

Ice Age Trail Alliance 2017 Annual Conference

Thursday, April 27

Special Event: Corridor Clearing/Trail Development at Firth Lake
8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Adding a new twist to the lineup of annual conference events is the opportunity to participate in a corridor clearing project at Firth Lake. These efforts are in anticipation of new trail to be constructed later in the Mobile Skills Crew season.

Concurrent Sessions: 3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

The Trail Simplified: Ice Age Trail Itineraries

If you've ever wanted to offer friends and family an easy way to explore the Trail, then you'll want to tap into the convenience of the IATA itineraries. These thoughtfully created tours make planning an excursion a snap! They cover six regions of our State and guide you to the best spots for hiking, relaxation, and education. Itineraries offer ideas for family-friendly hikes, casual day-hikes, and longer-distance hikes.

Book Discussion: Your Brain on Nature

Jump into what is sure to be a lively discussion (led by IATA staff) about the benefits of nature on human health. The co-author of this book, Dr. Eva Selhub, will be our Friday night keynote speaker. Gain greater insight into the constructive impact nature has on positive emotions, and heightened physical and mental energy. To read this book ahead of time, order a copy at [Dr. Selhub's website](#), where additional titles are also available.

Nebraska's River of Cranes: A Story of Conservation

Each spring, a half-million sandhill cranes converge on Nebraska's Platte River, transforming this agricultural region into a land wild with birds. The Platte's migration habitat draws not only sandhill cranes, but ducks, geese, whooping cranes – and tens of thousands of birdwatchers and nature-lovers. Doreen Pfost, author of *This River Beneath the Sky: A Year on the Platte*, will talk about the importance of the central Platte River to migrating cranes and waterfowl. She will share stories about conservation challenges, including an irrigation project that threatened the river's demise, but ultimately led to the creation of Audubon's Rowe Sanctuary.

Trail Mix, Concurrent Sessions: 7:00 p.m. – 7:45 p.m.

Next Gen Conversation

Are you curious about how to engage Millennials in your chapter's efforts on the Trail? A panel discussion with students from the Environmental Science Department at the UW-Eau Claire will illuminate ways to involve a crucial generation in land conservation and trailbuilding.

Landscape Photography: Tips and Tricks

Adam Smith, of Adam Smith Photography, along with Dave Caliebe, Trail Program Specialist, will present tips and tricks that will help you capture the essence and timeless beauty of the Trail. Adam will focus on foundational concepts which contribute to pleasing landscape photographs. Dave, whose many photos have graced the covers of Mammoth Tales, have been featured on the Alliance website, will address the key elements to consider when photographing your moments on the Trail.

Thousand-Miler Highlight

Delight in the achievements of your fellow Trail enthusiasts. Celebrate with them as they tell personal stories of their adventures and elaborate on the meaning and impact this journey had in their lives.

Trail Mix, Concurrent Sessions: 7:45 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Walk the Yellow Line

Join Tim Malzhan, Director of Trail Operations as he shares behind-the-scenes insights into the ethics of laying out new trail. You'll be astounded by the numerous complexities and details to be considered before a new segment comes to fruition.

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ICE AGE TRAIL
ALLIANCE

Friday, April 28

Concurrent Sessions: 1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.

Hikers' Forum: Wisdom from the Trail

Be inspired, be informed, and be entertained by the stories and fresh perspective of those who most recently completed their Thousand-Mile Journey.

Small Steps. Big Impacts. – Tyke Hikes

Peter Dargatz of the Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter established wildly popular Tyke Hikes, which have brought over 1,000 hikers to the Trail in just over two years. Not only is the formula for successful hikes with tykes easier than you might think, it's also more important than you can imagine. Come learn about the joys and rewards of this popular program, and more importantly, how YOU can be a part of its future.

Strategic Planning Introduction

Mike Wolmer, Executive Director, will introduce Don Owen and Sandi Marra, of Lands, Trails and Parks Consulting (LTPC). This impressive team was hired to facilitate the 2017 strategic planning process. You're invited to learn more about this important process which ultimately guides the work of the Alliance staff. The team will be available throughout the conference for one-on-one conversations to discover your thoughts and opinions about what would strengthen the effectiveness of the IATA.

Concurrent Sessions: 3:00 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.

Father/Son Hiking Adventures

The Ice Age Trail provides a unique bonding experience for those who hike with a partner. Come hear about the heart-warming adventures of two sets of father/son hiking pairs, Jon and Chase Jones, and Scott, Kyle and Andrew Kneeland who undertook this journey during the boys' formative years.

What's On Tap? 2017 Trailbuilding Season

The Trail needs your special brand of magic to flourish and take root in the hearts and minds and imagination of Wisconsinites. Whether it's crafting boardwalks and bridges, learning and sharing new skills, or meeting new people and seeing new places, the trailbuilding season ahead is representative of our steadfast commitment to creating, supporting, and protecting the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. Learn what's on tap for new and existing Trail segments in 2017.

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Eva Selhub “Spirit Medicine”

For thousands of years Wisdom traditions have aligned with the notion that the body is a landscape of nature, a part of nature, not separate from it. Science is now concurring, pointing to not only the importance of nature as part of our journey to health and wellbeing. Dr. Selhub explains how to tap into the power of nature to be healthier and happier. She will speak to how the lack of nature is affecting us, especially our children and what we can do about it.

Saturday, April 29

Chapter Leadership Summit: 8:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

This session is a great opportunity for chapter leaders to celebrate successes, discuss challenges, and most importantly, gather ideas and tools to help you build up your chapter. This year’s topic will highlight effective communication strategies, finding and activating volunteers, and inter-chapter cooperation. Bring a friend who might be interested in learning more about chapter leadership!

Annual Membership Meeting with Board of Directors Elections: 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.

The Saturday afternoon Annual Membership Meeting is free and open to all members. No registration required.

Awards Banquet and Celebration Event: 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m

We’re rolling out the yellow carpet! It will be a big night as we celebrate the accomplishments of our tremendously generous volunteers!

The evening will kick off with the Volunteers in the Park (VIP) Awards as the National Parks Service honors your efforts in support of the Trail. Each hour you’ve reported since 2007 makes for some impressive cumulative numbers: 100, 250, 500, and 1,000 hours (and beyond).

The Mammoth Achievement Awards will follow with special recognition in key areas of achievement: The Spirit Stick, Thousand-Miler, “In the Mud”, Stickman Scholarship, to name a few. Awards will also honor public officials, corporate partners, and new this year, leaders in trailbuilding.