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Area Scouts Create New Destination Sign for Ice Age National Scenic Trail

And earn several recognitions for their work

Cross Plains, Wis. (January 30 , 2025) --Thanks to a group of area Scouts, hikers will once again know where they are on the Ice Age National Scenic Trail—and how far away they are from their next destination.

Seventeen Scouts from Oregon, Wis.-based Troops 50, 168, and 750 recently collaborated to design and create the new destination sign for the Ice Age Trail access point at Frenchtown Rd. outside of Belleville. The destination sign lists the mileage to the next major road crossing, water source, and more. It is among only a few destination signs to exist on the 1,200-mile Trail. It is modeled after signs that are frequently seen along the Appalachian Trail.

“This project is a great example of community service,” says Dan Winter Cubmaster for Pack 350 (Oregon). “It required teamwork, precision, and creative problem-solving.”

Winter organized the project, which came about after he discovered the original destination sign at Frenchtown Rd. had been destroyed. The destination sign had stood for nearly 12 years before getting hit by a car (presumably) twice in two years. The first time it happened, the sign was able to be repaired and refurbished. When it happened the second time, the sign, which is valued around \$1,000, was a total loss.

“I came upon the broken sign days after returning from hiking the John Muir Trail (in California),” Winter says. “That trip inspired me to want to give back to Trails. So, finding this very specific need on a Trail so close to home was fortuitous.”

Winter quickly formed a group of Scouts interested in doing the work and solicited materials from Stoughton Lumber and Home Depot. Over the course of 12 days, the Scouts sawed, cut, sanded, painted, and assembled the 12-foot sign.

This project wasn’t the Scouts first encounter with the Trail. In the months leading up to their project, they had earned their Hiking Merit Badge by exploring various sections of the Ice Age Trail. They also helped with Trail maintenance, helping create a more enjoyable experience for users.

For their efforts in this project, the Scouts earned several recognitions, including the Woodworking Merit Badge, the Conservation Good Turn Award, and the Historic Trails Award. “These achievements reflect not only the skills the Scouts developed but also their dedication to environmental conservation and historical preservation,” says Winter.

Scouts who participated in this effort included Tiernan, Duncan, and Greg Kosharek; Jim, Veronica, Liam, and Aiden Kleckner; Nathan and Kristen Zweig; Tristan Harm; Kalib and Stephanie Lord; Kathy Kransy; Devin Little; and Michael, Franklin, and Dan Winter. A special thank you goes out to Liam Kleckner and Greg Kosharek for their outstanding contributions.

“The Scouts’ work on the mileage sign and Trail maintenance is greatly appreciated,” says Ed Spoon, member of the Dane County Chapter of the Ice Age Trail Alliance. “When people pause to read the sign, I hope they are reminded of the dedication of these young people.”

To hopefully prevent any further encounters with a vehicle, the sign was installed further from the road.

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About Scouting America

For families or individuals interested in joining Scouting America and experiencing the benefits of its programs, finding a local unit is easy.: visit <https://beascout.scouting.org/>. Whether you're looking for Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, Venturing, or Sea Scouts, this resource provides all the information needed to get started on your Scouting journey. Becoming a Scout opens the door to leadership development, outdoor adventures, and opportunities to give back to the community.

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 the nonprofit, member- and volunteer-based organization which conserves, creates, maintains, and promotes the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. It consists of 19 volunteer chapters, spread across the length of the Trail. For more information or to learn how to get involved, visit IceAgeTrail.org/volunteer.