



Friends of Thacher State Park

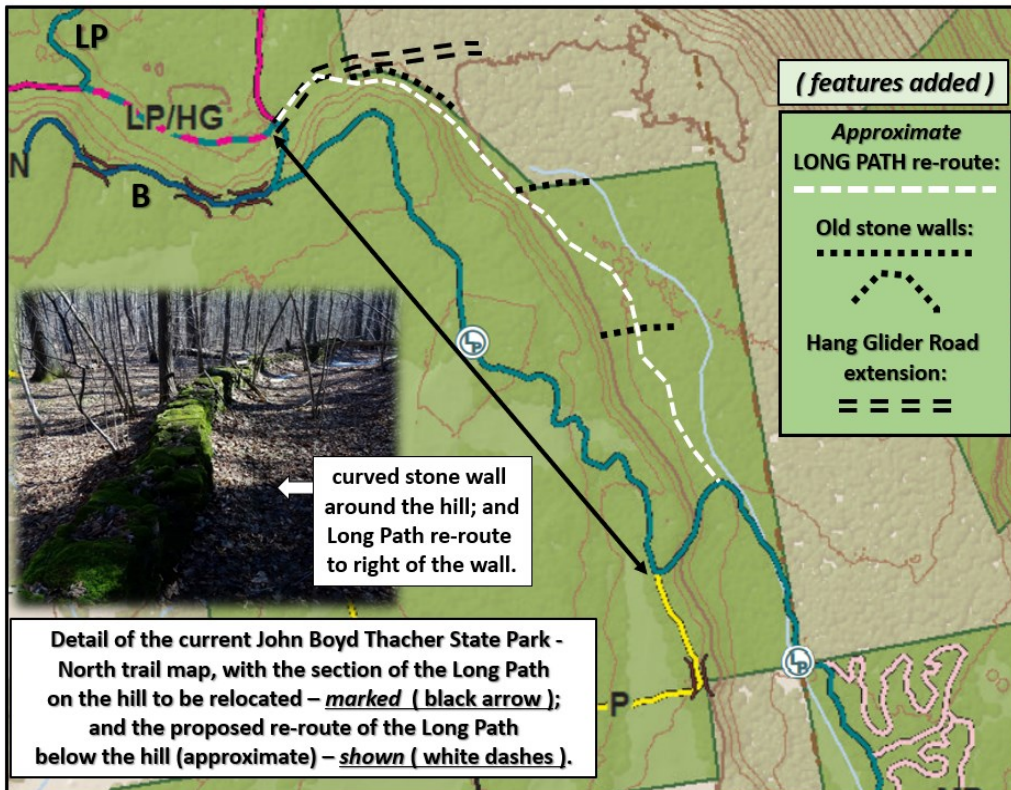
Emma T Thacher Nature Center • 87 Nature Center Way • Voorheesville, NY 12186
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Proposed Re-Route of the LONG PATH in Thacher Park North

In March 2022 it was proposed that a section of the Long Path in Thacher Park North be re-routed. The area is past Hailes Cave – where the trail goes on an old road up a hill. There, it turns right, and in ¼ mile goes back down the hill to Hang Glider Road. That section is often wet and even under water from rain or snowmelt. Also, exposed tree roots and uneven ground make the trail difficult to maintain.

The idea was to re-route the trail below the hill instead. We had never been in that area since it's a mix of private and state lands. I have a property map I received from Fred Schroeder long ago that shows the area in question. It actually shows two old stone walls where the property line runs or turns at angle points. It's undated, but is probably from the 1980's.

My first trip there was in late March 2022. I hiked the yellow trail from the Quarry – to Hang Glider Road – and down to its turning point. Then - ahead - into unknown territory! In a short time I saw the curved stone wall on the right beginning to circle around the base of the hill. There was a rusty rebar with a yellow survey cap that had the inscription "R D SNYDER, MIDDLEBURGH" in the top center of the wall. That was also where the property line crossed the woods road to the left with private land ahead. I followed the right side of the wall, and soon found a second rebar with cap – again in top center of the wall. I followed the wall to its end but the last part was straight. I noted that there was 4 to 6 feet of level ground behind the wall for a trail re-route, since the property line was the center of the stone wall! With enough for one day, I returned to the Quarry.



On the second trip in early April with Bonnie, we began at Hailes Cave and followed the Long Path to the hill, and then continued. In a while, we found a stone wall extending out from the hill but only for a few hundred feet where it ended! We noted mostly open woods, with only a couple areas of underbrush. Also, there were two "drainage" areas coming from the hill that might require bridging. After awhile, we came upon a second stone wall, and there in the top center, was another rebar with a yellow cap. This marked an angle point in the property line coming in from the right. About 20' to the left was a wide break in the wall, the site of an old farm, or field access road.

We continued on (for over 700') to the end of the stone wall - where I had been on my first trip. The map showed two "points on line" (rebars) set between the two stone walls. But with no known distances, we didn't find them that day. We then began the return hike to Hailes Cave.

From the Hailes Cave end, state land gradually widens out for ¼ mile - to the far right of the second stone wall. Then it turns left for 820' to the angle point (it's another 100' to the base of the hill). From the rebar (going ahead for over 700'), the state land narrows down from 100' to just the 4' to 6' width behind the curved stone wall near Hang Glider Road. We were concerned that in just over 700' that line should be marked to ensure the trail re-route stayed on state land!

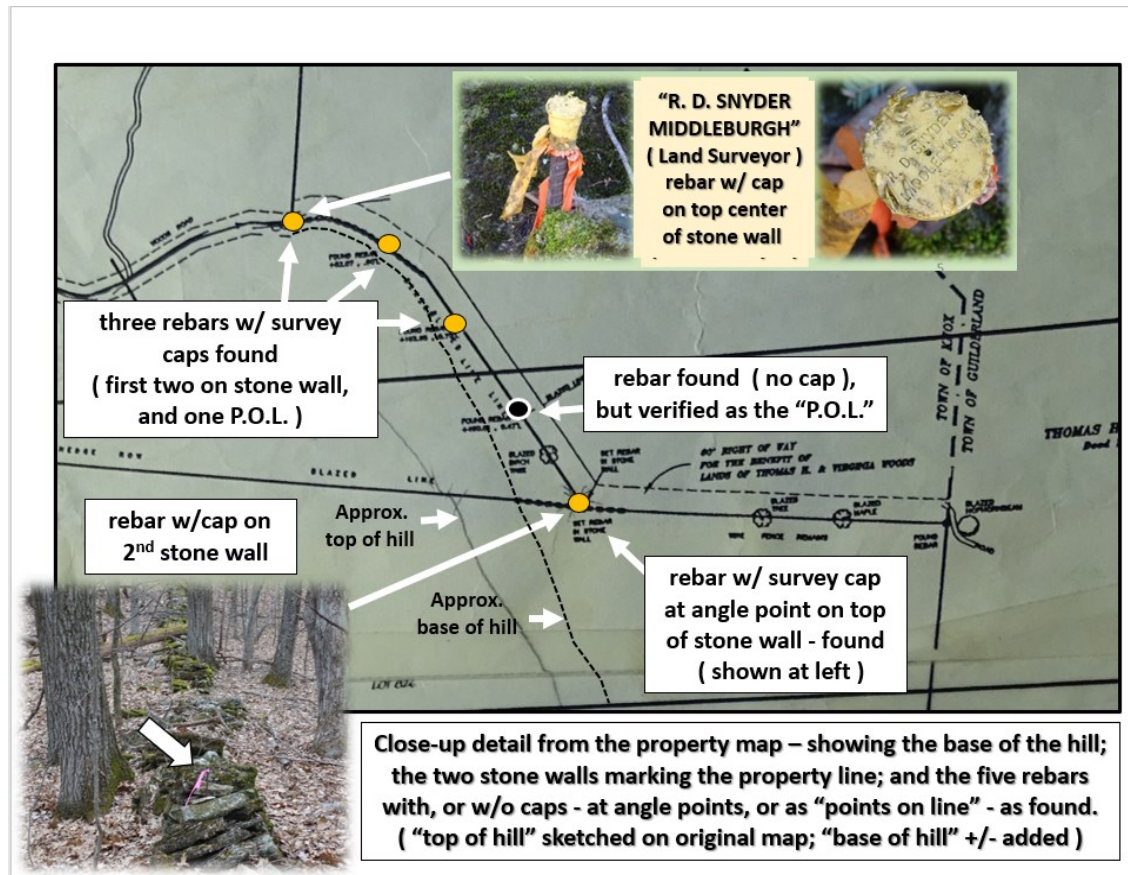
Later in the spring, we called the survey office of R.D. Snyder in Middleburgh. His son and daughter (both licensed Land Surveyors) invited us down. They provided us with copies of two survey maps their father did in 1985 and 1993 showing the area in question, and with distances marked between the two stone walls, and "points on line (P.O.L.)" We thanked them! But with summer's activities, etc., we didn't get back to the project until early October 2022.

Going in again from Hailes Cave to the stone wall's "angle point" rebar we followed an approximate angle forward, and with careful measuring (and with some luck) we found the two rebars (P.O.L.'s) and checked the distances between them and the stone walls. All checked out OK! A lathe with flagging was placed by both P.O.L. rebars and flagging set at about 100' intervals on small trees or branches in the 738.24' between the stone walls.

We were now satisfied that the N.Y. State / private land boundary was properly marked, and the proposed Long Path re-route could easily stay on State land. (Note - one P.O.L. rebar was missing its yellow surveyor's cap and three had the caps chewed down by rodents (perhaps porcupines) so only the first one had the surveyor's inscriptions intact - lucky for us!)

In late October we joined Assistant Park Manager Carley Kiernan and flagged a proposed route for the Long Path from past Hailes Cave to Hang Glider Road. On the return, GPS coordinates were recorded at way-points. Of course, the proposed re-route will have to be cleared with Long Path North, the New York New Jersey Trail Conference, and N.Y. OPRHP trail representatives. But the preliminary field work for the project has been successfully accomplished!

- by Jim & Bonnie Schaller, and Carley Kiernan



Friends of Thacher Park Meeting Dates for 2023

Meeting dates are Wednesdays, January 11, March 8, May 10, July 12, September 13, and November 8.

7:00 pm at Thacher Visitor Center. Come join us!

(Mask guidelines will follow CDC recommendations)

UPDATE FROM THE PARK

Hey folks, thank you for another wonderful year at Thacher State Park. We saw the addition of three new, but exceptionally experienced staff join our team that have integrated well. Carley Kiernan is our new Assistant Park Manager. She brings a wealth of park, trail and partnership knowledge from Scenic Hudson. Thacher's environmental education team (still missing a member but we're working on it!) is now led by Rebecca Schneider and her incredible creative, organized approach to programming at all of the state park facilities on the escarpment. Finally, Michael Nardacci was chosen for the seasonal Natural Heritage Fund position, sponsored by the Shido Endowment. His interactions and programs with the public expanded their geological knowledge of one of the richest fossil bearing regions in the United States, well in line with the wishes of the Shidos.

We saw some projects finish up with partners, the capital bureau and park staff. The Wastewater System Improvements at Thacher have concluded after a lengthy contract period. The park and its comfort stations are all on a septic system finally. Park staff cut more than 700 dead Ash trees affected by the Emerald Ash Borer at Thompson's Lake for the safety of patrons. Hazardous tree work is being completed along Route 157 in partnership with the New York State Department of Transportation, a partnership we hope continues in the future to the aid of both agencies. Park staff also spread over 575 tons of beach sand at Thompson's Lake to maintain current levels at the beach. A storybook trail was installed at the Nature Center Trails with the help of a local library. Finally, the Regional Trails Manager was able to lead regional and parks staff in stone shaping throughout the summer, leading to transportation of the stones, via crane, to the Indian Ladder Trail for placement in 2023. The accomplishments and dedication of staff continue to move agency and park goals forward.

As for projects in discussion or in progress, the Capital Bureau has found it necessary to finish the electrical upgrades started in 2017, and a new wastewater system is being constructed at Thompson's Lake. Both improvements will make the park more resilient and require less labor to maintain. The wastewater improvements at Thompson's Lake will also mean the treatment plant at Thacher can finally be decommissioned after decades of use. Expected completion dates of both projects are May 2023.

Internal park projects that remain include assessing trail needs, rerouting the Long Path and the Fred Schroeder Trail for more sustainable and manageable trail use. Carley continues working with the Regional Trails Manager and Bonnie and Jim Schaller on these priorities. Upon completion we expect to have renaturalized almost a mile of trails and increased the quality and sustainability of the portions that remain.

With the influx of capital funding that NYS Parks has finally received, we expect more projects to be underway in future years. Already, there is survey and scoping work at Hop Field and Greenhouse for future improvements. Additionally, the New York State Parks Centennial is in 2024 and we are actively looking for projects with partners that increase accessibility of our sites. Finally, the Emma Treadwell Nature Center will be turning 25 before we know it and we are vigilant for opportunities to expand and increase our outreach to the public.

As always, thank you for your efforts in helping to make Thacher what it is today. Friends' Groups are integral for the future of your parks and we cannot show enough gratitude for your service to these public lands.

- by William Hein, Park Manager



The Board of Friends of Thacher wishes you a happy 2023 and we hope to see you all back in the park next year!



A big Thank-you to our members and Hannaford shoppers for supporting the Community Hannaford Bags Program in Voorheesville in November. Friends of Thacher Park will receive \$25.00 because of your generosity!

Check for updates at www.friendsofthacherpark.org

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As always, call (518) 872-0800 or (518) 872-1237 to verify activity times and dates.

Please feel free to call board members with questions or suggestions.

Many thanks to Jim and Bonnie Schaller, William Hein, and Carley Kiernan for their contributions to this newsletter.—Christine Gervasi (Editor)

**Friends of Thacher Park
c/o Emma Treadwell Thacher Nature Center
87 Nature Center Way
Voorheesville, New York 12186-2601**



<https://etc.usf.edu/clipart/>

Wednesday, January 11, 2023

Next:

Board Meeting

7:00 pm at Thacher Visitor Center (masks may be required)

Green Thumb Program at the Park

John Boyd Thacher State Park is pleased to announce a new partnership with the Green Thumb Program starting in the Spring of 2023. The Green Thumb Program, located in Albany, provides meaningful and fulfilling work for senior citizens who play a vital role in maintaining and preserving the natural and man-made resources of New York State. Enacted by the State Legislature in 1974, the Green Thumb Program continues its successful operation of employing seniors serving to beautify our surroundings.

Green Thumb workers augment the efforts of full-time state employees wherever the state needs their valuable services. You will find them raking leaves and cutting the grass at DEC campgrounds. They plant flowers and perform general beautification activities along the rest areas of the Adirondack Northway. They enhance the grounds of various department and agency buildings by planting flower beds and trimming shrubs and bushes. They remove unsightly litter from walkways and perform some office work for selected state agencies. Green Thumbers take pride in the performance of their assigned tasks with minimal physical exertion. Their efforts make a difference in the groomed appearance of New York State's facilities.

By utilizing the varied talents of our senior citizens to supplement the ongoing efforts of full-time state employees, Green Thumb maximizes the expenditure of state tax dollars. Just look at state facilities where Green Thumbers work. Their cleaner and neater appearance is a mark of Green Thumb pride, a testimony to the program's success, and our seniors' talents. Green Thumb stands ready to provide senior citizens who want to work with an opportunity to continue to utilize their talents and skills. Their contributions to our state are present every day at Green Thumb job sites throughout the Empire State.

To join the ranks of Green Thumbers one must be at least fifty-five years old and fall within the income guidelines provided within state law. Income levels may not exceed \$33,975.00 for an individual or \$73,240.00 for a couple. Green Thumb work is part-time and the rate of pay is New York State minimum wage. On average, Green Thumbers work three days a week. Thacher will have openings for Green Thumb employees during the spring/summer season. You can contact a Green Thumb Field Representative for more information at 518-435-2471 or email albany@nygreenthumb.org for more information.

- by Carley Kiernan



As always, you can find a color version of the newsletter at www.friendsofthacherpark.org