

27. West Conesville to Doney Hollow

Features: Mine Kill State Park and Lansing Manor

Distance: 10.75 miles

USGS Map Quads: Gilboa

Trail Conference Maps: none

General Description

In this section, the Long Path leaves the rugged terrain of the Catskills and descends into the Schoharie Valley. After passing the Schoharie Reservoir, which is the northernmost outpost of the New York City water supply system, the Long Path begins a 30-mile journey along the Schoharie Valley and the hills surrounding Schoharie Creek. The trail passes through Mine Kill State Park, whose primary attraction is Mine Kill Falls. The Long Path passes both the top and the bottom of the falls, which plummet out of a spectacular gorge. Between the falls and the main part of the park, the trail follows a beautiful pine and hemlock forest. In the north end of the park are spectacular open views of the Schoharie Valley. Beyond Mine Kill State Park, the trail passes through the Lansing Manor Visitors Center of the Power Authority's Blenheim-Gilboa pumped storage complex. There are expansive views up the Schoharie Valley from both Mine Kill State Park and Lansing Manor. From Lansing Manor, the Long Path follows roads most of the way to Doney Hollow.

Access

Take the New York State Thruway to Exit 21 (Catskill). Continue west on NY Route 23 for about 30 miles to the Village of Prattsville. At the end of Prattsville, NY Route 23 crosses a steel bridge that goes over Schoharie Creek. Just before the bridge, turn right on Prattsville Road, and follow it for about 5 miles to the intersection of Prattsville Road and Route 990V.

Parking

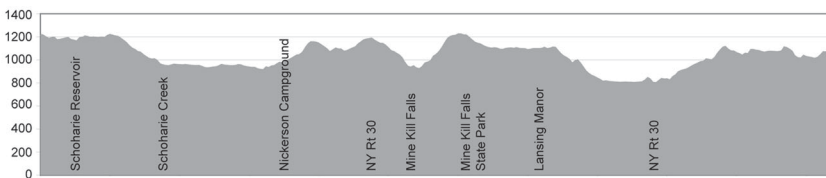
0.00 Intersection of NY Route 990V and Prattsville Road. (18T 546855E 4692197N)

1.20 Gilboa Dam overlook. (Unlocated)

4.50 Mine Kill Falls overlook. (18T 543431E 4697369N)

5.90 At north end of swimming pool, when park is open. (18T 544745E 4698543N)

6.65 Lansing Manor Visitors Center. (18T 544034E 4699753N)



7.50 On North Access Road near turnoff for fishing access to Schoharie Creek. (Unlocated)

10.75 West Kill Road at Doney Hollow. (18T 542369E 4703777N)

Camping

3.30 Campsites available at Nickerson Park Campground (fee charged).

Trail Description

0.00 At the intersection of Prattsville Road and NY Route 990V, the Long Path turns left and follows NY Route 990V downhill toward Gilboa. On the left side of the trail is the Schoharie Reservoir.

0.90 On the left is the former site of the Gilboa Settlement. From 1840 to 1869, a cotton mill, tannery, church and cemetery stood on the ground that is now covered by the Schoharie Reservoir. On the right is the Gilboa–Conesville Central School.

1.05 Pass Wyckoff Road on the right. The trail continues on NY Route 990V.

1.20 The Gilboa Dam of the Schoharie Reservoir is to the left. There is an overlook here, with views west over the reservoir. The trail continues to descend.

1.50 Flat Creek Road goes off to the right, near the Gilboa Town Hall and Post Office. On the right a few yards past the town hall is an exhibit of fossilized trees. They were discovered while constructing the Schoharie Reservoir. The Long Path continues ahead along NY Route 990V, which curves left and goes downhill.

1.75 The Long Path crosses Schoharie Creek on a bridge. The trail turns right on an abandoned road north along the creek.

Lansing Manor Visitor Center



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Lansing Manor

2.50 The Long Path intersects paved Stryker Road (Schoharie County Route 13) and turns right. Pass a large farm on the left with views of Schoharie Creek to the right.

3.00 Here, there is a large overhanging rock that extends over Schoharie Creek.

3.30 To the right, the trail passes Nickerson Park Campground, a privately operated campground. The Long Path continues along Stryker Road, which turns left, leaves Schoharie Creek and begins climbing up a hill. As the trail crests the hill, there is an expansive view up the Schoharie Valley across an open field.

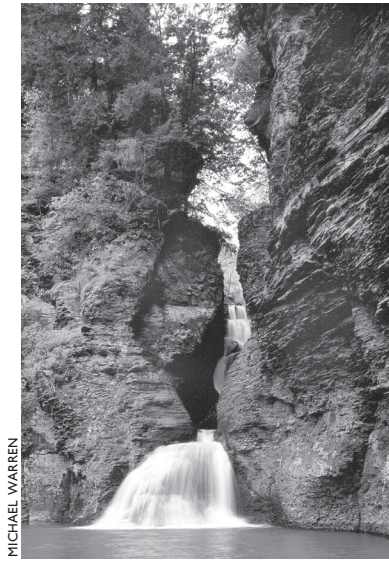
4.20 The Long Path intersects NY Route 30 and turns right (north) to follow Route 30.

4.50 The trail turns right at the entrance to the Mine Kill Falls overlook and continues to the overlook parking area. Past the overlook parking area, the trail descends to the top of the falls. There are park benches along the trail and picnic tables with charcoal pits to the side of the trail. The trail is in an open field here.

4.65 Ahead is a path that leads 100 feet to the Mine Kill Falls overlook. The path is protected with a fence, as there is a sharp drop-off here. It is worth the detour to the overlook. The Long Path turns right on a trail marked as a hiking trail and descends through a series of switchbacks to the bottom of the falls through a forest of pine and then hemlock.

4.90 Mine Kill Falls is to the left. The falls come out of a deep gorge and plummet into a pool where swimming is restricted. The trail turns right and follows the Mine Kill downstream. Across the Mine Kill are steep cliffs that were cut by water.

5.05 The trail turns left and crosses the Mine Kill, then begins ascending



MICHAEL WARREN

Mine Kill Falls

north away from the Mine Kill. In times of high water it is necessary to follow NY Route 30 at mile 4.50 to the main park entrance, then follow the entrance road to where the trail crosses (mile 5.50), and turn left to continue.

5.20 The trail crosses another stream. To the left is a beautiful cascading waterfall. The trail climbs continuously from here to the park entrance road. Part way up, the trail passes several rock piles on the right. Near the top, two trails lead right; the Long Path continues straight ahead.

5.50 The trail emerges onto an open field and crosses the main park entrance road. It continues on the western edge of an open field to reach the park administration building.

5.60 To the right is the park administration building, where there are restroom facilities. The trail bears left and follows a grassy road at the western end of an open field. From this path, there is a spectacular view up and down the Schoharie Valley.

5.80 The trail turns right and descends along the northern boundary of a soccer field, then passes a small playground that is just north of the swimming pool.

5.95 Turn left and follow a cross-country ski and snowmobile trail that leads from Mine Kill State Park to Lansing Manor. Here, there is a spectacular view north along the Schoharie Valley and across the Blenheim–Gilboa Reservoir. Soon, a blue-blazed cross-country ski trail leaves to the right. The Long Path continues ahead on a red-blazed cross-country ski trail that is also marked with Long Path aqua blazes.

6.30 The trail crosses an open field, leaving Mine Kill State Park and entering the New York State Power Authority Lansing Manor Blenheim–Gilboa complex. The boundary is not marked. Note the small cedar trees with fences

around them. These trees are pruned so as to provide the deer with a source of browse. The fences prevent the deer from killing the trees. There are also a number of bluebird feeders. Be sure to watch for the Long Path blazes on top of the fence posts by the cedar trees.

6.65 The Long Path enters a picnic area and then crosses the parking lot of the Lansing Manor Visitors Center. At the far end of the parking lot, the trail follows a walkway through the Visitors Center, where brochures on the historic Lansing Manor and the Blenheim–Gilboa pumped storage power plant are available. Brochures are also available at the nearby museum. There are picnic tables at the Visitor Center, making this an ideal lunch stop in the warm months.

6.80 Take the left fork in the walkway and pass the entrance to the museum. The Long Path now heads diagonally across a field, and then turns right and skirts the edge of a ravine. There is another deer feeding area here. At the end of the ravine, the trail continues straight ahead across the field to enter the woods.

7.05 After a rather steep descent, reach the bottom of a ravine. The trail now ascends gradually to reach a power-line right-of-way. At the power line, the trail turns right and follows the right-of-way for a short distance to a microwave tower, where it turns left and ascends.

7.35 Reach the top of a hill, with a view down to the dam of the Blenheim–Gilboa Reservoir. During periods of low electrical demand, water is pumped up the hill to the reservoir. During periods of high demand, the water is released, thus generating electricity. The Long Path turns left and descends, passing between two rows of white pines.

7.50 Turn left onto Baldwin Road, also known as North Access Road. In a few hundred feet, a road to the right leads to a parking area, used by fishermen for access to Schoharie Creek below the dam.

8.35 Reach NY Route 30. The Long Path turns right and follows Route 30 through the Village of North Blenheim. Originally named Patchin Hollow for Freeman Patchin, a fifer for the Albany Militia in the Revolutionary War, North Blenheim was the site of a gristmill at the confluence of the West Kill and Schoharie Creek.

8.65 The Long Path turns left onto West Kill Road, which was a main Iroquois route from the Susquehanna River to the Delaware River via the Schoharie Valley.

9.05 Burnt Hill Road leaves to the right. The Long Path bears left and continues along West Kill Road.

9.95 Pass a small pond on the right.

10.20 The trail turns left and descends to West Kill Creek. The trail continues west along West Kill Creek. After about a half mile, the trail climbs back up to West Kill Road at a parking lot for Doney Hollow.

10.75 The trail emerges at a parking lot where there is room to park several cars. This section ends just across Doney Hollow where the trail turns right to follow Doney Hollow.