

# Three Lakes Trail/Appalachian Trail Loop from Dennytown Road

## Overview

This loop hike leads to the remains of an old iron mine, passes an attractive lake, and follows the scenic Appalachian Trail along a forested ridge.

Details Time: 4 hours Difficulty: Moderate to Strenuous Length: 5 miles  
Fahnestock State Park [Clarence Fahnestock Memorial State Park] <sup>[1]</sup>

## Driving Directions

Take the Palisades Interstate Parkway to its northern terminus at the Bear Mountain Bridge. Cross the bridge and proceed north on N.Y. Route 9D for about 8.5 miles to a junction with N.Y. Route 301 in Cold Spring. Turn right and follow Route 301 for about five miles to Dennytown Road, then turn right and follow Dennytown Road south for 1.1 miles to a dirt parking area on the left side of the road.

## Description

Proceed to the northeast corner of the parking area (to the right of an old stone building) and follow the blue-blazed Three Lakes Trail, which enters the woods, crosses a stream and bears right to parallel it. After passing a swamp on the right, the trail turns left and begins to climb rather steeply. Near the top of the hill, the trail passes an interesting split rock to the right. Just beyond – at the top of the rise – the remains of the Denny Mine may be seen to the right of the trail.

You'll first notice a long, narrow opening, surrounded by piles of tailings (waste rock removed from the mine). If you bushwhack a little further to the northeast, you will reach an even more impressive mine opening – about 100 feet long and 20 feet deep, with the bottom filled with water. Use caution if you wish to explore these mine openings, all of which are to the right (northeast) of the trail.

Return to the trail and head north, descending through mountain laurel into a valley. Here, the trail turns right onto a woods road and soon reaches Sunk Mine Road, a rough dirt road. Turn right onto Sunk Mine Road and follow it for 0.2 mile, passing the southern end of John Allen Pond on the left. Just beyond, follow the blue blazes as they turn left, leaving the road. The trail crosses the outlet of the pond on rocks just below an old stone dam (now breached) and turns right. After continuing parallel to the lake shore for a short distance, the trail bears right, away from the lake. It reaches an old mine railbed and turns left to parallel it. After crossing a stream on rocks (to the left, the stone abutments of the mine railway are visible, but the bridge is gone), the trail bears left and joins the mine railbed for a short distance. It then turns left, leaving the railbed, and passes the stone foundations of several buildings from John Allen's homestead.

The Three Lakes Trail now climbs to reach a junction with the red-blazed Charcoal Burners Trail, which leaves to the left. Proceed ahead on the blue-blazed trail, which goes through mountain laurel thickets and continues through a grassy area, where it crosses a small stream. Just ahead, the yellow-blazed Old Mine Railroad Trail begins to the left. Continue along the blue-blazed Three Lakes Trail, which heads north on a relatively level footpath. Soon, you'll pass Hidden Lake on the left.

About two and one-half miles from the start, you'll reach a junction (marked by a cairn) with the white-blazed Appalachian Trail (A.T.). Turn sharply right and follow the A.T. as it descends rather steeply to a ravine, then ascends, passing to the right of a cliff. After proceeding through an overgrown field, the trail climbs steeply through hemlocks to the top of a ridge. It descends a rocky slope and continues along a ridge studded with pine and hemlock, with a steep drop to the right.

After steeply descending from the ridge along a rocky slope covered with pine needles, the A.T. crosses the outlet of a swamp to the right of the trail on rocks. A short distance beyond, it turns right on Sunk Mine Road, but follows the road for only 60 feet before turning left and ascending on an old woods road, first rather steeply, then more gradually. After passing a split rock on the left, the trail crosses a long, smooth rock and narrows to a footpath. It descends briefly, then continues to climb to a high point, with limited views through the trees to the west.

The A.T. now begins a steady descent. At the base of the descent, it skirts a swamp to the right, crossing its outlet stream on rocks. Soon, it reaches a junction with the red-blazed Catfish Loop Trail, which leaves to the left at a fork. Bear right, continuing on the white-blazed A.T., and in another 0.2 mile you'll reach the grassy field at Dennytown Road where the hike began.