Point Beach Segment (Atlas Map 96f; Databook pages 99–100)

SNAPSHOT

10.0 miles: Park Rd. to Lake Shore Rd.

This segment highlights both the ancient and current shorelines of Lake Michigan.

At Point Beach State Forest (PBSF) entrance station, campground/nature center and outdoor group campground. Pit toilet (no water) is also available near the PBSF Ice Age walk-in campsite (please respect those who have reserved the campsite).

From Lake Michigan and Molash Creek.

At PBSF walk-in Ice Age campsite.

At PBSF campground and nearby private campground (see Area Services).

At PBSF campground/nature center area.

Four ColdCache sites on segment.

By law, dogs are required to be on leash and not permitted within PBSF facilities.

Portions overlap park road, bike and XC trails. Hike off to the side of ski trails when groomed.

PBSF and School Forest trail networks.

TRAIL ACCESS AND PARKING

Park Rd.: From Two Rivers at the intersection of Washington St. and 22nd St., take 22nd St. east until it ends. Note: 22nd St. turns right at Neshotah Park across from the water tower. At Neshotah Rd. turn left and go north 0.1 mi. At Park Rd. turn right and go north 0.3 mi to the end of the road. Roadside parking.

Lake Shore Rd.: From Two Rivers take STH-42 and follow it north out of town for ~ 6 mi. At CTH-V turn right and go east 1.8 mi. At Lake Shore Rd. turn left and go north 0.2 mi. Roadside parking on the east side of the road.

Additional Parking: (i) Viceroy Rd. (CTH-VV) parking area on the north side of the road, near its junction with Sandy Bay Road (CTH-O). (ii) Within Point Beach State Forest (PBSF), east and north of the entrance station. (iii) PBSF Red Pine Trail parking area on the west side of Sandy Bay Road (CTH-O) across from the main entrance road.

THE HIKE

From its starting point at the end of Park Road, the segment travels through a wooded area and across sand dunes atop a cordwalk installed to help protect the fragile environment to the beach along Lake Michigan. Hikers may encounter standing water between the cordwalk and the beach, especially during rainy periods. Expect to find smaller beaches and a possible new water runoff. Hikers should hike as close as possible to the shoreline. At an Ice Age Trail marker at the top of the beach, the segment turns north and follows the shoreline for 2.0 miles to another Trail marker (MN14) at the top of the beach. Note: There are no other Trail markers or signage along the beach walk. This Trail marker can be difficult to spot; a sure sign hikers have gone too far along the beach is if they reach the mouth of Molash Creek, which always requires a ford.

From the Trail marker, the segment heads west (inland), crosses sand dunes atop another cordwalk and then heads briefly north where it connects with Point
Beach State Forest’s (PBSF) scenic Molash Creek Trail. It continues southwest, crosses a marshy area on a short boardwalk, then heads northwest. Along the way, the segment offers nice views of Molash Creek and surrounding wetlands.

As the segment nears Sandy Bay Road (CTH-O), it intersects (MN13) PBSF’s Rawley Point Bike Trail. The segment follows the bike path north across a bridge over Molash Creek, then in about 0.4 miles departs the bike path and heads east in a mixed conifer/hardwoods forest to an intersection (MN12) with the Yellow Loop of PBSF’s Ridges Trail.

From this point, the segment follows a series of PBSF’s trails as it traverses over ancient beach ridges and swales left behind from Lake Nipissing, the predecessor of Lake Michigan. The Trail travels generally north in this unique area through mixed forests, with occasional glimpses of and openings to the dunes at the top of the beach, and cuts across ridges and marshy swales. Hikers should pay attention to Ice Age Trail signage.

From the intersection with the Yellow Loop, the segment continues briefly south then north on the Yellow Loop, which then transitions (MN11) onto the Blue Loop. Farther on, the segment reaches a junction (MN28) with a spur trail that leads to a walk-in campsite with a bench, fire ring and a picnic table. A pit toilet and a kayak campsite are nearby. From
here the Trail turns left away from Lake Michigan and soon reaches a junction (MN10) where the segment switches onto the Red Loop and follows it north. The segment eventually leaves (MN9) the Red Loop to follow a narrow, winding tread on a ridge between marshy swales under a red-pine canopy to PBSF’s entrance road (MN8).

For a short side trip, hikers can head east on the entrance road to a trail leading to the working Rawley Point Lighthouse. At 113 feet, it is the tallest octagonal skeletal light tower and the only one of its kind on the Great Lakes. At the northern end of PBSF off Rawley Point lies Lake Michigan’s most famous shipwreck, the Rouse Simmons “Christmas Tree Ship.” In 1912, the ship, bound for Chicago with a cargo of evergreens, sank in a storm.

The segment continues west on the entrance road, crosses Sandy Bay Road (CTH-O) and heads for the northeast corner of the Trail access parking area for PBSF’s Red Pine Trail. From here it travels through the woods where it intersects trails of the Red Pine Trail system at several unsigned junctions. At one of these trail junctions (MN7), about 0.5 miles from the Red Pine Trail parking area, an unsigned wide, grassy trail leads 0.2 miles east to the PBSF group campsite.

Continuing north, at a signed boundary the segment leaves PBSF and enters the Manitowoc Public School District’s Rahr Memorial School Forest, a 300-acre parcel with a network of hiking trails. Hikers should watch carefully for Ice Age Trail signage to navigate through the network of trails as the segment makes its way across CTH-V and meanders to its endpoint on Lake Shore Road. Of particular interest north and west of the CTH-V Trail access is the School Forest’s boardwalk, a 0.3 mile curving walkway that crosses a swamp/wetland full of trees, wildflowers, frogs, turtles, salamanders, ducks and other wildlife. A boardwalk donor board (MN18) marks the beginning of the boardwalk, which was designed to preserve the delicate swamp/wetland ecosystem.

Mobile Skills Crew project site, 2006

### AREA SERVICES

**Point Beach State Forest (PBSF):** Camping, summer concession stand. On Trail. (920-794-7480, dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/name/pointbeach; reservations: 888-947-2757, wisconsin.goingtocamp.com). The remote walk-in Ice Age backpack and kayak campsites are reservable through wisconsin.goingtocamp.com. If not reserved, they are first come, first served, with check-in at PBSF office (please respect those who have reserved the campsite). Pit toilets on site. **Note:** For large groups, there is an outdoor group camp and group cabins available for rent.

**Scheffel’s Hideaway Campground:** Camping. On CTH-O just south of its intersection with Viceroy Rd. (920-657-1270, scheffelshideawaycampground.net).

**Two Rivers:** See Dunes Segment and City of Two Rivers Segment, p. 342. From the Point Beach State Forest entrance road go south ~5 mi. Also see Trail Access and Parking directions, above.

**Mishicot:** See Mishicot Segment and East Twin River Segment, p. 348. From Point Beach State Forest Trail entrance road go north and west 8.5 mi.

**Rahr Memorial School Forest:** On Trail (11617 Sandy Bay Rd., Two Rivers, 920-686-4777, Manitowocpublicschools.org/services/school_forest). An outdoor education facility for the Manitowoc Public School District and area community. Buildings can be rented by organized groups. The School Forest has 4.5 mi of trails accessing a variety of habitats and is open to the public during daylight hours.
Must-Have Ice Age Trail Books!

The **Ice Age Trail Guidebook** features more than 100 detailed segment-by-segment descriptions and maps to help you connect with the thousand-mile Ice Age National Scenic Trail. Written for those seeking a wide range of adventures on the Ice Age Trail.

The **Ice Age Trail Atlas** is a set of 105 color, shaded relief-style maps at 1:48,000 scale. In contrast to the smaller map excerpts in the Ice Age Trail Guidebook, each map in this package is printed on an 8.5” x 11” sheet and includes not just the Ice Age Trail route but also a wider snapshot of the area around the Trail.

Both books were written and published by the Ice Age Trail Alliance. All proceeds for each book help build and maintain the Ice Age Trail. Please call the IATA at (800) 227-0046 with any questions.

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