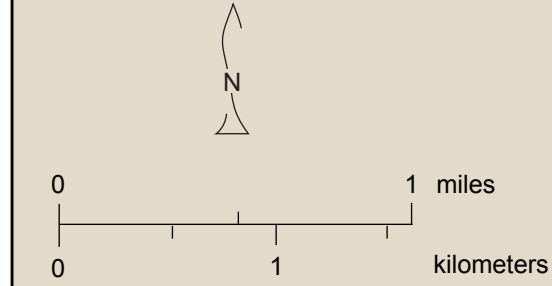


# Lake Wingra Watershed Bike Tour



- 1 Gardner Marsh
- 2 Big Spring
- 3 Mckay Center / Arboretum
- 4 Trail Spring
- 5 Wheeler Council Ring
- 6 Wingra Park
- 7 Vilas Park
- 8 Henry Vilas Zoo
- 9 Wingra Weir
- 10 Indian Mounds
- 11 Vilas Park Circle
- 12 Glenwood Children's Park
- 13 Westmoreland Park
- 14 Rain Garden House
- 15 Odana Hills Park
- 16 Brick Arch (Chippewa Dr.)
- 17 Nakoma Park
- 18 Monroe St. Detention Pond

- Bike Racks
- Drinking Fountain
- Public Phone
- Restrooms



Go with the Flow (blue) to get a sense of how rain water travels from one end of the watershed into the lake, both through above-ground and below-ground channels. This route includes the northern portion of the green route (12 miles).

The Lake Loop (green), the shortest bike trail at 7 miles, follows a scenic route through the Arboretum and around Lake Wingra.

Lake Wingra Watershed Boundary (red) indicates the divide between the Lake Wingra Watershed and surrounding watersheds

The Feed the Fish route (yellow) generally follows the boundaries of the Lake Wingra Watershed (17.5 miles). This route is only recommended for people who are comfortable with crossing large intersections.

# Bicycle Tour



## Lake Wingra Watershed

**1 GARDNER MARSH:** Park your bike in the parking lot near the east entrance of the Arboretum, and cross the street. From the boardwalks, you can see different areas of the marsh. Near the edge of the Marsh lies the remains of the "Lost City". This was a modern suburb planned for the southeast shore of Lake Wingra in the early 1900s. After the financial collapse of the development company in the 1920s, roads and foundations sank into the marsh. You can still see some of the foundations from the boardwalk today.

**2 BIG SPRING:** There is a parking lot atop the big hill on McCaffery Drive, with the "traditional" arboretum plantings of Longnecker Gardens to the south and the natural oak forest of Wingra Woods to the north. Follow the trail next to the bike rack to the Big Spring overlook. The water from this beautiful spring flows to Lake Wingra.

**3 MCKAY CENTER/ARBORETUM:** Opened in 1977, the McKay Visitor Center is named after William McKay, who contributed thousands of trees to early Arboretum plantings and left a bequest for the construction of the Center. Restrooms and water fountains are available in the McKay Center during building hours and nearby from May through October.

**4 TRAIL SPRING:** The stone staircase and wall, attributed to Frank Lloyd Wright, were built in the 1920s. The wall was extended along Manitow Way by the Arboretum CCC crews in the 1930s. Also known as Gorham Spring and by the Winnebago (Ho-Chunk) Tribe as "Nihin-nagoo" or trail spring, this is one of the few springs still flowing into Lake Wingra. Look across the street to find the Old Spring Hotel and read the plaque on the wall for a bit of history.

**5 WHEELER COUNCIL RING:** This stone meeting ring is located south of the parking lot off Monroe St. and Arbor. Follow the signs west of the parking lot. This council ring, one of several designed by the famous landscape architect Jens Jensen, was built in memory of his grandson. A nice boardwalk to the south provides a loop through the wetlands.

**6 WINGRA PARK:** Nestled along the Northwest shore of Lake Wingra, Wingra Park provides plenty of green space to picnic, play sports, or just relax. Boat rentals, a phone, and restrooms are available at the boat house from May through October.

Friends of Lake Wingra at:

<http://danenet.wiscip.org/fowingra/>

For information on how you can learn more about the Lake Wingra watershed, please feel free to contact the following:

- Friends of Lake Wingra
- Water Resources Management Program at the University of Wisconsin
- Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
- Dane County Lakes and Watershed Commission
- City of Madison
- Edgewood College
- University of Wisconsin Cartography Lab

We would like to thank the following agencies and organizations for their support:

This map was made by students in the Water Resources Management Program at the University of Wisconsin. Its purpose is to introduce people to the Lake Wingra Watershed and to point out some of its wonderful landmarks.

**7 VILAS PARK:** In 1904, William F. Vilas gave 63 acres to the city for a park. At the time, only 25 acres were suitable for parkland. So, in 1908, dredging began for the Vilas Park Lagoon, with the sediment piled to create dry land. By 1914, there was a park with band concerts and baseball games on Sundays.

**8 THE HENRY VILAS ZOO:** One of few free zoos remaining in the United States, Henry Vilas Zoo is fun for all ages. Across Vilas Drive is Lake Wingra's swimming beach.

**9 WINGRA OUTLET WEIR:** Just south of the zoo, there is a fishing pier with a railing from which you can see the v-shaped outflow to Wingra Creek. Built in 1919, this weir, like a small dam, keeps the level of the water in Lake Wingra relatively steady, allowing high waters to flow out.

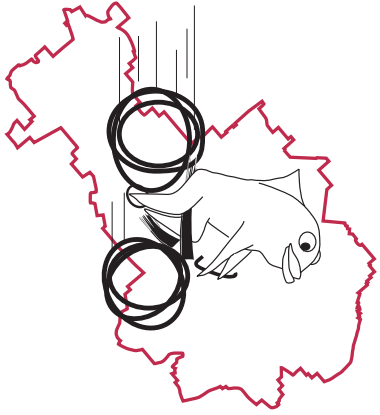
**10 INDIAN MOUNDS:** The small park located just east of the Henry Vilas Zoo contains a large Indian burial mound and a playground. Indian mounds were built at many locations around Lake Wingra by the Winnebago, or Ho-Chunk, tribe.

**11 VILAS PARK CIRCLE:** At the very northern edge of the Lake Wingra Watershed, Vilas Park Circle is a great place to observe the surface water divide between the Mendota and Wingra watersheds. If it is raining, water falling on the northern side flows to Lake Mendota; water falling on the southern side flows to Lake Wingra.

**12 GLENWOOD CHILDREN'S PARK:** Celebrating its 50th Anniversary in October 1999, this Park was recently restored with native trees. The park features a council ring that was originally designed by Jens Jensen.

**13 WESTMORELAND PARK:** This Park is a perfect stop for the longer rides. Be sure to take a seat on one of the benches located on the northwest side of the park. They are nestled within beautiful landscaping, providing a perfect atmosphere for a rest or a picnic.

**14 RAIN GARDEN** at 614 Piper Dr. Residence: Located in the front yard of this house is a rain garden. A rain garden is designed to collect the water running from the roof and stores it so that it will infiltrate into the ground instead of running off into the street. Besides reducing stormwater runoff, it helps keep the garden naturally watered.



**15 MONROE STREET POND:** One of the stormwater detention ponds in the watershed can be seen from Monroe between Odana Road and Glenway Drive. This pond is built to ease flooding and catch the dirt and sand from the watershed before the water flows into Lake Wingra. You can see Lake Wingra to the south as you walk towards the trees, and then see where the water flows out of the pond and to the lake.

**16 NAKOMA PARK:** After following the channel from the brick arch, stormwater flows through Nakoma Park and into a grate. From this grate, water flows to another detention pond, and ultimately into Lake Wingra. Look for the channel and grate at the base of the limestone staircase.

**17 BRICK ARCH (Chippewa Dr.):** This arch was constructed to provide a visually pleasing route for stormwater coming from the detention pond at Odana Hills Park to pass beneath the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad tracks.

**18 ODANA HILLS PARK:** The water body situated on the southern edge of this park is important to the Lake Wingra Watershed. This pond is one of several detention basins for stormwater. It collects runoff from the western portion of the watershed and holds it to allow dirt and sand to settle before the water enters the lake.

### Welcome to the Lake Wingra Watershed!

\* What is a watershed?

A watershed is the land area that drains to a lake or river. All the rain or snow landing within the Lake Wingra Watershed eventually flows into the lake.

The Lake Wingra Watershed is defined by more than just the land surface. As an urban lake, it is influenced by the network of storm sewers designed by the city. These storm sewers collect runoff from streets and parking lots. Storm sewer water does not undergo the same treatment that sanitary sewage does; instead it drains directly into Lake Wingra.

\* Where is the Lake Wingra Watershed?

The Lake Wingra Watershed is located in the city of Madison, Wisconsin. On a map, the outlined boundary of this mostly urban watershed looks like the shape of a fish.

\* Where does the water go after Lake Wingra?

Lake Wingra is a headwater lake, meaning that no other lakes or rivers feed into it. However, Lake Wingra serves as a source for water for many downstream lakes and rivers. Lake Wingra flows into Lake Monona and then into the Yahara River. The Yahara River flows to the Rock River and then into the Mississippi River and the Gulf of Mexico. Lake Wingra can be seen as a small part of many larger watersheds. Our actions in the watershed therefore affect others here in our watershed and in the watersheds downstream. □