

Gibraltar Rock Segment (Atlas Map 62f)

SNAPSHOT

4.8 miles (4.0 IAT, 0.8 CR): STH-113 ferry wayside to CTH-V

 This segment is a rolling ramble through mixed woodlands, prairies and fields. It features dramatic climbs and wide ranging views of Lake Wisconsin, a pastoral valley and the Baraboo Hills.



At STH-113 ferry wayside.

At a Dispersed Camping Area .



Segment includes a connecting route roadwalk.



A spur trail (**SC17**) to the DCA, three white-blazed loop trails (two north of Slack Rd. and one near the top of Gibraltar Rock) and Gibraltar Rock State Natural Area trails and road.

TRAIL ACCESS AND PARKING

STH-113 ferry wayside: In Lodi, from the intersection of STH-113 and STH-60, take STH-113 north 6.0 mi to the parking area.

CTH-V: In Lodi, from the intersection of STH-113 and STH-60, take STH-113 north 4.0 mi. At CTH-V turn left and go west 1.7 mi. to the parking area on the east side of the road.

Additional Parking: (i) Slack Rd. parking area. (ii) Gibraltar Rock Rd. parking area.

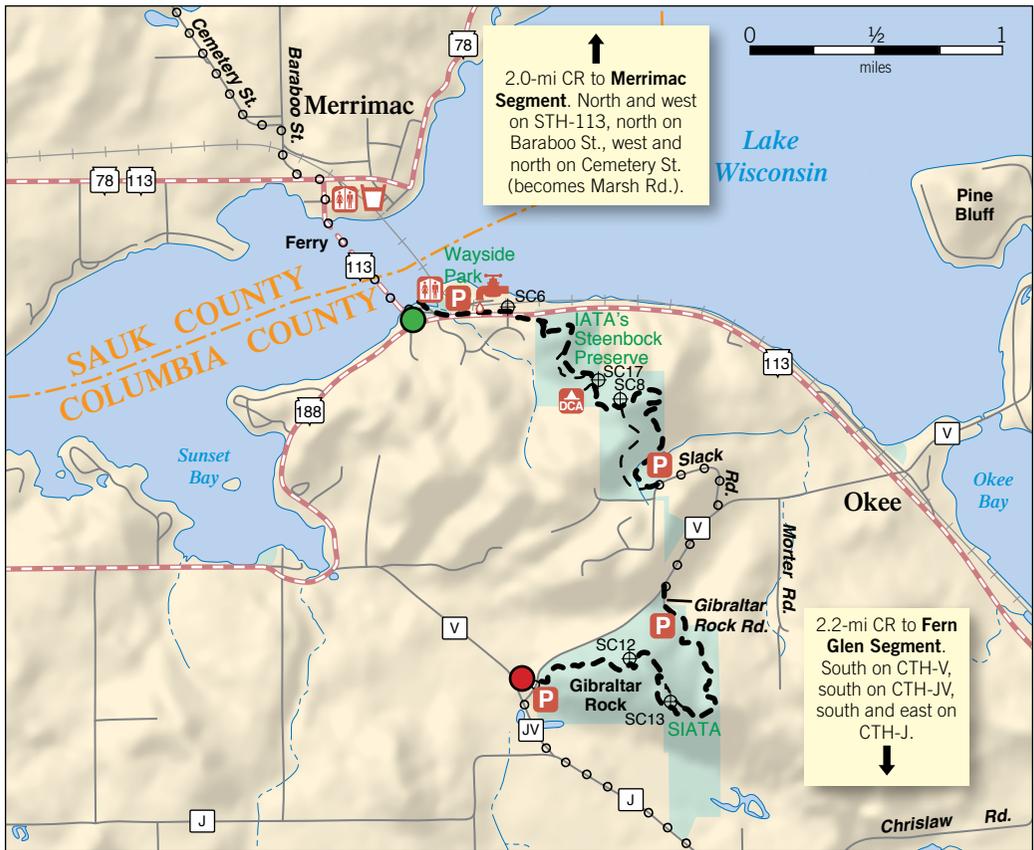
THE HIKE

The segment starts at a grassy picnic area with a kiosk and benches near the Merrimac Ferry south ramp. Posts with Ice Age Trail yellow blazes guide hikers through the STH-113 wayside area. The Trail then passes through a woods of white oak, shagbark hickory and maple before crossing (**SC6**) busy STH-113 (cross with caution) near Northern Cross Arm Road.

The segment then ascends the north face of a 200-foot hill, taking in fine views of Lake Wisconsin through a screen of large oaks. The Trail continues southeast through red cedar and existing remnant prairie areas with big bluestem, Indian grass, little bluestem and other native grass species. More scenic views of Lake Wisconsin and the surrounding landscape are offered from different points along the route. This portion of the segment also includes a white-blazed trail that makes a short loop to the west of the main route.

Shortly after the white-blazed trail reconnects with the main route the segment intersects (**SC17**) a spur trail with signage pointing west to a Dispersed Camping Area (DCA) for long-distance, multi-day hikers. Continuing on the main segment route, after a steady climb in open prairie for about a quarter mile, the Trail reaches a stunning panoramic vista (**SC8**) of the Wisconsin River and Baraboo Hills.

Continuing on, hikers will arrive at a junction with another white-blazed trail that makes a loop to the west of the main route. From the junction, the main segment route soon reaches a viewpoint that offers great views during the leaf-off season of the surrounding hills and Wisconsin River Valley. From here, the segment drops almost 200 feet on a series of switchbacks through a woods of white



pine and oaks, eventually reaching a boulder studded dry ravine. The segment crosses the ravine and ascends to the Slack Road parking area and rejoins with the white-blazed loop.

From the parking area, hikers should follow a 0.9-mile connecting route. From the Slack Road parking area go east and south 0.4 miles. At CTH-V turn right and continue southwest 0.4 miles to Gibraltar Rock Road. Hikers should turn left on Gibraltar Rock Road and walk through the parking area for the Gibraltar Rock State Ice Age Trail Area to a kiosk and the start of the next portion of the segment.

The Trail enters the forest, quickly intersects a mixed gravel and crumbling blacktop DNR access road leading to the top of Gibraltar Rock, then continues to wind its way through a second-growth forest of white pine, hickory and oak. Hikers will climb a series of 50 steps constructed by volunteers that lead to the top of Gibraltar Rock. Just after the last steps, a marked loop trail stretching across the backside of Gibraltar Rock provides hikers with another option to pass across the top, thus avoiding proximity to sheer cliffs.

Rising 1,234 feet above sea level, Gibraltar Rock is a flat-topped butte, an outlier of the Magnesian escarpment, with a thin dolomite cap over St. Peter sandstone. Its 200-foot sheer cliffs offer spectacular panoramic views of the Wisconsin River valley and Lake Wisconsin. On the south side of the butte is a rock face bluff overlooking a large leather-leaf bog and a bucolic valley.

At the top of Gibraltar Rock there are no safety guardrails and hikers should use extreme caution when hiking near or along the bluff. A memorial plaque (SC13) commemorating the Richmond Memorial Park of the Rock of Gibraltar, a park dedicated in 1929 in memory of James and Emma F. Richmond and other early pioneers, sits at a high point near where the DNR access road emerges.

The segment meanders along the top offering several views of the countryside below from rock outcrops framed by weathered red cedars. The segment leaves the big views and begins its gradual descent, first through a maple forest and then a white-pine-dominated woods as the Trail winds around the base of the bluff. Black locust and stone retaining walls line much of the route.

The segment emerges from the woods to the full panoramic “Horton Vista” (SC12). This vantage point offers outstanding long views of the field opening, the valley below and the Baraboo Hills in the distance.

Hikers will continue through the former farm field to the mulberry tree growing prominently along the Trail and can pause to further take in the views. The segment returns to a wooded canopy and continues to descend past the field opening and soon reaches the parking area on the former site of the Horton Family homestead.

Mobile Skills Crew project site 2005, 2009, 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016

POINTS OF INTEREST

Merrimac Ferry: See Merrimac Segment, p. 198

AREA SERVICES

Merrimac: See Merrimac Segment, p. 198. From the ferry wayside Trail access take the ferry across to the north side of Lake Wisconsin. On STH-113 go north then east 1.0 mi.

Devil's Lake State Park: See Devil's Lake Segment, p. 194. From the ferry wayside Trail access take the ferry across to the north side of Lake Wisconsin. Take STH-113 north and west ~10 mi.

Baraboo: See Baraboo Segment, p. 190. From the ferry wayside Trail access take the ferry across to the north side of Lake Wisconsin. Take STH-113 north ~12 mi.



Lodi: See Fern Glen Segment and City of Lodi Segment, p. 204. From the ferry wayside Trail access take STH-113 south 6.0 mi. Also see Trail Access and Parking directions, above.

Okee: Restaurant, lodging. From the CTH-V Trail access, go east on CTH-V for 2.0 mi. Meals at Fitz's On The Lake (608-592-3302, fitzsonthelake.com) and Lucky's On The Lake (608-592-5825, luckysbarandgrille.com/lake). Lodging at the Bridge Motel (608-592-5599).

Fern Glen Segment and City of Lodi Segment (Atlas Maps 62f, 63f)

SNAPSHOT

Fern Glen Segment—1.3 miles: CTH-J to Bilkey Rd.

2.4-mile Connecting Route

City of Lodi Segment—1.8 miles: Lodi School Complex to Pleasant St.