

## Directions

### From the North:

On Hwy M going South  
Turn Right onto Paoli St (WI-69)  
Turn Right onto Riverside Rd  
Turn Left onto Fritz Rd

### From the East:

On US 18/151 (Verona Rd) going SW  
Take exit 77 and turn Left onto WI-69  
Turn Right onto Riverside Rd  
Turn Left onto Fritz Rd

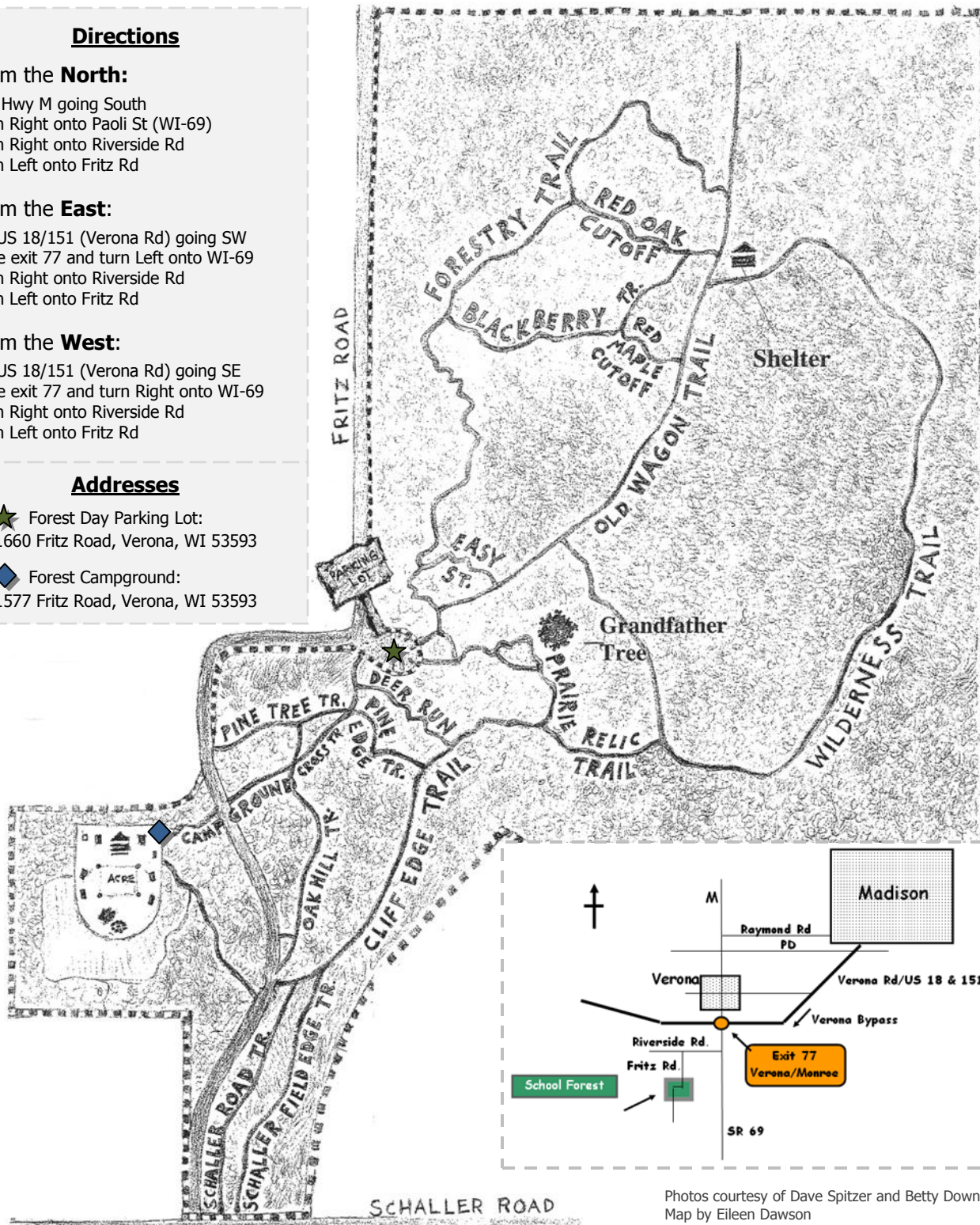
### From the West:

On US 18/151 (Verona Rd) going SE  
Take exit 77 and turn Right onto WI-69  
Turn Right onto Riverside Rd  
Turn Left onto Fritz Rd

## Addresses

★ Forest Day Parking Lot:  
1660 Fritz Road, Verona, WI 53593

◆ Forest Campground:  
1577 Fritz Road, Verona, WI 53593



# Madison's Jackson School Forest



GRANDFATHER TREE - OVER 250 YEARS OLD

A guide to educational field studies led by MMSD Naturalists at the Madison School Forest

Photos courtesy of Dave Spitzer and Betty Downs  
Map by Eileen Dawson



## History of the Jackson School Forest

Located in Wisconsin's driftless area, the Jackson School Forest topography includes limestone ridges, sandstone bluffs and karst sink holes. Our School Forest includes 287 acres of hilly terrain owned by Madison Schools consisting of oak forest, oak woodland, remnant oak savannas, a pine plantation, open fields, and a campground. Today 166 acres owned by MMSD and 20 acres owned by WDNR are included in the Olson Oak Woods State Natural Area. The Olson Oak Woods SNA is managed in a partnership between the WDNR and the Madison Schools. Nearly 300 species of vascular plants have been identified including many species of oak savanna and prairie plants. The site is home to over 40 species of breeding birds including Cooper's Hawk and four state threatened species, Acadian Flycatcher, and Kentucky, Cerulean, and Hooded Warblers. In the mid 1800's during times of European settlement the school forest was an oak opening. Scattered open grown oaks dating to the 1750's and frequent multiple stemmed trees from the 1840's remain as evidence of the former savanna conditions and the occurrence of fire.

## Exploring the Trails

The Jackson School Forest has approximately 7 miles of trails with varied terrain that provide a chance for adventure and exploration. The naturalist education program at the School Forest has provided environmental education for Madison area students since 1961. Students, teachers, parents, and naturalists have opportunities to explore using their senses and scientific tools to collect data for citizen science monitoring projects and to add the School Forest phenological data. Field studies at the School Forest help teachers and students meet educational goals in all subjects including science, math, language arts and environmental education.

MMSD Naturalist guides lead field studies that help students meet grade-level educational goals. Field study topics by grade levels:

- K-1** Characteristics of Animals
- K-1** Trees
- 2-3** Air and Weather
- 2-3** Insect Characteristics and Life Cycles
- 2-3** Plant and Animal Life Cycles and Adaptation to Life in the Forest
- 4-5** Decomposers and Soils
- 4-5** Environments: Living and Non-living, Two Parts to an Ecosystem
- 4-6** Diversity of Life: Insects; Mammals; Birds
- 6** Weather and Water
- 6-8** Map and Compass
- 7** Sink Hole Geology
- 6-12** Invasive species Service Projects
- 6-12** LEAF Field Studies: Tree ID; Woodland Eco-Services

Additional field studies available upon request!



## Schedule a Field Study

### Location

Hikes can be scheduled at these locations:

- School Forest Day Lot
- School Forest Campground (Day Use and Overnight camping facilities)

All buildings and shelter at the campground are wheel chair accessible. Wheel chair accessible trails are available at both the school forest campground and the school forest day lot.

### Cost

Bus transportation and naturalist guides are paid for by MMSD for one approved field study each school year when scheduled by Curriculum and Assessment (pending the availability of funds).

Overnight camping is available for a small fee, and includes a naturalist-led field study. \$2 per camper with a minimum of \$50.

## Contact Us!

To schedule a field study or overnight camping trip for MMSD teachers and students contact:

**Jody Mueller, Program Assistant**

**[jmueller@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:jmueller@madison.k12.wi.us)**

**(608) 663-5202**

For any assistance with planning and scheduling a field study please contact:

**Betty Downs, Head Naturalist**

**[ehdowns@hotmail.com](mailto:ehdowns@hotmail.com)**

**(608) 848-9121**

For History, Management, and Maps visit  
[https://envedweb.madison.k12.wi.us/school\\_forest](https://envedweb.madison.k12.wi.us/school_forest)

For a Forest Guidebook made for students by students visit  
<https://envedweb.madison.k12.wi.us/forest/edguide.htm>