county and town highway right-of-ways, parts of rail corridors, and public and private lands.

In the South Central Region, the corridor links a dozen communities, Nelson Dewey and Wyalusing state parks, Stonefield Village and



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Villa Louis historic sites and major portions of a large national wildlife management area.

SEGMENT 21 - SPRING GREEN TO ILLINOIS

State Highway 23 is a potential north-south trail route that could connect Tower Hill and Governor Dodge State Parks, and link with the Military Ridge State Trail.

Road routes could link Mineral Point and the Military Ridge Trail with the Pecatonica and Cheese Country State Trails to create a 62-mile system that highlights highly scenic unglaciated landscape and culture of southwest Wisconsin. It also would link a number of interesting communities, state and local parks, and historical sites, including Pendarvis and First Capitol historical sites and Belmont Mound State Park. In addition, this segment would connect with the Mississippi

River corridor and the states of Illinois and Iowa.

SEGMENT 22 - PRAIRIE DU CHIEN TO MADISON

A major east-west route along the historic and highly scenic Wisconsin River corridor would create a long-distance trail linking the Madison metropolitan area with the Mississippi River valley corridor and Wyalusing State Park near Prairie du Chien.

Much of the 97-miles-corridor is already recommended for a trail in the master plan of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway and the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020*, where paved shoulders are suggested for State Highway 133. The trail would likely rely primarily upon a combination of publicly owned lands within the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway project boundary, as well as a variety of state and county highway to include paved shoulders and possible rail corridor.

SEGMENT 23 - MAZOMANIE TO DEVIL'S LAKE

This roughly 19-mile-long corridor would link two major recreation areas, the Lower Wisconsin Riverway (LWSR) and Devil's Lake State Park. Together with Segments 28 and/or 29, discussed below, Segment 23 would provide a link from Madison and beyond to the "400," Elroy-Sparta, Great River, and La Crosse River state trail corridors. The proposed corridor might use rail, road, and utility right-of-ways.

The area has abundant scenic resources as it passes from the LWSR into the Baraboo Hills. This proposed trail relates to several trail recommendations in the Devil's Lake master plan:

- ◆ Page 8 of the Devil's Lake master plan recommends creation of the Stage Coach Trail on a route that would roughly parallel an old stagecoach route between Baraboo and Sauk City. This route would follow a path now known as Burma Road and a snowmobile route that follows the perimeter of the Badger Ammunition Plant property.
- ◆ Also on page 8 the plan recommends development of a bicycle trail along South Shore Drive from the eastern park boundary to the South Shore use area by constructing a separate gravel path parallel to the road, similar to the one at Peninsula State Park.
- ◆ The master plan recommends that if the railroad grade is ever abandoned, it could be converted into a trail. The rail corridor could extend either to Sauk City through the Badger Ammunition Plant property or to Madison through Merrimac (see Segment 11, below).

SEGMENT 24 - MADISON TO SUN PRAIRIE

This nine-mile corridor would serve Sun Prairie, a growing suburb of Madison. The trail would provide a significant link between the two communities for commuting and recreation. The proposed corridor might use rail, county or town roads.

SEGMENT 25 - LONE ROCK TO HILLSBORO

The 19.5-mile section of this corridor from Lone Rock to Richland Center is an existing trail on an abandoned rail line owned and operated under a joint county/private partnership arrangement. The 20 miles from Richland Center to a linkage with the Hillsboro State Trail in Hillsboro would follow

various roadways and the Pine River. This route would link with Segment 22 (Prairie du Chien to Madison).

SEGMENT 26 - DARLINGTON TO YELLOWSTONE LAKE STATE PARK

County Trunk Highway F is a potential trail connector route from Darlington that would provide users of the Pecatonica and Cheese Country trails access to Yellowstone Lake State Park. This 10-mile-long connection will add to the recreational opportunities of Yellowstone Lake State Park.

SEGMENT 28 - MADISON TO LAKE DELTON

This corridor would provide an opportunity for both recreation and bicycle commuting. The 50-mile-long corridor, which follows the U.S. Highway 12 right-of-way to Prairie du Sac/Sauk City, is a major link from Madison to the recreation-rich areas of the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway. Various road routes would make the connection beyond this point. In Madison, there is the potential to connect with the Capital City State Trail. There are two crossings of the Ice Age State Scenic Trail corridor, one south of Wisconsin Dells and another between Madison and Sauk City.

SEGMENT 29 - MADISON TO REEDSBURG

This 53-mile-long route would provide a unique opportunity to travel from the capital city of Madison, across Lake Wisconsin on the Merrimac ferry, and on to Devil's Lake, one of the state's most popular natural resources, linking to the "400," Elroy-Sparta, Great River, and La Crosse River trail corridors. It

could connect with the Ice Age State Scenic Trail at Lodi, Merrimac, and Devil's Lake. This route would follow rail and road routes.

SEGMENT 30 - MADISON TO COTTAGE GROVE

For several years, the cities of Madison and Fitchburg, Dane County and the DNR have worked together on the 27-mile-long Capital City State Trail proposal. The trail will link the Military Ridge and Glacial Drumlin State Trails by using active and abandoned rail corridor, city streets, private lands, and segments of the Dane County E-Way. The only remaining section to complete is a seven-mile-long section of the Glacial Drumlin Trail between Madison and Cottage Grove.

SEGMENT 31 - MADISON TO RAGINE (SOUTH CENTRAL REGION)

This 45-mile-long rail corridor provides a potential trail route between Madison and Janesville. It is one leg of a triangular trail system that includes Segments 27 and 32. It would connect with, and potentially incorporate, a portion of the Ice Age State Scenic Trail near Janesville.

Rail corridor or roadway would create a potential trail connector from Janesville to the proposed backbone trail system in the DNR's Southeast Region. The Rock County Alliance of Snowmobile Trails is on record in favor of a trail on the rail line, recently proposed for abandonment. This proposed connection with the Turtle Creek corridor would take place northwest of Darien at the Rock/Walworth county line.



Gary Knowles

SEGMENT 32 - MONROE TO JANESVILLE

This potential 34-mile-long trail route in Green and Rock counties uses a railroad right-of-way that links with the Cheese Country Trail and Sugar River State Trail on one end and connects with the Rock County Trail system in Janesville. This corridor would connect with segment 31 and 33.

SEGMENT 33 - JANESVILLE TO CLYMAN JUNCTION

This 48-mile-long trail would be made up of a variety of corridors. The Ice Age State Scenic Trail from Janesville north to Milton is recommended for completion, with rail corridor a second option. The section from Milton to Fort Atkinson, part of which has been developed as Jefferson County's Glacial River Trail, includes various highway and rail right-of-ways. From Fort Atkinson to the south end of the Wild Goose State Trail at Clyman Junction, the proposal includes the option of using rail corridor or highway right-of-way. It intersects the Glacial Drumlin State Trail north of Jefferson.

SEGMENT 34 - ROCK RIVER, WATERTOWN TO BELOIT

With the support of Jefferson and Rock Counties, the Rock River is recognized as a major natural resource corridor having trail potential. The 60-mile corridor intersects the Glacial Drumlin trail east of Lake Mills. It could also be considered as having interstate trail potential with a connection at the state line in Beloit.

SEGMENT 35 - WATERTOWN TO DELAFIELD (SOUTH CENTRAL REGION)

A 11-mile route on utility corridor or rail line from Watertown to Oconomowoc has the potential of providing a connection to an on-street/road trail proposed in the Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission's Bicycle / Pedestrian Plan for Southeastern Wisconsin. This route would link with the Ice Age Bike Route proposed as one of the "backbone" trails in the Southeastern Region and with Segment 33, the proposed southerly extension of the Wild Goose State Trail.

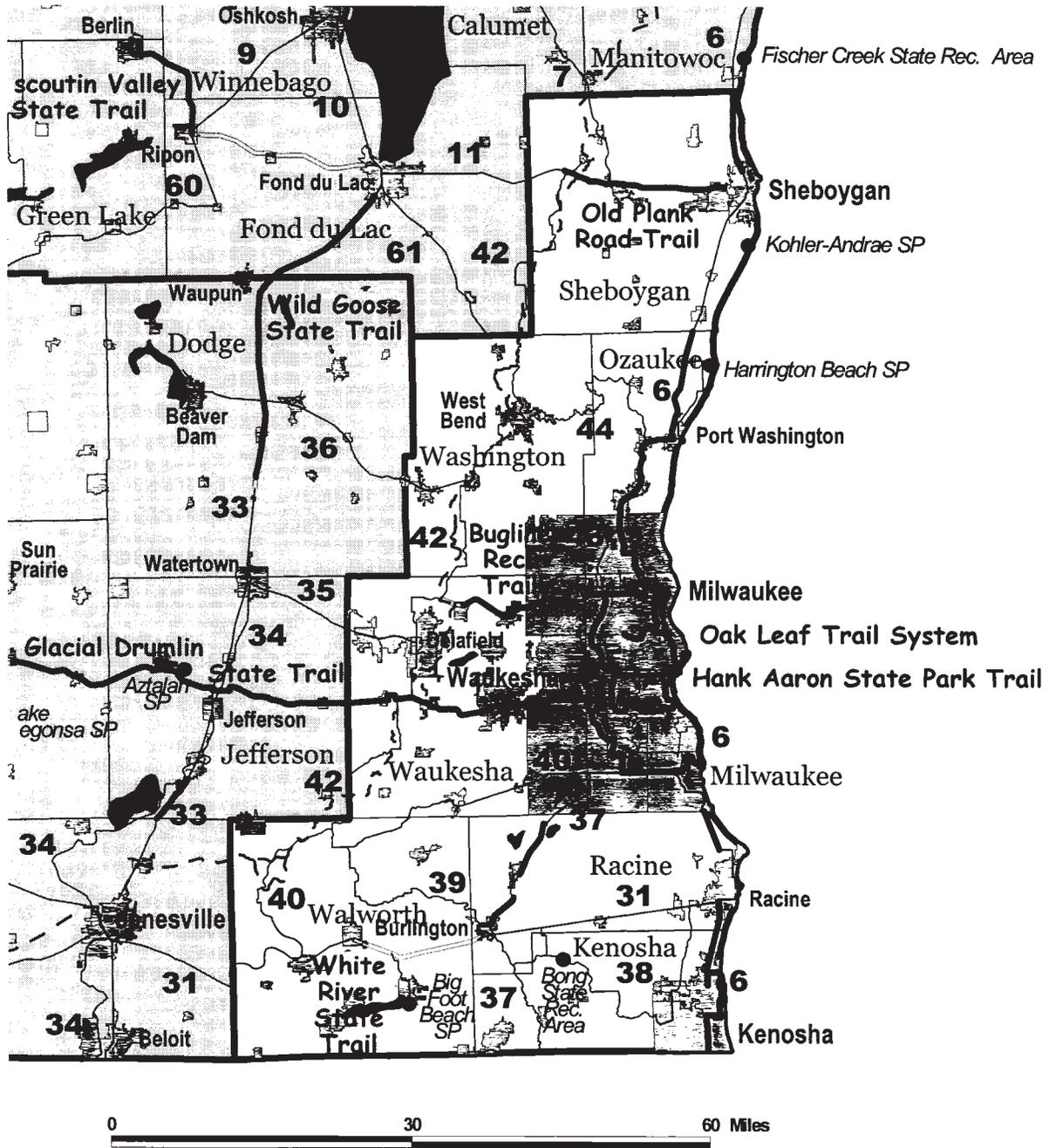
SEGMENT 36 - BEAVER DAM TO PIKE LAKE (SOUTH CENTRAL REGION)

This 26-mile segment has the potential of connecting with the Wild Goose State Trail and with the Southeast Region's proposed "backbone" trail system via rail corridor to the Dodge/Washington county line. Wisconsin and Southern Railroad Co. operate the rail line. At the county line there are two options for extending east to Hartford—rail line or the Rubicon River natural resource corridor. There is an off-road trail from Hartford to Pike Lake State Park and a trail in the park from Highway 60 to the beach, where it would connect with the Ice Age Scenic Trail.



Wisconsin DNR

SOUTHEAST REGION



- Proposed Trails
- Approved Trails
- Open Trails
- Ice Age Trail
- State Parks and Recreation Areas
- Water
- Cities and Villages
- DNR Administrative Regional Boundaries
- County Boundaries



EXISTING & APPROVED TRAIL
NETWORK
SOUTHEASTERN REGION

Trail Name	Owned by	Operated by	Status
Bugline Recreational Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Burlington Trail	DOT	DNR	Open
Glacial Drumlin State Trail	County/City	County/City/ DNR	Open
Hank Aaron State Trail	County	County	Under Construction
Ice Age National & State Scenic Trail	DNR	DNR	525 miles of 1200 miles open statewide
Lake Country Trail	County	County	Open
MRK Trail	Private/Public	IAPTF, NPS, DNR	Open
New Berlin Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
North Shore Trail	DNR	County	Open
Norway Trail	County	County	Open
Oak Leaf Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Old Plank Road Trail	DNR	County	Open
Ozaukee County Trail	DNR	County	Open
Racine Sturtevant Trail	County	County	Open
White River State Trail	DNR	DNR	DNR working with counties
Waterford to Windlake Trail	DNR	County	Open

POTENTIAL TRAIL NETWORK
FOR THE
SOUTHEASTERN REGION

Map Key	Segment	Regional Miles	Type of Corridor
6	Green Bay to Illinois	110	Natural Resource; Rail; Roadways; Utility
7	Green Bay to Plymouth	12	Rail; Roadways
31	Madison to Racine	55	Rail, Active & Abandoned; Natural Resource; Utility; Roadways
35	Watertown to Delafield	7	Rail; Roadway
36	Beaver Dam to Pike Lake	5	Rail
37	Franklin to Illinois	36	Rail; Roadways
38	Sturtevant to Bong State Recreation Area	35	Roadway
39	Burlington to La Grange	20	Roadways
40	Oak Creek to Delavan	60	Rail
42	Plymouth to La Grange	93	Existing Trail; Rail; Natural Resource Corridor
43	Mequon to New Berlin	20	Rail; Roadway
44	West Bend to Saukville	29	Rail, Ice Age Trail
33	Janesville to Clyman Junction	48	Rail
34	Rock River, Watertown to Beloit	60	Rail; roadway; natural resource corridor
35	Watertown to Delafield	11	Utility corridor; Rail
36	Beaver Dam to Pike Lake	26	Rail
69	Tomahawk to Crandon	40	Rail, Abandoned
70	Antigo to White Lake	20	Rail, Abandoned

SOUTHEAST REGION

Lake Michigan bounds the Southeast Region on the east; to the south it's a rapidly growing northeastern Illinois metropolitan region, and on the west fertile agricultural lands. The eight counties within the region's boundary contain about 40 percent of Wisconsin's population.

A geologically prominent feature is the 10,000-year-old region known as the kettle moraine. This collection of hills, ridges, and depressions extends more than 100 miles lengthwise and ranges from 1-to-10-miles wide. Thousands of acres of this unique topography created by the Ice Age are protected within the Kettle Moraine State Forest's, Northern, Southern, Loew Lake, and Lapham Peak units. Five state parks, a state recreation area, an environmental education center, and 16 miles of the Glacial Drumlin State Trail also exist in the region. The Hank Aaron State Trail is under development along the Menomonee River in Milwaukee. When completed, the trail will stretch about seven miles, starting at Lake Michigan and linking to the Milwaukee County Oak Leaf Trail in Doyme Park at its West End.

Intensive growth and development presents a somewhat different scenario for trail expansion in this region. Good bicycling routes to be used for trips to work or as an alternative means of travel intensifies the need for trail designation and connectivity between municipalities. This same development limits the likelihood of rail abandonment and corridor availability in much of the region. Trail development, in some cases will take place within natural resource corridors, presenting additional challenges in acquisition.

While they may not be optimum trail routes, in some instances it may be necessary to use roadways in order to reach the desired connections or destinations. Where this situation arises, the DNR is working closely with the Department of Transportation to designate routes on lightly traveled roads



Phil Van Valkenberg

and wherever possible, develop paved shoulders or grade separated paths.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) provides planning services for seven counties in southeastern Wisconsin. SEWRPC developed a bicycle and pedestrian facilities system plan that includes DNR's entire Southeast Region except for Sheboygan County. Most of the following "backbone" trail corridor segments are adopted from that plan.

SEGMENT 6 - GREEN BAY TO ILLINOIS (SOUTHEAST REGION)

This segment also serves as a link, via rail, to a potential Northeast Region corridor at the Manitowoc/Sheboygan county line. A shared-road segment along Highway LS has

been developed by Sheboygan County from the county line south to the city of Sheboygan. The proposed corridor extends south through Sheboygan County into Ozaukee County where the county and local governments are developing an off-road segment on WEPCO utility right-of-way south to the Ozaukee/Milwaukee County line. A short on-road connector to Harrington Beach State Park, as well as a connector segment to Milwaukee County's Oak Leaf Trail will be pursued in the future. West of Port Washington, a road corridor would link with the proposed Milwaukee River Trail (Segment 44) at Saukville.

Continuing southward the trail runs along the Oak Leaf Trail to South Milwaukee. The county is currently pursuing continuation of the trail along the previous North Shore right of way to the Milwaukee/Racine County line.

Racine and Kenosha Counties and municipal governments have developed a number of trails on parkway lands, utility company right-of-ways and on-street routes. The corridor links with Illinois's North Shore Trail at the state line.

SEGMENT 7 - GREEN BAY TO PLYMOUTH (SOUTHEAST REGION)

In Sheboygan County, the proposed 13-mile-long route along State Highway 67 would cross the county's Old Plank Trail along State Highway 23 and would link the communities of Plymouth, Crystal Lake, Elkhart Lake, and Kiel; Sheboygan Marsh County Park, and the Osthoff multi-family residential development. The trail could be a separate trail along the highway, paved shoulder, on the parallel rail corridor, or some combination. See the description of the section that continues to Green Bay in the Northeast Region section of this plan.

SEGMENT 31 - MADISON TO RACINE (SOUTHEAST REGION)

From Racine to Delavan, all of this east-west proposed trail is rail line. The status of the rail line varies:

Segment	Miles	Status
Racine-Kansasville	14	Active Canadian Pacific rail line
Kansasville-Burlington	8	Inactive, but not abandoned; publicly owned
City of Burlington	2	Active rail line
Burlington-Elkhorn	13	Ownership transferring from DOT to DNR
Elkhorn-Darien	8	Owned by DOT, operated by Wisconsin & Southern Railroad

SEWRPC identifies the 37-mile-long section from Racine to east of Elkhorn as the Southwestern Trail corridor. The state currently owns the section between Burlington and Elkhorn and is pursuing the potential for trail development through this corridor. From Delavan, the proposed corridor connects to the Turtle Creek Trail via city streets. Turtle Creek is a natural resource corridor that extends westward into Rock County and provides a potential link with the proposed South Central Region trail system.

A connector located on County Trunk Highway NN, Lake Geneva city streets, and State Highway 120 will provide trail users access to the City and nearby Big Foot Beach State Park. County Trunk Highway B is proposed as a connector to Bong State Recreation Area.

SEGMENT 35 - WATERTOWN TO DELAFIELD (SOUTHEAST REGION)

This proposed trail would link the Southeast and South Central regions. See description for Segment 35 in the South Central Regions section of this plan.

SEGMENT 36 - BEAVER DAM TO PIKE LAKE (SOUTHEAST REGION)

From the intersection of the Ice Age Bike Route in Pike Lake State Park, this segment would be an important link to one of South Central Region's backbone trails, extending to Beaver Dam. Referred to as the Rubicon River corridor in SEWRPC's Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan, about half the route is on roadway



Mary Langenfeld

and the other half is a natural resource corridor.

SEGMENT 37 - FRANKLIN TO ILLINOIS

This segment begins in the southwest corner of Milwaukee County at the east end of the Muskego Lakes Trail identified in SEWRPC's Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan (Segment 40). Part of this segment includes a natural resource/utility corridor proposed as the Waterford-St. Martins Trail. Racine County has developed four miles of this corridor, known as the Waterford-Wind Lake Trail.

The remaining corridor from Waterford south to the Wisconsin/Illinois state line, is referred to as the Fox River Trail. Racine County has developed the four-mile-long Burlington Trail on this segment. South of Burlington the corridor intersects the Southwestern Trail section of Segment 31 and continues south on a natural resource corridor along the Fox River.

SEGMENT 38 - STURTEVANT TO BONG STATE RECREATION AREA

Beginning east of Sturtevant, this segment includes the 9.5-mile-long Pike Creek Trail about 3.5-miles of on-road connector to the Des Plaines River Trail, and then northwest 22 miles to Bong State Recreation Area and a linkage with the Fox River Trail section of Segment 37.

SEGMENT 39 - BURLINGTON TO LA GRANGE

From Burlington west, this segment uses SEWRPC's proposed 14.5-mile-long Sugar Creek Trail to Abel's Corners in Walworth County. The route continues north on road-

ways five miles to link with the Mukwonago River Trail section of Segment 40 east of La Grange. Continuing north on a short section of roadway on Segment 40 will provide access to the Kettle Moraine State Forest-Southern Unit and the Ice Age Bike Route section of Segment 42.

SEGMENT 40 - OAK CREEK TO DELAVAN

From its link with the Lake Michigan Trail section of Segment 6 in Oak Creek, this proposed corridor extends west on street routes to the Muskego Lakes Trail in the community of St. Martins. Muskego has completed a 2.5-mile-long segment on utility company right-of-way.

The corridor continues west on the Mukwonago River Trail section about 14 miles from the town of Vernon in Waukesha County to the town of Troy in Walworth County. None of this proposed corridor is developed.

From the west end of the Mukwonago River Trail, about four miles of the Ice Age Bike Route on U.S. Highway 12 and Tamarack Road are to be used as a connector to the Kettle Moraine State Forest-Southern Unit trail system. At the south end of the forest, a proposed connector to Whitewater would use town roads, of which about two miles are designated as Ice Age Trail. Also on the south end near Whitewater Lake, the Turtle Creek Trail is proposed as the final connecting link to Delavan and the South Central Region.

SEGMENT 42 - PLYMOUTH TO LA GRANGE

Extending south from proposed Segment 7, Segment 42 will also run on rail line to Elkhart Lake in Sheboygan County.

From Elkhart Lake, the route will switch to local roadways and continue south through much of the Kettle Moraine State Forest-Northern Unit, paralleling the Ice Age Trail. At

the Fond du Lac/Washington county line, the proposed corridor connects with the proposed Milwaukee River Trail and extends south to West Bend. From West Bend the remainder of the corridor, to its meeting with Segment 39 in the Kettle Moraine State Forest-Southern Unit is on SEWRPC's Ice Age Bike Route.

From north to south, the corridor connects Kettle Moraine State Forest-Northern Unit, Pike Lake State Park, Loew Lake Unit, Lapham Peak Unit, Glacial Drumlin State Trail, and Kettle Moraine State Forest-Southern Unit.

SEGMENT 43 - MEQUON TO NEW BERLIN

This proposed north-south trail corridor begins near Mee-Kwon Park in Mequon in Ozaukee Co. where it links with the proposed Milwaukee River Trail. It uses the route of the Little Menomonee River Trail as it continues south to the Menomonee River Trail near the confluence of the Menomonee and Little Menomonee rivers in western Milwaukee County. Part of the Menomonee River Trail proceeds northwest from this junction. Milwaukee County has developed about five miles of the Little Menomonee River Trail.

The trail proceeds south following the Oak Leaf Trail along Milwaukee County's western edge. It continues south until it links with the New Berlin Trail in Milwaukee County's Greenfield Park.

SEGMENT 44 - WEST BEND TO SAUKVILLE

Beginning in West Bend, where it connects with the Ice Age Trail and Segment 42, this proposed trail route follows the Milwaukee River eastward into Ozaukee County, where it meets the Green Bay to Illinois trail (Segment 6) at Saukville.

EXISTING & APPROVED TRAIL
NETWORK
WEST CENTRAL REGION

Trail Name	Owned by	Operated by	Status
"400" State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Buffalo River State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Chippewa River State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Elroy-Sparta State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Great River State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Green Circle Trail	City/Private	Cooperative	Open
Hillsboro State Trail	DNR	Cooperative	Open
Ice Age National & State Scenic Trail	Private/Public	IAPTF, NPS, DNR	525 miles of 1200 miles open statewide
La Crosse River State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Mountain Bay State Trail	DNR	County	Open
Old Abe State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Omaha Trail	County	County	Open
Red Cedar State Trail	DNR	DNR	Open
Tomorrow River State Trail	DNR	County	Under Construction
Urban State Trail	DOT	County	Not Open
Wild Rivers State Trail	DNR	County	Not open from Rice Lake to Chippewa Falls

POTENTIAL TRAIL NETWORK
FOR THE
WEST CENTRAL REGION

Map Key	Segment	Regional Miles	Type of Corridor
4	Marshland to Wisconsin Rapids	115	Rail with option of using roadway
12	St. Croix - Mississippi River Corridor	150	Rail; Roadway
17	Ashland to Abbotsford	7	Rail
18	Tomahawk to Wisconsin Dells	120	Utility; Roadway
46	Red Cedar Junction to Nelson	25	Roadway; Potential Rail Option
47	Marshfield to Merrillan	40	Rail; Roadway
48	Mondovi to Durand	17	Roadways
49	Hudson to Merrillan	110	Rail
50	Somerset to Marathon City	144	Roadways
51	Cornell to Bloomer	20	Roadways
52	Wausau to Marshfield	40	Rail; utility corridor; roadway
53	Wyeville to Mauston to Adams County Hwy Z	32	Rail & Roadways
64	Ladysmith to Marshfield	36	Rail & Roadways



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WEST CENTRAL REGION

The West Central Region contains a vast area of Western Upland, a landscape often described as one of the most scenic parts of the state. The driftless, or unglaciated, portions of the region contain long, narrow valleys and steep ridges. Tributary streams in the area follow steep gradients to larger river valleys such as the Black, Buffalo, Trempealeau, and La Crosse rivers, while the St. Croix and Chippewa Rivers drain the gently rolling glaciated portions of the Western Upland. The Mississippi River created bluffs and steep terrain along its immediate banks, some bluffs rising over 400 feet above the river, as at Perrot State Park.

A number of counties within the region are part of another geographical province known as the Central Plain. Between Camp Douglas and Merrilan, the striking hill-like landscape features called buttes and mesas are representative, as are expansive, flat sandy plains with pine barrens. In contrast, other portions of the Central Plain have the soft swells of glacial topography. The Wisconsin River is an important water resource in the eastern portion of the region and Central Plain.

Recreational opportunities in the region include 15 state parks and recreation areas, the Black River State Forest, and 226 miles in 11 state-owned rail trails: Red Cedar, Chippewa River, Buffalo River, Old Abe, Great River, La Crosse River, Elroy-Sparta, "400," Hillsboro, Tomorrow River and the Mountain-Bay in Marathon County.

The community of Chippewa Falls could potentially serve as a major trail hub. The Natural Resources Board approved the establishment of the Wild Rivers State Trail, a 135-mile trail from Norma, near Chippewa Falls, to Ambridge Junction near Superior, the Urban Trail between Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire, and the Old Abe State Trail between Chippewa Falls and Cornell. These trails



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connect with the Chippewa River and Red Cedar trails to form the 70-mile-long Chippewa Valley regional trail system.

Under the National Trails System Act, the DNR purchased an abandoned rail line from Plover to Scandinavia in Portage and Waupaca counties. Both counties are agreeable to a cooperative trail project. The section from Plover to the Portage County line is currently under development.

Additionally, the City of Marshfield has the potential to become a trailhead with the possible development of several new trails in the area.

SEGMENT 4 - GREEN BAY TO MISSISSIPPI RIVER (WEST CENTRAL REGION)

Beginning in Marshland, across the Mississippi River from Winona, MN, this potential trail corridor is on rail line that

parallels the Trempealeau River east to Merrillan.

The rail line continues east through the north end of the Black River State Forest to City Point. From City Point to Wisconsin Rapids, the option of remaining on the rail corridor or using roadways should be considered.

See the Northeast Region section of this plan for a description of the eastern part of this proposed trail.

SEGMENT 12 - ST. CROIX - MISSISSIPPI RIVER CORRIDOR (WEST CENTRAL REGION)

The potential St. Croix - Mississippi River trail corridor would link the Northern, West Central and South Central regions.

The link with the South Central Region would occur at De Soto on the Vernon/Crawford county line. The proposed trail continues north on corridor using rail line, highway right-of-way, and the existing 22-mile-long Great River Trail between Onalaska and Trempealeau. State Highway 35 from Grant County to Prescott is identified in the *Wisconsin Bicycle Transportation Plan 2020* as a priority bicycle corridor. Wider paved shoulders are being added as the highway is being reconstructed. Currently DOT and DNR are cooperating on a 3.9-mile-long separated extension from Marshland (current terminus of the Great River Trail) along State Highway 35 to Winona, MN. Perrot, Merrick, Kinnickinnic, and Willow River state parks are in or near the corridor.

From Prescott to the St. Croix/Polk county line, the recommended route is on County Trunk Highways F, A, and I and State Highway 35.



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SEGMENT 17 - ASHLAND TO ABBOTSFORD (WEST CENTRAL REGION)

Abbotsford could be the junction of major north-south (Segment 17) and east-west (Segment 50) trails. Most of the proposed Ashland to Abbotsford trail is in the Northern Region. Please see the discussion of Segment 17 in the Northern Region section. Seven miles of this corridor extend into the West Central Region south to Abbotsford.

SEGMENT 18 - TOMAHAWK TO WISCONSIN DELLS

It is important to note that Segment 18 links with potential corridors in the Northern and South Central regions to create a continuous trail route from Ashland, on Lake Superior, to the Wisconsin/Illinois state line. The Bearskin-Hiawatha State Trail and

Segment 15 would provide the link to Lake Superior.

A variety of corridor types are used on this potential north-south trail route. From the Lincoln-Marathon county line, a trail following a power line corridor that extends south from State Highway 64 near Merrill to north of Wausau is recommended. Marathon County also recognizes the value of this utility corridor along the scenic Wisconsin Riverway for trail purposes.

Continuing southward, a power line corridor along County Trunk Highway X from Wausau to Stevens Point should be considered a component of the statewide "backbone" trail system. This potential trail not only connects the communities of Wausau and Stevens Point, but also could link with the Green Circle State Trail and several other proposed trail corridors.

From Stevens Point to Wisconsin Dells, a potential trail route using roadways is recommended that generally would follow the Wisconsin River and its flowages and may provide access to Roche-A-Cri and Buckhorn State Parks for trail users. With the support of the counties, this could become a designated bike route. Paved shoulders should be included with any future road improvements. The Ice Age Trail crosses this potential corridor near the intersection of County Highway Z and State Highway 82.

SEGMENT 42 - RED CEDAR JUNCTION TO NELSON

From the junction of the Red Cedar and Chippewa River Trails at Red Cedar Junction, two options exist for a trail connector to Durand. The first would use town and county roadways. The second option would follow an abandoned rail corridor owned by Northern States Power. Currently, local governments are working with NSP to negotiate the use of

the abandoned railroad grade. This potential trail continues south to Nelson via roadways.

SEGMENT 48 - MONDOVI TO DURAND

Roadways are recommended as a highway connector trail from the Buffalo River State Trail in Mondovi to Durand. Besides linking with the Buffalo River Trail, it also connects with three other potential trail corridors and becomes part of a loop system.

SEGMENT 49 - HUDSON TO MERRILLAN

Between Hudson and Eau Claire, Segments 49 and 50 are two alternate east-west rail corridors with trail potential. Segment 49 connects with the Red Cedar Trail in Menomonie and the Chippewa Valley trail system in Eau Claire.

A trail along the rail line from Eau Claire to Merrilan would link the Buffalo River and Chippewa River State Trails and proposed Segment 4.

SEGMENT 50 - SOMERSET TO MARATHON CITY

The Chippewa Falls to Somerset alternate closely parallels Segment 49 to the south and links with the Chippewa Valley Trail system in Chippewa Falls. Linkage to the Red Cedar Trail could be accomplished via roadway connectors between Wheeler and Menomonie. The trail corridor would extend eastward along roadway from Chippewa Falls to Marathon City west of Wausau.

SEGMENT 51 - CORNELL TO BLOOMER

This potential connector trail along roadways would link the Old Abe State Trail and Ice Age State Scenic Trail at Cornell and the Wild River State Trail at Bloomer.

SEGMENT 52 - WAUSAU TO MARSHFIELD

Marathon County also recognizes this abandoned rail corridor from Wausau to Marshfield as having significant trail potential. After rail line abandonment in the early 1980s the county took part of the rail right-of-way for tax purposes. A section near Wausau serves as a power line corridor by Wisconsin Public Service (WPS), which apparently would not object to sharing the right-of-way with trail users. Sections of the corridor have reverted back to adjacent landowners, but there may be opportunities for easements or the use of lightly traveled local roads.

SEGMENT 53 - WYEVILLE TO MAUSTON TO ADAMS COUNTY HWY Z

This potential trail corridor is a combination of rail line and highway right-of-way that links via Juneau County's Omaha Trail to the Elroy-Sparta and "400" State Trails in Elroy. Rail line would provide the linkage from Wyeville to Mauston, and various roadways from Mauston east to the Wisconsin River.

SEGMENT 64 - LADYSMITH TO MARSHFIELD

This potential trail corridor is a combination of rail line and highway right-of-way that continues into Northern Region as Segment #

64 to Ladysmith. This segment passes through numerous wildlife areas and several small communities.

SEGMENT 47 - MARSHFIELD TO MERRILLAN

This potential trail corridor is combination of a rail line and roadway that will link these two communities as it passes through many small towns. This segment will connect to West Central Region Segment #4 in Merrillan. Roadways maybe necessary for the completion of this section as a portion of the rail corridor is in private ownership.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TRAILS IN YOUR REGION
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