

What began as an afternoon hike five years ago has become an adventure of a lifetime. The trail is beautiful, challenging, peaceful, hilly, serene, rewarding, enjoyable beyond words.

A few years before I began my hike a friend had given me the IAT Guide Book as a gift. Had also seen info on the trail at different events and always picked up information. Was very interested in this "trail". After a few years I retired from my job and thought I would just check this out. Thus my quest began and I have enjoyed it all.

I have always enjoyed the outdoors year round...this seemed just the thing to do. Met two wonderful women who were early mentors and had much enthusiasm for the trail having completed it once and were working on their second time. Thank you Dianne and Ruth. Mostly I soloed hiked the first few months. Then partnered up with some wonderful friends and continued on.

Experienced long hot days on the trail, bugs galore, muddy hills, swollen rivers and streams, sore and tired legs, many missed turns on the trail, muddy and wet footwear, deep snow, cold weather, winter roads, windy and winding hills, lots of laughs, long drives to get to the trail, wonderful trail angels,

Each day was always an adventure.

Often times the biggest challenge was finding the trailhead parking area, how to get across a raging stream, fording the Prairie River, finding a "lunch log" to stop and rest and have our lunch on, figuring out how to drive home in your car after you had fallen off some wet, muddy rocks in a low stream, loosing your mittens when it is freezing cold on the trail, checking constantly that you still had your keys and phone in your pack and hadn't lost them somewhere....being paranoid mostly.

Am asked what my favorite trail was to hike. It is hard for me to choose just one. Whenever I finished a trail ...that was my favorite one. Would like to go again and hike some of the trails in

different seasons. As far as my worst trail....there were several that gave me real challenges...but always an adventure!

Thank you to all who saw the vision of this trail.....those who continue to help it expand, volunteer their time to improve, maintain and shuttle hikers to trailheads..

What a wonderful resource to enjoy and experience !

Mary Stewart