

PCT Northern Terminus – Illegal southbound Entry from Canada

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

December 7, 2010

1. Is there a way to legally enter into the United States from Manning Park, Canada at the northern terminus of the PCT?

No. There is no Port of Entry at the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail northern terminus.

US Customs and Border Protection (CBP) requires that U.S. citizens returning home from Canada by land or sea present one of the travel documents listed at a US Port of Entry: U.S. Passport, U.S. Passport Card, Enhanced Driver's License (EDL), Trusted Traveler Program Cards. There are 327 official ports of entry in the United States and 15 Preclearance offices in Canada and the Caribbean.

Port personnel are the face at the border for most cargo and visitors entering the United States. Here CBP enforces the import and export laws and regulations of the U.S. federal government and conducts immigration policy and programs. Ports also perform agriculture inspections to protect the USA from potential carriers of animal and plant pests or diseases that could cause serious damage to America's crops, livestock, pets, and the environment.

2. Is there a legal method for northbound hikers to enter into Canada from the United States?

Yes. The legal method to enter Canada is to submit no more than three months before departure an Application for Entry to Canada via the Pacific Crest Trail to: Canada Border Services Agency Pacific Crest Trail Processing Centre #28 – 176th Street, Surrey, B.C. V3S 9R9. Application is found at www.pcta.org/pdf/Canada-Entry-Form.pdf.

3. Why is this regulation for southbound entry being enforced now?

The Pacific Crest Trail Association and United States Forest Service were asked in June 2010 by the Spokane Sector of Border Patrol to notify PCTA members and users of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail of the following regulations:

There are three statutes in particular that hikers should keep in mind when planning their itineraries:

- **19 U.S.C. Section 1459** – States that individuals arriving other than by conveyance must enter the United States only at a border crossing point...and present themselves and all articles accompanying them for inspection.
- **8 U.S.C. Section 1225(a)(3)** - States that every applicant for admission to, or transit through, the United States, must be inspected by immigration officers.
- **8 C.F.R. Section 235.1(a)** - States that application to lawfully enter the United States shall be made in person to an immigration officer at a U.S. Port of Entry when the port is open for inspection.

Though their intentions may be harmless, people who cross the international border at places other than a designated Port of Entry risk a criminal penalty of up to one year in jail and a \$5,000 fine (19 U.S.C. 1459(g)) and a civil penalty of \$5,000 for the first violation and \$10,000 for each subsequent violation (19 U.S.C. 1459(f)).

4. What are the United States Forest Service and the Pacific Crest Trail Association doing to help facilitate hikers travel southbound into the United States?

The US Forest Service and Pacific Crest Trail Association have provided information to US Customs and Border Protection on the importance of the Canadian (southbound) access to the northern terminus and requested on October 4, 2010 to work together to find a legal resolution that provides the appropriate border security and facilitates travel.

5. How do I submit a question, complaint or comment to Customs and Border Protection?

See the website: <https://help.cbp.gov/app/ask>

You may submit a question, complaint or comment to a Public Information Officer by clicking on the "Ask a Question" tab. First you will type in your email address and question. Then you must pick a topic, subtopic, customer group and subgroup. Finally, after you have typed your question, comment or complaint, click the "Submit Question" button (for complaints or comments, just select that topic from the list). Important note: your question has not been submitted yet, please continue. Next you need to click the "Create an Account" button. On the next screen click the "Finish Submitting Question" button. When your question is successfully submitted you will get a reference number. If this is an urgent matter, please contact us by phone.

If you would prefer speaking to a live person, you may call the CBP INFO Center and speak with a Public Information Officer at (703) 526-4200 or 1-877-CBP-5511 (227-5511).

6. What can I do to legally hike southbound?

Currently the only legal way to thru-hike southbound would be to access the PCT within the United States, hike north to the terminus, and then backtrack, remaining in the United State the whole time. Harts Pass (30 miles south of the terminus) is the closest US road access point to the northern terminus.