

Palisades Parklands

Palisades Interstate Park Commission
New York, New Jersey

www.palisadesparkconservancy.org
www.njpalisades.org
www.nysparks.com

Welcome to the Palisades parklands—a collection of enchanting scenic and historic parks along the west side of the Hudson River. From beaches and boat basins to woodlands and mountaintops, Bear Mountain, Harriman, Rockland Lake, Sterling Forest, Minnewaska Preserve, New Jersey's Palisades Park, and other parks and recreation areas offer a variety of outdoor activities and adventures to residents of the New York metropolitan area. Swimming, camping, hiking, biking, picnicking—the possibilities are endless.

Bear Mountain State Park

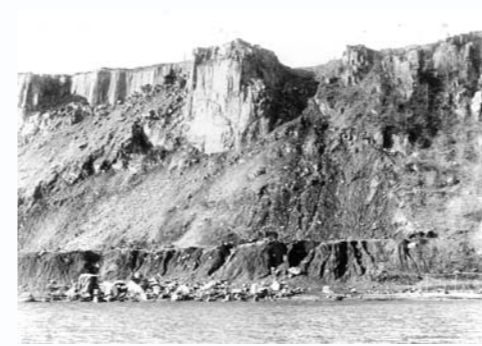
Discover the valley's rich Revolutionary War heritage at Forts Lee and Montgomery, Washington's Headquarters, Stony Point Battlefield, Knox's Headquarters, and the Senate House. Tour New Windsor Cantonment, which preserves the site of the

Continental Army's final winter encampment and celebrates the recipients of the nation's Purple Heart awards.

The Palisades parklands trace their roots to 1900, when the governors of New York and New Jersey established the Palisades Interstate Park Commission to protect the sheer cliffs that rise 400 to 800 feet along the west bank of the lower Hudson. At the time quarrymen were blasting away the cliffs and barging the rock to New York City to construct streets, docks, and foundations.

The scenic desecration alarmed several landowners, including J.P. Morgan and John D. Rockefeller, Sr. Under the inspired leadership of George W. Perkins, Sr., the commission purchased the quarries and other lands, and removed the industrial buildings and residences.

The Commission, with the support of the Harriman and Perkins families, was able to assemble Bear Mountain and Harriman parks and establish group camps and outdoor nature education programs for local and inner-city children.



Palisades quarry, 1897

Over the years the Commission led grassroots efforts to protect Storm King Mountain, Tallman Mountain, Sterling Forest, Minnewaska, and other sites from development.

Today, the Commission continues to conserve open space and to protect natural and historic resources along the Palisades for their intrinsic value and enjoyment by the public.

For more information about programs and volunteer opportunities, visit these websites:
www.palisadesparkconservancy.org
www.njpalisades.org
www.nysparks.com



The Palisades today

Books and detailed trail maps about Bear Mountain and Harriman parks and related subjects are available at the Commission's Visitor Center bookstore near Exit 17 of the Palisades Interstate Parkway.

Palisades State Parks



Bear Mountain, U.S. 9W or Palisades Parkway, Exit 18, N.Y., 845-786-2701—The flagship of the Palisades Interstate Park System, this 5,067-acre park has 53 miles of hiking trails, including the first constructed section of the Appalachian Trail, a major segment of the Long Path, and several that connect with Harriman trails. Park facilities include natural history museums, a swimming pool, rowboats, ice-skating rink, merry-go-round, inn, restaurant, lodges, conference center, picnic area, and pavilions. Perkins Memorial Drive and Tower affords views of the park, Hudson Highlands, Harriman State Park, and the Iona Island Estuarine Reserve and Bird Refuge.



Goosepond Mountain, N.Y. 17M, Chester, N.Y., 845-786-2701—This mostly forested 1,558-acre park offers hiking trails, horseback riding, picnicking, and swimming.



Harriman, Palisades Parkway, Exits 14 through 18, Seven Lakes Drive, N.Y. 210 and 106, N.Y., 845-786-2701 or 845-786-5003—This 474,000-acre park is home to a wide variety of wildlife. The park offers 31 lakes and reservoirs, two public camping areas, 32 organized group camps, picnic areas, and over 200 miles of trails, including several access points to the Long Path and Appalachian Trail. Besides hiking and camping, activities include fishing, boating, swimming, bicycling, horseback riding, sledding, and cross-country skiing. Permits are required for some activities. Major areas within the park include:

Lake Tiorati is a popular swimming, boating, fishing, hiking, and road cycling area. Rustic group campground facilities are offered.

Lake Welch features a 2,850-foot beach that can accommodate 15,000 visitors at one time. Winter snowmobiling is permitted.

Lake Sebago has an extensive beach, picnic groves, playground, playfields, and cabins. Fishing and non-motorized boating are permitted.

Silvermine offers fishing, boating, picnicking, and wintertime sledding.

Lake Kanawauke provides fishing, boating, and picnicking opportunities and a nature museum.

Anthony Wayne Recreation Area has the only mountain biking trail in the park. The area is host to several special events each year.



Haverstraw Beach, Short Clove Road, Haverstraw, N.Y., 845-268-3020—The beach, accessible only by foot or bicycle, provides views of Haverstraw Bay, the Hudson's widest point. Activities in the 73-acre park include hiking and fishing. A stone marker identifies where American Gen. Benedict Arnold gave British spy John André the plans to West Point during the Revolutionary War.



Blauvelt, East Greenbush Road, Orangetown, N.Y., 845-359-0544—Nature has been allowed to turn this former rifle range into a 590-acre park with a series of hiking trails.



Bristol Beach, Emerick Road, Saugerties, N.Y., 845-255-0753—This former brickyard became a 53-acre park in 1967 when the Department of Environmental Conservation transferred it to the Commission. In keeping with its efforts to protect the waterfront, the Commission expanded the park in the 1990s to 165 acres. Activities include fishing, picnicking, and bird-watching.



Franny Reese Preserve, Mack Lane, Highland, N.Y., 845-255-0753—This 250-acre park, named for the "mother of the modern environmental movement," offers hiking trails with scenic views from the 300-foot bluffs rising above the Hudson River. Frances Stevens Reese led the battle against Consolidated Edison's 1963 proposal to build a hydroelectric pump storage facility in the side of Storm King Mountain and helped form the environmental organization Scenic Hudson, Inc. The Storm King Supreme Court decision prompted the passage of the U.S. Environmental Protection Act.



High Tor, 415 South Mountain Road, New City, N.Y., 845-634-8074—From High Tor the Long Path provides views of the Hudson River, the Highlands, and New York City—vistas that have inspired countless artists and writers. Facilities include a swimming pool, hiking trails, and picnic groves.



Highland Lakes Park, Tamms Road or Inwood Road, Wallkill, N.Y.—Fishing, horseback riding, hiking, and flying model airplanes are popular activities at the 3,226-acre Highland Lakes Park.



Hook Mountain, Haverstraw, N.Y., 845-358-1316—From its 730-foot summit, Hook Mountain offers views of Rockland Lake and the Hudson River Valley. The 676-acre park is a prime location for watching migrating hawks in the fall. A regional bike trail provides access to the park from Rockland Lake or Nyack Beach.



Lake Superior, N.Y. 17B, Bethel, N.Y., 845-794-3000—This 1,049-acre park, managed by Sullivan County, has two large bodies of water, Lake Superior and Chestnut Hill Pond. Facilities include beaches, bathhouse, picnic areas, group picnic pavilion, rowboat and paddleboat rentals, boat launch, volleyball court, and food concession. Deer hunting is permitted.



Minnewaska Preserve, U.S. 44/N.Y. 55, New Paltz, N.Y., 845-256-0579—With its sapphire lakes, rugged cliffs, and panoramic views, Minnewaska is a 20,000-acre gem. Carriage roads and trails lead day-hikers through the diverse landscape of hemlock groves, rocky outcrops, lakes, and waterfalls in the Shawangunk ridge. Other activities include swimming, boating (car-top launch), picnicking, horseback riding, bicycling, mountain biking, rock climbing, cross-country skiing, and hunting.



Nyack Beach, Broadway, Nyack, N.Y., 845-268-3020—The park, one of the best hawk and raptor viewing areas in the United States, consists of 76 acres along the Hudson River at the base of Hook Mountain. Besides birding, activities include riverside hiking, picnicking, bicycling, fishing, and boating (car-top launch).



Palisades Interstate Parkway, N.Y. and N.J., 201-768-1360—The landscaped parkway, built between 1947 and 1958, extends 42 miles from the George Washington Bridge to Bear Mountain. Designed and constructed by major engineering and landscape architects of the day, the parkway was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1998.



Palisades Park, Palisades Interstate Parkway, U.S. 9W, and Hudson Terrace, N.J., 201-768-1360—New Jersey's Palisades Park protects 2,419 acres along the waterfront and some of the most impressive sections of the Palisades from State Line Lookout south to Fort Lee. The park comprises several recreation areas connected by the Shore Trail along the waterfront and the Long Path atop the cliffs east of Palisades Interstate Parkway. The Henry Hudson Drive, one of the oldest scenic drives in the nation, passes through scenic woodlands below the cliffs from Alpine to Fort Lee. Major areas within the park include:

State Line Lookout, at 532 feet the highest point on the Palisades cliffs, offers an autumn hawk watch, some of the best hiking in the New Jersey section, and over five miles of cross-country ski trails. Facilities include a bookshop and refreshment stand. Nearby is the Women's Federation Monument commemorating the role of the New Jersey State Federation of Women's Clubs in preserving the Palisades.

Park Headquarters and **Allison Park** provide access to the Long Path.

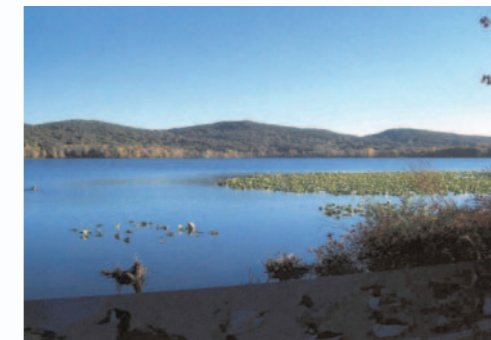
Alpine Area has a boat basin, car-top boat launch, picnic area, and access to hiking trails.

Englewood Boat Basin has a car-top boat launch, picnic area, and trails.

Ross Dock, near the former site of the Carpenter Brothers Quarry, has picnic facilities, a children's playground, trail access, and a launching ramp for trailers carrying boats up to 24 feet long and for jet skis.

Hazard's Dock has a launching ramp for trailers carrying boats up to 24 feet long.

Fort Lee Historic Park and **Kearney House**: see Historic Sites listings.



Rockland Lake, U.S. 9W, Congers, N.Y., 845-268-3020—The park offers two Olympic-sized pools, two pools for children, picnic tables and grills, a car-top boat launch, boat rentals, hiking trails, six tennis courts, and two golf courses. Winter visitors may enjoy cross-country skiing and sledding. The Nature Center has exhibits about flora and fauna and the area's history, including its ice industry.



Schunemunk, Taylor Road, Cornwall, N.Y., 845-351-5907—At an elevation of 1,700 feet, Schunemunk dominates the 2,467-acre park and offers hikers views of the Hudson Highlands. "Skun-uh-munk," an Algonquian term for "excellent fireplace," has more than 25 miles of trails, including five miles of the Long Path. In the spring and fall, migrating raptors cruise updrafts along the eight-mile-long mountain.



Sterling Forest, 116 Old Forge Road, Tuxedo, N.Y., 845-351-5907—The park comprises more than 20,000 acres of woodlands providing habitats for black bears, a variety of hawks and songbirds, and rare invertebrates and plants. Activities include hunting, fishing, hiking, boating, and ice fishing. The visitor center features exhibits about the local environment and the iron industry. Boat launches are available.



Storm King, U.S. 9W, Cornwall, N.Y., 845-786-2701—The park, established in 1922 with an 800-acre donation to the Commission, offers hikers views of the Catskills and the Hudson River Valley. Thanks to subsequent gifts—including several hundred acres donated by Consolidated Edison as part of a 1980 legal settlement—Storm King is now a 1,884-acre park. Deer hunting is permitted in season.



Tallman Mountain, U.S. 9W, Orangetown, N.Y., 845-359-0544—The park, overlooking the Hudson and Pierrmont Marsh, offers a swimming pool, basketball courts, running track, tennis courts, athletic field, hiking and cross-country skiing trails, and picnic areas.

Bear Mountain Inn, built in 1914-15 of local stone and American chestnut trees, set rustic design standards for future park buildings.



Historic Sites



Fort Lee Historic Park, Hudson Terrace, Fort Lee, N.J., 201-461-1776—On November 20, 1776, about 5,000 British and German troops under Lt. Gen. Charles Lord Cornwallis crossed the Hudson River at Lower Closter, north of Fort Lee. When Gen. George Washington received word of the crossing, he hurriedly evacuated his troops and left most of the American supplies and artillery behind before the British could seize the New Bridge across the Hackensack River. The retreat led to Thomas Paine's famous words, "These are the times that try men's souls..." The park, a quarter-mile east of the site of Fort Lee, includes a museum and reconstructed gun batteries and soldiers' and officers' huts on the cliffs overlooking the Hudson River.



Fort Montgomery, U.S. 9W, Bear Mountain State Park, N.Y., 845-446-2134—Fort Montgomery fell to overwhelming British forces on October 6, 1777. The battle, however, disrupted Sir Henry Clinton's attempts to relieve Lt. Gen. John Burgoyne's army that was trapped at Saratoga. Visit the newly constructed visitor center and then walk the self-guiding trail through the remains of the fort.



Kearney House, Alpine, N.J., 201-768-1360—This modest structure, the oldest still-standing building in New Jersey's Palisades Park, dates to about the 1760s. The smaller, wood-frame

addition was probably built in the 1840s, and the large porch was added by the Park Commission in 1909. Rachel Kearney raised nine children and ran a riverfront tavern here in the mid-1800s. Over the years the building has also served as a park police station and caretaker's residence. Today the house serves as a museum interpreting everyday life at Mrs. Kearney's tavern, kitchen, bedroom, and police station. It also includes a park history room. The museum is open on weekends and holidays in May-October.



Knox's Headquarters, Forge Hill Road, Vails Gate, N.Y., 845-561-5498—Maj. Gen. Henry Knox occupied John and Catharine Ellison's fieldstone house four different times during the Revolutionary War. Maj. Gen. Horatio Gates stayed here when he served as commandant of the New Windsor Cantonment. With its 18th-century furnishings, Knox's Headquarters retains much of its Revolutionary War appearance. The Jane Colden Native Plant Sanctuary honoring America's first woman botanist is also located on the grounds.



New Windsor Cantonment and The National Purple Heart Hall of Honor, Temple Hill Road (N.Y. 300), Vails Gate, N.Y., 845-561-1765—The Continental Army made its final encampment at the New Windsor Cantonment. Here, Gen. George Washington delivered his emotional speech in the Temple of Virtue convincing officers not to revolt over pay. The meeting hall and a soldiers' hut have been reconstructed. Artifacts, dioramas, and artillery pieces are displayed. The Purple Heart exhibition tells the stories of America's combat wounded veterans.



Senate House, 296 Fair St., Kingston, N.Y., 845-338-2786—In Kingston's

Stockade Area, this house served as the meeting place for the first Senate of New York State in 1777. The stone building is furnished as an early Revolutionary period home and contains important portraits of local residents. The museum includes major works of art by John Vanderlyn and other Hudson Valley paintings by Ammi Phillips, Joseph Tubby, James Bard, and Thomas Sully and serves as an archive of local history.



Stony Point Battlefield, U.S. 9W, Stony Point, N.Y., 845-786-2521—British Lt. Gen. Henry Clinton gained control of Kings' Ferry on May 31, 1779, and built fortifications at Stony Point to prepare for a possible battle in the Hudson Highlands. But the Americans, led by Brig. Gen. Anthony Wayne, retook the fort in a surprise midnight attack. The site also includes the Stony Point Lighthouse, the oldest extant lighthouse on the Hudson.



Washington's Headquarters, 84 Liberty St., Newburgh, N.Y., 845-562-1195—George Washington and his wife, Martha, stayed in the Jonathan Hasbrouck House for 16 months after the American victory at Yorktown. Here, while awaiting the completion of the Treaty of Paris, Washington contained British troops around Manhattan, rejected a proposal to establish an American monarchy, defused a potential mutiny among his officers, created the Badge of Military Merit, announced the Cessation of Hostilities, and drafted principles that became incorporated in the U.S. Constitution. Washington's Headquarters, the first publicly preserved historic house museum in the nation, includes the fieldstone house, a museum, Tower of Victory monument erected in 1887, and grounds with views of the Hudson River and Highlands.

The Palisades Interstate Park System consists of the parks, recreation areas, and historic sites shown in bold on this map. Most of the natural scenic areas are open year round dawn to dusk. Some historic sites are closed Mondays or Tuesdays. For details about directions and hours of operation, use the telephone numbers provided with the site descriptions or visit these websites:

www.palisadesparksconservancy.org
www.njpalisades.org
www.nysparks.com

The Palisades Interstate Park Commission is dedicated to protecting natural and cultural resources and providing outdoor educational and recreational opportunities on the west side of the Hudson River in New York and New Jersey.

Contributions for Commission projects may be sent to The Palisades Parks Conservancy, Administration Building, Bear Mountain, NY 10911. For information about this charitable organization, visit www.palisadesparksconservancy.org or call 845-786-2701.

