

Kaaterskill Falls & North/South Lake

This area is rich in human history and natural beauty with a multitude of opportunities for walking, hiking and recreating. Trails and recreational resources are available for all abilities and ages, allowing everyone to visit mountain cascades, stunning vistas and wild destinations. Please note that access to the Kaaterskill Falls area may be restricted through 2016 as improvements are made.

This map only provides an introduction to the region and is no substitute for the detailed trail information that is provided on our maps and within guidebooks for the region.

Trails and lean-tos in the Catskills are built and maintained by the people who love and use them through volunteer service programs organized by the **New York-New Jersey Trail Conference**. To learn more about the trails, hikes and opportunities to volunteer for stewardship activities in the Catskills, visit nynjtc.org/catskills or contact us at catskill@nynjtc.org.

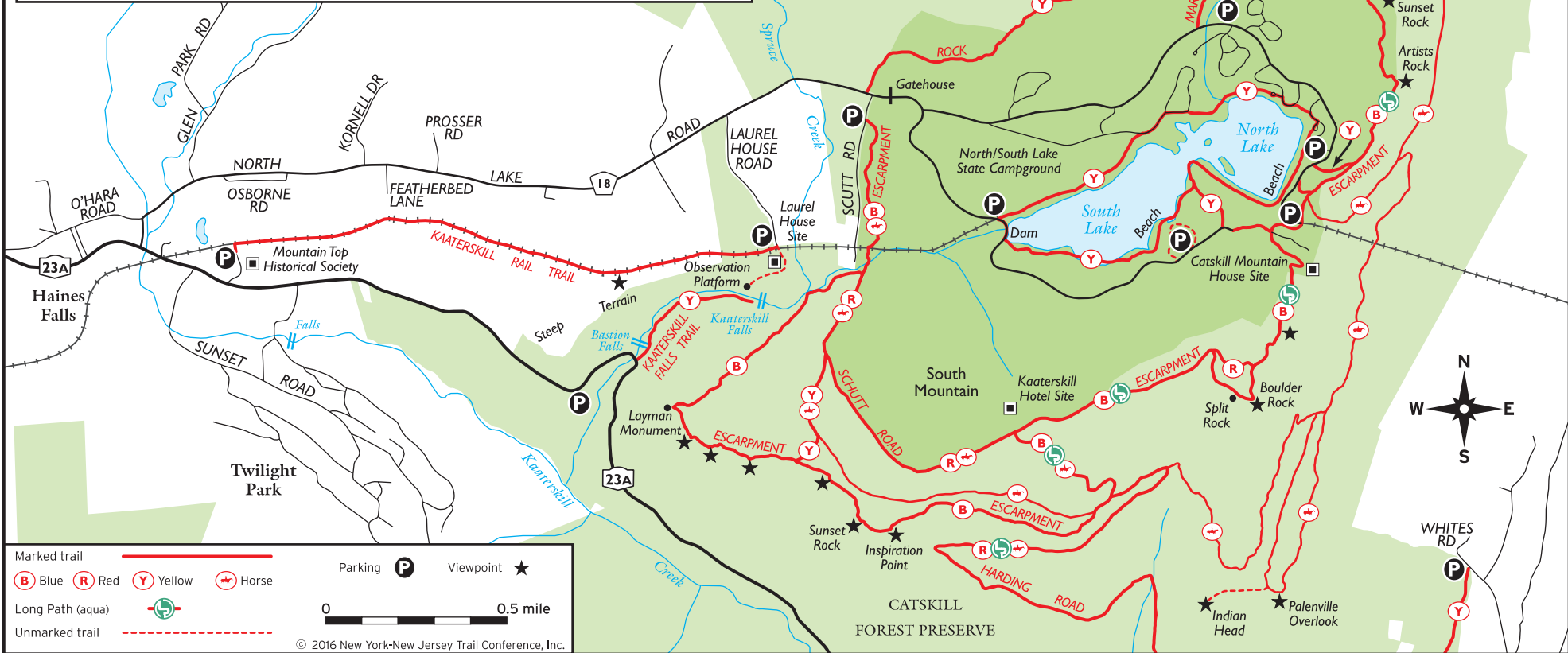
24-Hour Ranger Emergency Dispatch: 518-408-5850



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Use this map on your mobile device!



Map adapted by the **New York-New Jersey Trail Conference** from *Catskill Trails*, a six-map set that includes elevation contours, is waterproof and tear-resistant, and shows more than 400 miles of marked trails throughout the Catskill Park. ★

Trail Conference books and maps are the go-to trail resources for the NY-NJ area. Pick up your copies at www.nynjtc.org today! ★

The **Trail Conference** supports parks by mobilizing thousands of outdoor-loving volunteers who create, maintain, and protect 2,100 miles of public trails. Support trails and the work of our volunteers by **purchasing** great trail maps, **volunteering** on the trails, or simply **visiting** nynjtc.org for more info.

A Step Back in Time

In another era, great luxury hotels sat on the eastern escarpment of the Catskill Mountains. Carriage roads and railroad lines brought guests to the wilderness retreats that had all the comforts of home. Considered **America's First Wilderness**, this area helped launch the Hudson River School of Art, was an escape from overcrowded cities for America's wealthy, and eventually became part of New York State's constitutionally protected Forest Preserve within the Catskill Park.

As you explore the natural areas of this region, you will see traces of that history and also experience stunning, wild views that inspired the likes of Thomas Cole and Frederic Edwin Church to create their landscape masterpieces.

Be a Good Neighbor

Carry it in - Carry it out! Make sure you do not litter along our region's trails, and respect private lands where trails or trailheads may be located. This is especially true for portions of the Kaaterskill Rail Trail. Please be a good neighbor by staying on the trail and cleaning up after your dog in these areas to ensure continued access. For all trails, be sure to keep your dog under your control, and in the case of the North & South Lake State Campground and Day Use Area, make sure to have rabies vaccination papers and a leash to manage your dog.

Safety, Hiking Essentials and Trail Tips

The Kaaterskill Falls region, while filled with natural beauty, is an area where serious injuries and fatalities can and do occur due to a multitude of factors including the rugged topography and weather conditions. Visitors and hikers should come prepared to walk and hike in a wilderness area, along trails of various construction methods. Wet conditions can make rocks in the area very slippery and extra caution should be taken during thunderstorms to avoid areas such as open ledges that could be struck by lightning. In addition to natural hazards, extra caution is necessary when trails follow or cross busy roadways.

Hiking Equipment Essentials

- Wear sturdy hiking boots (not sneakers!)
- Bring extra clothing for warmth or for changing when wet
- Carry plenty of water to stay properly hydrated
- Bring food for longer hikes & raingear for sudden storms
- Carry a small first aid kit for blisters, cuts and sprains

Trail Tips

- Official trails in the area are clearly marked with red, blue, yellow, or white (Kaaterskill Rail Trail) discs
- Please sign the trail registers, as they allow rangers to easily track trail use and find people who become lost
- Purchase a detailed topographic map, such as the Trail Conference's Catskill Trails map set, for a better understanding and guide to your hike

Easy Hikes

Kaaterskill Rail Trail (KRT)

The currently completed KRT is a 1.5 mile section of trail nestled between the Mountain Top Historical Society and the North & South Lake State Campground and Day Use Area. The trail follows the route of the Ulster & Delaware Railroad and offers an alternative route from Route 23a to obtain views of and reach Kaaterskill Falls. Parking is provided at the Mountain Top Historical Society campus on Route 23a at the head of Kaaterskill Clove. Follow white "KRT" trail markers along the route of the Rail Trail. The Trail currently ends at Laurel House Road (very limited parking available). **Distance - 3 miles | Ascent - Almost Level**

Catskill Mountain House Hike

This very short hike offers great Hudson Valley views, and on a clear day you can see into Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Connecticut. The open field where the trail ends is the former site of the Catskill Mountain House, which catered to 400 guests a night during the mid-1800s. The Trailhead is located in the North & South Lake State Campground. Drive through the North Lake Beach parking lot and park in the parking lot at the end of the road. Walk uphill from the end of the parking lot on the trail marked with blue trail makers and a right turn sign. Follow the blue markers uphill for 0.2 mile to arrive at the open ledges and historic spot. **Distance - 0.5 miles | Ascent - 80 feet**

Mary's Glen & Ashley Falls Hike

This is a short hike that is good for those with small children who would like to avoid hiking near open ledges. Hikers travel through a wooded glen alongside a beaver meadow to a deeply forested cascade known as Ashley Falls. After leaving the small day use parking lot in the North & South Lake State Campground, cross over the stone bridge and turn right, following the red trail markers and sign indicating North Point and Mary's Glen. At 0.2 mile, the yellow spur trail leads straight ahead 0.1 mile to the rocky base of the falls. **Distance - 0.6 miles | Ascent - 20 feet**

Moderate Hikes

Kaaterskill Falls Trail

****CAUTION: Stay on the marked trail, as many deaths and serious injuries have occurred in this area****

This short but very rugged walk follows Spruce Creek from Route 23a through a deep gorge, ending at the base of Kaaterskill Falls. At 231 feet, this is one of the highest waterfalls in New York State, with the upper falls dropping 167 feet and the lower falls dropping 64 feet into a rocky basin. Begin the hike at the parking lot on Route 23a 1.3 miles east of North Lake Road (*this parking lot fills quickly and there are no other parking sites along this section of Route 23a - if the lot is full, the best access to see Kaaterskill Falls is via the KRT*). Walk very carefully downhill along Route 23a, which is a narrow and busy roadway, cross the bridge, and then turn left at 0.2 mile onto the yellow trail. From Route 23a, the trail climbs steeply from the road with several good vantage points from which to view Bastion Falls. The trail then travels a little over 0.5 mile through a gorge to end at the rocky, often mist-shrouded base of the falls. **DO NOT HIKE BEYOND THIS POINT or attempt to climb the falls, as this has resulted in many deaths and injuries.** **Distance - 1.4 miles | Ascent - 340 feet**

Moderate Hikes (continued)

Lookout and Sunset Rock

This hike climbs gently through a forest of pines, passes several rock ledges, and follows a short spur trail to Sunset Rock, a large rocky outcrop that is often considered the Catskills' most scenic lookout. The hike begins at the kiosks just before the North Lake Beach parking area. A short connector trail with yellow markers leads into the pine forest and joins the Escarpment Trail at 0.1 mile. Turn left and follow the blue trail markers of the Escarpment Trail. There is a steep scramble up a ledge at 0.2 mile and at the top is a trail register. Walk over very flat rock slabs and through a pine forest past viewpoints before reaching Artists Rock, an open rock ledge at 0.3 mile. After passing along a wall of conglomerate rock, another short climb brings you to a trail junction at 0.7 mile. Turn right and follow the yellow trail to Sunset Rock, where the trail ends at 0.9 mile with breathtaking views of North & South Lakes and the Hudson River. **Distance - 1.8 miles | Ascent - 300 feet**

Difficult Hikes

North Point via Mary's Glen Trail

This moderate climb contains a couple of short, steep scrambles over rock on the ascent to the large open rock slabs and expansive vistas at North Point. Begin at the Mary's Glen trailhead and follow the red trail. Pass the spur trail to Ashley's Falls at 0.2 mile and continue through forest before reaching a junction and a small falls at 0.7 mile. Following the red markers, the trail climbs steeply up a short rock ledge and then across stepping stones through a wet area. At 1.35 miles, the trail reaches the blue-marked Escarpment Trail. Turn left and follow the Escarpment Trail, which climbs steeply for 0.2 mile before scrambling up to the ledges of North Point. This broad expanse of open rock at about 3,000 feet elevation offers magnificent views of the area. **Distance - 3.2 miles | Ascent - 840 feet**

Inspiration Point & Hotel Kaaterskill Site

This longer hike on mostly easy grades passes several ledges that overlook the awe-inspiring cliffs and crags of Kaaterskill Clove. The trail begins at the Scutt Road parking lot, located 200 feet down Scutt Road just outside the North & South Lake State Campground entrance. Follow the blue Escarpment Trail across the road and into the forest, cross the second bridge at 0.5 mile, and turn left to follow the red-marked Schutt Road Trail to another trail junction and registration booth at 0.75 mile. Turn right onto the yellow trail and follow (watch for a sharp right turn at 1.1 miles) until you rejoin the blue Escarpment Trail at 1.25 miles. Turn left and pass Sunset Rock at 1.35 miles and Inspiration Point at 1.55 miles, with views looking directly into the clove and across to Kaaterskill High Peak. Remain on the blue trail as it climbs South Mountain to a junction with the red Schutt Road Trail at 2.15 miles. The remains of the luxury 1,014 room Hotel Kaaterskill, built in 1881, are located here. Follow the red trail back to the original junction with the blue trail at 3.85 miles and then turn right to return to the Scutt Road parking lot at 4.35 miles. **Distance - 4.35 miles | Ascent - 450 feet**