



ICE AGE NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL

A Cooperative Partnership

April 5, 2013

Dear Rock County Landowner:

The National Park Service (NPS), Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WiDNR), and Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA), partners in the Ice Age National Scenic Trail (NST) invite you to attend open house meetings to review and comment on potential alternative corridors for the trail in Rock County.

The Open House Meetings are scheduled as follows:

Tuesday April 23, 2013

5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Milton House Museum
18 South Janesville Street
Milton, WI

Saturday, April 27, 2013

12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Rotary Botanical Gardens
1455 Palmer Drive
City of Janesville, WI

Monday, April 29, 2013

5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.
Creskide Place
102 Maple Street
Evansville, WI

During the open house meetings, maps and aerial photos will be on display for your review and comments. Representatives from the NPS, WiDNR, IATA, Rock County, and City of Janesville will be available to answer questions and explain each partner's role in the Ice Age NST project.

Presentations to explain the location of the alternative corridors will be given on Tuesday, April 23 at 6:00 p.m., Saturday, April 27 at 1:00 p.m., and Monday, April 29 at 6:00 p.m. Each meeting will feature a special presentation on either the cultural resources of Rock County, or the IATA's trail building activities in Rock County. Please see the enclosed yellow notice for further information.

The Ice Age Trail was authorized as a National Scenic Trail by Congress in 1980 and a State Scenic Trail in 1987. When completed, the Ice Age NST will meander over 1,200 miles through some of the finest glacial scenery in Wisconsin providing day walkers, backpackers, school children, and general outdoor enthusiasts with a premier hiking and educational experience. Today, approximately half of the trail is built. To complete the trail, the NPS, IATA, and WiDNR are working with county and local units of government, interested organizations and citizens, and landowners to establish a permanent route throughout the state, including Rock County.



National Park Service
Ice Age National Scenic Trail
700 Rayovac Drive, Suite 100
Madison, WI 53711
608-441-5610



Ice Age Trail Alliance
2110 Main Street
Cross Plains, WI 53528
608-798-4453
800-227-0046



Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources- Bureau of Parks and Recreation
101 South Webster Street
Box 7921
Madison, WI 5377-7921

The City of Janesville was one of the first areas of the state to embrace the Ice Age NST. Here the Kiwanis Trail was certified as part of the Ice Age NST in 1984. Over the years, through the efforts of the IATA staff, local chapter volunteers, and cooperating private and public landowners, over 23 miles of the trail have been established in scattered segments across the county, from the northeast corner at Clover Valley State Wildlife Area to west of the City of Janesville at the Cook Memorial Arboretum. The planning currently underway is an effort to complete the remaining portion of Ice Age NST through Rock County and provide a connection to the trail in Green County.

A few years ago, the partners initiated the Corridor Planning Process for the trail in Rock County. There are several reasons for this process. One reason is to determine a general route for the trail countywide and actively involve the public in this decision making process. This process consists of identifying and mapping features of outstanding geologic, biologic, cultural, and scenic significance to the trail and then defining wide study areas or alternative corridors that encompass these features. These alternative corridors or “corridors of opportunity” represent areas within which the trail may be located.

Last year we held open house meetings as part of the Scoping process for the Ice Age Trail to obtain input from the public regarding where they would like to see the Ice Age NST located. Summer 2012, we utilized the public input to create three alternative corridors for the trail. They are located in nine townships—Lima, Milton, Harmony, Janesville, Fulton, Porter, Union, and Magnolia. These alternative corridors will be presented to landowners and local officials for their review and comment at the April open house meetings. After the meetings, the partners will develop one “corridor of opportunity” that is approximately 3-5 miles wide with possible route options. This one “corridor of opportunity” may be a refinement of one of the alternatives or some combination of the three, depending upon the information and public comments obtained through the open house meetings. The reason the corridor is so wide is to allow flexibility in locating the trail since all participation in the Ice Age Trail is voluntary. We expect to present our final recommendations to local officials and landowners next year.

For landowners who may be interested in allowing the Ice Age NST passage across their lands, the partners can work with them either by direct purchase (fee simple or conservation easements) or through license handshake agreements. Lands purchased for the Ice Age NST by public agencies or non-profit organizations may be eligible for funding assistance under the Wisconsin State Stewardship Program and Federal grant programs. The partners do not want to acquire all of the land within the preferred corridor. The intention is to acquire a 50-1,000 foot trailway for the Ice Age NST. In some areas, more land may be desired to accommodate the wishes of the landowner or to preserve outstanding resource features. This width of trailway provides for a high quality hiking experience for the public while maintaining a buffer for neighboring landowners. All land transactions will be made only on a willing-seller basis.

Your land is within the one or more of the alternative corridors either because of the glacial features on your property or to provide the possibility of a continuous trailway. Including your land does not necessarily mean that you will be in the preferred alternative. We simply ask that you consider working with this partnership to help identify the best location for the Ice Age NST through Rock County.

Enclosed for your information are the following:

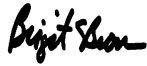
- **Maps** showing the location of the proposed Rock County Ice Age NST corridor
- **Schedule of Open House Meetings** (yellow)
- **A Comment Sheet** to return to the National Park Service office
- **Ice Age NST Brochure**

We encourage you to attend the open house meetings and learn more about this exciting project. If you are unable to attend, please complete the enclosed comment sheet and mail it to the National Park Service, 700 Rayovac Drive, Suite 100, Madison, Wisconsin 53711. If you have any comments, concerns, or questions about the meetings, please contact the NPS office in Madison at 608-441-5610.

Sincerely,



Pamela Schuler
Manager, Ice Age NST
NPS



Brigit Brown
State Trails Coordinator
WI DNR



Mike Wollmer
Executive Director
IATA

Enclosures 5