



2026

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Middlefork Savanna Trail

Illinois



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the Bike Path for a while, before swiveling and heading south. A canopy of white oak shades travelers from direct sunlight, but the relief doesn't last all the way as the scenery opens up into meadows and wetlands. The trail criss-crosses the North Branch of the Chicago River. Take time to pause on the river crossings or at any of the ponds to see if you can spot Green Herons or Great Egrets, among the many other kinds of waterfowl.

About halfway through the meandering path is the Elawa Farm Foundation, an historic farm that serves as a neighborhood park and education center. There is also access to the adjacent neighborhoods at this point.

The trail continues south and terminates at Melody Road.

The Middlefork Savanna Forest Preserve is a natural gem hidden in an high-income neighborhood of Lake Forest, Illinois. Those 600 acres are home to perhaps the best-preserved example of the rare tallgrass savanna in Illinois. On top of that, there are a range of natural communities including woodlands, mesic and wet prairie, sedge meadow and marshes. This incredible ecological diversity means that the Middlefork Savanna accommodates many federally and state-protected species of flora and fauna. Birders especially are in for a treat here.

The Middlefork Savanna Trail traverses the preserve, and is open to joggers, cyclists, dog-walkers, snoeshoers in winter, and others seeking to explore this natural haven. The trail diverges from the North Shore Bike-path along US 176, near Ashford Drive. Users will parallel going west



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States: Illinois

Counties: Lake

Length: 4.3miles

Trail end points: North Shore Bike-path (near SR 176 & Ashford Dr.) to Melody Rd

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone,Gravel

Trail category: Greenway/Non-RT

Trail activities: Bike,Mountain Biking,Walking

Parking & Trail Access

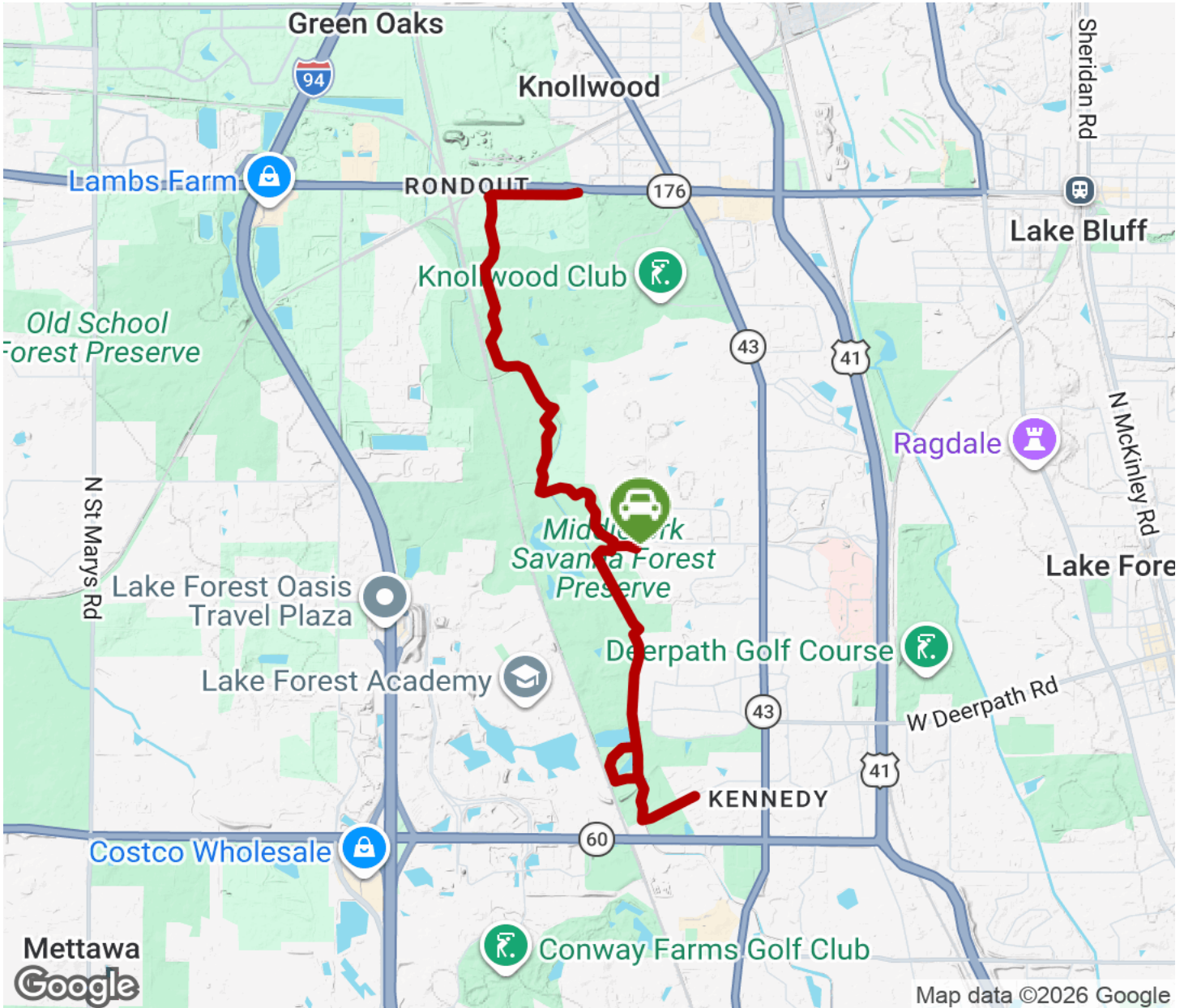
For those driving to the site, the best place to start would Elawa Farm, which is the only parking lot adjacent to the trail. From the Farm, riders can either chose to turn right and head north, or left and head south along the crushed dirt trail.

The Farm/ Preserve entrance is located off of Waukegan Road, South of SR 176 (Rockland Road) but north of SR 60. Take Middlefork Drive to its conclusion and then bear left to enter the parking lot.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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