

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Melissa Pierick, Ice Age Trail Alliance  
(608) 798-4453 ext. 223; [melissa@iceagetrail.org](mailto:melissa@iceagetrail.org)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Ice Age Trail Alliance Protects Property in Manitowoc County**  
*Offers the potential to extend the Walla Hi Segment*

**Cross Plains, Wis. (Sept. 9, 2022)**—An 80-acre property in southwestern Manitowoc County has been permanently protected for future Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

The Ice Age Trail Alliance recently closed on the property, which is in the Town of Schleswig and adjacent to the Alliance's 176-acre Brownrigg-Heier Preserve. This acquisition helps close the gap in Trail between the Preserve and the 2.3-mile Walla Hi Segment of the Ice Age Trail.

"This land was important to protect, not only because of its location but because it is a great example of glacial geology" says Kevin Thusius, Director of Land Conservation at the Alliance. "This property sits in the northernmost area for Kettle Moraine topography, which means steep, rolling hills and dry kettles," says Thusius.

In addition to offering a premier outdoor hiking experience, the Ice Age Trail exists to protect and highlight glacial features and landscapes left behind by the last continental glacier.

Located in the Walla Hi woods, the property boasts mature northern hardwoods including sugar maple and red oak trees. Its open fields contain milkweed and sumac.

"It's a lovely property to add to the underlying tapestry of the Trail," says Thusius. "When combined with the Brownrigg-Heier preserve and Walla Hi County Park, this area has the potential to become one of the real highlights of the Trail."

This would bring more hikers and visibility to the Ice Age Trail in Manitowoc County. New blazed hiking Trail would reduce the amount of road walking between segments (called connector routes); currently more than 40 of the 72 miles of Ice Age Trail in the county are on connector routes.

**Protecting Land is the First Step to Completing the Ice Age Trail**

Once the Alliance protects land, it develops a management plan, which determines property uses and future developments (such as trail and camping locations). While planning is underway, state and federal reviews take place. Once approvals are received, construction can begin on trails and parking lots, boundaries are marked, and signage is put up.

The Ice Age Trail Alliance continuously seeks opportunities to protect land within the up-to-three-mile-wide corridor identified by the National Park Service as the route for the National Scenic Trail. Currently, 682.1 miles of the nearly 1,200-mile Trail is blazed hiking trail, ready for use. The remainder of the route follows rural highways and backroads (connector routes).

Money from the Alliance's land acquisition fund was used to pay for the property. In the future, the Alliance may seek reimbursement for the property from the DNR or National Park Service.

#####

***About the Ice Age National Scenic Trail:***

The Ice Age National Scenic Trail is a 1,200-mile footpath contained entirely within Wisconsin. It traverses the state from St. Croix Falls in the west, to Sturgeon Bay in the east, going as far south as Janesville. One of 11 National Scenic Trails, the Ice Age Trail highlights the landscapes that were carved out by ancient glaciers, which happen to be some of the most beautiful areas in the state. Approximately 60% of Wisconsin residents live within 20 miles of the Ice Age Trail.

***About the Ice Age Trail Alliance:***

The Ice Age Trail Alliance is a non-profit, member and volunteer-based organization which conserves, creates, maintains, and promotes the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. For more information on our work, visit [iceagetrail.org](http://iceagetrail.org).