



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Hebron Trail

Illinois



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The Hebron Trail rolls across the northern Illinois prairie through the former corridor of the Kenosha and Rockford Railroad, known as the Kenosha Division Line at the time of its demise in 1939. Launched in 1861, the railroad boosted economies along its rural route by serving dairy farmers and carrying passengers. Though agriculture still plays a role in the local economy, the railroad closed shop after farmers began hauling their goods to market by truck and passengers turned to the automobile.

Founded 25 years before the railroad arrived, the town of Hebron served as a midpoint stop on the 72-mile-long rail line. Today, it serves as a trailhead for the 6.7-mile Hebron Trail that runs east to the North Branch Conservation Area and a junction with the [Prairie Trail](#). The crushed-stone path is also part of the 500-mile Grand Illinois Trail

that loops around northern Illinois.

To verify that you're in the right town to start your trek, look over the rooftops for a soaring water tower. If the tank is painted to look like a giant basketball, then you're in the right place. The water tower commemorates the state basketball championship won in 1952 by the local high school, the smallest ever to win the statewide honors.

Departing from the trail's parking lot on Seaman Road (about 0.5 mile from the western end of the trail), visitors pass through a shady, wooded corridor that screens the trail from farm fields that border it. The trees disappear after a mile, offering views of cornfields and other crops in a landscape punctuated by red barns and silver silos. A short zag onto a country road at a railroad crossing interrupts the trail after about 2 miles.

The route continues across open farmland and occasional tree-lined corridors until it reaches the North Branch Conservation Area. The preserve is managed by the McHenry County Conservation District, which also oversees the Hebron Trail and more than 115 miles of other trails in the county.

The trail leaves the railroad corridor here and takes a curving route through the 521-acre preserve for about 1.5 miles to the Prairie Trail. Bird-watchers can identify 80 species in the grasslands and forests of the nature preserve. Many species of mussels and fish—some threatened or endangered—live in the clear waters of Nippersink Creek.

The county set aside a small primitive camping area with pit toilets and a drinking fountain in the preserve, where traveling bicyclists can pitch their tents and be lulled to sleep by the croaking of frogs. Note that a permit is required to camp; visit the McHenry County Conservation District website for more information.



Hebron Trail

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States: Illinois

Counties: McHenry

Length: 6.7miles

Trail end points: Church St. near Maple Ave./IL 173 (Hebron) to Prairie Trail, about a mile north of Kenosha St./IL 173 and N. Main St. (Richmond)

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone,Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Horseback Riding,Mountain Biking,Snowmobiling,Walking

Parking & Trail Access

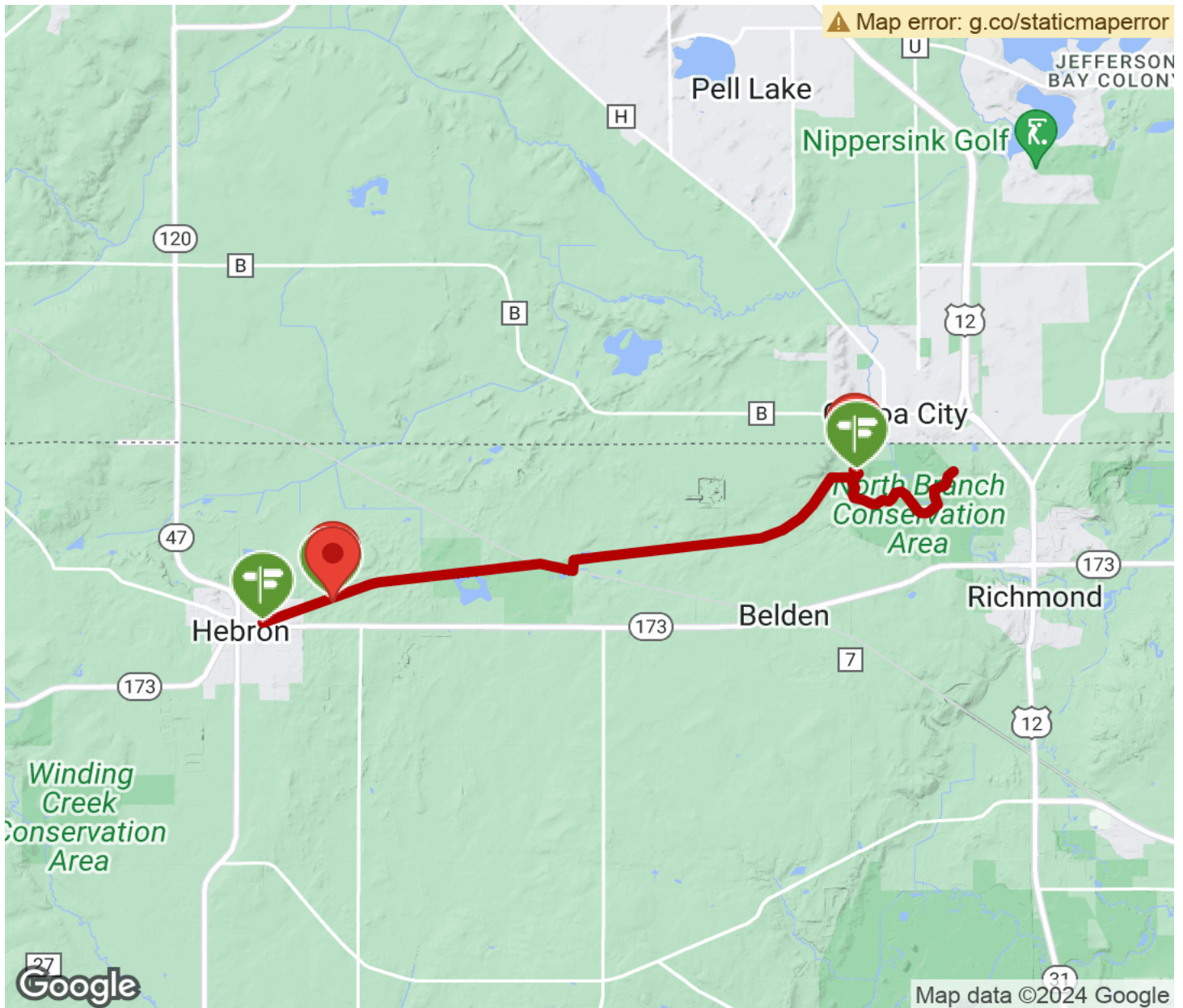
To reach the western trailhead in Hebron: From I-94, take Exit 2 for IL 173/Rosecrans Road. Head west on IL 173 for 24.1 miles, then turn right onto Seaman Road. Continue 0.2 mile to a trailhead parking lot on the right. The trailhead is 0.6 mile west in Hebron.

To reach the eastern trailhead at the North Branch Conservation Area from I-94, take Exit 2 for IL 173/Rosecrans Road. Head west on IL 173 for 19.1 miles. Turn right onto Broadway Road, then go another 0.7 mile and turn right onto Keystone Road. The North Branch Conservation Area parking lot is on the right in 0.6 mile. The eastern endpoint at the junction with Prairie Trail is 1.4 miles east via the Hebron Trail.



Hebron Trail

Illinois



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



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