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What is it?

Planet Trek Dane County (PTDC) was first installed in April 2009 as a celebration of the [International Year of Astronomy](#) by UW Space Place and partners. PTDC is a temporary installation uniting science education, art, and outdoor recreation. It was first on display from April-October 2009 and has been removed for the winter of 2010. PTDC is, at heart, a scale model of our solar system: We shrunk the Sun, planets, and other bodies by the same factor so that the sizes and distances are represented to scale relative to each other. In our model, the scale is about 200 million to 1. This means the Sun is a sphere about 24 feet in diameter at Monona Terrace, and Pluto the size of a marble in Mt. Horeb. NEW IN 2010: An interactive sun dial on the grass next to the Sun!

Where is it?

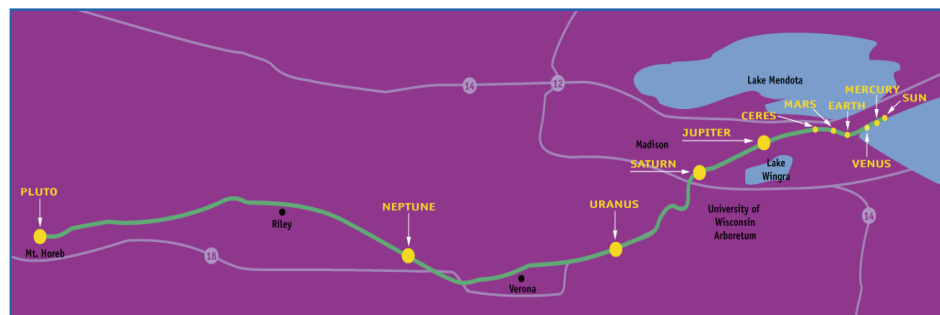
The PTDC Sun is located at Monona Terrace Convention Center in downtown Madison.

Avid cyclists passing Mercury just southwest of Monona Terrace.



Cyclists passing the earth, just north of the Brittingham boathouse on Monona Bay.

Your trek through the solar system follows the Southwest Commuter Bike Trail, then the Military Ridge Bike Trail. PTDC ends at Pluto, which is located about 23 miles away from Monona Terrace in the village of Mt. Horeb. Here's a scalable [map](#) of the route.



Who can ride it?

All parts of PTDC are open to the public. You can voyage anywhere from the Sun to Saturn (just west of Midvale Blvd. on the bike path), on foot or bicycle whenever you like. Uranus and points beyond require access to Military Ridge Trail, which requires purchase of a trail pass from the Wisconsin DNR.

When can I see it?

The installation is currently on display until fall of 2011.

Tell us about your trek!

You can leave still comments on our [blog](#).

Other Community Solar Systems

Peoria, IL [Lakeview Museum and Planetarium](#)

Ithaca, NY [Sagan Planet Walk](#)

Eugene, OR [Scale Model Solar System](#)

Boston, MA [Museum of Science Community Solar System](#)

St.-Luc, Switzerland [Francois-Xavier Bagnoud Observatory Scale Solar System](#)

Additional Resources

A detailed, scalable [map](#) of the Planet Trek route.

[Images of the markers](#)

[Additional resources and activities](#)

The [brochure](#) that goes along with the trek.

Who created it?

We thank our sponsors: [Monona Terrace](#), [Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources](#)

Madison Parks Division and Friends of Washburn Observatory.

Thanks go to Nick Schweitzer for the project concept and working out many details of planning and installation. Jim Peterson built the sturdy planet marker frames. Tsela Barr designed the graphics. UW Space Place originated and surveyed the recreational trail version, designed the scale model, fabricated the components, and completed the installation. Many thanks also to John Rummel for help and good advice. Images are courtesy of NASA.



Bike all the way from the Sun at Monona Terrace...



to Pluto in Mount Horeb!



Tell time by the Sun!