



LOCATION & PARKING

LOCATION: This trail is 9 miles southeast of Spring Green and 5 miles north of Ridgeway. From Highway 23: one mile south of the Wisconsin River, turn east onto County T. Travel 4.4 miles, turn south onto Knobs Road, and go 1.8 miles to the trailhead. From County H: 3.5 miles north of Ridgeway, turn west on Knobs Road and go 1.4 miles to the trailhead.

PARKING: Park on the shoulder of the road, **well off the pavement and at the crest of the hill.** Cars travel fast on Knobs Road so be extra careful when parking, turning around, and hiking. Avoid using driveways.

WHAT IS THE DRIFTLESS TRAIL?

Imagine a hiking trail that wanders through the woods, prairies, farms, bluffs, and streams of Iowa County's Driftless landscape; through public parks, cultural sites, and special places owned by people who want to share the beauty of their land with you - all while creating a corridor for land conservation, climate resiliency, exercise, and education. This is our vision for the Driftless Trail.

Though this project will take many years to fully complete, multiple trail segments are open now! Explore them all, learn more about the trail, find volunteer opportunities, and get involved at driftlessconservancy.org/driftless-trail.



Barb Barzen

Our sincere thanks to the landowners, volunteers, donors, and partners who make this trail possible.

Be a part of the Driftless Trail! Donate by visiting driftlessconservancy.org/give-today, scanning the QR code, or mailing a check or cash to Driftless Area Land Conservancy, 206 S. Iowa St, Dodgeville, WI 53533.



DRIFTLESS
AREA LAND CONSERVANCY

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The Driftless Trail:

KNOBS ROAD



Barb Barzen

Enjoy your hike and leave no trace – the best way to preserve this trail forever!

Before you go, check current trail notes at driftlessconservancy.org/driftless-trail or by scanning this QR code.





abundance of honeysuckle, a common invasive shrub. The trail leads to a **bench on a knoll with a nice view of the valley**. A few large oaks in the mostly walnut woods here remind us this area was once oak savanna. **Take a seat and enjoy a rest!**

Continue onwards and leave the forest for **amazing views on the mile-long ridgetop**, which is planted into hay for cattle. The eastern third of the ridge is native big bluestem and Indian grass, used for bedding, or, in very dry years, harvested in summer for emergency hay, since native grasses have deep roots to survive drought.



The south end of this trail runs through an **oak-dominated woodland**. You will find another very common sight on the forest floor here: garlic mustard. This highly invasive plant, which flowers in May, grows in dense stands and is difficult to eradicate.

THE HIKE

DIFFICULTY: MODERATE
LENGTH: 3.9-MILE LOOP

This trail winds 2.7 miles through a property that produces Butler Grassfed Beef. You can hike out-and-back from either end, or travel a loop that includes 1.2 miles of walking the lightly travelled Knobs Road. **Please follow SIGNED trails only.**

There are many points of interest on this hilly, winding trail. Starting at the parking area and heading south, you'll first pass an **apple orchard** with varieties that are old, diverse, and not generally seen in the supermarket. Admire these heirloom trees, but **please do not pick apples.**

Next a restored prairie leads down to a pasture and stream where a herd of approximately 150 cattle are

rotationally grazed during the growing season. **When cattle are present, the gates will be closed and you must cross the fence using the ladder stiles.**



Head down to the truss bridge to cross the **spring-fed stream** at the bottom of the valley. This stream flows into Mill Creek, which runs from Governor Dodge State Park north to the Wisconsin River at Tower Hill State Park. Water emerges from springs throughout the Driftless Area at 48-50° F year-round, which is **ideal for brook and brown trout**. Look for a large spring after leaving the pasture, plus groundwater "seeps" along the trail that support unique and interesting plants.

Climb the wooded slope across the pasture, noting the

SPECIAL NOTES:

- **When cattle are grazing in the valley pasture, the red gates will be closed and you must cross the fence using the ladder stiles.** It is fine to walk near the animals, but do not touch or scare them.
- There are no toilets or water at this trail.
- **Wild parsnip** is common near the stream and road. This plant contains photo-toxins that can cause a severe rash, so look up how to identify this plant and please avoid it.
- Knobs Road has little traffic, but **cars DO travel fast here** so walk on the shoulder.
- This trail is **closed from November 1st - December 19th** for deer hunting.
- **Pets are welcome but MUST remain on a leash.**