

### “Flat Rock Brook”

This stream flows downhill over the eroded flat surfaces of the diabase basalt forming the Palisades. It drains into Crystal Lake and Overpeck Creek as part of the Hackensack River watershed.

Flat Rock Brook flows down from the top of the Palisades beginning in Englewood Cliffs. The brook empties into Crystal Lake and now continues in culverts beneath Interstate 80/95 to Overpeck Creek, a tributary of the Hackensack River watershed.

The “flat rocks” are diabase basalts at the top of an igneous intrusion, the Palisades Sill. (See “The Seven Sisters” for more information.) They formed underground about 200 million years ago. The diabase was more resistant to erosion than the overlying sedimentary rocks. Over time, the overlying rocks were removed by erosion, exposing the flat diabase surface. Earthquakes tilted the region, producing the westward slope characterizing the East Hill section of Englewood down to Grand Ave. and Engle St. On the eastern side of the sill, erosion and rock falls created the cliffs of the Palisades along the Hudson River.

This 1880s map shows part of Flat Rock Brook. The pond labelled “Vanderbeck’s Mill Pond” was created by damming the brook in 1876. It was later known as Macfadden’s Pond.



<https://www.flatrockbrook.org/about-us/history>

In the 1970s, the Englewood Nature Association (now the Flat Rock Brook Nature Association) was established to preserve the area, resulting in establishment of the Flat Rock Brook Nature Center. Green Acres funding from the State of New Jersey was important in beginning this project. In the 1980s, it was merged with Allison Park, creating the 150-acre preserve in existence today.



More information

[Dustin Griffin "The History of the Flat Rock Brook Watershed"](#)

[Flat Rock Brook Nature Association "Our History"](#)

[Michael J Passow "Brief Introduction to the Geology of Flat Rock Brook Nature Center and Bergen County"](#)