

LANGLADE COUNTY ICE AGE NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL CONDITIONS

(As of January 8, 2023)

A projected National Oceanic, Atmospheric Administration 10 day forecast for Wisconsin of above normal temperatures in the coming week provides suitable weather for winter hiking. There is a snow base with icy stretches and some parking areas are unplowed so consider options.

COVID-19

Scattered windfalls on the five segments in the county have been reported, some are passable, but certified sawyers will remove them as schedules permit.

Due to situations beyond the control of the Langlade County Ice Age Trail Chapter, conditions are constantly changing. Hikers are urged to contact the chapter coordinator (715-623-2645) or the Langlade County Forestry Department Office (715-627-6300) at the Fairgrounds to check on current conditions in advance of any hike.



Frost pocket on the Kettlebowl Segment

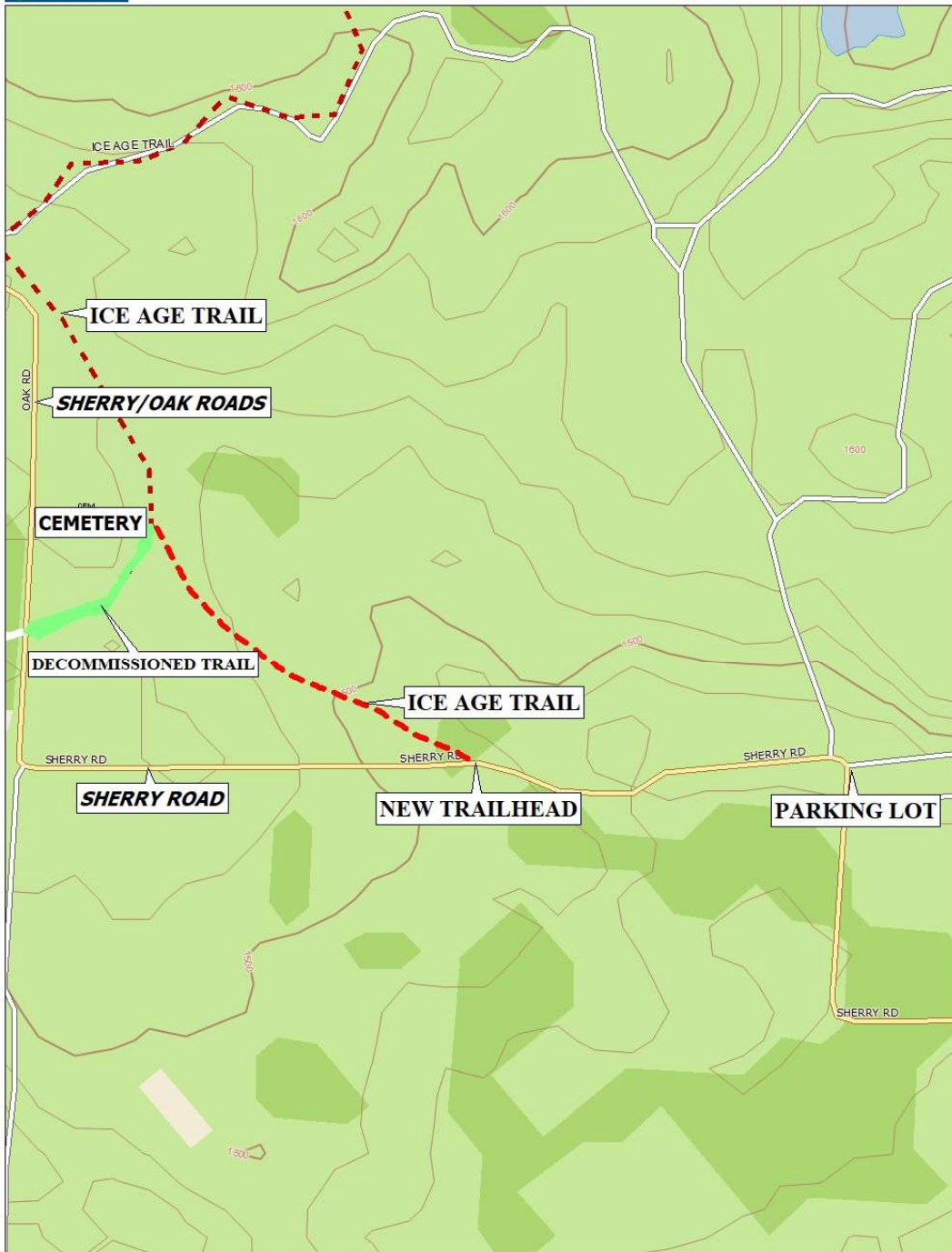
KETTLEBOWL – Distance: Approximately 15 miles Highway 52 to Polar at Highway 64.

The trail was extended a third of a mile to the new trail head which is closer to a county-owned parking lot. The lot accessible by a short road walk via Sherry Road offers safe and legal parking space for hiker vehicles. (See map on following page for details of the segment extension and off-road parking area). **The parking area near the Sherry Road Trailhead is not plowed so other options should be considered for winter hiking.**

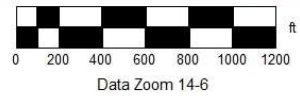
A Langlade County ordinance authorizes local law enforcement officers to impound vehicles considered by them to be unsafely parked on any rural road. To avoid the risk of impoundment and accidents, hikers are encouraged to use off-road parking options, especially on the 25 mile connecting roads associated with the Kettlebowl/Plover River Segments. Information on off-road parking options is available from the chapter.

Brushing and markings were refreshed where needed from Sherry Road north to the Kettlebowl Ski Hill at Highway 52 this year. Most of segment was mowed by volunteers.

The segment passes through some of the highest terrain in Langlade County and features scenic hardwood ridges, kettles and frost pockets. Just off the trail at the south end is the foundation of a three-story barn, once part of the Norem Sheep Ranch. Approximately three-quarters of a mile from the trail is Kent Hill at 1903 feet above sea level which is the county's highest point of elevation. Big Stone Hole, a unique glacial feature, is just off the trail but access is unimproved. Also, future logging will occur in the Big Stone Hole area, so caution is advised.



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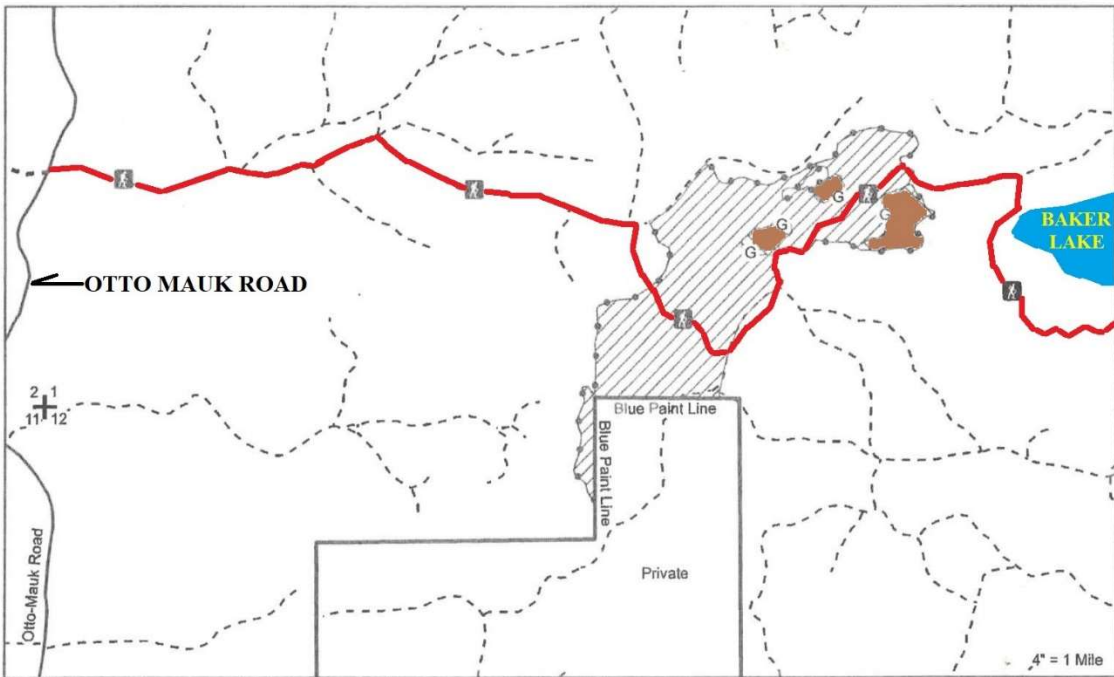
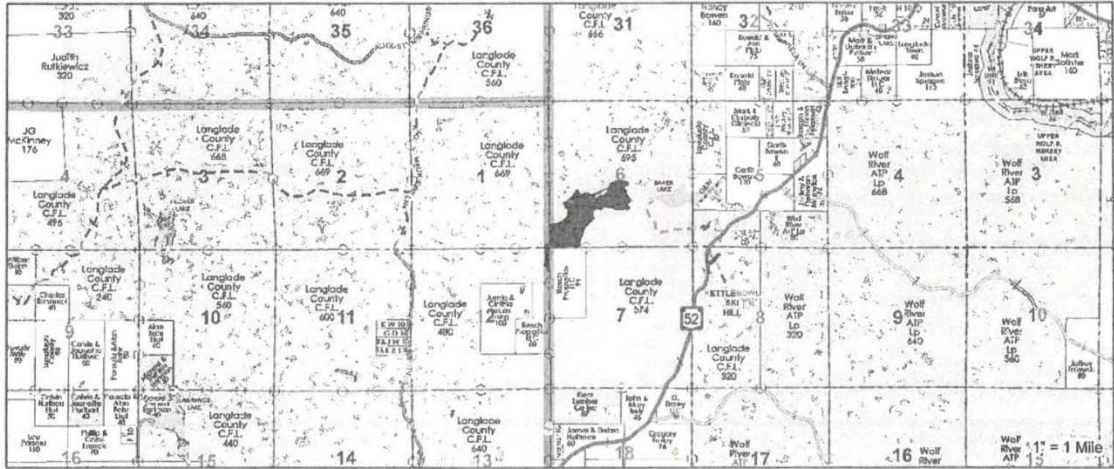
Boulder field on slope of Summit Lake Moraine west of Baker Lake - Photo by Lee Auner

LUMBERCAMP - Distance: 12 miles Wisconsin 52 to County Trunk A

A logging operation is active in the Peters Marsh area, so caution is recommended in that area. The stretch west of Otto Mauk Road to County Trunk S has an inordinate amount of use by 4-wheel vehicles. Pools of water have collected in depressions formed by the vehicular traffic. Brushing and directional arrows at critical intersections and markings were refreshed from Wisconsin Highway 52 west to County A. Access to parking at the north end of Hill Road is not available currently as a deep pool of water covers the entire width of the road and beyond. Years ago, local sportsmen fixed up the stone cellar at the former Norem Lumbercamp site just west of Otto Mauk Road for overnight use. The historic structure is on county forestland and the chapter is not responsible for the facility but hikers are encouraged to exercise good trail stewardship if using it.

Parking of vehicles in front of gates at the west end of the segment on County A is prohibited by county ordinance and the DNR. There is an enlarged parking area provided by the DNR on the south side of County A, which is currently plowed. **The parking area at County S is not plowed so other options should be considered for winter hiking.**

The boulder strewn slope near Baker Lake, a former logging camp and the state's Peters Marsh Wildlife Area are noted features of this segment. The east end of the segment has rugged terrain which is part of a recessive moraine known as the Summit Lake Moraine which serves as a portion of the sub-continental drainage divide between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins in Langlade County.



SHADED AREA IS LOGGING OPERATION Legend

RED LINE IS ICE AGE TRAIL **BROWN ARE CLEAR CUT AREAS**

Area 1 (Hwd Thinning) 77 acres	Woods Road	RPL Red Paint Line
Area 2 (Aspen Clearcut) 8 acres	Ice Age Trail	—G— Green Paint Line
County Forest Road	Red Paint Line	

This map is not a survey of any property depicted.



Spychalla Lodge-Summit Moraine Segment at County Trunk J.

Summit Moraine - Distance: 12.4 miles County Trunk A to County Trunk B

Rerouting of this segment was completed in 2018. The reroute involved establishment of some new trail sections and upgrading existing stretches of the former Old Railroad Segment.

Salvage logging occurred recently on the segment east and west of Pence Lake Road.

The entire segment was checked this year with mowing, brushing and markings refreshed. New You Are Here signs at four locations on the segment were installed last summer.

Caution should be exercised on the trail section along the busy and high-speed County A.

Parking of vehicles in front of gates on County A is prohibited by county ordinance and the DNR. There is an enlarged parking area provided by the DNR on the south side of County A.

Hikers are encouraged to use this parking area and those at County B, Veterans Memorial Park or the Jack Lake Cross Country Ski on County J to avoid the volume of highspeed traffic on US 45/WI 47. **The parking areas at Pence Lake Road and County B are not plowed so other options should be considered for winter hiking.**

There is no legal or safe off-road parking space along US 45/W/47.

Depending on varying lake levels, the bog walk at Game Lake may not be safely passable, but hikers can follow a 0.2 mile longer portion of the nature trail around the lake as a bypass option to connect east or west with the Ice Age Trail.

Features of this segment are Veterans Memorial Park, the recently restored bog walk and Spychalla Lodge. The latter facility is open but overnight use is discouraged. There are two fee campsites along the segment on Game and Jack Lakes along with the no-fee designated camp area (DCA) at Upper Ventor Lake. Ice Age Trail Alliance rules prohibit campfire at DCAs so observance of the rule is appreciated by other hikers and local volunteers.

Veterans Memorial Park on Jack Lake is a county park with cabins, developed campground, picnic area, a beach and native plant arboretum. Some hikers have used the county park as a base camp for their treks.



Crossing the West Branch of the Eau Claire River. Babbling brook or raging torrent?



Restored vista along Highland Lakes (Photo courtesy by Dory Witzeling of Appleton). The view is of a spruce/tamarack wetland and the distinct ridge of the Parrish Terminal Moraine in the background was formed by the Langlade Lobe of the Wisconsin Glacier.

HIGHLAND LAKES - Distance: 12.5 miles County Trunk B to County Trunk T.

In 2009, the Knights Templar Club granted permission for the trail to cross their land on a section of a forest lane north of Kleevers Road. Gates and trail markings were installed on the stretch the following year. Brushing, refresher markings and directional arrows at critical intersections were completed this spring. The segment has not been mowed.

This segment is incomplete but a 4.5 mile connecting route is available via Forest and Kleevers Roads in the Town of Upham between trail heads at County B and T. **The small parking area at County B is not plowed so other options should be considered for winter hiking.**

An interesting feature on Forest Road is the Bogus Swamp State Natural Area. The unique site once considered for a peat removal operation is less than a mile north of the Bogus Road junction with Forest Road.

A mile south of County T, a scenic vista was restored recently. The view overlooks a Spruce/Tamarack swamp, once a former shallow glacial lake, framed by the north side of the Parrish \Terminal Moraine. The natural process of eutrophication over the ages eventually converted the water body to a wetland from sediment run-off and organic material deposition. Bogus Swamp on Forest Road connecting route is another example created by the natural process.

The Parrish Terminal Moraine is a distinctive landform which stretches over 26 miles from Bryant to Parrish and was deposited by the Langlade lobe of the Wisconsin glacier. Langlade County contains portions of terminal moraines deposited by three of the six ice lobes of the last glacier which shaped the state's landscape. The forest lane portions of the trail between Kleevers Road and the West Branch of the Eau Claire River parallels the moraine for over three miles until ascending or descending it just west of the stream crossing.



Just east of Nelson Fire Lane, the vista east from “Blackberry Ridge”. Photo by John Prokops

PARRISH HILLS - Distance: 12 miles County Trunk T to the Lincoln County Line

****Volunteers have installed trail marking in a clearcut of a 44-acre pine plantation at County Highway H. See MAP A on following page for the affected section of the segment.**

****A tornado in 2011 devastated a portion of the segment south of 5 Cent Road. A shorter re-routed stretch was completed this year by a WisCorps crew and volunteers. The newly completed trail requires future stump removal so hikers should use caution, especially along the newly cut trail just west of the Parrish Hills Game Trail forest lane. (See MAP B)**

Depending on ground water levels, the segment has several water crossings which require a bit of creativity to get around them.

Beaver activity occasionally creates wet stretches in the Old Truck Marker area 2.5 miles north of the County T trail head. **The parking areas at Pine and First Lake Roads are not plowed so other options should be considered for winter hiking.**

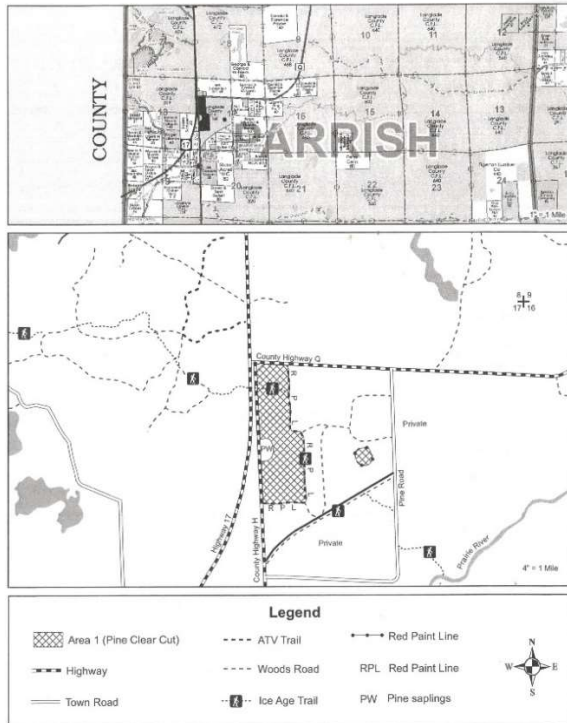
Brushing and refreshing of trail markings along with some mowing were completed this summer. Hikers may encounter a No Trespassing sign on the rail grade just west of Pine Road in Parrish. However, the landowner has granted permission for hikers to pass over his property.

The segment has a ford across the Prairie River southeast of Parrish. The river bottom is firm and the water level is usually below the knees. Mucky stretches just north and south of the river can be expected. Last winter the river froze to allow dry crossings but six days later the stream was flowing.

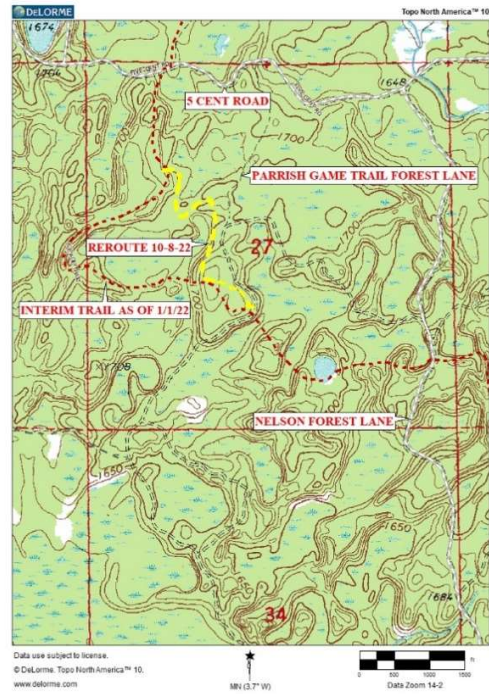
Logging will be occurring in areas near the trail so hauling traffic may be encountered. Caution is advised in these areas when logging operations are active.

There is an ATV shelter with water and pit privies just north of Five Cent Road. The facility, a half mile south of the trail crossing, is available to hikers. However, camping in proximity to the shelter is not permitted. Available for primitive camping is an Adirondack-like shelter on the trail about a mile southeast of the Prairie River ford.

Features of the Parrish Hills Segment include the Old Truck Marker, natural lakes, wetlands, “Blackberry Ridge”, the Prairie River ford and the hamlet of Parrish where oil exploration occurred in the county’s early years. Other features recently made more visible due to an extensive trimming job by chapter volunteers are a CCC-era concrete stairway to the top of Basswood Hill, an eroded outdoor grill and bench posts. Basswood Hill is 60 feet lower than Lookout Mountain on the Harrison Hills Segment in Lincoln County, which is the highest point along the entire trail. Another notable feature just west of Wisconsin Highway 17 is Baldy Hill, the eastern prominence of the Harrison Hills Terminal Moraine deposited by the Wisconsin Valley Lobe of the last glacier over 11,000 years ago.



MAP A - CLEAR-CUT AFFECTED TRAIL



MAP B
RE-ESTABLISHED INTERIM TRAIL - RED DASHES
BETWEEN PARRISH GAME TRAIL FOREST LANE
AND 5 CENT ROAD AS OF JANUARY 2022.
NEW REROUTE AS OF 10-8-2022 - YELLOW DASHES