

## AREA SERVICES

**Sauk City:** Restaurant, grocery store, convenience store, lodging, library, medical service. From the Ballweg Rd. Trail access go south 0.2 mi. At USH-12 turn right and go northwest for 7.0 mi. For area info contact the Sauk Prairie Area Chamber of Commerce (608-643-4168, saukprairie.com).

**Middleton:** See Valley View Segment and Madison Segment, p. 220. From the Ballweg Rd. Trail access go south 0.2 mi. At USH-12 turn left and go east then south ~12 mi. Also see Trail Access and Parking directions, above.

**Indian Lake County Park:** Camping (for long-distance, multi-day hikers only). On Trail. Camping allowed at the park's warming hut/cabin (**DA24**) only with advanced permission from the Dane County Parks Department (608-224-3730, parks-lwrđ.countyofdane.com).



**Cross Plains:** See Table Bluff Segment and Cross Plains Segment, p. 216. From the STH-19 western Trail access go west then south ~10 mi.

# Table Bluff Segment and Cross Plains Segment (Atlas Map 65f)

## SNAPSHOT

**Table Bluff Segment—2.5 miles:** Table Bluff Rd. to Scheele Rd.

*1.6-mile Connecting Route*

**Cross Plains Segment—2.8 miles:** Hickory Hill St. to Bourbon Rd.

 *The **Table Bluff Segment** offers long ridgetop views and showcases the results of some remarkable land stewardship efforts.*



No reliable sources of water.



Dogs must be leashed.



At the top of the bluff 0.4 mi north of Scheele Rd.



Two white-blazed loop trails and additional informal trails.



The southern two-thirds of the segment crossing private land are closed during gun deer season.

 *The diverse **Cross Plains Segment** highlights a Trail Community, the Ice Age Trail Alliance headquarters and the surprisingly remote-feeling bluffs, prairies and woodlands north of town.*

**Note:** New Ice Age Trail is planned between Bourbon Road and CTH-P. Check with the Ice Age Trail Alliance (800-227-0046, iceagetrail.org) for details.



At the public library, public pool (seasonal) and IATA headquarters (**DA34**).



At Legion Park and town pool.



Portions follow town streets and sidewalks.



From Black Earth Creek.



A blue-blazed spur trail (**DA37**) to the DCA and an informal trail in Hickory Hill Conservation Area.



At Legion Park, 1 block west of the Trail on American Legion Dr.



At a Dispersed Camping Area  on the IATA's Andersen Preserve.



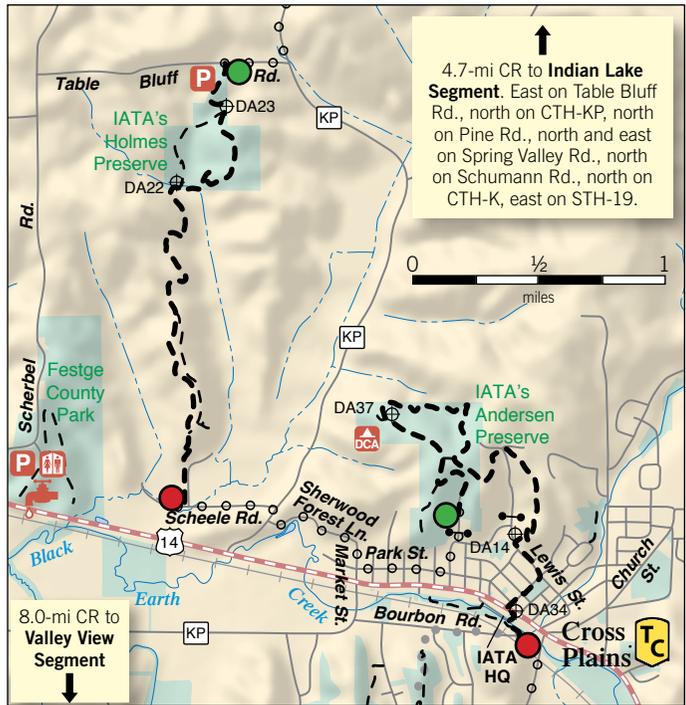
Portions of this segment may be suitable for those using wheelchairs or similar devices.

## TRAIL ACCESS AND PARKING

**Table Bluff Rd.:** From the Ice Age Trail Alliance headquarters in Cross Plains, take USH-14 west 1.2 mi. At CTH-KP turn right and go north 2.4 mi. At Table Bluff Rd. turn left and go west 0.3 mi to the parking area on the south side of the road.

**Bourbon Rd.:** From west of Madison on the Beltline Hwy. (USH-12/14) near Middleton, take Exit 251 for University Ave. (USH-14) and go west on University Ave. (USH-14) for 7.2 mi to Cross Plains. At CTH-P turn left and go south across Black Earth Creek then immediately turn right at Bourbon Rd. The segment begins a short distance west where a paved path intersects the road. Roadside parking.

**Additional Parking:** (i) Roadside parking on Scheele Rd. (ii) Roadside parking at Hickory Hill St. near the gated access road for Hickory Hill Conservation Park. (iii) Roadside parking at Lewis St. Trail access. (iv) Parking area at Village of Cross Plains Municipal Park pool at 2106 Lewis St. (behind the library). (v) Parking area behind IATA headquarters (DA34), 2110 Main St.



## THE HIKE

Located in the Driftless Area of southwestern Wisconsin, the **Table Bluff Segment** traverses restored prairie as well as steep, rocky slopes. There is approximately 200 feet of total vertical relief and several vistas from the heads of two valleys and two prominent goat prairies that offer great views of the Driftless Area. Meltwater from the Laurentide ice sheet poured through a preglacial valley depositing sand and gravel and partially filling the lower valley floors, which now hold extensive wetlands and a tributary stream of Black Earth Creek, a Class I trout stream.

From the Trail access on Table Bluff Road, the segment heads south across the IATA's 73-acre Holmes Preserve. After passing through a prairie hikers will come to an intersection (DA23) with a white-blazed loop trail that offers a 0.5-mile "bubble" to the west. The loop trail traverses up a ridge through a mixed hardwood forest containing a grove of several large oaks.

Back on the main segment, from its initial encounter with the white-blazed loop trail the segment continues south across a large prairie restored to its natural state. A thriving population of the rare pale purple coneflower can be found here. Hikers will find this area to be a wildflower treasure trove—shooting star, rattlesnake master, stiff gentian, hoary vervain, prairie smoke, cream gentian and cream baptisia have all been identified here. The segment then enters a wooded

area and dips down onto a valley floor. After crossing an open area the segment makes its second connection with the white-blazed loop trail (DA22).

The remainder of the segment traverses the privately owned Swamplovers property. From the valley floor, the segment climbs up a ridge and traverses nearly a mile of woodlands of oak and hickory before entering a prairie/oak savanna area that owners of the Swamplovers property are faithfully restoring to its native state. This area, including a second white-blazed loop, features dramatic rock outcroppings of Ordovician dolomite and views southwest to the Blue Mounds. At the top of the bluff area is a shelter with picnic tables that is available to hikers when not already in use by the property owners. From the top of the bluff the segment drops precipitously on a series of switchbacks to the segment's endpoint on the Swamplovers property access road.

*Mobile Skills Crew project site, 2006*

*To reach the Cross Plains Segment, hikers should follow a 1.6-mile connecting route by heading south on the access road to its intersection with gravel Scheele Road. From there, hikers should turn left and head east on Scheele Road, then turn right and head south on CTH-KP for 235 feet. Turn left and head east on Sherwood Forest Lane, which becomes a private road. Curve south onto Market Street. At Park Street, turn left and head east. Turn left and head north on Hickory Street, which jogs slightly to the right, then turn left and head north on Hickory Hill Street.*

The **Cross Plains Segment** shows off the village of Cross Plains, which is situated along Black Earth Creek in a valley between tall bluffs. It sits at the boundary of the most recent glaciation to the east and north and the Driftless Area to the west and south. Meltwater from the receding glacier eroded and carried the terminal moraine downstream from the site of the village. Cross Plains is named for the intersection of two early roads: the military road from Fort Crawford (Prairie du Chien) to Fort Howard (Green Bay) and the lowland road from Arena to Madison.

The segment starts at the end of Hickory Hill Street, where a gate crosses an access road that leads north uphill into the Hickory Hill Conservation Park. Departing from the access road, the segment enters a former agricultural field restored to native prairie which shows great variations and color over the seasons. Shortly after entering the former agricultural field, hikers will encounter signage for a "cut-off" path that heads east. To continue with the full segment hikers should veer northwest at this junction. The segment continues across the former agricultural field, entering the IATA's Andersen Preserve, and soon enters a woodland that features not only native flora such as jack-in-the-pulpit, shooting stars and wild ginger but also the glacial drainage network known as "Three Gorges." Shortly after entering the woodland the segment intersects (DA37) a blue-blazed spur trail that leads a few hundred yards to a Dispersed Camping Area (DCA) for long-distance, multi-day hikers.

The segment exits the forest and once more crosses the former agricultural field. After passing the cut-off path, hikers will continue southeast through an oak savanna in the midst of a restoration. The segment continues southeast, gaining elevation up the side of a dolomite ridge. At the head of the ridge hikers will find views to the south and east displaying what conservationist Increase Lapham described as the "Great Dividing Ridge." On the distant ridge to the south hik-