



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Omaha Trail

Wisconsin



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The 12.5-mile Omaha Trail passes through a wonderland of towering buttes, mesas, and pinnacles that seem more at home in an arid desert than in fertile farmland. The steep sandstone formations, some 100–200 feet high, served as landmarks for early pioneers traveling through Wisconsin. They have names like Lookout Tower, Castle Rock, and Twin Bluffs. You'll skirt them as you leave Camp Douglas bound for the Elroy trailhead, passing through a tunnel midway.

The Omaha Trail is maintained by Juneau County, which sealed the loose screened-limestone surface usually found on state rail-trails. Although it is built to be smoother than gravel, watch for cracks and potholes that have developed over the years.

The trail follows a spur route that the Chicago and North Western Railway acquired when it bought the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railway (known as the Omaha Road) in 1882. The railroad stopped using the rail bed in 1987, and the county adopted the original railway's name when the trail opened in 1992.

Beginning in Camp Douglas, an old logging town that's now home to Volk Field Air National Guard base, you'll head south to the first and only town on the trail at 2.8 miles. Hustler has a pleasant public park right near the trail.

You'll probably notice that the grade increases after you leave Hustler and climb past the weathered bluffs that are unlike anything east of the Mississippi River. You'll gain 200 feet over the next 4 miles, arriving at an 875-foot-long tunnel at the summit. The only other trails in Wisconsin with tunnels are the Elroy-Sparta and [Badger State Trails](#). A small park just before the tunnel's domed entrance provides restrooms and water and a sign encouraging bicyclists to dismount.

Leaving the tunnel, it's all downhill for the next 5.4 miles to the town of Elroy. You'll cross more than a dozen bridges and pass through a dense forest where you might spot white-tailed deer. Closer to Elroy the valley widens, and you'll return to farm country.

The trail ends at the north end of Elroy, where you'll turn left onto Second Main Street and go 0.9 mile to Cedar Street. You'll find the [400 State Trail](#) a half block to the left and the [Elroy-Sparta State Trail](#) one block to the right at the Main Street intersection. The 400 State Trail passes Elroy Commons Trail Shop, which serves as a trailhead for all three trails; here you'll find parking, an information center, and bike rentals.

NOTE: A Juneau County Trail Pass (\$10 annually/\$2 daily) is required for bicyclists ages 18 and older on the Omaha Trail. The passes are available at Home Front Travel Mart



Omaha Trail

Wisconsin

States: Wisconsin

Counties: Juneau

Length: 12.5 miles

Trail end points: Murray St. at Eddy Ave.
(Camp Douglas) to North St. at 2nd Main St.
(Elroy)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Fishing, Mountain
Biking, Snowmobiling, Walking, Cross Country
Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

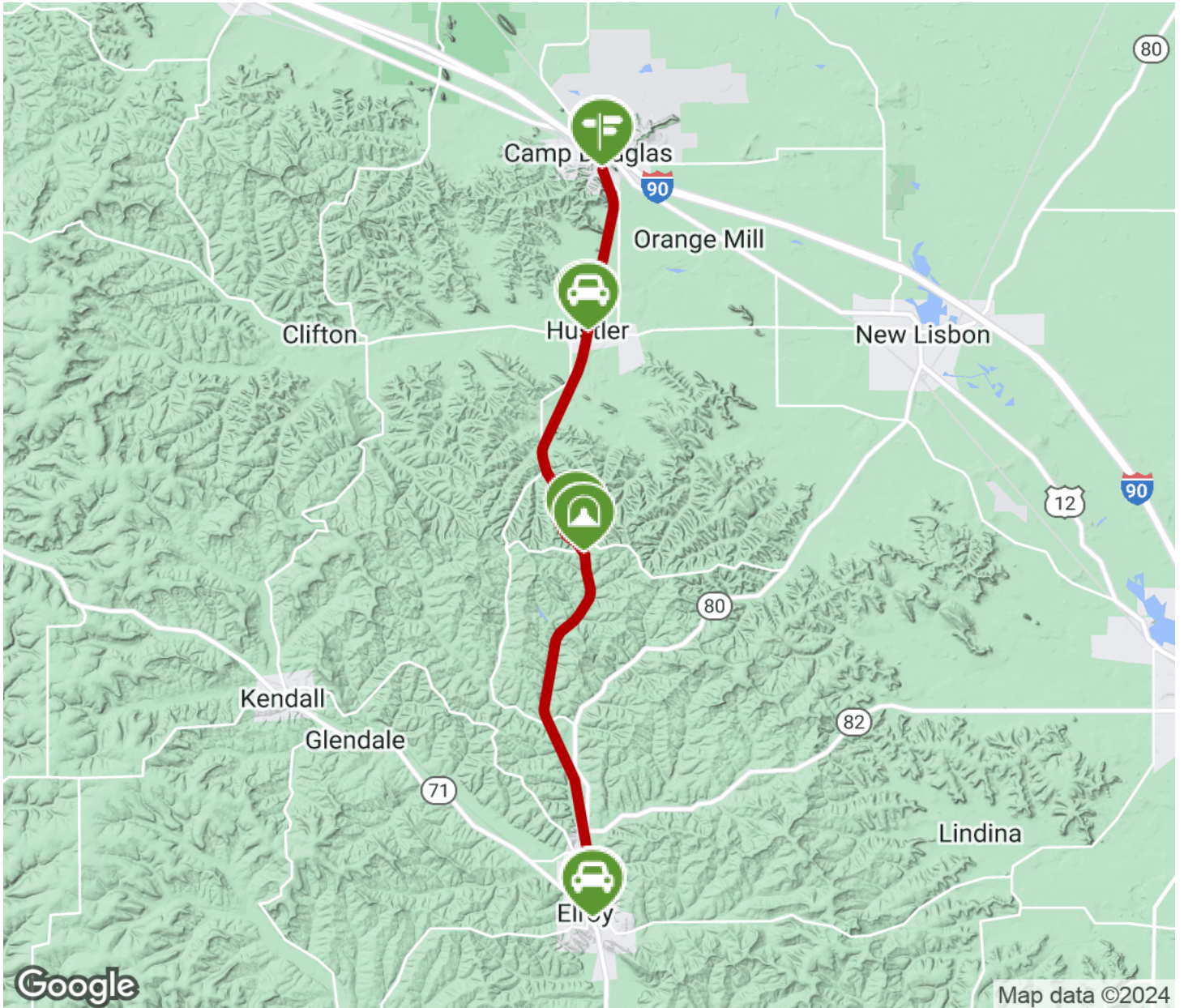
To reach the northern trailhead in Camp Douglas from I-90/94, take Exit 55 toward Camp Douglas onto County Road C. Go 0.1 mile south, and turn right onto US 12; immediately turn left onto Castle St. and then left again onto Douglas St. Go 0.1 mile, and turn right onto N. Washington St. Take the first right onto Eddy Ave., and look for on-street parking. The trail begins directly across the street from Eddy Ave., heading south.

To reach the southern trailhead in Elroy from I-90/94, take Exit 69 toward Mauston on SR 82/Gateway Ave., heading west. In 0.6 mile, bear left on SR 82/N. Union St. to head south across the Lemonweir River. In 0.2 mile, turn right on E. State St., go 0.3 mile (4 blocks), and turn left to head south on WI 82/Division St. In 0.6 mile, bear right around the traffic circle, and take the first right to continue east on WI 82/Grayside Ave. In 10.5 miles, turn left to continue south on WI 82. In 1.6 miles, turn left onto Franklin St. in Elroy. Take the first left into the parking lot, located behind the Elroy Commons Trail Shop on Railroad St. After parking, take the 400 State Trail north to Cedar St., turn left, and then, in half a block, turn right onto Second Main St. Go 0.9 mile and look for the Omaha Trail on the right.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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