

Final Master Plan
For
Rockland Lake, Hook Mountain, Nyack Beach and
Haverstraw Beach State Parks

July 10, 2013



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Introduction

The New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) administers over 200 state parks and historic sites encompassing more than 330,000 acres of parkland. The Palisades Interstate Park Commission (PIPC) manages 20 parks and eight historic sites in New York, covering over 110,000 acres of parkland and includes more than twenty miles of Hudson River shoreline.

Under Section 3.02 of the Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation Law, OPRHP is directed "...to conserve, protect and enhance the natural, ecological, historic, cultural and recreational resources contained therein and to provide for the public enjoyment of and access to these resources in a manner that will protect them for future generations." Master planning is a critical element in the process to meet the substantial responsibilities to provide recreation while at the same time protecting and interpreting resources. The master plan process explores the parks' or sites' existing physical, natural, cultural, recreational, and structural resources. It evaluates the condition of these resources to provide recreation and interpretive opportunities within healthy and productive environments. The process calls for the development and consideration of alternatives that enhance the stewardship of natural, cultural, and historic resources and improve the recreational opportunities and experiences offered at the park. The master plan is the preferred selection of alternatives that best meet OPRHP's mission and the vision for the park or site.

OPRHP and PIPC have determined that the preparation of a master plan for the Rockland Lake Park Complex will further their missions to provide safe and enjoyable recreational and interpretive opportunities for all New York State residents and visitors and to be responsible stewards of our valuable natural and cultural resources.

This Master Plan document and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) can be found on the OPRHP website at <http://nysparks.com/inside-our-agency/master-plans.aspx>.

Establishment of the Parks

Rockland Lake State Park

Recreation has been associated with Rockland Lake since 1873, when a picnic area known as "The Grove" was located at North end of the lake along State Route 9W, near the present entrance. A second recreational area called the Quaspeck Park Beach Club and Casino was located near the present South entrance of the park. By 1900, large numbers of visitors came to the area by special trains.

On July 24, 1958, the PIPC acquired the first property to create Rockland Lake State Park. This consisted of the 256-acre lake and 225 acres of adjacent land. The \$735,000 acquisition was generously donated by PIPC Commissioners W. Averell Harriman, George W. Perkins, and Laurence S. Rockefeller. The State of New York (NYS) provided a matching appropriation for this gift. NYS also provided funding for the rehabilitation and temporary operation of The Grove recreation area. In 1959, these same Commissioners donated an additional \$250,000 also matched by NYS funds. By December 31, 1964, with further Commission gifts totaling \$223,000, and Park and Recreation Bond Issue allocations of \$1,040,925, a total of 1,035 acres had been purchased. Since that time, an additional 98 acres has been acquired for a total of 1,133 acres.

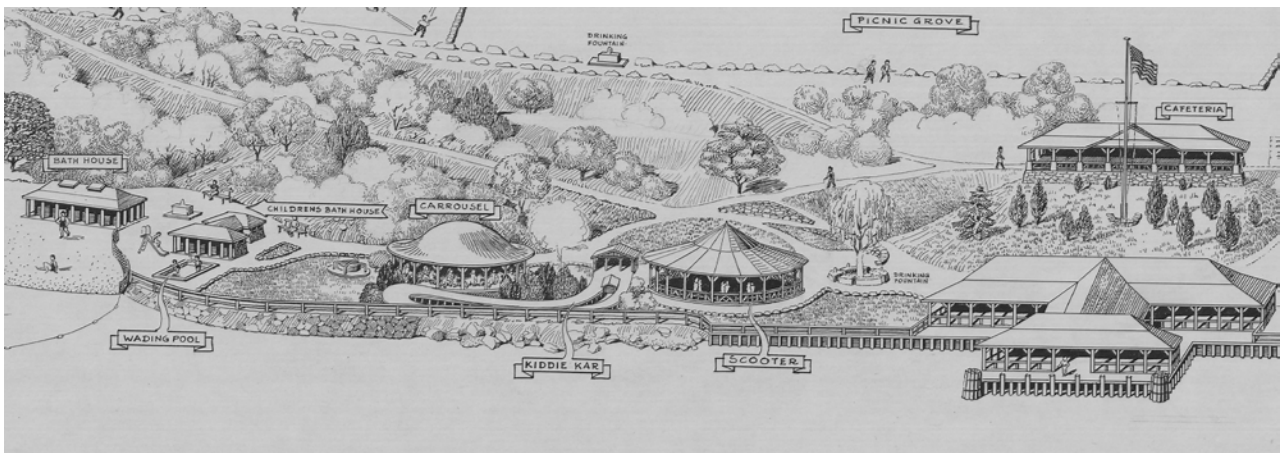


Hook Mountain State Park

Hook Mountain derived its name from the Dutch *Verdrietige Hoogte/Hoek* or “Troublesome height/point” a name chosen to reflect the challenging winds sailors encountered while passing the area. It is located just north of the Town of Nyack. The columnar geologic formations of its massive quarried face demarks the western edge of Hudson River, the northern edge of the Palisades and are a well-known feature of the area.

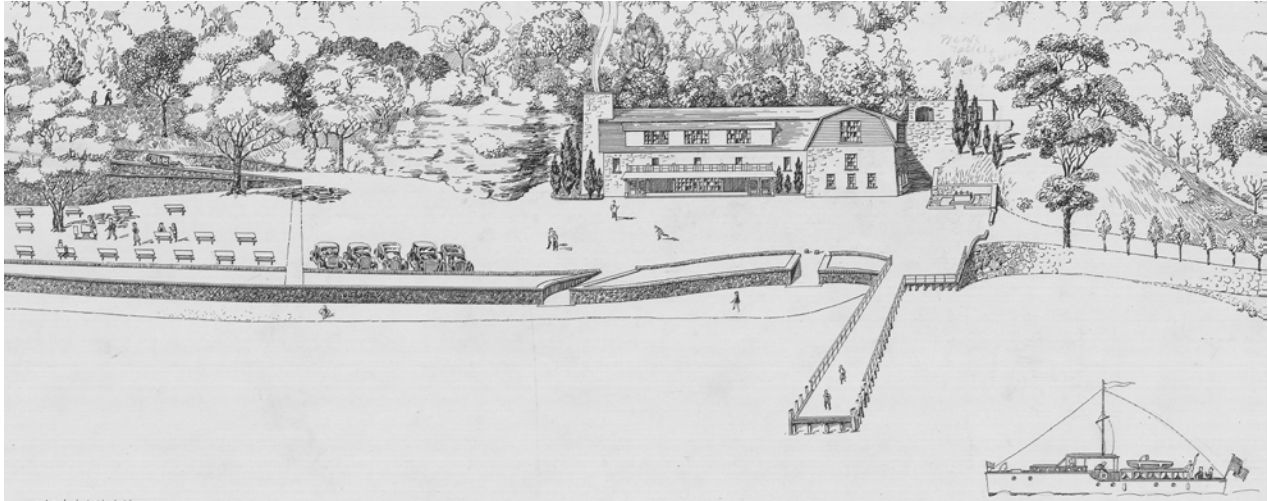
In the late nineteenth century, rock quarrying, which began on the New Jersey Palisades, was spreading up the Hudson River threatening to deface Hook Mountain and the entire riverfront. There was a bustle of new activity with ferries and steam ships docking at the many local landings and fishing villages that focused on river front related industries. In 1872, the erection of a stone crusher signaled the beginning of a large-scale quarrying operation in the area. By 1900, there were over 30 small quarries. Following the lead of the scenic preservation movement in New Jersey, the protection of the picturesque qualities of the “Hook” were of utmost importance to many.

In 1906, legislative action extended the PIPC’s jurisdiction to New York. The PIPC acquired the 676-acre Hook Mountain area in 1911 using generous contributions by members of the Rockefeller, Harriman, and Perkins families. These families recognized the importance of Hook Mountain, not only for its scenic qualities but for its significance culturally and naturally, wishing to protect them for future generations to use. Additionally, this acquisition fit in with PIPC’s plan to provide riverfront public recreation in New York. A series of parks was developed by PIPC along the riverfront known as the “River Parks”. These River Parks were heavily visited by day trippers arriving by paddle-wheel steam ships from New York City.



Nyack Beach State Park

The park consists of 61 acres of riverfront property. This land was purchased in 1911 by PIPC to provide additional recreational opportunities in the area and protect the natural, cultural and scenic resources of the area from quarrying. The former rock crusher was converted to a bathhouse for swimming. As with Hook Mountain and Haverstraw Beach, this area was a bustling with activity. Ferries and steam ships regularly docked at landings bringing people from New York City to the area for recreation.



Haverstraw Beach State Park

Haverstraw Beach State Park, the location of an early town named Snedeker's Landing, is also known as the oldest shipyard in Rockland County. It built barges to ferry brick from the nearby brickyards in Haverstraw to New York City. The park consists of a small dirt parking lot on a 73-acre state park in the Town of Haverstraw. The land was purchased in 1911 by PIPC as a means to provide additional recreational opportunities in the area and protect the natural, cultural, and scenic resources of the areas from quarrying efforts on Hook Mountain.

Past Planning

After the purchase of Hook Mountain, Haverstraw Beach and Nyack Beach State Parks, plans were developed illustrating significant recreational facilities along the Hudson River shoreline.

After the purchase of Rockland Lake State Park, the PIPC started to design a development plan to guide the expansion of recreational opportunities. In the early 1960's, the Commission developed a plan for Rockland Lake North that would provide a significant expanse of recreational opportunities for the area. The plan would allow up to 15,000 people to use the park at one time and called for the construction of swimming pools, golf courses, bathhouses, lakeside picnic areas, pathways, a nature center, row boat rental, parking for 3,000 cars, and more. Upon the opening of the Rockland Lake North area in June, 1965, the Grove was closed and planning for the Rockland Lake South area began. Since that time, OPRHP/PIPC has not conducted additional park-wide planning for Rockland Lake, Hook Mountain, Nyack Beach, and Haverstraw Beach State Parks (park complex).

Park Description

The Region

The park complex is located in OPRHP's Palisades Region that is jointly administered by the Palisades Interstate Park Commission and OPRHP. The Palisades Region, one of eleven OPRHP regions, includes properties within Rockland, Orange, Ulster, Sullivan, and Greene counties.

Location and Access

The park complex is located on the Hudson River in central Rockland County in the lower Hudson Valley. Generally accessed by personal vehicle, the four-park complex is accessed by State Route 9W, a two lane state highway. The complex is approximately an hour north of Manhattan and has four entrances. Two vehicle entrances are located at Rockland Lake, one at Haverstraw Beach, and the last is located at Nyack Beach. Public bus stops are located near the south and north entrances, bringing both patrons and staff to the complex. Access to the complex by train is not directly provided, however, bus access from the Tarrytown Train Station is available.

In the southern portion of the park complex, sidewalks are located adjacent to parkland on State Route 9W and in the local community. Patrons regularly use these sidewalks to access the trail network. Pedestrian access to the complex from the north is not as convenient. Sidewalks are not provided adjacent to parkland, forcing pedestrians to use the road shoulders.

Pedestrian/bicycle access to Hook Mountain and Rockland Lake State Parks from both Haverstraw Beach and Nyack Beach is achieved by using the Hook Mountain/Nyack Beach Bikeway/River Trail. The Long Path, a long distance hiking trail, allows hiking access to and from Hook Mountain State Park along the ridge-top, connecting to High Tor and Bear Mountain State Parks to the north and Blauvelt State Park to the south. Connectivity from The Long Path to the other parks in the park complex is possible through the trail system.

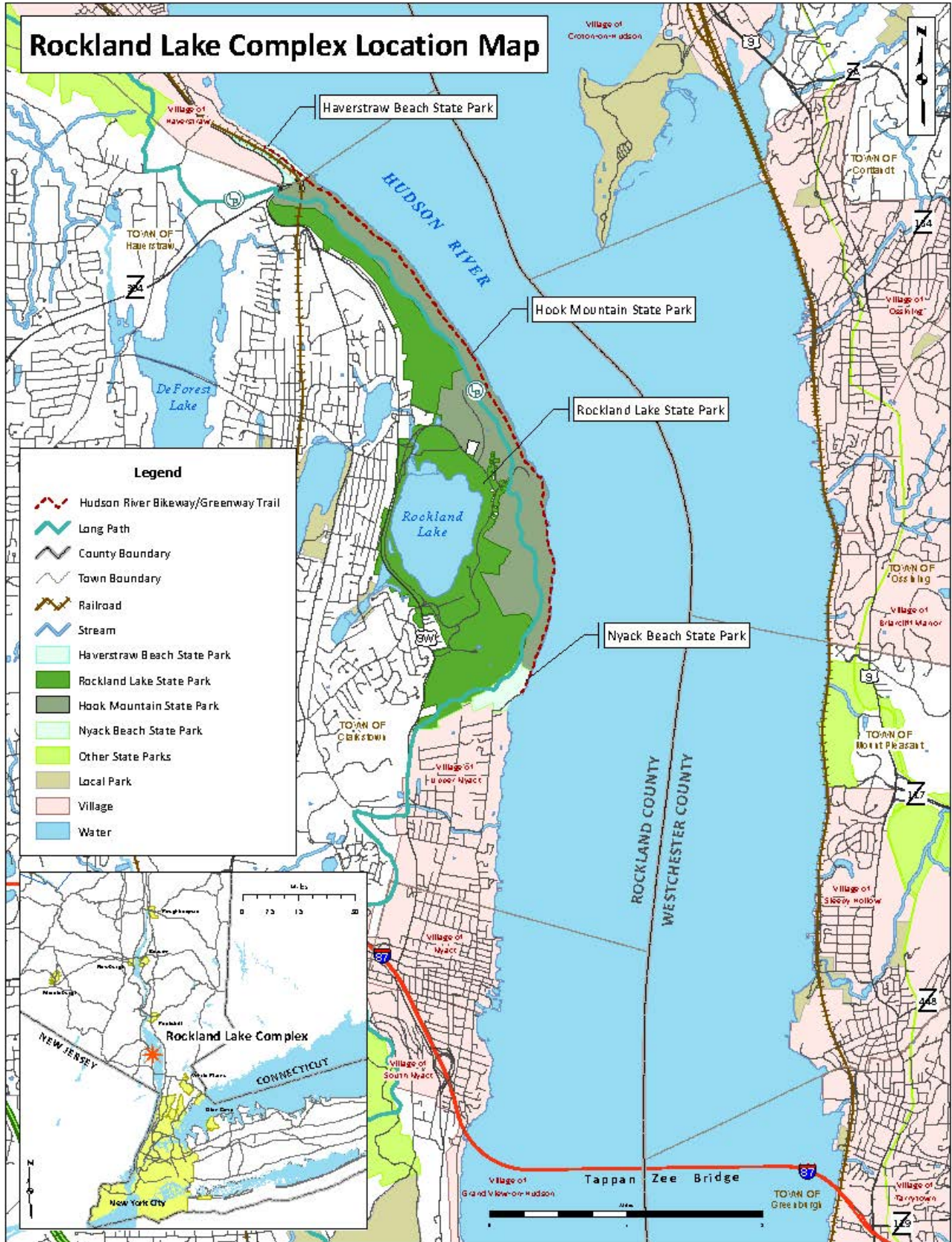
For patrons wishing to bring their bicycles to the park, Rockland and Westchester County Department of Transportation buses provide a "bike on bus" service allowing patrons to access the park with their bicycles.

Access from the east side of the Hudson River can be achieved by use of the Haverstraw-Ossining Ferry that docks in the Village of Haverstraw, approximately one mile from the entrance to Haverstraw Beach State Park and the Hook Mountain/Nyack Beach Bikeway/River trail.

Operations

General maintenance throughout the park complex such as mowing, trash collection, restroom cleaning, and care for the golf courses is conducted from both the north and south maintenance areas. Management of the complex is based out of the park office located on the north end of the lake and is where most administrative actions are conducted. Management of the golf courses is based out of the Championship Golf Course Clubhouse. Educational programming for the park complex is coordinated from Trailside Museum at Bear Mountain State Park and takes place in the Rockland Lake Nature Center and the Program Room located in the North Bathhouse.

Rockland Lake Complex Location Map



Existing Conditions

The information below provides a brief introduction to the existing conditions in the park complex. For a more complete description of the environmental setting and various resources of the parks please refer to Chapter One of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Physical Resources

The more recent geology of the park has been significantly altered by the erosional forces of the Wisconsin Glacial Episode, which retreated 10,000 years ago.

Continental drift and tectonic plate movement in the late Triassic Period lifted and eroded bedrock exposing the Palisades Sill forming what is known regionally as The Palisades.

The topography begins at sea level along the edge of the Hudson River. From the river westward, the mountain rises steeply to approximately 620' at the top of the Hook Mountain ridge. Continuing westward from Hook Mountain, the topography then descends to approximately 157' at Rockland Lake. Rockland Lake State Park is located on a mix of flat to undulating/sloped terrain.

The main soil types in the park complex consist of a mix of well drained, sandy loams to moist, poorly drained soils and rock outcrops.

The primary water resources of the park complex are Rockland Lake and the Hudson River. There are some small unnamed streams and a variety of wetlands. Rockland Lake is a 282-acre, primarily spring-fed, lake that is the centerpiece of the park. Algae blooms, sedimentation, and an increasing presence of invasive aquatic plants are reducing the quality of the lake as wildlife habitat and as a recreation and scenic resource.

The Rockland Lake Park Complex is located in the New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Long Island non-attainment area for failing to meet the National Ambient Air Quality Standard for air pollutants, specifically, ozone (EPA 2008).

Natural Resources

The dominant forest types found within the Rockland Lake Park Complex are Appalachian oak-hickory forest, Chestnut-oak forest and Successional southern hardwoods. In general, the flora in these forest communities is similar in composition to other large natural areas of the Hudson Highlands such as Bear Mountain, Harriman, and Sterling Forest State Parks. The Rockland Lake Complex supports a varied assemblage of fauna that is typical for the area. The populations of white-tailed deer, Canada Geese, and Turkey and Black Vultures have been increasing in and around the park



complex and have begun to have negative impacts on natural resources and operations. A 175-acre oak-tulip tree forest within Hook Mountain has been documented as a significant natural ecological community. In addition, the park complex contains six rare plants and one rare animal. The quality of significant habitats and the complex's forested communities in general have been severely degraded by deer overbrowsing and aggressive invasive plants such as black swallow-wort and mile-a-minute weed.

Cultural Resources

The area surrounding Rockland Lake has a very rich history starting with the Lenape Indian habitation. The area was a prime location for habitation because of the proximity to both the Hudson River and a large spring fed lake. For centuries, the Lenape Indians prospered here; however, as the Dutch began to settle this area, the Lenape began to move north and west looking for new land. Eventually, the traditional settlements that once existed in the area were completely extinguished. For more information about the Lenape Indians, please visit the following website.

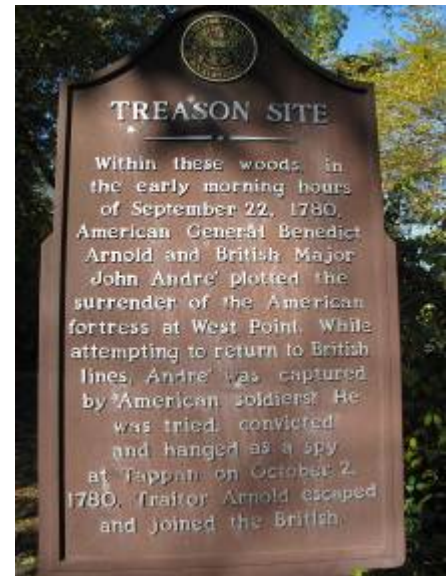
<http://www.lenapelifeways.org/lenape1.htm>

Dutch settlement in this area was slow primarily due to the rocky conditions encountered here. As time went on, more settlers came to the area wishing to escape the congestion downstream in what was once New Amsterdam (New York City).

This area was also a very important location during the Revolutionary War period. In 1780 American General Benedict Arnold and the British spy John André exchanged the plans to the fort at West Point.

As the settlements surrounding Rockland Lake grew, so did the local industries. The area was a very important supplier of brick, ice and quarry rock to the local area and to New York City throughout the 1800's and into the 1900's.

Many of the historic structures and sites found on Hook Mountain, Nyack Beach and Haverstraw State Parks are remnants of a former park complex developed by PIPC after the purchase of the land in the early 1900's. Structures and sites in Rockland Lake State Park are both former residential structures which were removed upon the development of the park and remnants from the ice industry. The former Hudson House, which has succumbed to the elements and is in disrepair, was once the residence of the only women said to have worked in the Rockland Lake ice industry.



Archeological documentation on the park is limited. Archeological sites in and around the park indicate that there is both a pre-contact (Native American) and historic (Euro-American) component to the archaeological sites near the park. Environmental factors such as proximity to the Hudson River increase the potential for archeological sensitivity in the park and surrounding area.

Scenic Resources

Expansive scenic vistas of the Hudson River Valley and beyond are provided at various points on Hook Mountain and Nyack Beach State Parks. These ridge-top vistas have been a significant part of the region through both the pre-contact and the historic periods and are even more pronounced due to the quarry operations of the 19th century.

The scenic characteristics of Hook Mountain from the Hudson River Valley and surrounding communities have been well documented.

Artists of all types have used the mountain as a backdrop including the "Hudson River School", a mid-19th century American art movement embodied by a group of landscape painters. Vistas of the Hudson River can also be found along the shoreline on the Hudson



River Bikeway. Additionally, many scenic areas can be found surrounding Rockland Lake that provides significant scenic vistas of the lake, flora and surrounding topography.

Recreational Resources/Activities

The Rockland Lake Park Complex is heavily used for its diverse range of both passive and active recreational resources. It offers a variety of recreational opportunities including picnicking, hiking, bicycling, fishing, court and field games, golfing, geocaching, swimming and cross-country skiing.

The park complex has almost 15 miles of trail including 5 miles of multi-use trail along the Hudson River, 3 miles of multi-use trail surrounding Rockland Lake and 6 miles of The Long Path for hiking.

Rockland Lake State Park is very heavily used during the summer season for picnicking, swimming, walking, bicycling, golfing and field activities. On warm summer weekends and holidays, the park is filled to capacity. Rockland Lake State Park has two 18-hole golf courses, a Championship Golf Course and an Executive Golf Course. Generally, the recreational activities that take place on Hook Mountain, Nyack Beach and Haverstraw Beach include picnicking, bicycling, walking, dog walking, fishing and relaxing.



The parks' education and interpretation programs take place in the nature center and also at various locations throughout the complex through educational panels which describe the natural and cultural environments.

Agency Mission and Vision Statement

Agency Mission Statement

The mission of OPRHP/PIPC is to provide safe and enjoyable recreational and interpretive opportunities for all New York State residents and visitors and to be responsible stewards of our valuable natural, historic and cultural resources.

Vision Statement

Rockland Lake, Hook Mountain, Nyack Beach and Haverstraw Beach State Parks will continue to provide diverse recreation and education opportunities and proper stewardship of its natural and cultural resources, while seeking to reconnect park visitors to the Hudson River and the unique history of the riverside parks. These parks will be revitalized by providing new and updated day use facilities in the upland areas, improved access and interpretive opportunities along the riverfront and enhanced stewardship and interpretation of its unique history and natural resources.

Action Steps

This section provides a description of what will be done in the park complex in terms of natural and cultural resource protection, recreation resource development, management and operations. The action steps described here are based on the analysis in the EIS and the preferred alternatives and support the vision statement.

GOAL 1: RECREATION

Improve or expand day use activities in the park including picnicking, swimming, golf, trail activities, and court and field games.

Action Step 1 – Develop the South Recreation Area

The South Pool Area, parking lot and recreational field area will be expanded and reconfigured into a court and field recreation complex. The parking lot will be paved using porous asphalt and reconfigured to improve the spacing and sizing of recreational fields and parking lot access. Recreational fields will remain open and available for all allowed uses. To provide flexibility, designated activities will not specifically be identified for individual areas with the exception of the softball/baseball field adjacent to Rockland Lake and above the former pool. Open areas have been sized appropriately for certain uses as shown on Figure 13 of the EIS. Two basketball courts will be constructed within the former bathhouse area, two volleyball court locations will be designated in the grassy area to the west of the former bathhouse and picnic tables will be provided throughout the area. The entrance roadway will be improved to expand vehicular stacking room and reduce or eliminate impacts to traffic flow on Route 9W. A larger fee booth will be constructed which includes electricity for lighting, air conditioning and to accept electronic transactions. The former bathhouse will be converted to a facility which meets the needs of the court and field users, spectators and other day users. The concessions stand will be reopened, keyless free lockers will be provided, three group pavilions will be constructed and the bathrooms will be improved. The landscaping in the area will be designed to provide an aesthetically pleasing and relaxing area for patrons and the recreational field drainage will be improved.

To reuse and naturally filter storm water from the parking lot and adjacent area, OPRHP/PIPC staff will investigate methods to reuse the pool as a below grade storm water storage area. Staff will investigate methods to adaptively reuse the pool filter pumps as a means to irrigate the recreational fields during the summer months.

The parking lot will be closed in the winter to protect the lots' porosity from plowing and sanding/salting activities and also protect the lake water quality from road salt.

Action Step 2 – Redevelop the North Pool Area

The North Pool will be rehabilitated. The area is easily monitored by park administration which will provide improved safety and security of the area. The pool will use a "zero entrance" design allowing all patrons to walk into the pool unimpeded. The bathhouse will be redesigned to provide improved services and convenience to park patrons. The redesign will allow for families and groups to enter the bathhouse together rather than immediately split up into male and female sides. As part of this redesign, the Program Room and Park Office will be updated to meet current standards. To further improve safety, security and increase enforcement of park policies, the Park Police will have an office in the building.

Action Step 3 – Improve Golf Courses

Both the Executive and the Championship Golf Courses irrigation systems will be improved using current design standards to improve irrigation efficiency and reduce the labor and maintenance associated with the current system. Other course improvements such as landscaping/trees, bunkers and other features will be improved.

Action Step 3 – Improve Picnicking opportunities

To improve the picnicking in Picnic Area 5, additional shade trees will be planted on the southern portion of that area. Picnic Area 3 will be converted to a reservable picnic area and a covered shelter/pavilion will be constructed for large group use. The South Recreational Area will include additional picnicking including three covered shelters/pavilions and a tree-shaded picnic area. (See Action Step 1 for additional information).

Action Step 4 – Improve Trail Systems

- River Trail – Erosion, which is a result of past storm damage, will be addressed through construction projects. Regional staff will assess damaged areas and develop a plan for restoration. Interpretive panels will be placed at key locations along the trail describing the park's resources.
- The Rockland Lake Trail will be improved to reduce user conflict and increase safety by adding a two to three foot wide gravel shoulder along the trail for runners wishing to use a natural surface. Gravel will be installed as funding and time allows or with the construction of an adjacent project. OPRHP/PIPC will seek partnerships with user groups for development of this project. Impact to trees will be considered during the improvements to this trail.
- The Landing Road Trail will be constructed as a paved multi-use trail connecting Parking Lot 2 to the Long Path and the Cultural Resource Center (see Goal 11 for the Cultural Resource Center.)
- Improvements to The Long Path will be coordinated with the New York/New Jersey Trail Conference, OPRHP and PIPC staff to develop sustainable strategies to reduce erosion in certain locations and address regularly moist areas. Additional signage and blazing will be installed to meet current OPRHP trail standards

(<http://nysparks.com/recreation/trails/technical-assistance.aspx>). The undesignated parking area on Landing Road will be eliminated. The sole designated trailhead for the Long Path will be Parking Lot 2. Patrons wishing to hike on the trail will walk an additional quarter mile on the Landing Road Trail.

GOAL 2: CULTURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Protect, preserve, interpret and document important historic structures, landscapes, and archeological resources.

Action Step 1 – Preserve River Park Structures

Strategies will be developed by Regional and Field Services Bureau/State Historic Preservation Office (FSB/SHPO) staff for these National Register Eligible (NRE) structures and sites which will include preservation and stabilization techniques. In some cases where the structure has deteriorated and reasonable methods for preservation are not realistic, the structure may be documented by SHPO staff and demolished. Partnerships with outside organizations/groups will be considered to implement preservation strategies. The park manager's house, located at the end of Landing Road is the last of the River Park structures that remains standing. Due to its significance and location in a high use area, this structure will be converted into a Cultural Resource Center and comfort station. (See also Goal 11 for information on the Cultural Resource Center)

Action Step 2 – Preserve Knickerbocker Ice Company Sites

The Knickerbocker Ice Company played an important role in the development of this area. Sites associated with this era are subject to FSB review before developments such as the Landing Road trail, are implemented. Measures will be developed to protect, preserve and interpret these structures during the design phase for projects. Additional panels for the interpretation of the Knickerbocker railroad will be designed and placed at key points along this trail. The former ice house area will have trees selectively removed to show the scale of the structures. Trees in this area will be assessed by the Regional biologist to identify key shade or specimen trees to keep. Trees growing on or impacting the ice house foundation walls will be removed to protect its structural integrity.

Action Step 3 – Develop a Cultural Resource Survey

A cultural resource survey will be conducted throughout the park complex. An initial assessment of cultural resources has begun, however, further assessment and documentation is needed. FSB, Albany and Regional staff will coordinate to complete this survey of sites and structures from the former River Parks, quarry and ice industry, Native American sites and Revolutionary War sites. There has been a limited amount of archaeological work conducted throughout the park complex. Further studies are recommended.

Action Step 4 – Document changes to Park Structures

Park structures including the North and South Bathhouses are National Register Eligible (NRE) and any alterations and improvements are subject to SHPO and FSB review and documentation. Former residential structures located on parkland along Rockland Lake Road and Collyer Avenue have deteriorated and are scheduled for demolition. Before demolition, these structures will be documented and efforts will be made to salvage historic structural or architectural elements of these homes. Reuse of these historic elements by PIPC, OPRHP, and local/County government or through

private contract is preferred before final demolition and clean-up. OPRHP/PIPC will investigate opportunities to salvage historic elements before demolition.

Action Step 5 – Interpret Revolutionary War Sites

The Revolutionary War history will be interpreted at key locations throughout the park complex with interpretive panels and in the Cultural Resource Center.

Action Step 6 – Interpret Native American Habitation

Native American (Lenape Indians) habitation of this area will be interpreted by use of interpretive panels and in the Cultural Resource Center. Protection and preservation of these resources will occur through enforcement of New York State Park policies.

Action Step 7 - Rehabilitate the Hudson House

If outside funding and expertise is made available for the Hudson House soon, rehabilitation will be considered. Otherwise, the structure will be removed. OPRHP/PIPC will consider the salvage of usable architectural components by contract before demolition.

GOAL 3: SCENIC RESOURCES

Protect and maintain the scenic views to and from Hook Mountain, Haverstraw Beach, and Nyack Beach and the vistas and picturesque landscape surrounding Rockland Lake.

Action Step 1 – Improve Rockland Lake Vistas

The existing vistas surrounding Rockland Lake will remain or be improved by vegetation management. Areas which have the highest visitation by patrons will receive a higher level of maintenance to preserve the scenic qualities.

Action Step 2 – Maintain Hudson River Vistas

Scenic vistas along the Hudson River on Hook Mountain and Nyack Beach State Parks contribute significantly to the scenic resources in the park complex and will be maintained.

Action Step 3 – Improve Landscaping

The North and South parking lots (lots 1 and 4) will receive vegetation screening from the roadway. The North Lot will be screened using native trees, shrubbery and other vegetation on undulating, naturalistic berms, see Figure 12 of the EIS. The South Lot will be partially screened using native trees, See Figure 13 of the EIS. Additional trees will be planted near Parking Lot 5 to enhance the views of the area and provide shade for day users.

GOAL 4: NATURAL RESOURCES

Protect, preserve, and interpret the natural resources and biodiversity.

Action Step 1 – Create a Bird Conservation Area (BCA)

Upon adoption of the plan, the entire park complex with the exception of the golf courses and the developed area surrounding Rockland Lake will be designated as a BCA. This designation aims to integrate bird conservation into agency planning and management. It will create heightened public awareness of the site's important bird community and encourage opportunities for bird-related education programming. The designation itself does not preclude existing or future land use proposals, nor will it prohibit park development or operational needs.

Action Step 2 – Implement Wildlife Management Strategies

Management of wildlife in the park complex will be consistent with OPRHP policies. Existing management activities for Canada Geese and Mute Swans will continue in order to reduce their impacts in high use areas.

Deer population levels are adversely affecting the vegetation in the park complex through over browsing. Deer population management has been identified as an issue not only within the complex, but also throughout the surrounding areas. The master plan calls for convening a deer management team led by representatives of DEC, OPRHP and PIPC to work collaboratively with other stakeholders in the region to identify and implement a comprehensive, long term approach to deer management. To reduce public feeding of white-tailed deer, educational signage will be installed to inform patrons of the impacts.

Strategies will also be developed and implemented to reduce the impacts of Turkey and Black Vultures in the picnic areas. After the park is closed for the day, trash cans are regularly pushed over by Turkey and Black Vultures in an attempt to scavenge for food creating additional maintenance for park staff.

Action Step 3 - Improve Invasive Species Management

Invasive species management strategies will be developed for the park complex based on ongoing management strategies developed for other parkland. Monitoring of trails and roadways will be conducted as an initial and ongoing strategy to allow for early detection and early eradication of new populations. Information and signage will be provided at the boat launch educating boaters of things they can do to assist staff and protect the lake by reducing the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Staff will continue to work in cooperation with volunteers and other partners to coordinate programs and control efforts looking at the possibility of preventing the movement of invasives into the complex from other areas. Additional scientific studies of both flora and fauna mentioned in the plan may be conducted as needed to further preserve and protect the resources.

Interpretation will be provided to educate patrons of the impacts of invasive species and what steps they can do to reduce the spread.

Action Step 4 – Protect Water Resources

The park complex includes significant water resources including Rockland Lake, streams, wetlands and almost five miles of Hudson River shoreline. The quality of Rockland Lake is vitally important

to the park as a recreational and aesthetic resource and as an ecological habitat. Steps will be implemented to improve and protect its water quality particularly focusing on storm water and non-point source pollution prevention. Further monitoring of water quality and aquatic plants will be conducted. On-site filtration techniques such as permeable pavement, stream day-lighting and bioretention will be considered to reduce impacts to lake water quality. Additional educational material on cultural eutrophication will also be developed.

The wetland at the north end of the lake will continue to be protected and the former boardwalk within the wetland will be replaced to enhance environmental interpretation opportunities. The shoreline of the Hudson River, Rockland Lake and the lake's outlet stream will be protected using vegetation or other shoreline protective structures to reduce erosional forces.

GOAL 5: VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION

Provide appropriate vehicular and pedestrian improvements to the park and its resources in a manner that ensures the safety and security of park patrons and protection of its resources.

Action Step 1 – Improve Parking Lots

- **Parking Lot 1** – Parking Lot 1 (North Lot) will receive significant improvements to improve the patron experience, reduce congestion and improve the sustainability of the area. The majority of the parking lot will be screened from view from Rockland Lake Roadway enhancing the scenic qualities of the area. Along the roadway, a large planted berm will be constructed using a selection of native vegetation. The entrance will be relocated to a centralized location dividing the lot into quadrants. Three of the quadrants will be landscaped and paved. Parking islands will be developed and used to capture and naturally filter storm water. Overflow storm water will be directed to an adjacent constructed wetland that will be used for educational purposes. A separate parking lot will be constructed for the Nature Center, its associated boardwalk and nature themed playground. Minor realignment of the walkways between the Nature Center and the bathhouse will take place, addressing drainage issues associated with these areas. The forth quadrant will be grass and will be used for recreational purposes for the majority of the year. On busy summer weekends, this area will be striped with chalk for additional parking.

A new collection booth will be constructed at the lot entrance to handle additional traffic volume and reduce traffic congestion on Rockland Lake Road. The collection booth will have electric service, allowing for credit card readers and air conditioning. See Figure 12 of the EIS for more information.

- **Parking Lot 2** – A basketball court will be created in the northern most portion of Parking Lot 2 and/or a playground will be constructed adjacent to the parking lot.
- **Parking Lot 3** – Parking Lot 3 will be included with the reservation of the proposed group shelter. On days the group shelter is not reserved, park staff, at their discretion, will open this area to public parking.
- **Parking Lot 4** – Parking Lot 4 (South Lot) will receive significant improvements to improve patron experience, reduce congestion and improve the sustainability of the area. Refer to Goal 1 - South Recreational Area and Figure 13 of the EIS for more information.
- **Parking Lot 5** – A new collection booth will be constructed at this lot eliminating the need for two collection booths along Knickerbocker Road.

- Parking Lot 6 – Parking Lot 6 will be gated and made available for fishing and boat access only. Bicycle, running and other day users will be directed to use Parking Lot 1 upon improvements to the area. The adjacent restroom will be completely rehabilitated to meet accessibility standards and provide a modern facility for patrons.
- River Trail/Cultural Resource Center Parking - To address access to the River Trail and the Long Path, a former trailhead from the mid 1900's will be reconstructed off of Landing Road near what is presently the park manager's house. This parking lot will significantly improve patron convenience, take pressure off of the undesignated street parking adjacent to the Rockland Lake Fire House and serve the Cultural Resource Center (the present park manager's house). (See Goal 11)

GOAL 6: PARK OPERATIONS

Operate and maintain the park in a safe, efficient, clean, and sustainable manner that protects the resources and the welfare of the patrons and staff.

Action Step 1 – Redevelop the North Pool Area

The North Pool Area will be redeveloped and reopened (according to Goal 1- Action Step 2), improving the ability for park staff and Park Police to monitor and respond to the pool area, increasing patron safety and improving the management of this heavily used area.

Action Step 2 – Improve the South Entrance

Vehicular traffic flow will be improved at the South Entrance reducing traffic impacts to the area during heavy volume periods. The entrance from Route 9W to Parking Lot 4 (South Parking Lot) will be redesigned to provide additional stacking room for vehicles entering the lot. Collection booths will be improved with the addition of electricity and phone lines to allow the use of credit card readers and increase park communications. Other forms of electronic fee collection and access will be considered to enhance park operations and patron convenience.

Action Step 3 – Plant Low Maintenance Landscaping

Low maintenance, native plantings will replace significant portions of the deteriorating wooden fencing surrounding Parking Lot 1 (North Parking Lot). (See Goal 5 and Figure 12 of the EIS.)

Action Step 4 – Support Volunteer Projects

Volunteer work crews will continue to assist park staff with maintenance and facility improvement projects. Coordination of volunteers will be handled through the park office.

Action Step 5 – Improve Golf Course Operation

The golf course irrigation systems improvements will reduce the quantity of staff time and other resources needed to irrigate the course.

Action Step 6 –Continue Trash Collection

The “Carry in/Carry out” policy will remain in place at Nyack Beach, Haverstraw Beach and Hook Mountain State Parks. Due to the heavy volume of patrons at Rockland Lake State Park, it has been determined that this policy is not compatible with the usage trends at the park. Park staff will continue to remove trash from Rockland Lake.

Action Step 7- Improve Fee Collection Methods

Vehicle Use Fee's (VUF) will continue to be collected from park patrons per OPRHP/PIPC policy. Collection booths will be consolidated to reduce staffing and scheduling issues. The two collection booths on Knickerbocker Road will be consolidated into a single booth for Parking Lot 5. Parking Lot 3 will be reserved as part of the group shelter fee. At times, when the group shelter is not reserved, the parking lot may be available for general patron use and VUF's will be collected. Empire Passports will continue to be sold at the Park Office.

Action Step 8 – Improve Equipment and Material Storage

An unheated, secure covered storage area will be constructed near the Championship Golf Course on the concrete tennis courts, which are infrequently used and in need of repair. This storage area will be used to store and protect golf course maintenance equipment, materials and tools. A portion of this structure will be designed to store chemicals needed for golf course and equipment maintenance. This structure will be oriented and designed to be aesthetically consistent with its surroundings. All equipment and materials will be completely screened from patron view from the golf course parking lot and roadway.

Action Step 9 – Construct a Salt and Sand Storage Area

The former wastewater treatment facility will be removed. In its place a simple covered structure will be constructed to keep salt and sand dry for the treatment of roadways in the winter.

Action Step 10 – Improve the Park Office

A plan will be developed to renovate the park office, updating the layout and telecommunications to better meet the administrative demands of the park and the needs of park patrons. To better meet the needs of staff, a lunchroom will be constructed.

Action Step 11 – Relocate the Park Manager's Residence

Housing for the park manager is currently located within a high use area. Patrons regularly mistake the park manager's residence for a comfort station or other public facility. It is preferred to provide park manager housing in an area that is not heavily used by the public. Park and Regional staff will investigate opportunities for a new residence for the park manager. Upon vacating the current residence, the structure will then be rehabilitated into a Cultural Resource Center and comfort station (see Goal 11).

GOAL 7: SUSTAINABILITY

Incorporate sustainability and environmentally sensitive planning into the design, management and operation of the parks.

As part of the OPRHP/PIPC's sustainability initiative, "green" technologies and environmentally sensitive recommendations remain consistent throughout the master planning process. The action steps below contribute to the sustainability initiative.

Action Step 1 –Develop Paved Porous Parking Areas

To reduce storm water runoff, porous asphalt will be used in the redevelopment of Parking Lot 4 (South Lot). Asphalt will be removed from Parking Lot 1 (North Lot) during its redevelopment.

Much of the year this area will be used as a recreational field. During periods of heavy usage, this area will be used for overflow parking. See Figure 12 of the EIS and Goal 5.

Action Step 2 – Develop Stormwater Storage/Filtration System

Regional staff will investigate opportunities to adaptively reuse the former South Pool as a subterranean water storage or filtration system. If deemed feasible, the pool pumps will be reused to irrigate the adjacent recreational fields with stored water. See Figure 13 of the EIS.

Action Step 3 – Improve Landscaping

The redevelopment of Parking Lots 1 and 4 will include a landscape plan that includes a significant quantity of trees. These trees will provide shade for cars and reduce the radiant heating of vehicles. This results in reduced need for air conditioning, and increases the absorption carbon dioxide from vehicle exhaust. Many of these trees will be planted on curbless parking islands which will collect and filter storm water.

Low maintenance native plants will be used in landscape plans to minimize water usage and maintenance.

Action Step 4 - Reuse of Bathhouse

The former South Bathhouse will be adaptively reused as part of the South Recreational Area. Portions of the building will be reused for concessions operations, restrooms and picnic shelters. The area will include a playground, tree covered picnic areas, and two basketball courts.

Action Step 5 – Adaptive Reuse of Materials

The adaptive reuse of existing historic structures will be considered when feasible. If demolition is deemed necessary, staff will investigate sustainable demolition practices with the consideration for reuse/storage of reusable or historic materials.

Action Step 6 – Support Sustainable Transportation

OPRHP and PIPC support local pedestrian and bicycle connectivity. Brochures and/or advertising for mass transit opportunities/companies will be available at the Park Office.

Action Step 7 – Investigate Opportunities to Expand Recycling

OPRHP/PIPC staff will investigate opportunities to partner with the Rockland County Solid Waste Management Authority to improve recycling opportunities in the park.

Action Step 8 – Continue Current Sustainable Practices

- Recycling of materials will continue at the maintenance facility.
- Natural lighting products such as skylights and light tubes will be considered during all renovations.
- Vehicles and equipment – Alternative fueled and energy efficient vehicles and equipment will be considered upon replacement or purchase.
- Energy Consumption – Energy consumption will be reduced through the use of lighting upgrades, programmable thermostats, occupancy motion sensors and other efficient, green technologies and sustainable practices. The use of energy efficient products and the consolidation of travel are recommended.
- Maintenance – The use of alternative fueled equipment and alternative fuels such as solar, electric and propane fueled equipment and bio-based products (including soy based chain-saw oil and biodegradable products); the proper storage and disposal of chemicals and fuels;

limiting the storage of chemicals on site to the quantity which can be used in one year; and proper clean-up of spills; shall all remain a high priority for the Park's maintenance staff. The recycling of used oils, batteries and metal will be continued.

GOAL 8: INFRASTRUCTURE

Maintain and improve infrastructure and signage to be consistent with the current park and recreational standards and with traditional park design aesthetic appropriate to this complex while using sustainable buildings practices.

Action Step 1 - Improve Nyack Beach Area

The Nyack Bathhouse will continue to be reservable for evening group events and the restrooms will be renovated. Alternate uses will be considered for this structure which will provide a public benefit and does not significantly impact the historic character of the building or the limited parking availability. The seawall and retaining walls will be repaired to reduce further deterioration and erosion.

Action Step 2 – Improve Nature Center Area

In lieu of creating a new structure the existing Nature Center building will be reused and expanded to support the enhanced Nature Center functions and programs.

The boardwalk and nature trail will be reconstructed and repaired in place to reduce disturbance.

A small bioretention basin will be constructed to provide natural filtration of storm water runoff from the adjacent parking field and nature interpretation opportunities for the nature center.

A new comfort station will be constructed, which will serve Rockland Lake Trail users, Nature Center users and playground users. This new comfort station will be available for use year round, replacing the winter function of the Parking Lot 6 comfort station. See Figure 12 of the EIS for more information.

Action Step 3 – Improve Maintenance Areas

- North Maintenance Area - The heated workshop area will be expanded to improve year round operation. A small unheated secure storage area will be constructed to store mowers. Unheated secure storage for maintenance equipment will also be expanded in the tennis court area reusing the concrete pad.
- South Maintenance Area - The area will be used only during the main operating season. The small heated carpentry workshop area is relocated to the North Maintenance Area to improve and consolidate park operations. This area will be used for unheated storage in the winter.

Action Step 4- Improve Signage

A signage plan that outlines signage standards will be developed for the park complex to improve patron orientation, direction and provide consistency within the parks.

Action Step 5 – Improve Roadways

Deteriorated portions of Knickerbocker Road will be improved. Knickerbocker Road will be closed to vehicular traffic during winter months. This will reduce maintenance and plowing needs while

increasing winter recreational opportunities. Patrons will be directed to drive on Rockland Lake Road .

Action Step 6- Improve Utilities

- Electric – The electric service will be improved to meet current standards throughout the park. Electric lines located on utility poles will be buried where feasible to reduce the frequency of power outages. Park and Regional staff will coordinate with the local electric company.
- Water - Several buried water pipes are suspected to be leaking. These leaks will be identified and fixed.
- Wastewater – The septic holding tank located adjacent to Parking Field 1 will be sealed or replaced to eliminate ground water seeping into the septic tank.
- Telecommunications – The phone system throughout the park will be improved to meet current standards and improve safety and park operations. Park staff will coordinate with the local provider.
- Natural Gas – Park and Regional staff will investigate opportunities to connect with the adjacent natural gas supply pipeline.

GOAL 9: PARTNERSHIPS

Develop and maintain partnerships with other organizations and agencies to enhance the cultural, natural, and recreational resources.

Action Step 1 – Develop Research Partnerships

To further protect the park resources and assist OPRHP/PIPC, the master plan encourages inventory, monitoring and research activities by individuals, interest groups and institutions. Programs will be developed and implemented to monitor and measure conditions and changes within the park complex. A coordinated approach will be developed for inventories, monitoring programs and research that facilitates data exchange between OPRHP/PIPC` and outside entities.

Action Step 2 –Volunteer Partnerships

The park will continue to partner with volunteer groups for park improvement projects.

GOAL 10: EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

Enhance educational and interpretive opportunities.

Action Step 1 – Improve the Nature Center

The Nature Center will function as the base for natural resource based education and programming. Regional staff will develop a plan to reconfigure the existing structure which will improve the function of the existing space for exhibits that provide self-guided educational experiences. The plan will also include constructing a classroom/meeting room space for school groups and other group

events. Partnerships will be developed to improve staffing and expand hours of operation. The center will remain a seasonally operated facility.

The boardwalk and nature trail will be reconstructed to enhance educational opportunities. Partnership opportunities will be considered for the construction of these projects.

A nature themed playground will be constructed between the Nature Center and Parking Field 1 allowing children to experience natural elements through play. A small bioretention pond will also be constructed in this area to provide additional educational and demonstration opportunities, and to provide filtration of storm water from the parking field.

Action Step 2 – Construct a Cultural Resource Center

A Cultural Resource Center will be established in the present park manager's house located at the base of Landing Road. The Cultural Resource Center will be the base for cultural resource education and interpretation. Coordination with outside partners may be required for initial display development.

A parking lot will be constructed at the base of Landing Road to improve access to the facility and the River Trail.

Action Step 3 – Install Interpretive Panels

Educational and interpretive panels will continue to be installed throughout the park complex. As areas are improved, educational components will be included or expanded. The car top boat launch area will have improved educational information and signage concerning aquatic invasive species, describing how patrons can help prevent the spread of invasive species.

The cultural resources will be interpreted at key points throughout the park complex. Important historic structures, landscapes, and archeological resources including the former ice and quarry industries, River Park structures and sites, local Revolutionary War history, and Native American history will be interpreted as areas are improved or as funds allow.

Where feasible, new interpretive panels will have scan codes located on them allowing patrons to find additional internet based information using personal smart phones. The park will continue its partnerships with local groups to expand educational opportunities.

Action Step 4 – Improve Programming

Improvements to the educational and interpretive programming in the park will include a multi-lingual component to reach non-English speaking populations. Strategies to accomplish this task will be developed and implemented.

Relationship to Other Programs

The park staff continues to be committed to partnering with groups that are interested in furthering the mission of the park including recreation, resource protection and educational opportunities. The park staff are also interested in working with local municipal planning departments to further the park's contribution to and participation in the recreation resources of the area.

The park staff, through the regional office staff, will continue to reach out to the larger service area to encourage individuals, groups and agencies to contribute to the parks.

The park and regional office staff will continue to work with state and federal agencies, such as New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), the Army Corps of

Engineers (ACOE), the National Park Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), as well as county and regional governments.

The park staff will also continue to work with the Friends of Rockland Lake and Hook Mountain, The Master Gardeners Club, Audubon Society, Boy and Girl Scouts, the New York/New Jersey Trail Conference, Camp Venture and other groups. Additional partnerships will be developed to assist with the maintenance and improvement of parks' facilities.

Rockland Lake State Park has received funding through the National Park Service Land and Water Conservation Fund. Acceptance of this federal funding includes a requirement that mapped portions of this facility remain in public outdoor recreation use in perpetuity. Any proposals for use of these lands other than public outdoor recreation requires the prior approval of the National Park Service through a process known as "conversion." The conversion process includes a requirement that replacement lands be provided that are of at least equal fair market value and offer reasonably equivalent recreational opportunities.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) says that no qualified person with a disability may be excluded from participating in, or denied the benefits of, the programs, services, and activities provided by state and local governments because of a disability.

State Parks is in the midst of assessing its compliance with the ADA. This assessment will lead to the preparation of a statewide "Transition Plan" for accessibility requirements. Preliminary assessments are an important part of this process and have been completed for each facility.

Deficiencies will be addressed as existing facilities and structures identified in the master plan for reconstruction, renovation or rehabilitation come on line. This also applies to new projects. The designs for existing and new facilities will conform to the ADA design and development guidelines.

In addition, review of the findings from the preliminary assessment may identify ADA projects that are easily correctable and do not require detailed design. These early action projects will be addressed through existing park and regional maintenance crews. ADA deficiencies that are ranked high for correction will also be placed in this early action category.

A preliminary list of facilities that will be addressed includes;

- Boat launch
- Parking Lot 3 Restroom
- Walkway from Parking Lot 2 to Landing Road.
- North Lot Restroom
- North Pool and Bathhouse
- Cultural Resource Center
- Nature Center
- Walkway along Landing Road to the Cultural Resource Center
- Boardwalk and nature trail.
- South Recreation Area

Implementation

Timeline

The master plan sets forth OPRHP’s vision for capital improvements and operational enhancements to the park complex for the next ten to fifteen years. OPRHP/PIPC has not developed detailed cost estimates for the proposed components. Cumulatively they will cost tens of millions of dollars to implement. The pace and sequencing of recommended actions will be determined by the availability of funding, which is a function of the size of OPRHP’s and PIPC’s annual capital budgets and the need to balance investments throughout both park systems. The master plan will be reviewed annually to select projects that will be added to the park complex’s budget for implementation and to assess the progress of plan implementation.

The implementation of the master plan for the park complex is divided into three priority phases. The priority groupings described below are conceptual and subject to reorganization based on available funding for specific components in any given group.

Table 1 Priority Phases

Implementation Priorities	Description/Development Component
Immediate:	A Bird Conservation Area is designated.
Priority 1:	Repave Knickerbocker Road.
	Rehabilitate the North Pool, Park Office and Bathhouse.
	Construct a heated area for winter use, wash pad, restroom and small covered storage area at the North Maintenance Area.
	Install the Championship Course Irrigation System and dredge supply pond.
	Install the Executive Course Irrigation System and dredge supply pond.
	Stabilize the Landing Road culvert
	Reconstruct the Nyack Beach seawall and retaining wall.
	Rehabilitate Championship Course bunkers and cart path.
	Rehabilitate Executive Course bunkers and cart path.
	Construct maintenance storage area by the Championship Course.
	Prune or remove trees above the Nyack Bathhouse.
	Coordinate with volunteers to improve hiking trails.
	Partner with groups to improve interpretation.
	Construct the South Recreational Area.
Redevelop Parking Lot 4 (South Lot).	
Rockland Lake Trail and River Trail improvements.	
Priority 2:	Stabilize key River Park structures/develop plan.
	Renovate the Lot 6 comfort station.

	Develop a park-wide cultural resource plan for structures and sites.
	Construct a comfort station near the Nature Center.
	Rehabilitate the Nature Center and surrounding area.
	Construct basketball court on Parking Lot 2 and/or playground near Parking Lot 2.
	Plant shade trees and construct fee booth in picnic area 5.
	Redevelop Parking Lot 1 (North Lot).
	Construct a reservable picnic shelter near Parking Lot 3.
Priority 3:	Construct a small nature themed playground near the Nature Center.
	Remove former wastewater treatment plant and construct a covered area for roadway salt and sand storage.
	Identify a new Park Manager's residence.
	Convert Park Manager's house into a Cultural Resource Center.
	Construct trail from Parking Lot 2 to Landing Road.
	Construct trail from Landing Road to the Cultural Resource Center.
	Construct the Landing Road Parking Lot.
Ongoing:	Implement natural resource management strategies for invasive species, wildlife, storm water, wetlands, streams, the Hudson River and scenic vistas.