

LANGLADE COUNTY ICE AGE NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL CONDITIONS

(As of September 7, 2021)

COVID-19

All five Ice Age Trail segments in the county are open for hiking. However, hikers are encouraged to keep an appropriate distance when encountering other hikers on the trail. Also having a facemask handy if close encounters with others is recommended.

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.

"You Are Here" signs, installed in 1997, are at select sites or where the trail crosses public roads on the Kettlebowl, Lumbercamp and Parrish Hills Segments.



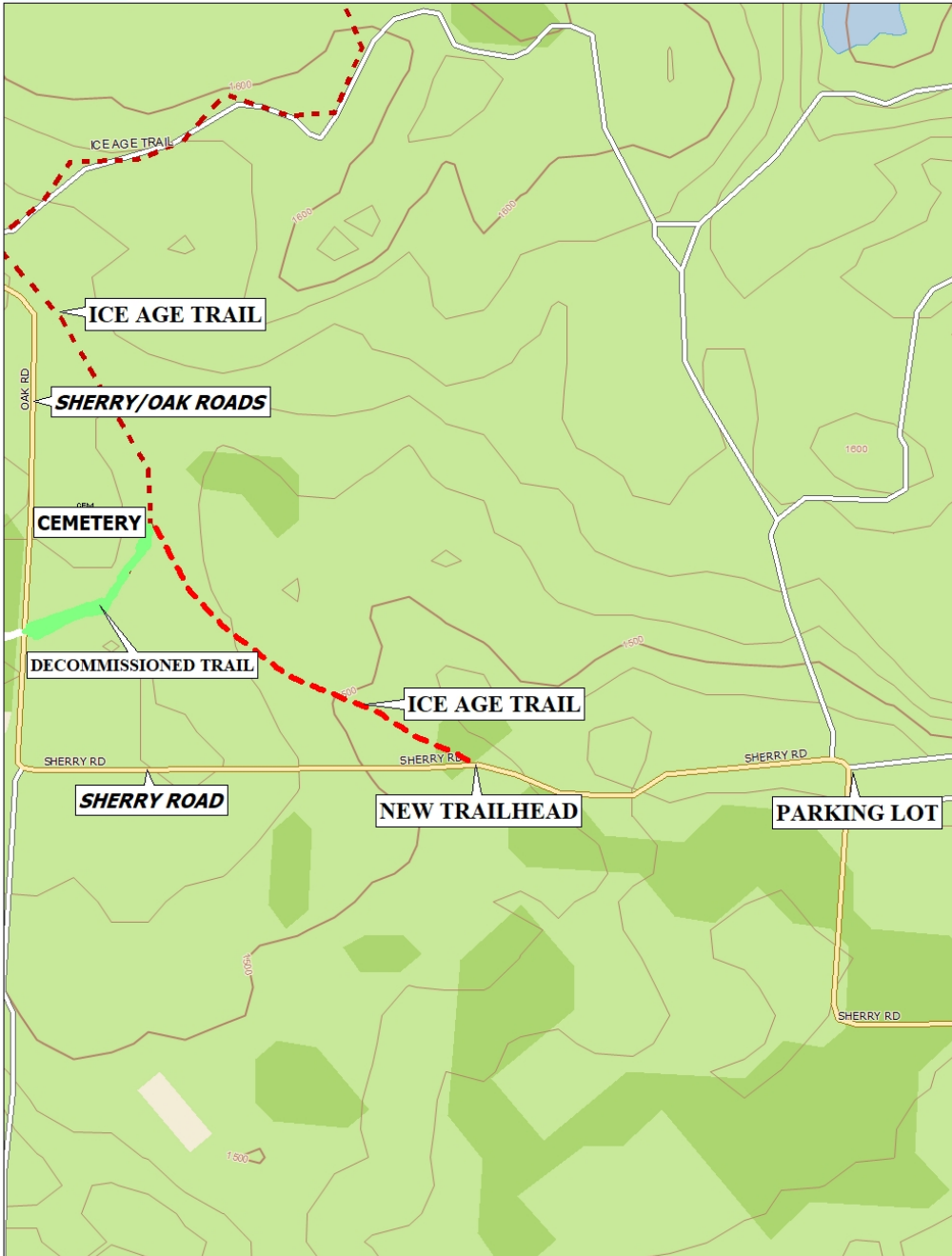
Frost pocket on the Kettlebowl Segment

KETTLEBOWL – Distance: Approximately 14 miles Highway 52 to Polar at Highway 64. Recently the Kettlebowl Segment trail head on Sherry/Oak Roads was moved over a half-mile southeast to a new location on Sherry Road. The trail was also 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 road walk via Sherry Road offers safe and legal parking space for hiker vehicles. A Langlade County ordinance prohibits parking on town and county roads unless authorized by the governing body. Violators of the ordinance can be ticketed and have their vehicles impounded. (See map below for details of the segment extension).

Over half of this segment crosses privately-owned land. The mile plus stretch of trail north of the Sherry Road trail head is privately owned so good trail ethics is especially appreciated. A portion of the segment on the south end is currently being logged. Hiker are encouraged to use caution. Another section of the segment is covered by a six-mile state conservation and trail easement on private land owned by the BTG Pactual Group. Logging also occurs occasionally but not currently along this section of the trail in the middle of the segment.

Brushing and markings were refreshed where needed from Sherry Road north to the Kettlebowl Ski Hill at Highway 52 this year. Seasonal growth of trees screen markings so be alert. Drainage of a large pool of water on the trail was completed last year by volunteers.

The segment passes through some of the highest terrain in Langlade County and features scenic hardwood ridges and frost pockets. Near to 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, so caution is advised.



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Boulder field on South Slope of Summit Lake Moraine east of Baker Lake - Photo by Lee Auner
LUMBERCAMP - Distance: 12 miles Wisconsin 52 to County Trunk A

An incomplete logging operation, including eight acres of clear cut, affects a half mile of the segment just west of Baker Lake (see following map). The operation is currently inactive but will return later this year. An alert will be posted when the operation will resume. When logging resumes on the steep, boulder strewn trail, hikers should be alert and exercise extreme precaution in the area to falling timber, chain sawing and equipment movement.

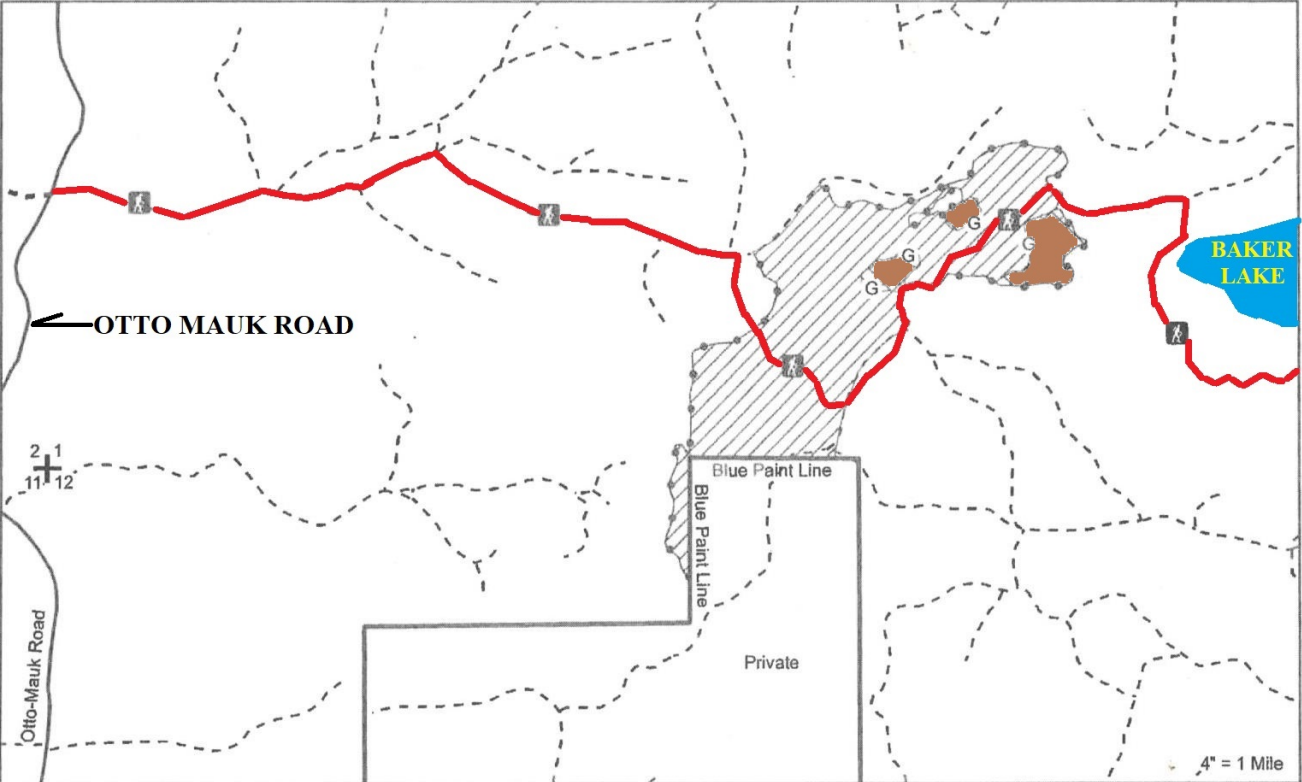
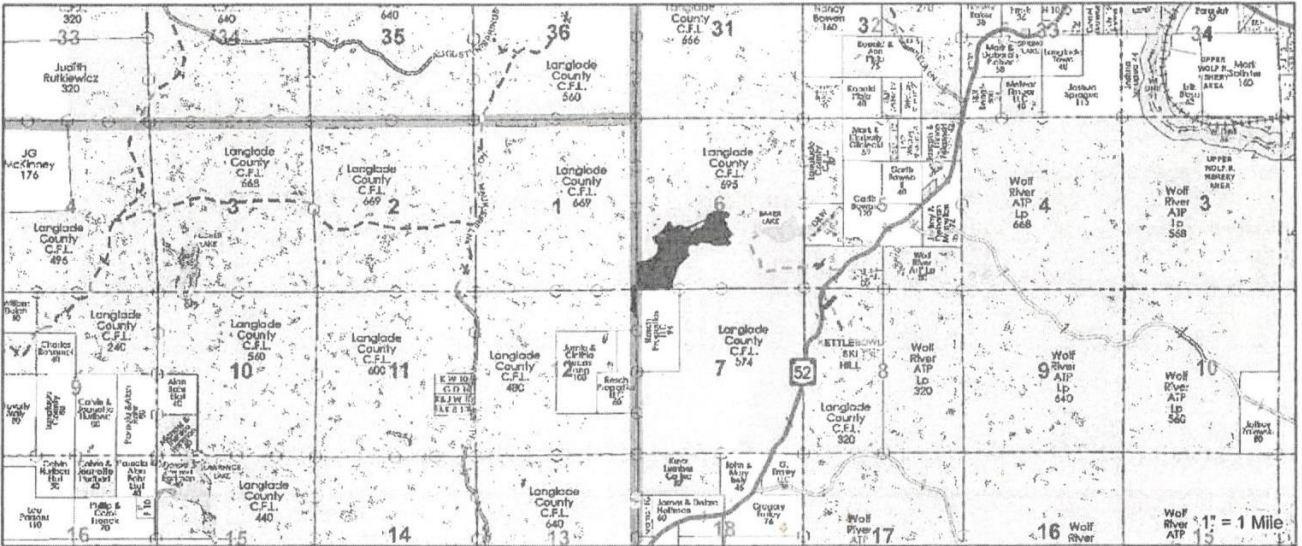
The logger uses Otto Mauk Road to the west of the operation for log storage and hauling to WI 52 so hikers should also be alert and cautious in this area.

The stretch especially west of Otto Mauk Road to County Trunk S has an inordinate amount of use by 4-wheel vehicles. With the abnormal rain this summer, pools of water have collected in depressions formed by the vehicular traffic. Caution is advised in these areas.

Brushing and directional arrows at critical intersections and markings were refreshed this year 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 town road and beyond. High water levels have caused an overflow of the shallow glacial lakes in the Peters Marsh Wildlife Area affecting the trail between County Highways S and A.

Local sportsmen have fixed up the stone cellar at the former Norem Lumbercamp site just west of Otto Mauk Road for overnight use. Although the chapter is not responsible for the accommodations, hikers are encouraged to exercise good trail stewardship if using the historic structure.

The boulder strewn slope of 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 stretches from Oneida County through Langlade County into Oconto 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	Green Paint Line
County Forest Road	Red Paint Line	N W S E

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 new trail sections and upgrading existing stretches. The segment utilizes a part of the popular Jack Lake Cross Country Ski system. Winter hikers are encouraged to avoid disturbing the groomed track maintained for skiers.

Salvage logging was recently completed on the segment west of Pence Lake Road and currently underway east of the town road. Hikers should exercise caution in these two areas.

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

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

Parking of vehicles at any gated areas 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. There is no safe off-road parking space along the busy highway.

Depending on varying lake levels, the bog walk at Game Lake may have flooded sections but hikers can follow the longer portion of the nature trail around the lake as a bypass to connect east or west with the Ice Age Trail.

Features of this segment are Veterans Memorial Park, the bog walk and Spychalla Lodge. The latter facility is open but overnight use is discouraged. There are two 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. A babbling brook or raging torrent?

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 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.

This segment is incomplete and requires a hike on Forest and Kleevers Roads in the Town of Upham for approximately 4.5 miles to complete a trip from the eastern trailhead at County Trunk Highway B.

An interesting feature on Forest Road is the Bogus Swamp Natural Area. Watch for the state marker about the unique site on the east side of the road. The marker is less than a mile north of the Bogus Road junction with Forest Road.

An outstanding feature of this segment is the Parrish terminal moraine which closely parallels the stretch north of Kleevers Road for over 3 miles. Just north of 5 Points, is a gap cut by the West Branch of the Eau Claire River through the terminal moraine by vast volumes of water from the melting glacier. The gap was shaped later for a railroad grade. Just west of 5 Points is the west branch requiring a ford or a bit of creativity, depending on water levels, to avoid wet feet.



Just east of Nelson Fire Lane, the vista east from “Raspberry Ridge”. Photo by John Prokops
PARRISH HILLS - Distance: 12 miles County Trunk T to the Lincoln County Line

A tornado in 2011 devastated a portion of the segment south of 5 Cent Road. A re-route via ATV/UTV trails on the Parrish Game Trail Fire Lane and 5 Cent Road is provided until the damaged stretch is re-established. Activity to move the stretch from the ATV trail is expected this year.

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

Beaver activity created a water crossing challenge in the area between 5 Cent Road and the forest lane north of the ATV shelter. Beaver activity continues to offer wet stretches in the Old Truck Marker area 2.5 miles north of the trail head on County T

A few downfall trees were reported at scattered locations and awaiting removal. 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. This winter the river froze to allow dry crossings but six days later the stream was flowing.

Logging was partially completed on the stretch between the Nelson and Parrish Game Trail Fire Lanes and the state-owned property south of the Prairie River. Logging will be occurring in areas near the trail so hauling traffic may be encountered. Caution is advised in these areas when any logging operation is 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 a Adirondack-like shelter on the trail about a mile southeast of the Prairie River ford.

Northwoods Chapter members regularly check the stretch from County Trunk H west into Lincoln County.

Features of the Parrish Hills Segment include the Old Truck Marker, natural lakes, wetlands, “Raspberry Ridge” and the Prairie River ford. Another notable feature 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.