

# Long Path/Bike Path Loop from Landing Road

## Overview

This loop hike follows the ridge of Hook Mountain, with many views, and returns via a bike path along the Hudson River.

Details Time: 3.5 hours Difficulty: Moderate Length: 6 miles

## Driving Directions

Take the Palisades Interstate Parkway north to Exit 4, and turn left at the bottom of the ramp onto US 9W. Continue north on US 9W for about 10 miles (2.8 miles beyond the intersection with NY 59 in Nyack). At the bottom of a hill, turn right and enter Rockland Lake State Park. Continue ahead on the main park road, which curves to the right, and proceed for 1.4 miles to a three-way intersection. Here, the main road bears left, but you should continue ahead onto Landing Road (marked by a "No Outlet" sign). After passing a fire station to the right, park in the spaces provided on the right side of the road, just before a barricade across the road.

## Description

The aqua-blazed Long Path - which will be your route for the first part of the hike - crosses the road near the barricade. Follow the Long Path to the north (left) as it begins to climb the ridge of Hook Mountain. In a short distance, you'll notice an old cemetery behind an iron fence to the right, with gravestones dating to the 1840s. You'll want to stop and take a look at this interesting feature.

Beyond the cemetery, the climb steepens. As the grade moderates and the trail bends to the left, there is an unobstructed viewpoint over the Hudson River to the right of the trail. After reaching the top of the rise, the trail begins a steady descent. Towards the base of the descent, as the trail bends to the left, you'll come to another unobstructed viewpoint over the river. Croton Point Park juts out into the river to the left, and the Village of Ossining is to the right.

Directly below you is the site of a former quarry. Beginning in the 1870s, a series of quarries were opened along this stretch of the river. Public outrage over this defacement of the Palisades led to the establishment of the park in 1911, but the scars carved into the hillside are a permanent reminder of these quarrying operations. Down below, along the river, you can see the Hook Mountain Bike Path, which will be your return route. The drop to river level is quite steep, so caution should be exercised when approaching the edge.

At the base of the descent, you'll notice an overgrown area surrounded by a chain-link fence to the right. The trail now resumes its ascent, soon beginning to parallel a stone wall to the left. Beyond the stone wall are tennis courts, part of the recreational facilities provided by the park. At the end of the stone wall, where the trail bears left and continues to ascend, a vague, unmarked path leads ahead to another viewpoint over the river from the top of another abandoned quarry.

For the next half mile, the Long Path continues ahead along the ridge over undulating terrain, with views through the trees on both sides of the ridge. To the left, the park's Championship Golf Course is visible. After reaching an open area at the crest of the ridge, with west-facing views obscured by

trees, the trail begins a rather steep descent, then bends left and soon again begins a gradual ascent. For the next mile, the trail follows the relatively level ridgeline, with some minor ups and downs, and with many views through the trees.

After reaching the highest point on this section of Hook Mountain, the trail begins a steep descent. The descent soon moderates, and in a short distance, you'll reach a three-way trail intersection. The Long Path turns left and begins to climb, but you should continue straight ahead, now following the white-blazed Treason Trail that descends to the river on switchbacks. Directly below you is the West Shore Railroad, built in 1883 and now operated by CSX. The railroad tunnels through the mountain, and the north portal of the tunnel is only about 150 feet from the trail. Many freight trains pass through the tunnel daily, and you may see and/or hear a train as you descend along the white-blazed trail.

As you approach the river, you'll pass a ruined stone structure to the right. Just beyond, the white-blazed Treason Trail ends at the Hook Mountain Bike Path, which is paved at this point. An abandoned stone park building is adjacent to the intersection. Turn right and follow the bike path, which continues south along the river as a wide gravel path on a shelf about 80 feet above the water level, with views over the river. You'll soon pass an abandoned quarry.

Continue along the bike path as it winds along the river, passing several ruins of former structures. After about two miles of pleasant walking, you'll notice two more old quarries to the right. To the left, at the end of the second quarry, an abandoned road leads down to the river. This is the site of Rockland Landing North. Just beyond, to the right, is another vandalized stone building surrounded by cedar trees.

Beyond the cabin, the site of yet another, even larger, quarry is visible to the right. This area was once landscaped as part of the park development, and you can see the former backstop of a softball field overgrown by vegetation.

In another half a mile, the bike path descends rather steeply to the river level (this portion of the path is paved). You're now at the site of Rockland Landing South, where ice from Rockland Lake was once shipped to New York City by boat. You'll pass some more abandoned buildings and see wooden pilings in the river - the remains of former docks.

Beyond the pilings, the bike path (once again paved) begins to climb, soon reaching a junction with another park road. Turn sharply right, following the sign to "Rockland Lake, and proceed along the park road past the remnants of the largest quarry in the area and a stone building, now used as a private residence. Continue uphill on the road, now paved, until you reach the barricade which marks the crossing of the Long Path, where the hike began.

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