



2025

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



Glacial Drumlin State Trail (Route of the Badger)

Wisconsin



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The 53-mile Glacial Drumlin State Trail between Cottage Grove and Waukesha provides a glimpse into the past when glaciers bore



The 53-mile Glacial Drumlin State Trail between Cottage Grove and Waukesha provides a glimpse into the past when glaciers bore down on southeastern Wisconsin in the last Ice Age. Those gigantic sheets of ice created wetlands, ponds, and rivers, as well as hundreds of low, cigar-shaped hills called drumlins. The rail trail in fact runs concurrently with the Ice Age Trail, a 1,200-mile hiking path across Wisconsin, for about 2 miles near Wales.

State campgrounds are located in Lake Mills, Dousman, and Delafield.

NOTE: A State Trail Pass (\$25 annually/\$5 daily) is required for bicyclists and in-line skaters ages 16 and older. Snowmobilers must display either a Wisconsin

registration or a snowmobile State Trail Pass. Snowmobiles are permitted on the limestone section of the trail—but not the paved asphalt section—between Waukesha and Dousman. For information, go to dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/trailpass.html.

About the Route

Leaving off from the town of Cottage Grove in the west, the trail heads east for about 40 miles on a crushed-stone surface until the trail turns to pavement in Dousman, one of many small towns along the trail providing rest, refreshment, and exploration. After leaving Cottage Grove, the route passes through miles of open country before reaching Deerfield and London. At around mile 14, the trail sails over a 0.25-mile-long bridge that separates upper and lower Rock Lake, just before reaching Lake Mills. A restored 1895 train depot provides exhibits on local nature and railroad history, as well as other visitor services. Camping is available at Sandhill Station State Campground, 1.3 miles south of the depot on Mud Lake Road.

In the 5-mile stretch between Lake Mills and Jefferson, the trail tunnels under a thick tree canopy in the summer and crosses Crawfish River and Rock River (a fishing haven for locals). In Jefferson, at about 22 miles, signs guide trail users through a 1.5-mile on-road section before reconnecting with the trail. As the trail journeys through small towns and the communities of Helenville, Sullivan, Dousman, and Wales, trail users can find nearby restaurants and grocery stores.

Before reaching Sullivan, the trail parallels US 18 for a couple of miles, and then a stream and wetland populated with yellow finches and purple thistles. Outside of Dousman, the crushed-stone surface ends, and the final 13 miles to Waukesha are smooth pavement. Even with the smoother surface, the trail users might notice the grade increases as the route passes the Lapham Peak Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest. It's a well-deserved downhill after Wales for the last 7 miles to the Fox River and the trail ends at the E. B. Shurts Environmental Learning Center at the Fox River Sanctuary in Waukesha.



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States: Wisconsin

Counties: Dane, Jefferson, Waukesha

Length: 53.2 miles

Trail end points: S Main St. (Cottage Grove) to
Fox River Trail (Waukesha)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Crushed Stone, Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline

Skating, Snowmobiling, Walking, Wheelchair

Accessible, Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

The Glacial Drumlin State Trail runs between S Main St. (Cottage Grove) and Fox River Trail (Waukesha), with parking available at both ends.

Parking is also available at:

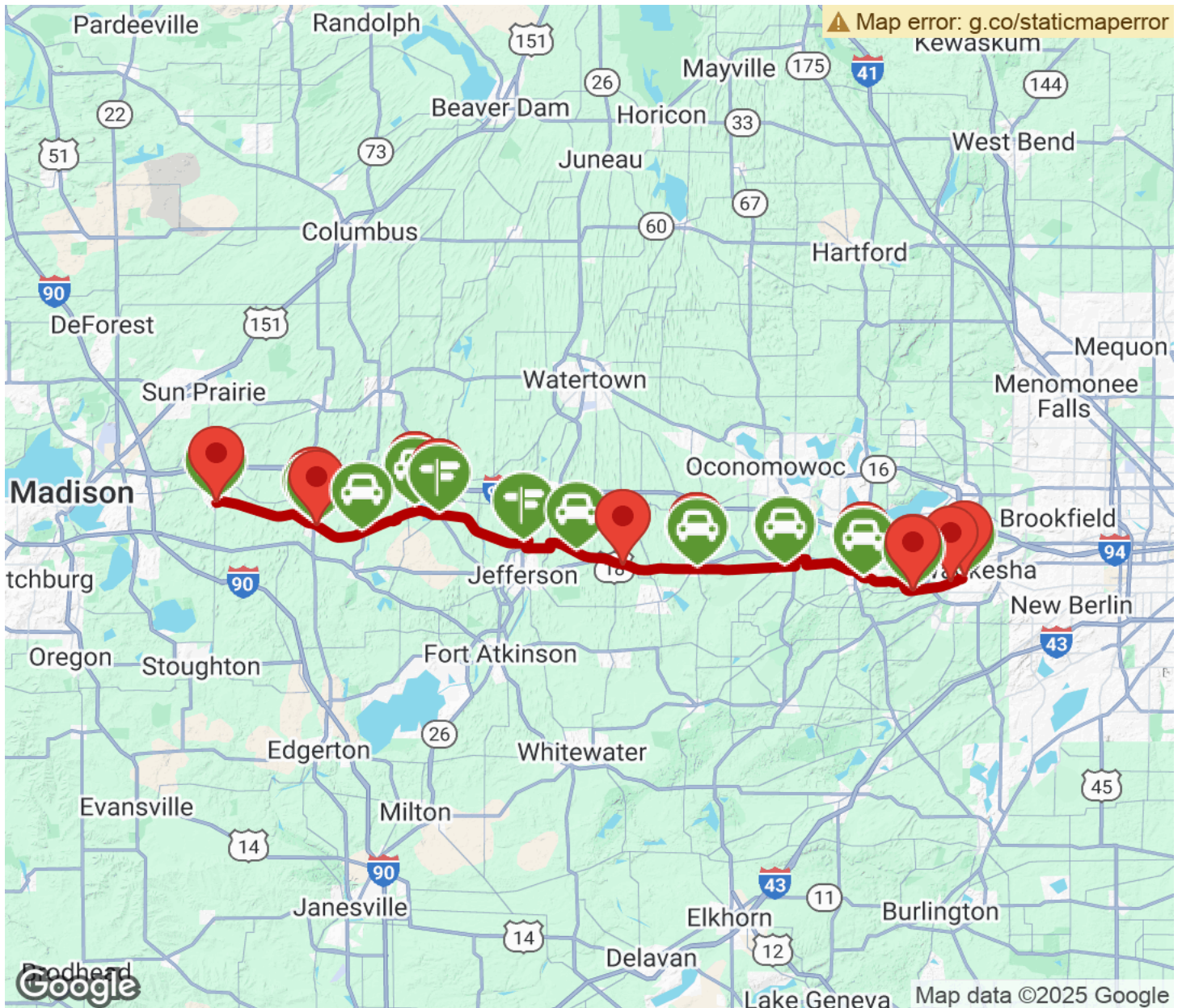
- 310 S Industrial Park Rd. (Deerfield)
- Korth Park, W8390 Korth Ln. (Lake Mills)
- 319 James St (Wales)

Please see [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.



Glacial Drumlin State Trail (Route of the Badger)

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

TrailLink.com