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News

Ironman To Close Southbound PIP For A Day

Palisades Interstate Parkway Commission and race officials say the triathlon on Aug. 11 will not affect the PIP's northbound lanes, but that southbound lanes will close from 2 a.m. to 8 p.m. on race day.

By [Erik Wander](#) [Email the author](#) July 23, 2012

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The 2012 Ironman U.S. Championship, scheduled to take place Aug. 11 in New York City and parts of New Jersey for the first time in its history, will put Fort Lee in the national spotlight and be a boon to local businesses, with thousands of spectators expected to descend upon the borough, according to local volunteer coordinators with the Fort Lee Regional Chamber of Commerce.

The race is also going to shutdown the southbound lanes of the Palisades Interstate Parkway (PIP) from exit 18 in Bear Mountain State Park to the George Washington Bridge for most of the day, according to the Palisades Interstate Park Commission.

That's because the PIP is being used for the 112-mile cycling portion of the triathlon, which also includes a 2.4-mile swim in the Hudson River ending at Ross Dock in the Fort Lee section of the Palisades Interstate Park and a 26.2-mile from the New Jersey section of the park, going over the GWB and ending in Riverside Park in New York City.

The Ironman organization proudly touts the PIP closure as "unprecedented" on its [website](#), which also says the cycling portion of the race spans "the scenic cliffs of the Palisades ... heading north into New York State."

Cyclists will leave the Ross Dock transition area, heading south to Hudson Terrace, and then riding a mile north to the southbound access to the PIP. The athletes will then complete two "rolling" 27-mile loops from Fort Lee north on the PIP and back, travelling counter-clockwise in the Parkway's southbound lanes, and finally exiting back onto Hudson Terrace and returning to Ross Dock, where they will make the transition to the running portion of the triathlon, according to race organizers.

The Ironman organization is [paying the state \\$250,000](#) to use the PIP, The Journal News reported, citing a spokesman for the state Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.

Dan Keefe agreed that the closure is "unprecedented in 25 years at least," according to that report, which also said the Palisades Interstate Park Commission will use the quarter million dollars to help offset lost revenue caused by the event.

The lane closure will affect the southbound PIP lanes only and will last from 2 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Aug. 11. The Parkway's northbound lanes will not be impacted, according to the Palisades Interstate Park Commission.

Fort Lee Regional Chamber of Commerce board president Kenneth Bruno, speaking at a [volunteer rally](#) Thursday in Englewood Cliffs, estimated that the event could bring as many as 15,000 people to Fort Lee, including spectators, friends and family members of the athletes, although he note that was a "very rough" estimate.

Bruno was confident in calling the nationally televised event "great exposure" for the borough however.

"They're going to have cameras everywhere so you're going to be televised," he told Patch. "There's going to be unbelievable press, unbelievable coverage, and all the local businesses in that area are going to flourish if they open on that day."

He added, "Fort Lee is going to be all over the world for that one day."

"It's going to bring the community a lot of revenue," Bruno said. "It's going to be a great event."

Patch will have more on how the event is expected to affect local roadways as race day approaches.

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