

Thousand-Miler Essay
Richard Larson

I started the Ice Age Trail in mid-April after finishing my seasonal work at a tax office in Hinckley, MN. The previous nine summers I spent as a wilderness trail crew lead in the North Cascades, but I decided to take this year off to hike. The Ice Age Trail was followed by thru hikes of the Pacific Northwest and Mogollon Rim Trails. I am currently planning on the Snowbird Route (a path of my own devising that goes from Key West to Angle Inlet — southernmost to northernmost points in the Continental US).

I had a few cold days at the start of the IAT including a little snow and I had some 90-degree humid days towards the end, but for the most part the weather was ideal.

The mosquitoes weren't bad until the last couple weeks.

I met three other thru hikers (Hannah who I hiked with for one day by Antigo) and Claire and Lucas who were both hiking eastbound and I saw the day after Antigo.

I kept a journal at trailjournals.com/skittles

I grew up in Minnesota and my parents now live in Wisconsin. I have hiked all over the world but it was nice to do a long distance hike in my own backyard.

I am extremely impressed with the active community — on Facebook pages, with work crews, trail angels and shuttlers — involved in the IAT and think the organization has done a great job of appealing to people of all ages and abilities with its different chapters and programs for section hiking.