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Large Trailbuilding Project to Begin in Rib Lake
Will result in 4 new miles of Ice Age National Scenic Trail

Cross Plains, Wis (May 3, 2022) –Volunteers will converge just outside of Rib Lake next week with one goal: to add four new miles to the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

More than 100 people are expected for the first phase of a large-scale project, which is happening May 18-22. Some volunteers come for a few hours, a day, or the whole weekend. During this first phase, volunteers will clear 2.5-miles of new Ice Age Trail corridor.

“Corridor clearing involves lopping branches, clearing brush, and sawing trees,” says Dave Caliebe, Trail Program Manager for the Ice Age Trail Alliance. “We clear the path the Trail will ultimately follow. It’s the essential first step to new blazed miles.”

In subsequent phases of the project (planned for fall 2022, spring 2023, and fall 2023) Trail will be constructed.

“Projects like this are broken into manageable phases,” says Caliebe. “Ultimately we have a 1,200-mile Trail to care for. So, we have to balance the work that must be done along it with our volunteer crew,” he says.

The new Trail is expected to be open and blazed for hiking in October 2023.

The Trailbuilding project is made possible by the generous support of Bob and Ann Rusch, Taylor County residents and members of the Ice Age Trail Alliance. They provided necessary funding to complete the project.

New Trail will Eliminate Road Walk

When complete, the new 2.5-mile portion of Trail will connect to an existing 1.5-mile spur trail, which takes hikers through the Ice Age Trail Alliance’s Rusch Preserve. Since it currently dead ends, the spur trail is not technically part of the Ice Age Trail. Once the two portions are connected, however, it will all be official, blazed Ice Age Trail.

The four new miles of Trail (which will become part of the Rib Lake Segment) will replace the 2.8-mile road walk that currently connects segments in Taylor county.

“We worked diligently to get permanently protected land for the Trail,” says Kevin Thusius, Director of Land Protection for the Ice Age Trail Alliance. “We’re really happy we’re able to close a gap in the Trail in Taylor county.”

Northwoods Feel Awaits

The new trail will run across the top of the Perkinstown Terminal Moraine, pass several large erratics and ephemeral wetlands, and have a few stream crossings.

“This segment is going to be beautiful,” Caliebe says. Its path will go through well-managed forests with white pines, hemlocks, oaks, and sugar maples. “It will have a great Northwoods feel,” says Caliebe.

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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 visit iceagetrail.org.