

Southern Catskills

These sections of the Long Path mark the beginning of the route through Catskill Park. The Catskill Park has spectacular scenery and considerable rugged terrain. It passes over Slide Mountain, the tallest in the Catskills. Nowhere does the Long Path go higher. Small villages nestled in the valleys provide a break from the traverses through dense forests carpeting most of the Catskill Mountains.

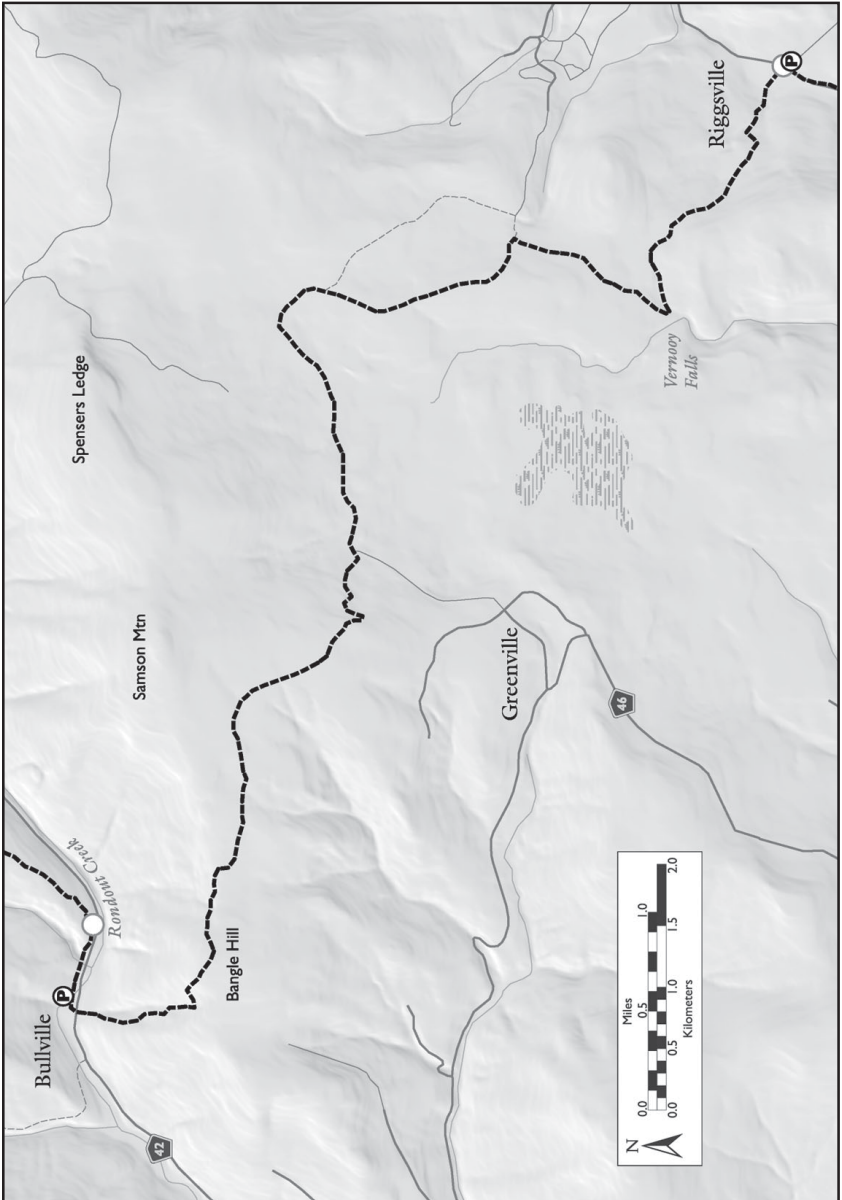
Most of its route follows DEC trails maintained by the Trail Conference. The trails are generally marked with different colored plastic markers. These are usually the only trail identification except at major trail junctions. The Aqua paint blaze is reserved for when the trail crosses private property. As the Long Path changes frequently from one DEC trail to another, hikers must watch carefully for turns and make sure that they are on the proper trail. Most trail DEC junctions have signs that give the trail names and the direction and distance to important points.¹⁰ At many of these intersections, a plastic Long Path marker indicates the route of the Long Path.

Camping is permitted on State land at elevations below 3,500 feet (this elevation is usually marked by signs along the trails), and at locations at least 150 feet away from trails and water. The Long Path also passes several DEC lean-tos and campgrounds.

¹⁰The distances given on these signs are not always accurate.

The Southern Catskills from High Point, Minnewaska State Park





14. Riggsville to Bull Run

Features: Vernooy Falls, Bangle Hill

Distance: 10.10 miles

USGS Map Quads: Kerhonkson, West Shokan, Peekamoose Mountain

Trail Conference Maps: Map 43, Southern Catskill Trails

General Description

The Long Path follows a snowmobile trail to Vernooy Falls, a series of lovely waterfalls. After the cascade, the Long Path leaves the snowmobile trail to follow and cross many dirt roads on gentle grades for the first six miles. The trail becomes narrower and more rugged as it passes the shoulder of Samson Mountain and climbs gently over Bangle Hill. The final descent to Bull Run is steep and long.

Access

Take the New York State Thruway to Exit 19, Kingston. Continue on NY Route 28 west for about three miles, then turn left onto NY Route 28A. At Ulster County Route 3, go west to and through Samsonville. Go right on Sundown Road, then turn left onto Upper Cherrytown Road and follow it to the trailhead.

Parking

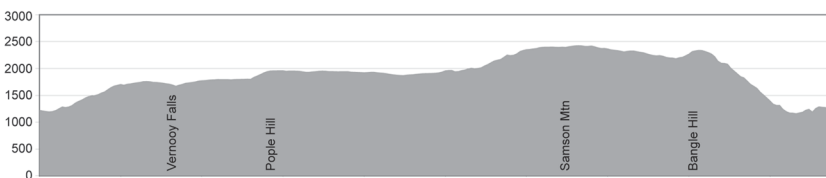
0.00 DEC parking area at entrance to Catskill Park on Upper Cherrytown Road. (18T 554278E 4634905N)

9.65 Sundown Primitive Campsite on Peekamoose Road. (18T 546612E 4640690N)

10.10 Parking area on Peekamoose Road (also known as Gulf Road and Ulster County Route 42). (18T 547333E 4640489N)

Camping

9.65 Sundown Primitive Campsite.



Trail Description

0.00 Opposite a DEC parking area on Upper Cherrytown Road, the Long Path enters the woods at a DEC sign with a red marker indicating a snowmobile trail. Follow the blue hiking trail markers and the large yellow snowmobile markers on a wide path. The trail crosses a small stream and begins to ascend.

0.25 Cross a stream on a wooden footbridge and turn right to follow the stream. In another 0.1 miles, pass a piped spring on the left. The trail turns left away from the stream and ascends more sharply as large trees give way to a smaller forest. The trail eventually levels off and crosses several small streams.

1.70 Reach a clearing with Vernooy Falls, a series of lovely cascades in a large stream, on the left. A number of old foundations are in this area, and the hiker can explore several paths. The Long Path makes a sharp right turn on a wide cobble path as it continues to follow the blue trail markers and the yellow markers of the snowmobile trail. After a gradual ascent, the trail levels off. Here, it is often wet.

2.65 The Long Path turns left up a gentle hill as the yellow-marked snowmobile trail continues straight ahead. The Long Path now follows a wide woods road. It reaches a gentle hilltop and becomes fairly level.

3.90 The trail goes left at an intersection of woods roads. It crosses a stream on three metal pipe culverts. Several dirt roads lead away from the trail. A stream approaches from the left and the trail runs alongside it.

4.60 Cross a tributary stream on a wood plank bridge. The trail passes through hemlock forest before rejoining hardwoods. This section of the trail is often wet.

5.30 Cross a stream on a metal pipe culvert. In 500 feet, another dirt road goes off to the left.

5.60 The Long Path goes right on a narrow track, leaving the woods road. The trail climbs, often fairly steeply, until it reaches another woods road. Here it turns left on level ground. (For reverse direction, the turn off this woods road is a few hundred feet before the road curves to the left.)

6.10 At a small crest in the woods road, the Long Path turns right on a footpath, leaving the road. A few hundred yards further on, it makes a sharp left on a well-defined path. The general trend is gently downhill as it crosses several small streams.

7.95 The trail jogs left and runs along a level grade with a sharp drop to the right.

8.65 After reaching the top of Bangle Hill, the trail descends steeply, and then turns left and continues along a nearly level contour.

8.85 Cross a rocky intermittent stream, turn right, and head downhill, parallel to the stream. It is now steep downwards all the way to the base of Bangle Hill. On the way down, the trail crosses the stream two more times. It then crosses the outlet of a spring and continues along the valley of the stream. The trail widens into a woods road and passes several other woods roads on the left.

9.65 Reach Peekamoos Road (Ulster County Route 42) and turn right, pass-

ing a parking area for the Sundown Primitive Campsite on the left. Occasional aqua blazes appear on roadside objects to mark the way.

9.75 The road crosses a bridge over Rondout Creek. In another 600 feet, it crosses a bridge over a tributary stream.

10.10 The Long Path departs from the road by turning left.