

DNR Consultation Report
Governor's Bicycle Coordinating Council meeting
June 17, 2026
DNR Consultation Report April – June 2026

Parks and Recreation Management (PRM) Program Updates

General Program Updates

- Property visitation for 2025 was 20,838,733, which is a 2% increase over 2024.
- New partnership between DNR and WisDOT DMV launched on June 11 that enables Wisconsin residents the option to purchase annual state park pass while renewing vehicle registration. [Press Release: Gov. Evers Announces New Evers Administration Initiative to Make it Easier Than Ever...](#)
- National Trails Day was celebrated on June 6, along with Bike Week, and our program also launched a new *Mountain Biking in Wisconsin State Parks* pocket map to guide riders to unique state park and forest destinations in the badger state! The pocket map offers detailed descriptions of 12 locations that offer purpose-built singletrack mountain bike trails systems that meet International Mountain Biking Association trail development guidelines. The map also pinpoints 27 off-road bike trails perfect for beginners, group rides, or trail riders seeking a more casual nature observation ride. The pocket map informs riders about singletrack trail difficulty levels, beginner tips, trail etiquette, pass information, volunteering opportunities, and more.

Bike Trail Project Updates

DNR Trail Projects

- **Military Ridge State Trail**
 - Closure and detour for Epic, Hyper Drive road construction project. According to the [City of Verona's project page](#):
 - Detour will be in place from June 12, 2026 to September 30, 2027.
 - The detour will use Epic Lane (yellow highlighted area on the map).
 - When construction allows Military Ridge State Trail will be open.
 - Military Ridge State Trail will be open for snowmobiles from December 2026 to February 2027.
 - Madison Metropolitan Sewage District (MMSD) Interceptor Project – DNR is coordinating with MMSD on their interceptor replacement project by Hwy 18/151 at Fitchrona Road to the north and west side of Goose Lake near the Military Ridge State Trail. Construction may impact the trail, signs will be posted in advance or any possible impacts or detours. Tree removals will be required, but the area will be revegetated with more desirable tree species, including some conifers for a visual and noise buffer. Construction is anticipated to start this summer.
 - Fitchrona Rd Reconstruction Project – DNR is coordinating with City of Fitchburg on road design for on DNR land under trail bridge, construction expected in August 2026 through November 2027; includes multi-use side path on east side and buffered bike lanes.
 - Reconstruction and expansion of Riley parking lot and a new gravel parking lot in Klevenville are in the design phase with construction anticipated to start in 2027.
 - Several bridge replacements are in the design phase for the section of trail between Verona Area High School and Paulson Road. Construction is anticipated to start in 2027, pending funding approval.

- **Sugar River State Trail** – Trail and parking lot repaving project in New Glarus, along with depot repairs, including roof and siding replacement, are in design phase with construction anticipated to start in 2027/28.
- **Elroy-Sparta State Trail** - A large infrastructure project kicked off construction in February on the Elroy-Sparta State Trail. The project involves the repair or replacement of 10 bridge or culvert structures on the Elroy-Sparta State Trail. The project begins with work on five structures between John Street in Sparta and the southeast-most crossing of Javelin Road in the Town of Wells. Work on this section has been completed. The project will then shift to the other structures located near Norwalk and Wilton this fall. To facilitate this work, the trail will need to be closed to public use around the construction. Currently, the trail is open until construction resumes in the fall.

Partnership Trail Projects

- **Military Ridge State Trail Verona Segment**
 - City of Verona is moving forward with the replacement of 3 bridges for the 2-mile segment from Old Highway PB to Verona Area High School. Construction for the bridge replacements is anticipated to start in the Fall of 2026. There will be three detours around the bridges while they are under construction. After the bridges are replaced, the City will be paving this section in 2027.
- **Dane County Walking Iron Trailhead**
 - DNR conveyed an easement and land use agreement to Dane County to allow them to improve an existing parking lot and construct a second lot at the Hwy 78 parking lot for the Lower Wisconsin State Riverway property that will serve as a trailhead for the County's Walking Iron Trail and provide additional public access for the riverway property. Dane County anticipates that construction for the 3-mile Walking Iron Trail (Phase 2) will start this summer in 2026 and be completed in 2027. The Walking Iron Trail will connect from the Hwy 78 parking lot to the Wisconsin River bridge crossing to the Great Sauk State Trail in Sauk County that is expected to be completed in 2026 late summer/early fall.
- **Dane County Glacial Drumlin to Capital City Connector Trail**
 - DNR and Dane County are working through necessary cooperative state trail agreements to allow Dane County to construct, maintain and operate the Glacial Drumlin Trail connection between the City of Madison and Highway AB/Buckeye Rd. Dane County's anticipated schedule is to finalize design in 2026 with construction starting in 2027 at the same time as the City of Madison's project that connects from Vondron Road and under the I-90 interstate.

Master Planning Updates

- [North Central Forest Proposed Regional Master Plan and Environmental Analysis](#) was approved by the NRB, as written on April 15th. The department is working on archiving the plan and preparing the final document. Expect the final plan to be available online by the end of the summer.
 - Biking related highlights include: Proposed bicycle trail loop to be developed at Flambeau River State Forest. e-bikes are proposed to add as a use alongside traditional bicycles at state trails and, on Brunet Island State Park bicycle trails and on Flambeau River State Forest. Wildlife areas have the opportunity to open entire areas of properties to bicycle or e-bike use off trail, as appropriate

- [Western Coulees and Ridges Draft Regional Master Plan](#) is currently out for public comment. Comment period is open until July 10th. Comments can be submitted by online or paper survey, or by reaching out to the lead planner. More information is available on the webpage.
 - Biking related highlights include: Proposed new mountain bike trail system at Hoffman Hills State Recreation Area and Perrot State Park. Bicycling is proposed to be added as an allowed use to two existing trails at Wyalusing State Park and an abandoned road that is proposed to be designated as a trail will include off-road bicycling as an allowed use, Class 1 and Class 3 electric bicycles (e-bikes) are proposed to be authorized at Governor Dodge State Park, Perrot State Park, and Wyalusing State Park on all trails where bicycles are allowed, a proposal to remove bicycling as a designated use on two trails at Governor Dodge State Park.
- A general index of DNR master planning is at <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/fl/PropertyPlanning/index>, including information regarding how to sign up for updates for general master planning updates or updates on individual regional planning efforts.
- Existing Natural Resources Board (NRB)-approved master plans are available for viewing from DNR's Completed Master Plans web tool at <https://apps.dnr.wi.gov/completedpropertyplanning/index.aspx>.

Events

- Explore the Outdoors Expo, May 16 at Havenwoods State Forest
- Free Fun Weekend/National Trails Day, June 6 & 7
- Peninsula Mountain Bike Trail Ribbon Cutting – Peninsula State Park, May 30
- Brule River Mountain Bike Trail Ribbon Cutting, June 6
- Universal Recreation Month, July 2026 – Universal recreation month will celebrate universal recreation at Wisconsin State Parks by showcasing adaptive equipment, universal amenity options, and promote inclusive events for families and friends to do together. It is a new statewide event, hosted at multiple properties around the state in July.