

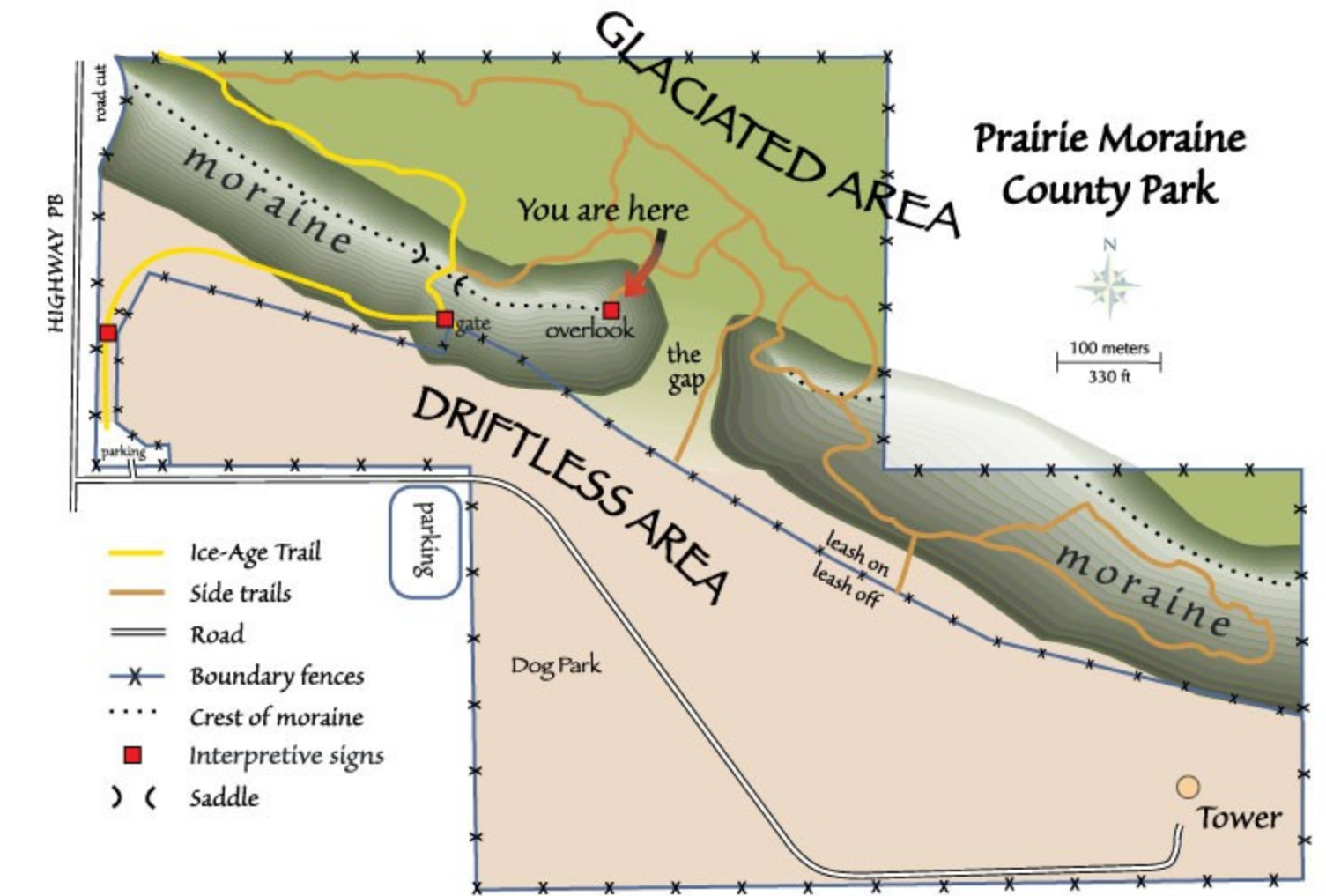
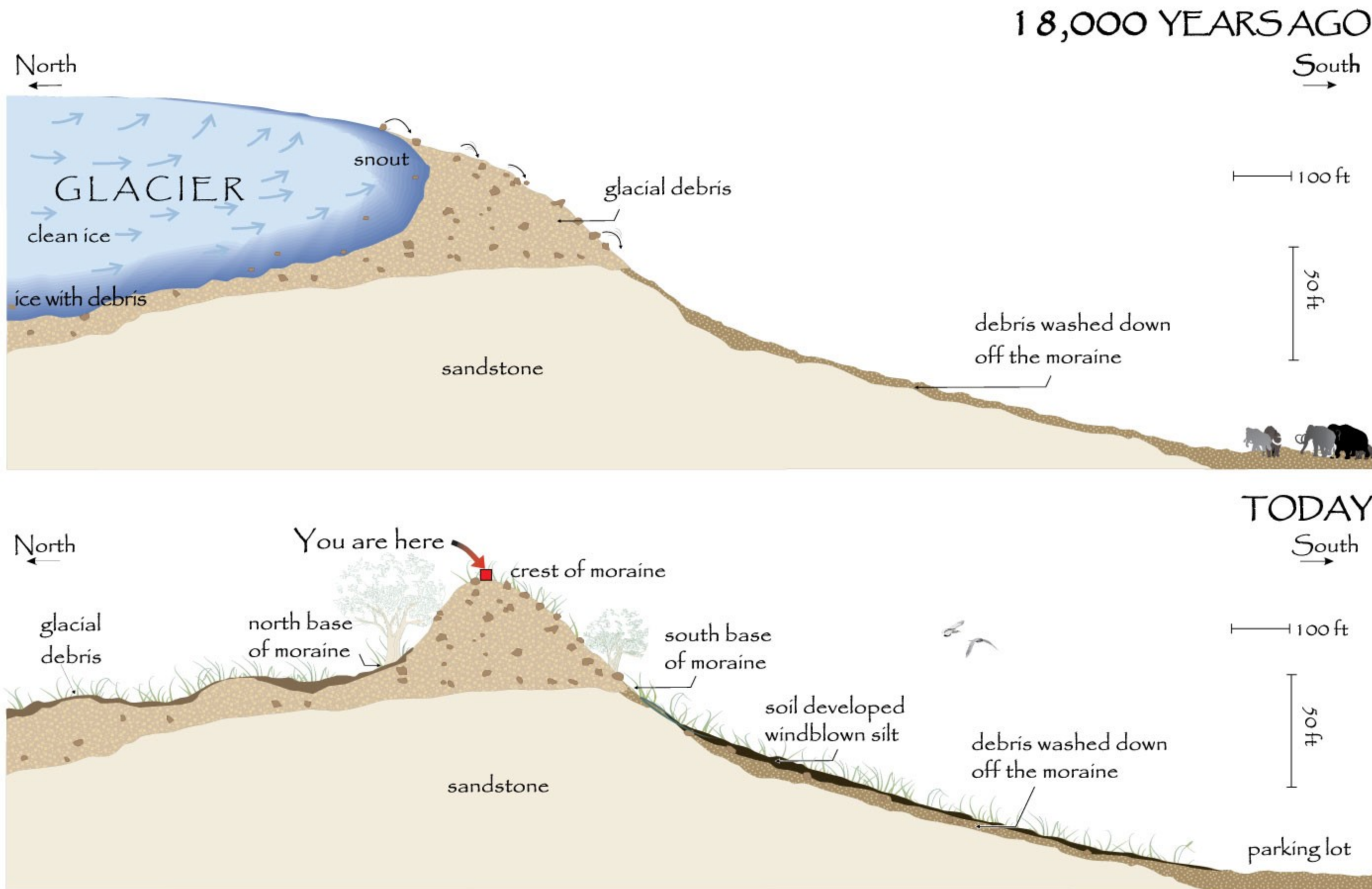
Prairie Moraine Park / Ice Age National Scenic Trail



Glacial Moraine Shapes the Land

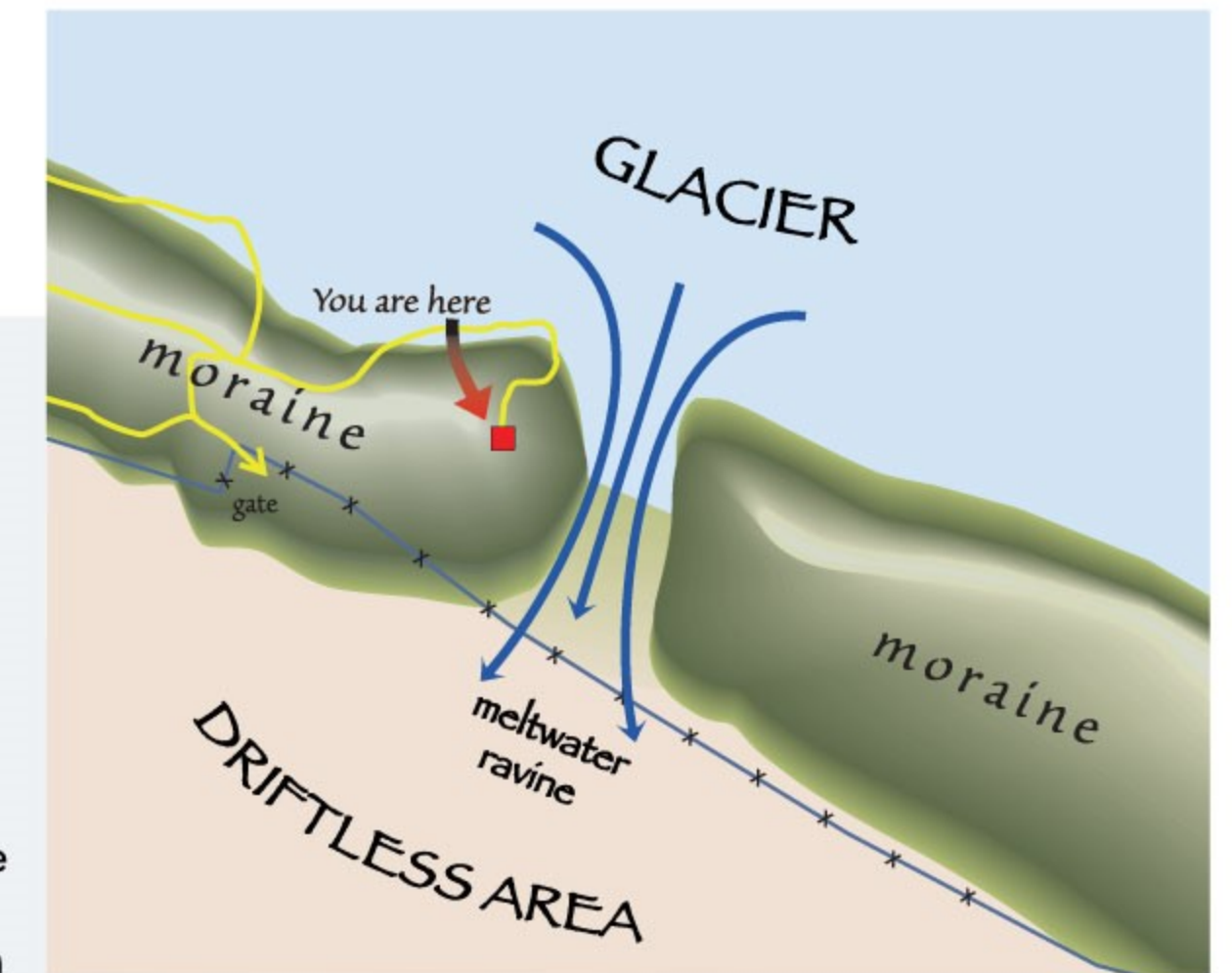
This is one of the best places in the state to see a glacial moraine. From here west to Hwy PB it is a single ridge up to 60 feet high and about 400 feet wide composed of glacial rubble - a jumbled mixture of clay, silt, sand, and gravel including a variety of igneous, metamorphic, and sedimentary rock types. Much of the debris eroded by a glacier is carried along near its base and deposited where the ice melts. The steeper north slope of this moraine is its ice-contact face where the glacial snout sheared up over the already deposited debris. The south slope of this moraine is less steep where mud flows and soil erosion have moved debris down to the lower part of the moraine.

The apparent height of the moraine here is somewhat deceiving. It has been draped over a preglacial sandstone hill. The part of the moraine obscured by woods on the other side of the gap also owes much of its apparent height to an underlying sandstone hill. Sandstone is exposed not far downhill from the crest of the moraine.



Gap in the Moraine

In front of you is a gap in the moraine carved by a river of glacial meltwater. The moraine on the other side of this gap is partially obscured by trees. This ravine is only a few hundred feet long but must have been longer as the ice melted back from the moraine. Farther north it may have been plugged with glacial debris when the glacier's edge receded a short distance from the main moraine ridge.



Alternatively, the river may have been fed by meltwater flowing to the gap from the east and west between the north side of the moraine and the glacier. Or possibly, the river flowed under or on top of the glacier and the channel it formed was in the ice and vanished when the ice melted. The upper (northern) end of the meltwater river channel is filled with debris carried by the glacier and dropped when the ice melted.

Interpretive signage provided by:

- Ice Age Trail Alliance
- Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey
DIVISION OF OUTDOORS - UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
- With funding from:
 - Dane County Parks
 - Prairie Moraine Friends



Dane County Parks
(608) 224-3730 • www.danecountyparks.com
TTY: Call WI Relay 711

Prairie Moraine County Park
6724 Wesner Road
Verona, WI 53593