

Verona Segment (Atlas Map 66f)

SNAPSHOT

 **6.3 miles:** McKee Rd. (CTH-PD) to Prairie Moraine County Park at Wesner Rd.



At Reddan Soccer Park parking area, Verona Public Library, Badger Prairie County Park main shelter and Ceniti Park Baseball Complex.



At a Dispersed Camping Area  in Badger Prairie County Park.



At Reddan Soccer Park and Badger Prairie County Park. Playground also available at Ceniti Park Baseball Complex.



Two ColdCache sites on segment.



Dogs must be leashed (8-ft max) and under control at all times.



Portions overlap multiuse paths, town sidewalks and roads and the Military Ridge State Trail (MRST).



MRST continues east and west from the Trail; also numerous bike trails and spur trails.

TRAIL ACCESS AND PARKING

① McKee Rd. (CTH-PD) Trail Access (43.01598, -89.52193): From Verona, at the intersection of Verona Ave. (Bus. Rt. USH-18/151) and Main St. (CTH-M), take CTH-M north 1.7 mi. At McKee Rd. (CTH-PD) turn right and go east 0.6 mi. **No Parking.** Instead, park at the Ice Age Trail Junction Area 0.2 mi east on CTH-PD. A 0.1-mi blue-blazed spur trail leads to the IAT.

② Prairie Moraine County Park at Wesner Rd. Trail Access (42.96159, -89.51360): From USH-18/151 south of Verona, take Exit 79 and follow CTH-PB south for 1.0 mi. At Wesner Rd. turn left to enter Prairie Moraine County Park. **Parking:** Adjacent to Trail Access.

Additional Parking: (i) Reddan Soccer Park on Cross Country Rd. (No parking during tournaments.) (ii) Verona Public Library on Silent St. (iii) Badger Prairie County Park (iv) Military Ridge State Trail (MRST)/Ice Age Trail access and Verona Park & Ride parking area on Old PB Rd. (v) Ceniti Park Sports Complex on E. Verona Ave. (vi) Lincoln St. roadside parking. (vii) IATA's Moraine Kettles Preserve on CTH-M.

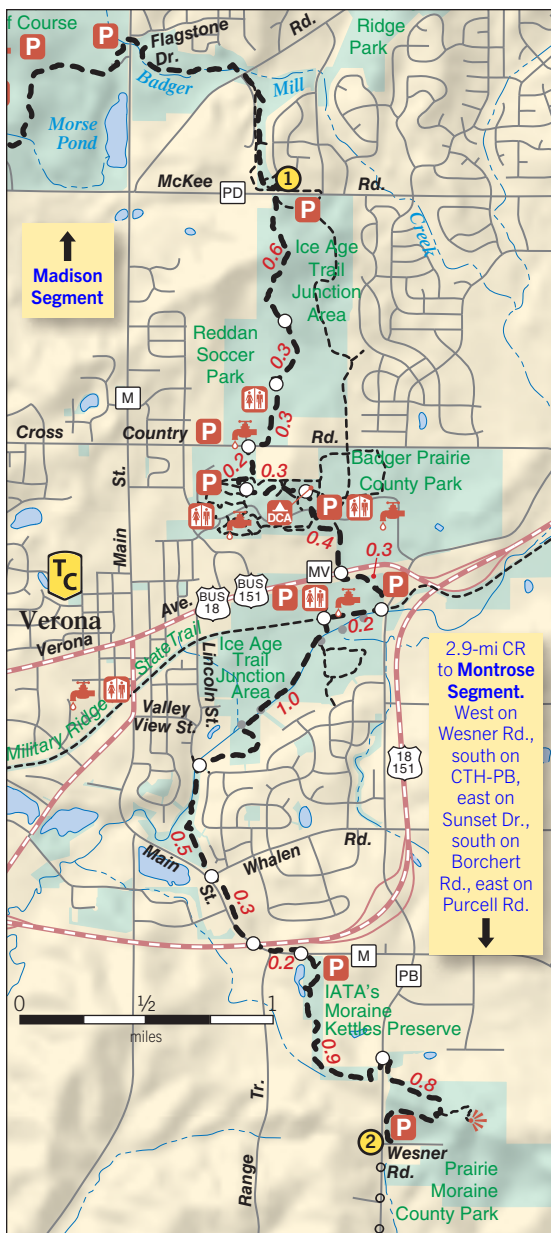
THE HIKE

This suburban segment makes good use of three Dane County parks: The Ice Age Trail Junction Area, Badger Prairie County Park, and Prairie Moraine County Park. It offers access to the services of Verona, an Ice Age Trail Community with the moniker "Hometown U.S.A." The segment also highlights the Alliance-owned Moraine Kettles Preserve. This 24-acre property includes a portion of the Johnstown Terminal Moraine. The property also boasts the transformation from agricultural fields into a restored prairie.

From the Trail access on McKee Road (CTH-PD) at the south end of the pedestrian bridge, turn right off the multiuse trail and head across a prairie. Shortly you'll meet a blue-blazed spur trail on the left leading to the Ice Age Trail Junction Area parking area.

From the junction with the blue-blazed trail, continue south through the prairie and begin a slight descent toward a wooded area. Look south for a fine overview of features you will encounter on the segment – the hills of Badger Prairie County Park, Badger Mill Creek, and the moraine on the horizon at the end of the segment.

Enter the wooded area and head left at a fork. Travel south through another prairie before reaching a short spur trail (near a maintenance shed) leading



west. Continue south, passing Reddan Soccer Park. Several mowed paths intersect the Trail near the soccer park; continue to follow the Trail south toward Cross Country Road.

At Cross Country Road turn right and follow the Trail, which runs west along a fence on the north side of the road to the entrance of the soccer park. Cross the road south at a marked pedestrian crossing. Several restaurants are 0.3 miles west on Cross Country Road. Enter Badger Prairie County Park and continue southward. You'll quickly meet a mowed park path and briefly follow it west and south before heading east. To the southwest is the Verona Public Library, which is accessible by following a mowed park path.

After turning east, you'll ascend a ridge, cross the top of it, and descend it, first on a gravel road, then on a mowed path. Finally, just before reaching the park's main shelter, you'll pass a Dispersed Camping Area (DCA) for long-distance, multi-day hikers, in the restored prairie dominating the park.

After passing the DCA, the main park shelter, and parking area, continue south and east, hooking up with a paved bike

trail as you head toward Verona Avenue (CTH-MV). You'll pass a large shopping area to the west with restaurants and a large grocery store. Continue heading west on Verona Avenue (CTH-MV) for additional services, including lodging.

Go under Verona Avenue (CTH-MV) via a tunnel, turn left and continue east, then southeast on the bike trail to the Military Ridge State Trail (MRST) Park & Ride parking area off Old County Road PB. The multiuse MRST, connecting Madison to Dodgeville, is located on a railroad grade, abandoned in the 1970s, that once extended to Galena, Ill.

Head west on the MRST. Just past mile marker 3, depart from the MRST on a gravel path and go south, then southwest along the west side of Badger Mill Creek, which flows through a meltwater gap in the moraine. At the point where the gravel path turns left, leading to a bridge over the creek, you'll continue straight ahead along the northwest bank of the creek.

Pass through a wetland area, hiking on top of a berm for part of the route. After leaving the berm, you'll reach a small pine grove with a trailside bench. Turn left to cross a bridge to the east side of the creek and turn right. Briefly follow a paved path before turning left onto a dirt path. You will cross a swampy area with a boardwalk/puncheon span and then head into the woods.

Briefly skirt an open area and then reach a junction with a paved path connecting residential neighborhoods. (If you head west on it, the paved path leads across the creek on the Lincoln Street footbridge and connects with the street's dead end. Lincoln Street provides access to Verona's city center less than a mile away. To reach several restaurants, a supermarket, and a hardware store, walk northwest on Lincoln Street, left on Valley View Street, and right on South Main Street.)

Continue south, following the paved path along the creek. In short order, leave the paved path and turn left, cutting into the woods. Make a steep ascent from the creek before gradually descending to CTH-M. Continue east near or along the north side of CTH-M, cross USH-18/151 on an overpass, continue on the north side of CTH-M, and then cross it and start hiking south through a restored prairie. Soon you'll meet a spur trail leading to the CTH-M parking area. From here, enter the woods and pass several kettle ponds in the Alliance's Moraine Kettles Preserve. Leave the woods, cut through another prairie, and reenter the woods, where the Trail heads east toward CTH-PB. At the intersection with CTH-PB, briefly walk north and cautiously cross the road at the end of a median. *Note: Traffic along CTH-PB is heavy; exercise caution at this Trail crossing.*

Enter a wooded area of the 160-acre Prairie Moraine County Park, which features a 0.8-mile-long stretch of the terminal moraine on St. Peter sandstone bedrock. Head south and then southeast, gently ascending the north-northeast side of a terminal moraine through restored prairie and savanna. At the top of the moraine, a spur trail heads east to a viewing platform. It offers views of a ravine cut in the moraine by meltwater and of the upper Sugar River Valley in the Driftless Area to the south.

From a saddle on the moraine, descend westward using several short switchbacks. Curve southward to reach the segment's end at a gate in the northwest corner of the park's parking area near CTH-PB. The moraine and the Ice Age Trail are fenced off from a heavily used dog park south and east of the Trail.

AREA SERVICES

Madison: See [Valley View Segment and Madison Segment](#), p. 235. From the McKee Rd. (CTH-PD) Trail access go east and north ~5 mi to the West Towne Mall area.



Verona: Restaurant, grocery store, convenience store, general shopping, lodging, camping, library, medical service. From the E. Verona Ave. (CTH-MV) Trail crossing go west 0.9 mi on E. Verona Ave. Area information available from the Verona Chamber of Commerce (608-845-5777, visitveronawi.com).



LAUREN RAPINCHUK

Verona Segment: A quiet forest glows in the afternoon sunlight.