

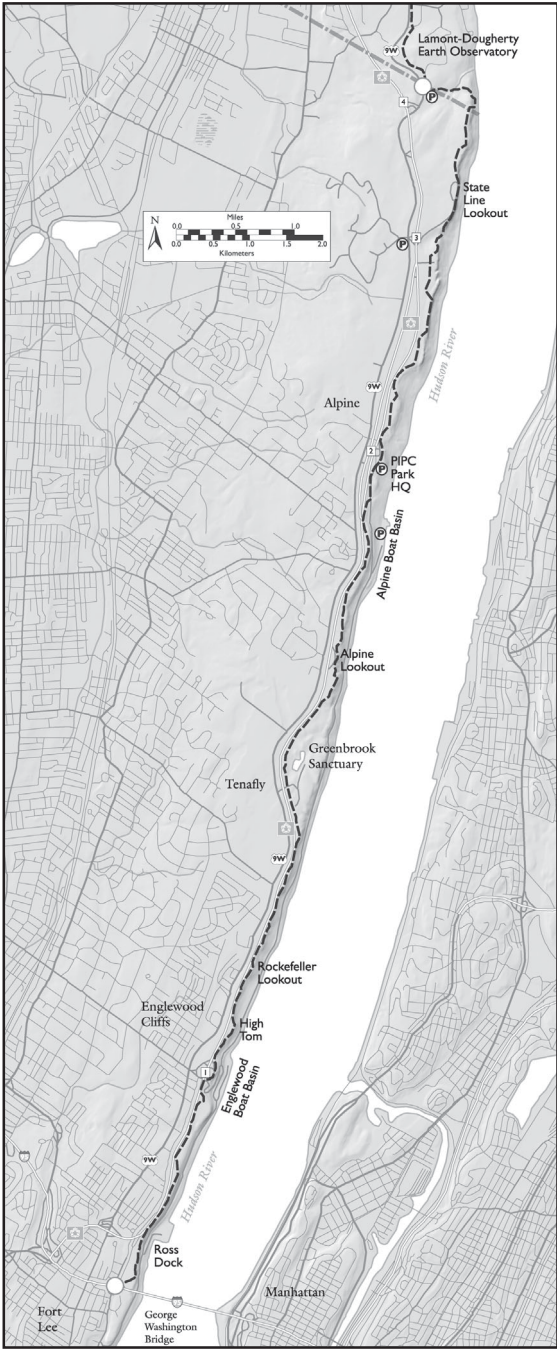
Hudson Palisades

The southernmost sections of the Long Path follow the Hudson River and the Hudson Palisades north, staying close to the river and to civilization. Although the trail does have some quiet forests and lakes, the majority of its scenic vistas look out over the Hudson River and the works of civilization. Its most impressive views encompass towns and villages along the way, but the most conspicuous ones are of the cities and villages on the east side of the Hudson River, not the least of which include the Borough of Manhattan and the City of Yonkers. On most days, it is possible to see barges and tugboats plying the river, and occasionally a small freighter passing as it connects points along the navigable portions of the Hudson River, from Albany south to the great port of New York City. These southernmost sections of the Long Path are the main ones easily accessible by public transportation, making them attractive and easily reachable weekend jaunts into nature for those who live in New York City.

Forest view, New Jersey Palisades



MICHAEL WARREN



1. George Washington Bridge to NY-NJ State Line

Feature: New Jersey Palisades

Distance: 12.90 miles

USGS Map Quads: Central Park, Yonkers, and Nyack

Trail Conference Map: Map 4A, Hudson Palisades Trails, New Jersey Section

General Description

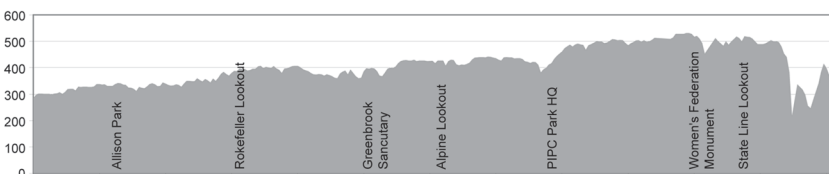
The Long Path follows the crest of the spectacular Palisades Escarpment on the western bank of the Hudson River near New York City, wandering between the cliff edge and the Palisades Interstate Parkway. The route affords stunning views of the basaltic face of the Palisades, the Hudson River and the City of New York and its suburbs. The trail passes through rich forests, with occasional streams and swamps. Old roads, rock walls and foundations along the route are remnants of past settlement along the Palisades. Several side trails lead down to the Shore Trail along the Hudson River. These allow the hiker to make a number of interesting circuits. The *New York Walk Book* and the *New Jersey Walk Book*, both published by the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference, can be consulted for additional information. The trail is generally wide and nearly level (except for some steep sections near the New York-New Jersey border). Unfortunately, the trail is almost always within sound of the Palisades Interstate Parkway. In 1971 this section of the Long Path was designated a National Recreational Trail by Secretary of the Interior, Roger C. B. Morton.

Access

From New York: Take the George Washington Bridge to the first exit after the Palisades Interstate Parkway.

From New Jersey: Take any road, including the Palisades Interstate Parkway, I-95, NJ 4 and US 1-9, that leads to the George Washington Bridge. The trail begins in Fort Lee Historic Park, just south of the George Washington Bridge.

By public transportation: Take any bus or subway to the George Washington Bridge Bus Terminal and walk over the bridge or take a bus to Bridge Plaza in Fort Lee, NJ. From Bridge Plaza North, walk south to the first cross street, turn left towards the river, and turn right on Hudson Terrace to Fort Lee Historic Park and the start of the trail. The Red and Tan Lines buses 9W



and 9A give access to many points along the trail from US Route 9W.

Parking

0.00 Fort Lee Historic Park, about two blocks south of the trailhead on Hudson Terrace (fee charged April-November); street parking along and near Hudson Terrace (free on Sundays and holidays; meters with one-hour limit on other days). (18T 587325E 4522705N)

1.60 Allison Park (when open). (18T 588250E 4524884N)

3.50 Rockefeller Lookout (20-minute limit). (18T 589185E 4527341N)

6.70 Alpine Lookout (20-minute limit). (18T 590350E 4531621N)

10.60 Parking along Route 9W in Alpine near overpass leading to Women's Federation Monument. (18T 591394E 4537120N)

11.45 State Line Lookout. (18T 591990E 4538017N)

12.90 Parking along Route 9W at NY-NJ state line, just south of the access road to Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory. (18T 591566E 4539432N)

Parking is also available at Ross Dock and the Englewood and Alpine Boat Basins on the Hudson River (fee charged in season); side trails lead up to the Long Path.

Trail Description

0.00 The Long Path begins in Fort Lee Historic Park. Turn right onto Hudson

Manhattan and the George Washington Bridge



TODD SCHREIBMAN

Terrace.

0.20 Just north of the bridge the trail turns right and climbs two sets of steps, turns left to cross a roadway bridge, and enters the woods on a broad gravel track to the right of a chain-link fence. The Long Path follows the “Trail to River” signs while several side paths lead left and right. There are a few views of the Hudson River.

0.70 At the last of several signs for “Trail to River,” the Carpenter’s Trail (blue on top and white on the bottom) heads right, leading to the Shore Trail (white). The Long Path continues to the left on a narrower track near the cliff edge. In 300 feet, a side trail (white on top and blue on the bottom) leads left to a footbridge over the Palisades Interstate Parkway. The Long Path continues on past the former site of an old mounted cannon from the Spanish-American War. The trail then goes by several old stone walls and crosses a stream.

1.35 The trail passes a gas station (water, vending machines, food, phone) on the left and then crosses a stream after a short while.

1.60 The trail passes to the left of the iron fence surrounding Allison Park to reach the entrance to Allison Park. This park was developed by the trustees of the Estate of William O. Allison (1849-1924), who was born and spent his life nearby.⁵ When open, the park offers water, restrooms, phone, and overlooks. The Long Path continues along the paved access road to the park, enters a



narrow strip of woods near the Parkway, and passes the entrance road to St. Peter's College. It briefly follows the Parkway's shoulder before heading back toward the edge of the Palisades' cliffs on what becomes an abandoned asphalt drive.

2.30 The trail descends steps to Palisade Avenue, turns right, turns left at the corner and goes up another set of steps to the right. Nearby, the Dyckman Hill Trail (yellow) starts down the Palisades to the Englewood boat basin, leaving the Long Path, which turns left to follow the cliff edge. Views across the river include the Henry Hudson Bridge over the Harlem River and Manhattan's Inwood Hill Park. The medieval-looking monastery is the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Cloisters.

2.95 As the Long Path turns left, an unmarked trail straight ahead leads to the High Tom promontory with its magnificent views up the river.

3.45 The Long Path reaches Rockefeller Lookout and its tremendous views. Not long after, it crosses a small stream and briefly follows an old gravel road. There are many fine river views. Clinton Point, reached by a short walk toward the right away from the Long Path immediately after it passes an open

⁵ William O. Allison was a native of the small group of small fishing villages that developed at the base of the Palisades during the 19th century. He was born in Undercliff Village in 1849 and became a successful journalist in his early twenties. He started a trade journal (the *Oil, Paint, and Drug Reporter*) and became very successful at acquiring more trade journals, making him a wealthy man. In his later years, he interviewed old-timers from the Undercliffs, but a large part of his historical collection burned along with his mansion in 1903. The trustees of his estate established Allison Park, and some of the land he owned is now a part of the Flatbrook Sanctuary in Englewood.

Blackledge-Kearny House, Alpine Boat Basin



MICHAEL WARREN



Women's Federation Monument

area, is one of the best viewpoints. Just after the trail crosses another stream, reach the fence for the Greenbrook Sanctuary on the right of the trail.

5.30 The trail crosses the entrance road to the Greenbrook Sanctuary. The Sanctuary, open to interested parties by membership, preserves a splendid example of the forests and other habitats that once ranged along the top of the Palisades. The Long Path continues along the Sanctuary's fence, twice plunging below the grade of the Parkway to cross over streams that run through woodland swamps.

6.15 The Huyler's Landing Trail (red), which connects to the Shore Trail (white) at the Hudson's edge, leads right at a very sharp angle shortly after leaving the Sanctuary fence. The Long Path then returns to the edge of the Palisades.

6.65 Reach Alpine Lookout, with many fine views. The trail runs past the lookout point and enters the woods at the end of the cliff-edge railing. It then passes a series of old stone walls and foundations and travels briefly on an old road as it meanders between the Parkway and the cliff edge. It is never far from either, but there are plenty of river views.

8.05 A tunnel leaves to the left under Palisades Interstate Parkway to US Route

9W and the start of the Closter Dock Trail (orange), which joins the Long Path for the next 0.20 miles.

8.25 The trail uses a tunnel to pass below Alpine Approach Road. Immediately after the tunnel, the Closter Dock Trail (orange blazes) leads right and down the hill to the Alpine Boat Basin. The Long Path shifts left at this point and exits the woods. (For reverse direction, a sign reading “Path to River” shows where the Long Path leaves the paved road and enters the woods.)

8.45 The trail passes the headquarters of the New Jersey section of Palisades Interstate Park. There are water, telephone, bathroom facilities, and information about the Park and Greenbrook Sanctuary in the Park Commission headquarters building. The Long Path enters the woods on a wide path at the north end of the headquarters parking lot, past the building. Once in the woods, it goes through a variety of hardwood and hemlock forests that afford river views, some quite fine.

10.20 The trail reaches the end of Ruckman Road. To the right is an overlook above the Hudson (with a concrete block wall). The Long Path turns left on Ruckman Road and, in another 50 feet, turns right on a gravel road into well-developed forest. Meet a second gravel road leading right to run along the cliff edge. This road, not part of the Long Path, ends in about 900 feet at the terminus of a great split off the main face of the Palisades. With its many splendid views, it makes a worthwhile excursion.

10.40 The trail turns right on a narrow gravel road. In another 500 feet, the Long Path reaches a second gravel road. The left branch, marked with blue-and-white rectangles, leads to a footbridge over the Parkway to parking on 9W and to the Bergen Boy Scouts Council’s Camp Alpine. To the right, these markers run concurrently with the Long Path.

10.75 Reach a clearing with stone monument shaped like a castle, a reminder of the preservation works of the New Jersey State Federation of Women’s Clubs. They played an instrumental part in creating Palisades Interstate Park at the beginning of the 20th century. Beyond the clearing, the trail descends on rock steps. A few hundred yards farther, the blue-and-white trail, now called the Forest View Trail, leaves to the right and descends to the river to connect with the Shore Trail (white). The Long Path continues ahead to cross a stream and begin an ascent on steps to reach the concrete access road to State Line Lookout. (This road was originally part of US Route 9W). The trail bears right past large stones that block vehicle access and follows the concrete road.

11.45 The State Line Lookout’s snack bar, with restrooms, food, water, and phone, is on the left. The concession remains open all year. The trail continues along the edge of the concrete road and passes Point Lookout on top of Indian Head, the highest point in the New Jersey section of Palisades Interstate Park. In another 225 yards, the Long Path bears right into the woods, just past the end of the rock wall along the roadside.

12.10 Continue straight ahead as a cross-country ski trail comes in from the left. In another 300 feet, the Long Path turns right, up four steps, and continues on a narrower path. It turns right at a chain-link fence marking the New Jersey-New York state boundary (to the left, there is a stone boundary monu-

ment placed in 1882). The trail descends along the fence on stone steps, turns left, and passes through a gate in the fence to enter NY. It continues to descend on steps, often quite steeply, close to the edge of the cliffs.

12.40 The steps end and the Long Path turns left to descend more gradually to a stream crossing.

12.55 The Shore Trail (white) goes right and follows the stream for 0.75 miles to a beautiful cascade and remnants of Lawrence Garden (or Italian Garden, designed after a garden in Amalfi). The Long Path turns left to follow the stream uphill, ascending gently but steadily. Another unmarked trail leaves to the left 0.2 miles farther along the Long Path as the ascent ends.

12.90 The Long Path reaches US Route 9W at the entrance road to Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, just north of the New Jersey-New York state line. To continue, cross the entrance road.