

Proposed State Loop Multi Purpose Trail

The proposed Loop Trail will be constructed totally on state land and the Highway 51 right-of-way. The route was determined to provide the *safest* trail to connect to the Mercer trail, while providing trail users the ability to experience the beauty of the North woods. The Loop is also being designed as a barrier free trail to allow those with limited abilities to enjoy our north woods beauty, which will also exacerbate the need for the *safest* route possible.

The Loop will commence at the Tower Road Trail crossing and go west through state land parallel to Tower Road. The majority of the trail will be constructed on an old unused logging road which will facilitate the least amount of disturbance to the woods floor. A minimum amount of trees will have to be cut, most of which are small aspen. The trail will cross the Discovery Center walking trail in two places, and other than that will not have any impact on the trail. The trails are far enough from each other that there will be very little visibility from one to the other.

The trail will cross Highway 51 near the Manitowish River Bridge. This will avoid crossing at the Tower Road intersection at what has been determined to be the *safest* place by sight line studies. Once the trail crosses Hwy 51 one leg will go west within the Hwy. 51 right of way to Manitowish River Access Road and follow that road to the Iron County line where it will connect with the Mercer Trail.

The second leg will continue south approximately ¼ mile to a point where a bridge, which will be unseen from Highway 51, will bring the trail across the Manitowish River. The bridge will be about 165' clear span that will go from shore to shore and be approximately 8' above the river. The trail will then continue east through state property, again on an old unused logging road, to a point where it will rejoin the Highway 51 corridor and continue east to connect to the trail crossing by Marathon Road. The total length of the loop will be about 5 ½ miles.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resource has conducted a search for archeological sites and endangered species and has determined that the only issue would be not to construct along the river shore during the Wood turtle hatching period. The department has already reviewed the trail for wetland disturbance and the erosion control plan has been approved.