



2026

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Sugar River State Trail

Wisconsin



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If you can't make it to Switzerland, then you can do the next best thing: take the Sugar River State Trail to "America's Little Switzerland," New Glarus, Wisconsin. Settled in 1845 by a small group of Swiss pioneers, New Glarus today is a living monument to all things Swiss, with chalet-style buildings, restaurants dishing up savory Swiss fare, and annual celebrations including Polka Fest, the Heidi Festival, and Volksfest, which marks the Swiss independence day.

The scenic Sugar River State Trail crosses the Little Sugar and Sugar Rivers as it rolls southeast nearly 22.7 miles past gently rolling hills and meadows and through the farming communities of Monticello and Albany to Brodhead. In the section between Monticello and Albany, the trail overlaps the Ice Age Trail, a hiking path spanning 1,200

miles across Wisconsin.

About the Route

Leaving off at the north end of the trail at a restored railroad depot in New Glarus, the route starts as a paved trail for 0.3 miles until it crosses WI-69 and becomes crushed limestone (Remaining on the paved path alongside WI 69 takes trail users on a side trip to the New Glarus Brewing Company in 1 mile). From here, the trail follows the course of the Little Sugar River. Near mile 6, approaching Monticello, the trail passes a brightly painted railroad depot (not open to the public). The trail here also runs alongside the Badger State Trail, which crosses south of Monticello nearly 7 miles after leaving New Glarus.

About 12 miles from New Glarus the trail enters a 3-mile stretch of the Albany Wildlife Area, where hunting is allowed. Bright bicycling wear is recommended. Between Monticello and Albany, there are five stream crossings with views of scenic farmland. At mile 14, the trail crosses the Sugar River on a long, curving bridge that provides spectacular views of lowlands of cattails and reeds, and woods of oak, hickory, walnut, cherry, and willow.

At mile 21, the trail crosses Norwegian Creek on a replica of a covered bridge built in 1984 from wood supplied by the DNR from demolished old barns and other buildings in the state.

The trail arrives in Brodhead at the crossing of Decatur Road. Cross the street and take West Third Avenue south for about a mile to the trailhead parking lot at the corner of West Exchange Street.

The town was named for Edward Brodhead, chief engineer of the Milwaukee Road's predecessor, the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad. Trail users who choose to take a detour should be sure to visit the Depot Museum at 1108 First Center Ave., open in the summer, which chronicles the trail's



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States: Wisconsin

Counties: Green

Length: 22.7miles

Trail end points: 418 Railroad St. (New Glarus)
to W. Exchange St. (Brodhead)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Mountain

Biking, Snowmobiling, Walking, Wheelchair

Accessible, Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

The Sugar River State Trail runs between 418 Railroad St. (New Glarus) and W. Exchange St. (Brodhead), with parking at both ends.

Parking is also available at:

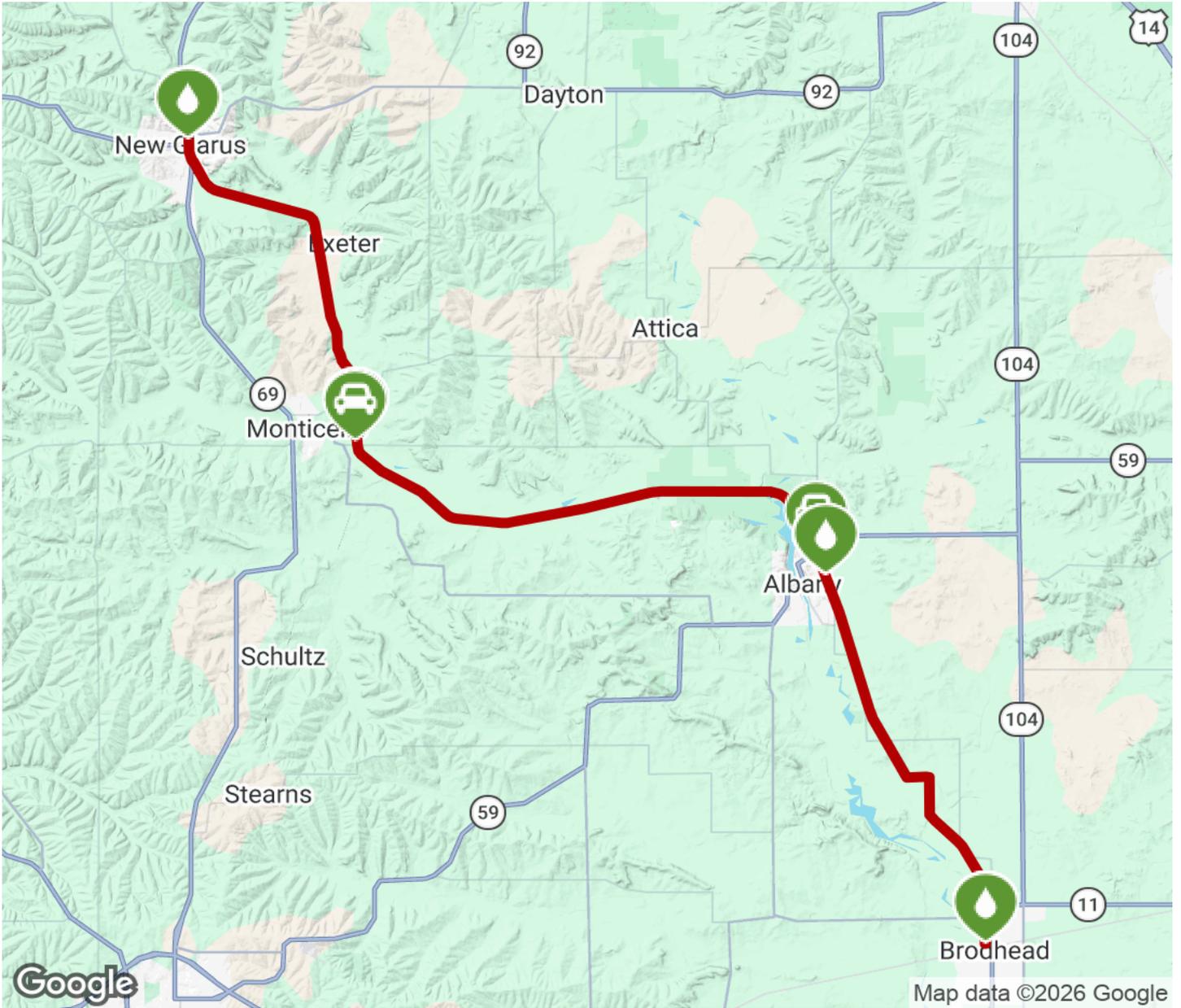
- 204 N Cincinnati St (Albany)

See [TrailLink Map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



Sugar River State Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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