



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



Badger State Trail

Wisconsin



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Rail-trail fans know that Wisconsin's Elroy-Sparta State Trail is famous for its three tunnels. The Badger State Trail, which heads south from Madison to the Illinois state line (where it connects with the [Jane Addams Trail](#)), boasts its own 1,200-foot Stewart Tunnel—with a twist: the Stewart Tunnel is built on a curve, so riders cannot see the other end as they enter the tunnel.

The trail starts in Madison just south of Lovell Lane, where it intersects the Southwest Commuter Path, which heads 5.6 miles from Madison to Fitchburg. Heading south on the [Badger State Trail](#), you'll quickly cross over an intersection of the [Capital City State Trail](#), a 17-mile route that stretches from Fitchburg to Madison, and the Cannonball Path, a 3.9-mile route from the University of Wisconsin-Madison Arboretum to the [Military Ridge](#)

[State Trail](#) in Fitchburg.

The first 6 miles of the Badger State Trail are paved to Purcell Road, after which the surface gives way to crushed stone. The trail also overlaps the Ice Age Trail for a handful of miles in this part of rural southern Dane County. The Ice Age Trail is a 1,200-mile hiking path across Wisconsin and a National Scenic Trail. The small town of Belleville will greet riders just shy of the 13-mile mark. It's a quaint historical town where one can see remnants of how the railroad used to go right through the heart of the community.

Approximately 4 miles south of Belleville, riders will find the Stewart Tunnel. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recommends that all riders walk their bikes through the entirety of the tunnel. Flashlights and light jackets to guard against the dampness are also recommended.

Once you clear the tunnel, it's only 5 more miles to Monticello. Parking can be found a couple hundred yards to the right of the trail on Pratt Road. Here the trail also connects to the [Sugar River State Trail](#).

The next 5 miles run through wooded areas and farm fields—with rolling hills and several nice creeks and bridges along the way—to the small farming town of Stearns, after which it's only a few more miles to Monroe. The seat of Green County (population 10,000), Monroe is home to the famous Swiss Colony gourmet food company and is also known as the "Swiss Cheese Capital of the USA."

Just a few blocks west of Badger State Trail, on West 21st Street, you'll find the eastern terminus for the [Cheese Country Recreation Trail](#), a 47-mile route that heads west and then north to Mineral Point.

The final few miles of trail takes you to Clarno, the last town in the state of Wisconsin, where you'll find a few businesses. From there, it's just a short ride to the Illinois state line and



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States: Wisconsin

Counties: Dane, Green

Length: 40miles

Trail end points: Southwest Commuter Path just southeast of Lovell Ln & Carling Dr (Madison) to Jane Addams Trail (Orangeville, IL)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline Skating, Mountain Biking, Snowmobiling, Walking, Cross Country

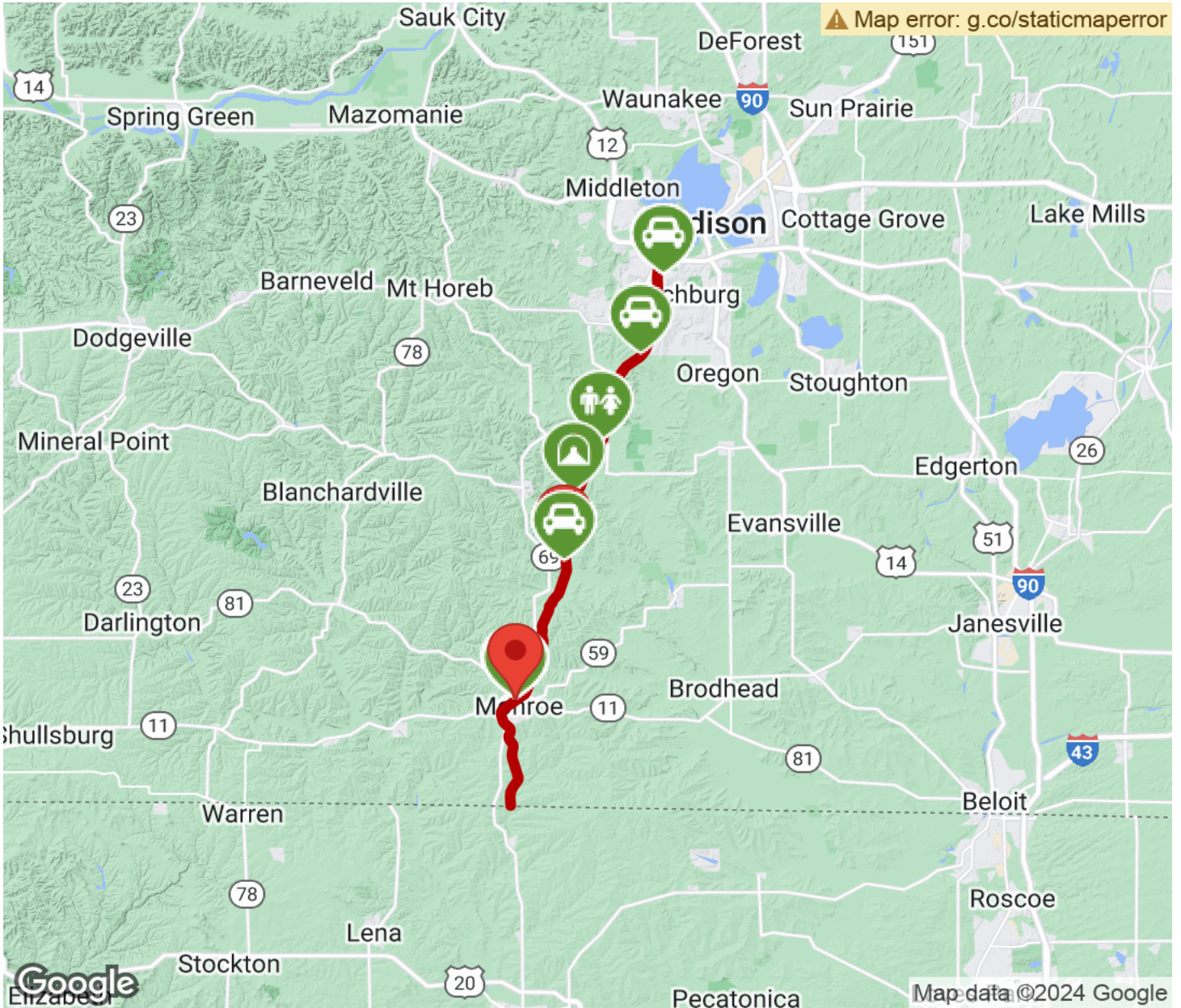
Parking & Trail Access

Parking is located at multiple points along the route. Parking near the northern endpoint is available at Dawley Conservancy in Fitchburg—which also serves as the western trailhead for the Capital City State Trail. The southern endpoint is just over 8 miles south along the trail at Wuetrich Road and the Wisconsin–Illinois state line, which is also the northern terminus for the Jane Addams Trail. Visit the [TrailLink map](#) for all options and detailed directions.



Badger State Trail

Wisconsin



Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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