

ment's endpoint on the Swamplovers property access road.

To reach the Cross Plains Segment, hikers should follow the 1.9-mile connecting route by heading south on the access road to its intersection with gravel Scheele Road. From there, hikers should turn left and head east on Scheele Road, turn right and head south on CTH-KP, turn left and head west on USH-14 (Main Street in Cross Plains), turn left and head north on Hickory Street which jogs slightly to the right, then turn left and head north on Hickory Hill Street.

The **Cross Plains Segment** shows off the village of Cross Plains, which is situated along Black Earth Creek in a valley between tall bluffs. It sits at the boundary of the most recent glaciation to the east and north and the Driftless Area to the west and south. Meltwater from the receding glacier eroded and carried the terminal moraine downstream from the site of the village. Cross Plains is named for the intersection of two early roads: the military road from Fort Crawford (Prairie du Chien) to Fort Howard (Green Bay) and the lowland road from Arena to Madison.

The segment starts at the end of Hickory Hill Street, where a gate crosses an access road that leads north uphill into to the Hickory Hill Conservation Park. Departing from the access road, the segment enters a former agricultural field being restored to native prairie which shows great variations and color over the seasons. Shortly after entering the former agricultural field, hikers will encounter signage for a "cut-off" path that heads east. To continue with the full segment hikers should veer northwest at this junction. The segment continues across the former agricultural field and soon enters a woodland that features not only native flora such as jack-in-the-pulpit, shooting stars and wild ginger but also the glacial drainage network known as "Three Gorges."

The segment exits the forest and once more crosses the former agricultural field. After passing by the cut-off path, hikers will continue southeast through an oak savanna in the midst of a restoration. The segment continues southeast, gaining elevation up the side of a dolomite ridge. At the head of the ridge hikers will find a Leopold bench and views to the south and east displaying what conservationist Increase Lapham described as the "Great Dividing Ridge." On the distant ridge to the south hikers may see a lone majestic white pine, marking the approximate location of a future Ice Age Trail segment through the Cross Plains National Scientific Reserve. The Blue Mounds are also clearly visible to the west.

At this point the segment drops steeply 150 feet down a series of switchbacks to emerge at Lewis Street (**DA14**) between two houses. From here, the segment continues on sidewalks and roads through residential Cross Plains.

The segment heads east 0.2 miles on Lewis Street to its intersection with Caesar Street, where hikers should turn right and head southwest on the east side of Caesar Street, passing the Rosemary Garfoot Public Library and Village of Cross Plains Municipal Park and Pool.

At the intersection of Caesar Street and Julius Street signage directs hikers to continue southwest on Caesar Street but first to cross to the opposite (west) side of the street.

The segment reaches busy Main St. (USH-14), which hikers should cross cautiously and then turn left to head east down Main Street.

Hikers will soon encounter the Ice Age Trail Alliance's headquarters building (**DA26**) on the south side of the road at 2110 Main Street. The headquarters building

is open 8 p.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays except in the case of special events. Though not a true “Visitor Center” hikers are urged to stop in—IATA staff love to chat with Trail users! Restrooms and drinking water are available for all, as are shower and laundry facilities for thru-hikers. Ice Age Trail merchandise can be purchased here as well.

The segment leaves Main Street and turns southwest to cross the IATA headquarters property, which features a rain garden, lawn with native prairie plants and boulders along the segment route bearing the names of the IATA’s 21 volunteer chapters and the organization’s key partners—the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the National Park Service.

The segment exits the IATA headquarters property and crosses Black Earth Creek on a bridge then heads east on a paved path through H.M. Zander Community Nature Park to the segment’s terminus on Bourbon Road.

Mobile Skills Crew project site, 2004, 2006, 2009

POINTS OF INTEREST

Cross Plains National Scientific Reserve and Future National Park Service Interpretive Area: From the IATA Headquarters in Cross Plains: Take Main St. (USH-14) east 2.6 mi. At Cleveland Rd. turn right and go south 0.9 mi. At Old Sauk Pass Rd. turn right and go west 0.5 mi to entrance gate. Roadside parking. Do not block the gate with vehicles. From west of Madison on the Beltline Highway (USH-12/14) near Middleton: Take Old Sauk Rd. exit and go west 4.0 mi. At Timber Ln. turn right and go north 0.5 mi. At a bend in the road, continue west on Old Sauk Pass Rd. 0.7 mi. Additional parking: Shoveler Sink, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Waterfowl Production Area, on Timber Ln.

This area features a complex of lands owned by Dane County, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and the National Park Service and includes the Cross Plains Unit of Ice Age National Scientific Reserve, one of nine such units. The area represents a world-renowned example of the interface of glaciated and unglaciated terrain. The relationship between moraine and glaciated landscapes on one side of the moraine and unglaciated bedrock landscapes on the other side is strikingly exhibited. Rugged ridges of the moraine formed during the Wisconsin Glaciation meet the eroded Driftless Area to the south and west. Oak savanna, oak forest, wetlands and prairies cover the area.

Unmarked hiking trails penetrate both the DNR land north of Old Sauk Pass and the NPS-owned land south of the road. Dogs are welcome on leash. There are no public restrooms or other visitor facilities available at this time. The National Park Service is in the process of developing a general management plan for the area. This area will be home to a segment of the Ice Age Trail in the future. Details are available at parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=21764.

AREA SERVICES

Cross Plains: Restaurants, grocery store, convenience store, general shopping, lodging, library, medical care. On Trail. Most services on Main St. (USH-14). Meals at Crossroads Coffeehouse (2020 Main St., 608-798-2080, crossroadscoffeehouse.net) and Coach’s Club (1200 Main St., 608-413-0400, coachclub.com). Area info available from the Cross Plains Chamber of Commerce (608-843-3166, crossplainschamber.net).

Mendota County Park: Camping. From the IATA headquarters go east 7.0 mi on USH-14. Pass under the Beltline Highway and continue east on University Ave. for 1.0 mi. At Branch St. turn left and go north 0.6 mi. At CTH-M/Century Ave. turn right and go east 1.3 mi to the park entrance (5133 CTH-M, Middleton, 608-224-3730, reservedane.com).

Cedar Hills Campground: Camping. From the IATA headquarters go ~8 mi west on USH-14. At STH-78 go 3.0 mi north to the campground entrance (seasonal; 6406 STH-78, Mazomanie, 608-795-2606).

Middleton: See Valley View Segment and Madison Segment, p. 220. From the IATA headquarters on USH-14 go east ~8 mi. Also see Trail Access and Parking directions, above.

Madison: See Valley View Segment and Madison Segment, p. 220. From the IATA headquarters on USH-14 go east ~13 mi.