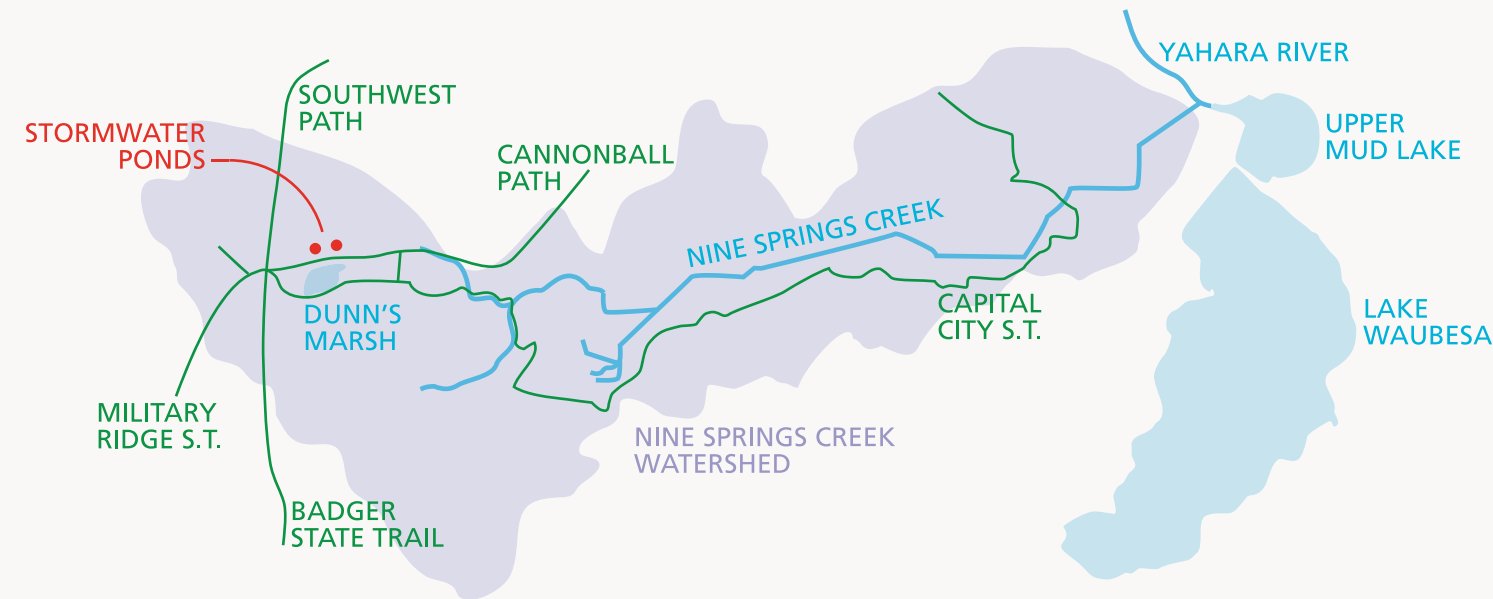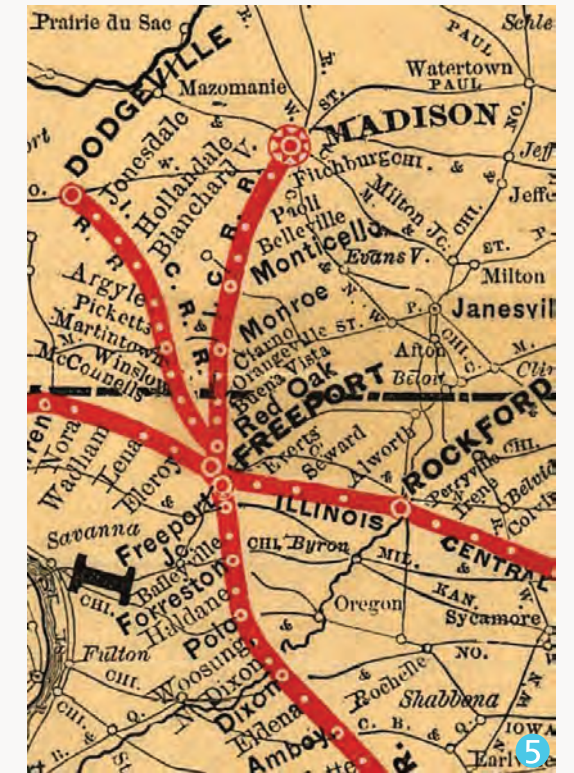# DUNN'S MARSH & NINE SPRINGS

It's named Dunn's Marsh, but the body of water before you is part marsh, part lake, and part stormwater pond. At low water the marsh is a self-contained basin, but it can overflow and run east into Nine Springs Creek. The creek flows through the Lewis Nine Springs E-Way to Lake Waubesa.

WATERSHED PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

This hillside absorbs most rain and snow. However, hard surfaces—streets, sidewalks, roofs, driveways—within the watershed dramatically increase storm runoff and peak flows. Big storms stress

the marsh by raising the water level unnaturally and adding pollution. We can help Dunn's Marsh by creating rain gardens and swales, and by building small stormwater ponds that hold back water from the marsh.

OLD RAILROADS, NEW TRAILS

Many of our best trails are rail-trail conversions from abandoned railroads. Two nearby railroads met this fate. The Illinois Central (IC) line reached Madison in 1888 from Freeport, Ill., via Monroe, Belleville, and Fitchburg. The former IC depot still stands on West Washington Ave. Today that corridor is the Badger State Trail and Southwest Path.

The Chicago and North Western Railway (C&NW) cut Dunn's Marsh in two in 1881. C&NW trains carried lead and zinc from southwest Wisconsin's mining district, and livestock to stockyards. The C&NW right of way is now the Military Ridge State Trail and Cannonball Path. The only remaining traces of the railroads are the raised beds once traversed by tracks.

IMAGES
1 Virgina rails need healthy wetlands. [Richard Armstrong]
2 Community rain gardens reduce stormwater runoff. [City of Fitchburg]
3 Military Ridge State Trail west of Verona. [Jeff Durbin]
4 Illinois Central Railroad crossing Stoner Prairie. [Fitchburg Historical Society]
5 Illinois Central Railroad route to Madison. [Library of Congress]