




# Arbor Ridge Segment and Devil's Staircase Segment (Atlas Map 74f)


## SNAPSHOT


**Arbor Ridge Segment—2.1 miles:** Upper Parking Area of the Robert Cook Memorial Arboretum to Washington St. (CTH-E)


**Devil's Staircase Segment—1.7 miles:** Washington St. (CTH-E) to Riverside Park South Pavilion


 *The scenic Arbor Ridge Segment through the Robert Cook Memorial Arboretum is handy to Janesville but feels miles away.*






-  At the arboretum shelter (seasonal).
-  From Marsh Creek.
-  Hikers will not have any interaction with hunting on this segment.


 By law, dogs not permitted in Janesville Parks May 15 to Sept. 15; must be leashed at other times.


 Small portion overlaps with asphalt walkway in the arboretum.


 Robert Cook Memorial Arboretum trail network.

 *Like the Arbor Ridge Segment, the remarkable, remote-feeling Devil's Staircase Segment will make hikers forget they are in a city.*

- 
-  At Riverside Park North and South pavilions. Restrooms and drinking water are seasonal.
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-  From the Rock River.

 Hikers will not have any interaction with hunting on this segment.

 By law, dogs not permitted in Janesville Parks May 15 to Sept. 15; must be leashed at other times.

 Small portions overlap with golf course paths.

## TRAIL ACCESS AND PARKING

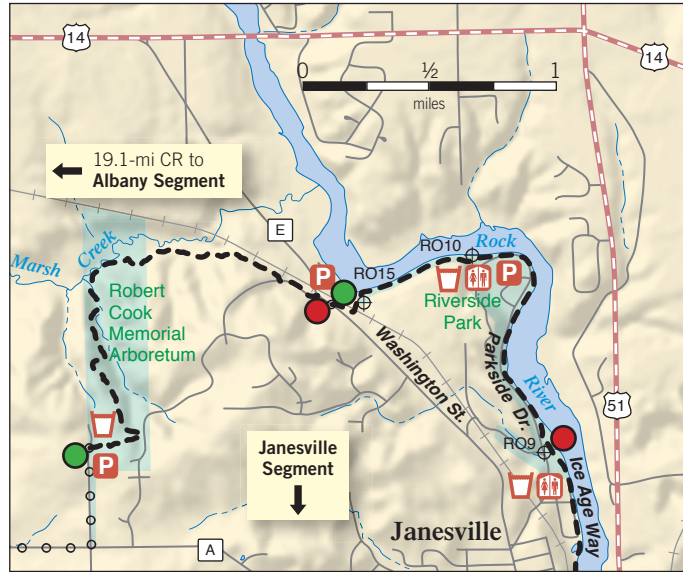
**Upper Parking Area of the Robert Cook Memorial Arboretum:** From Janesville at the intersection of Washington St. and Memorial Dr., take W. Memorial Dr. west 1.4 mi. Memorial Dr. becomes CTH-A. Continue west on CTH-A 0.4 mi to the gravel entrance drive for the Arboretum on the right shortly after passing the Arbor Ridge subdivision entrance. The Ice Age Trail is accessed from the upper parking area. Additional parking in the lower parking area.

**Riverside Park South Pavilion:** From I-39/90 at Janesville, take Exit 171B onto USH-14 and go west 4.0 mi. At N. Washington St. (CTH-E) turn left and go south 2.5 mi. At Parkside Dr. turn left and go northeast for 0.4 mi to the pavilion. Roadside parking.

**Additional Parking:** (i) Roadside parking in Arbor Ridge subdivision. (ii) N. Washington St. (CTH-E) parking area on the east side of the road across from the entrance to the Arbor Ridge subdivision. (iii) Riverside Park parking areas on Parkside Dr.; one is located along the road between the pavilions and another is located at the end of the road near the North Pavilion.

## THE HIKE

The **Arbor Ridge Segment** traverses through an area of bedrock hills covered with till from glacial advances much older than those explored by most of the Ice Age Trail. From its starting point at the upper parking area for the Robert Cook Memorial Arboretum—Janesville Schools



Outdoor Laboratory, the segment heads under an archway and into the heart of the arboretum property. Trailside signage provides educational information on trees and local flora. The arboretum is a 166-acre City of Janesville park (managed by the Janesville school district) that is open to the public sunrise to sunset.

The segment route heads east from the parking area and then turns north, descending down a long bedrock ridge to Marsh Creek. Upon reaching the creek the segment turns east and follows along the base of the bedrock ridges and valleys. Some of Marsh Creek's intermittent tributaries line the bottom of valleys in the hilly terrain, with elevation gain and loss of 200 feet. Volunteers have worked hard to remove invasive species in the area and open the mixed hardwood forest to views of magnificent oaks.

The segment bends away from Marsh Creek and parallels an active railway within a thirty-foot-wide wooded easement granted to the IATA for foot traffic only. The segment then intersects with an Arbor Ridge subdivision road, Northridge Drive, where hikers should turn left and follow Trail signage east a short distance to the segment's endpoint at the Ice Age Trail parking area across Washington Street (CTH-E).

*Mobile Skills Crew project site, 2011*

From its starting point at the parking area on the east side of Washington Street (CTH-E), the **Devil's Staircase Segment** heads southeast a short distance parallel to the road, then emerges onto the City of Janesville's Riverside Golf Course property. As the segment continues, hikers will walk past a couple of the golf course's tee and green areas, crossing a set of railroad tracks in the process. Hikers are asked to be respectful of golfers when passing through this area; keep voices low and yield to those in the process of teeing off, hitting approach shots or putting. Hikers should stay on the mulched pathway and off the grass.

The segment parallels a high-tension power line and then enters a wooded area. For the next half-mile, hikers will traverse one of the more unique portions

of the entire Ice Age Trail and may have a hard time remembering they are in the city of Janesville. The Civilian Conservation Corps built trail here in the early 1930s; however, it deteriorated to the point where it became impassible. The Ice Age Trail Alliance, along with great cooperation from the city, golf course, environmental groups, local businesses and dozens of local and statewide volunteers, rebuilt the Trail with an emphasis on keeping the area as natural as possible. As a result, when hiking the segment hikers will not see the golf course but will enjoy outstanding views of the Rock River. Skillfully placed rock steps that blend into the landscape take the hiker up and down steep hills. A portion of the route incorporates and preserves stonework attributed to the Civilian Conservation Corps.

As hikers begin this unique section of the Ice Age Trail, the segment descends a steep switchback into the natural feature known as the Devil's Staircase (R015). This area features a huge gully (usually dry) descending from the golf course down across the Trail to the river. Lining the gully are large rocks that appear as though purposely placed as steps, thus leading to the name "Devil's Staircase."

The segment departs from the Devil's Staircase gully and continues along to the shore of the Rock River. The route then ascends from the river's shore up into the wooded area between the golf course and the river. On the uphill (south) side of the segment hikers will soon encounter carbonate calcareous rock faces, some of which rise up to 50 feet above the Trail. Numerous cliff-dwelling plants and woodland wildflowers highlight this portion of the segment.

Continuing east the segment arrives at a hand-crafted stone bench, where hikers will leave the wooded area by descending a steep set of manmade steps (R010) and arrive at Riverside Park's North Pavilion area. From here to its endpoint at the park's South Pavilion the segment hugs the shoreline, generally sticking to the thin strip of land between the Rock River and Parkside Drive.

*Mobile Skills Crew project site, 2007, 2009, 2011*

#### AREA SERVICES

**Janesville:** See Janesville Segment, p. 246. From the Washington St. (CTH-E) Trail access go south into the city. Also see Trail Access and Parking directions, above.