




# Mecan River Segment (Atlas Map 52f; Databook pages 48–49)

## SNAPSHOT

**7.5 miles (7.1 IAT, 0.4 CR):** Buttercup Dr. to Cumberland Ave.

 This segment traverses a variety of natural communities from wetland to grassland to forest and includes outstanding views of the Mecan Springs and Mecan River.

*Note:* A reroute is planned for the eastern portion of the segment. Check with the Ice Age Trail Alliance (800-227-0046, [iceagetrail.org](http://iceagetrail.org)) for details.

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
|  | From the Mecan River.   |  | Dogs should be leashed (8-ft max) and under control at all times.  |
|  | A Dispersed Camping Area  south of Buttercup Dr. |  | Road walk along 9th Ave.   |
|  | At a nearby private campground (see Area Services).   |  | A blue-blazed spur trail ( <b>WS14</b> ) to the DCA, a blue-blazed spur trail to the CTH-GG parking area and a blue-blazed spur trail ( <b>WS6</b> ) to the Mecan River vista. |
|  | One ColdCache site on segment.  |   |  |
|  | Portion of the segment crossing private land between CTH-GG and 9th Ave. is closed during gun deer season.                        |   |  |

## TRAIL ACCESS AND PARKING

**Buttercup Dr.:** From I-39 take Exit 124 (Coloma) and follow STH-21 east 1.4 mi. At 6th Ave. turn left and go north 2.6 mi. At Buttercup Dr. turn right and go east 0.8 mi to the parking area on the south side of the road.

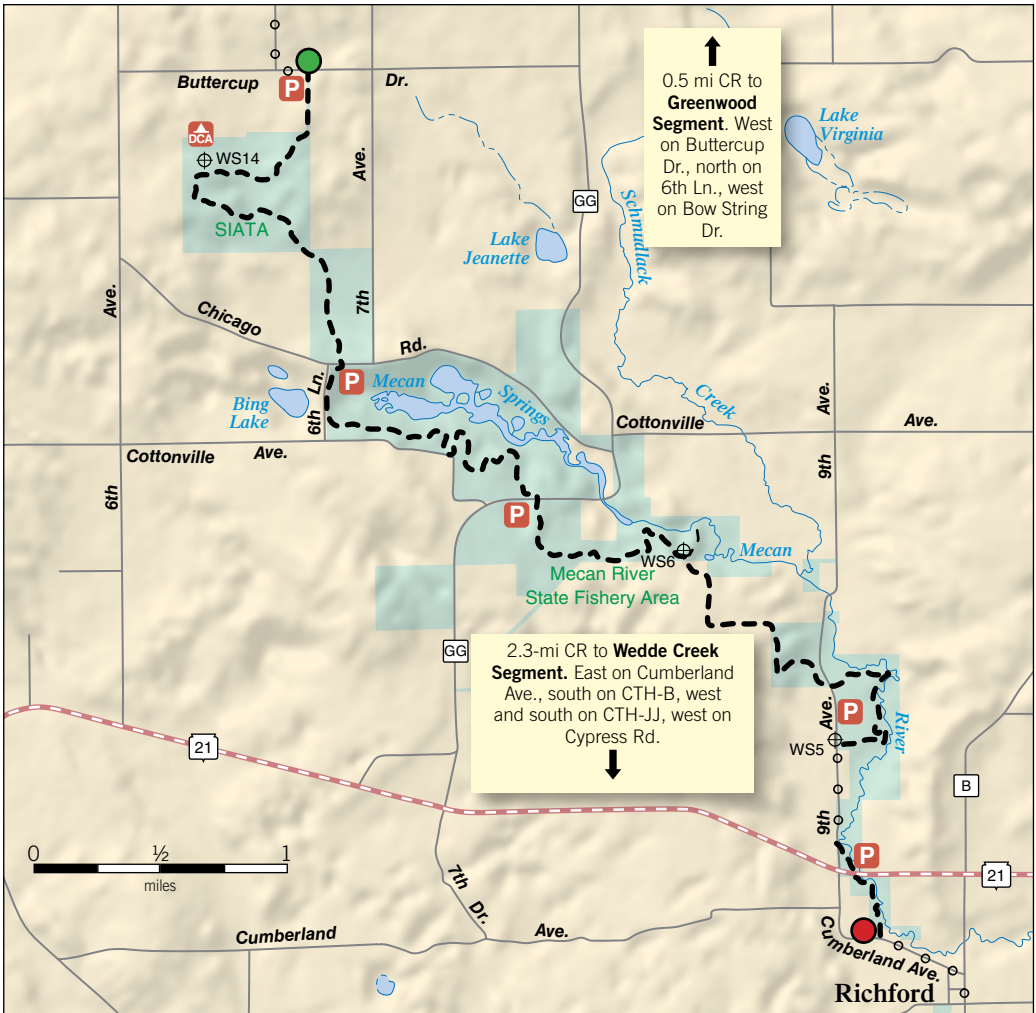
**Cumberland Ave.:** From I-39 take Exit 134 (Coloma) and follow STH-21 east 3.9 mi. At 9th Ave. turn right and go south 0.2 mi, merging with Cumberland Ave. Curve east and continue on Cumberland Ave. 0.1 mi to the Trail access on north side of the road. No parking. Instead, park at the STH-21 parking area between 9th Ave. and the Mecan River.

**Additional Parking:** (i) 6th Ln. parking area. (ii) CTH-GG parking area. A blue-blazed spur trail leads 0.1 mi to the Trail. (iii) 9th Ave. DNR parking areas located 0.6 and 0.8 mi north of STH-21.

## THE HIKE

From its starting point at the parking area on Buttercup Drive, the segment heads south on a grass-and-dirt access road. The segment then heads west through a pine plantation, where one of the Waushara County Chapter's signature log benches offers a shady respite. The segment intersects a signed spur trail (**WS14**) leading to a nearby Dispersed Camping Area (DCA) for long-distance, multiday hikers. The segment continues through a State Ice Age Trail Area property that contains rolling hills with steep slopes and scenic panoramas of the rural farm countryside. The property is a mix of pine plantations, upland woods and grasslands. As the segment makes its way south toward Chicago Road, it passes through a large, open field where whitetail deer are often spotted at dawn and dusk.

South of Chicago Road the segment heads into the Mecan River headwaters area and intersects an outstanding example of a tunnel channel. The channel extends west several miles through the Almond Moraine to the edge of the Han-



cock Moraine. As it bends around the western edge and then southern edge the segment offers outstanding views of the Mecan Springs more than a hundred feet below. Many migratory and wetland birds visit the area including sandhill cranes, northern bobwhite quail, red-shouldered hawks and bald eagles.

The segment bends south away from the springs, crosses CTH-GG and intersects a blue-blazed spur trail that leads 0.1 miles to the CTH-GG parking area. The Trail continues south and east for a short distance before arriving at a spot above the banks of the Mecan River, renowned as one of the finest trout streams in central Wisconsin. A little farther on, a rewarding side trip on the blue-blazed Mecan Vista Trail (WS6) offers views of the Mecan River.

The segment departs from the Mecan River State Fishery Area briefly and passes over the Wisconsin Operating Engineer training grounds. For safety's sake, hikers should stay on the Trail to avoid the heavy equipment operated on the grounds.

As it approaches 9th Avenue, the segment reenters the fishery area property.

Hikers will cross through a recent timber harvest area, part of an oak regeneration project. East of 9th Avenue the segment hits another recent pine timber harvest area. Pay close attention to Trail signage in these logged areas.

From 9th Avenue the segment continues past rock piles cleared from pioneer farmers' fields and through deciduous forest and openings of prairie and wetlands along the river. The segment bends back to the west and passes through a pine plantation before emerging back onto 9th Avenue (**WS5**). Here, hikers should turn left and walk south 0.4 miles along the road. The segment then leaves the road again, heading southeast along the river for a short distance before reaching STH-21. Hikers should cross STH-21 carefully and continue south as the Trail follows a beautiful section of the Mekan River. The Trail passes a log bench and crosses a 70-foot-long boardwalk and a 32-foot-long bridge built by volunteers as it makes its way to the segment terminus at the Cumberland Avenue parking area.

*Mobile Skills Crew project site, 2003, 2010, 2014, 2019*

## AREA SERVICES

**Hancock:** See Bohn Lake Segment and Greenwood Segment, p. 168. From the Buttercup Dr. Trail access go west then north ~6 mi.

**Coloma:** Restaurant, convenience store, lodging, camping, library. From the STH-21 Trail access go west 4.0 mi on STH-21. INN Style lodging at the Coloma Hotel (715-228-2401, colomahotel.com) and Caribou Bay Retreat (920-716-5918, cariboubayretreat.com) and Whispering Pines of Pleasant Lake (715-347-7005, airbnb.com/rooms/14083416).

**Wautoma:** Restaurant, grocery store, convenience store, lodging, camping, library, medical service. From the STH-21 Trail access go east ~10 mi on STH-21. Lodging at Super 8 (920-787-4811, wyndhamhotels.com/Super-8), Boarders Inn and Suites (920-787-5050, staycobblestone.com/w i/Wautoma), Silvercryst Resort and Motel (920-787-3367, silvercryst.com; includes restaurant). Area info available from Waushara Area Chamber of Commerce (920-787-3488, wausharachamber.com).

**Richford:** Restaurant, lodging. From the Cumberland Ave. Trail access go east 0.5 mi. Lodging at Mekan River Inn (866-322-6466 or 715-228-2555, mecanriverinn.net).

*I touched every large tree encircling Ennis Lake, as if to make a personal connection with John Muir. I wondered if he had carefully examined these same trees when they were mere saplings. Among countless ranks of swaying tan cattails, I observed a trio of Amish youth launch a wooden rowboat from a carriage pulled by a handsome black horse. Did the youthful, inquisitive Muir play on the same shoreline to usher in a similar summer morning?*

JAMES KING (AKA "J.J."), ICE AGE TRAIL THOUSAND-MILER



# Map 52f

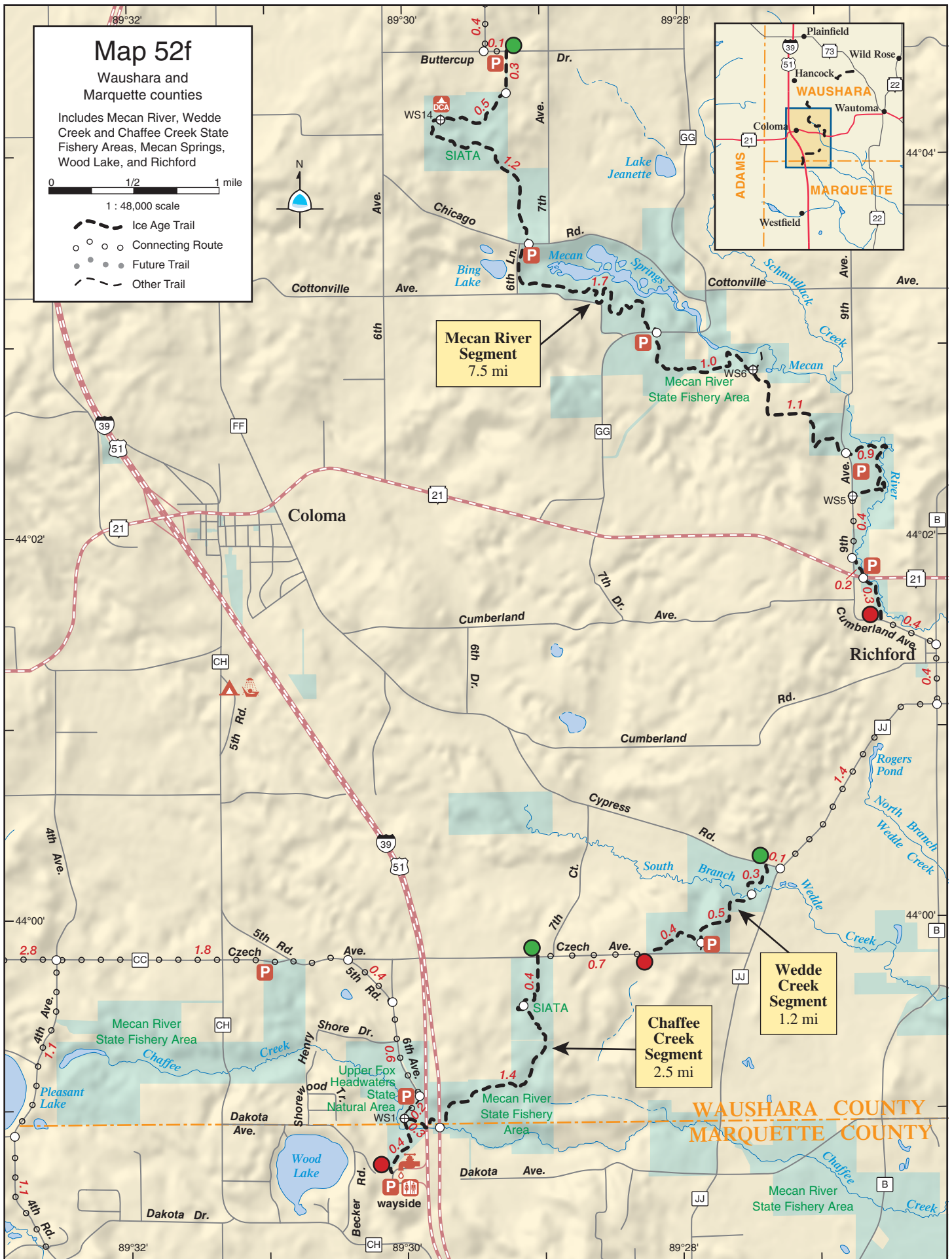
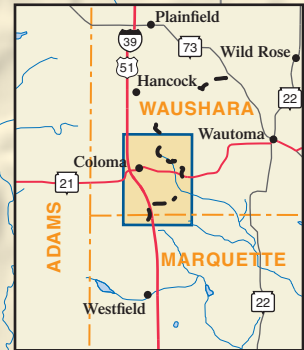
Waushara and Marquette counties

Includes Mecan River, Wedde Creek and Chaffee Creek State Fishery Areas, Mecan Springs, Wood Lake, and Richford

0 1/2 1 mile

1 : 48,000 scale

- Ice Age Trail
- Connecting Route
- Future Trail
- Other Trail



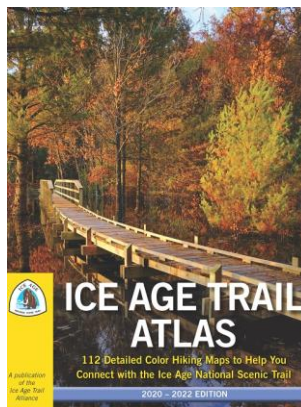
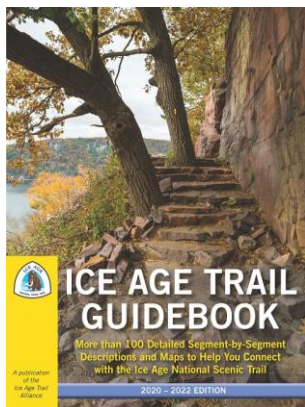
**Mecan River Segment**  
7.5 mi

**Wedde Creek Segment**  
1.2 mi

**Chaffee Creek Segment**  
2.5 mi

**WAUSHARA COUNTY**  
**MARQUETTE COUNTY**

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The **Ice Age Trail Atlas** is a set of 105 color, shaded relief-style maps at 1:48,000 scale. In contrast to the smaller map excerpts in the Ice Age Trail Guidebook, each map in this package is printed on an 8.5" x 11" sheet and includes not just the Ice Age Trail route but also a wider snapshot of the area around the Trail.

Both books were written and published by the Ice Age Trail Alliance. All proceeds for each book help build and maintain the Ice Age Trail. Please call the IATA at (800) 227-0046 with any questions.

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