

I hiked the Ice Age Trail with 3 other people, Kay (Kate) Gabriel, Susanne Dane and Liz Lusk. We started in May of 2017 in St. Croix and finished in September of 2022. I never really considered hiking the entire trail until my partner suggested that we hike the IAT with our 2 friends. I didn't want to be left out of the fun, so I said - let's do it! I never regretted the decision. I saw parts of Wisconsin that I never would have seen otherwise. I also had a much better appreciation for the beauty of this state. I saw porcupines in the wild for the first time ever, saw a beaver swimming in the river, saw numerous bears (one with 4 cubs) and loved the many lakes. And I can now identify a few geological features! The connecting routes got a little old at times - but walking through many of the smaller communities was interesting as well. Up north we saw very few people on the trail, in the southern areas the trails were much more used. Everyone we meet was friendly and many were interested to learn that the 4 of us were doing the entire trail. We would usually rent an airBnB and hike for 5 or 6 days in a row. I did some hiking on my own as I had knee replacement surgery as well as a surgery on my calf (due to long term injuries). In order to not get behind my 3 hiking companions I hiked on my own to get ahead of them. I would drive my car up with my bike on the back, drop the bike at one end of the segment drive to the other end, hike the segment and then ride my bike to my car. I found hiking on my own a lovely experience and never had any issues. When we finished this past September I was both proud of our accomplishment - and sad to be done. I enjoyed the time with my friends on the trail. I am so appreciative to those who keep the trail in such great condition and the commitment of the Ice Age Trail Alliance to continue to purchase land in order to grow the IAT.

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