



# Geological Natural History of Burr Pond State Park, Torrington



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## INTRODUCTION

This project is the beginning of a geological inventory of glacial boulders found within the property boundaries of the Connecticut Department of Energy & Environmental Protection (CT DEEP) Burr Pond State Park in Torrington, CT. The product created for this project is an informational brochure that will be distributed to park visitors.

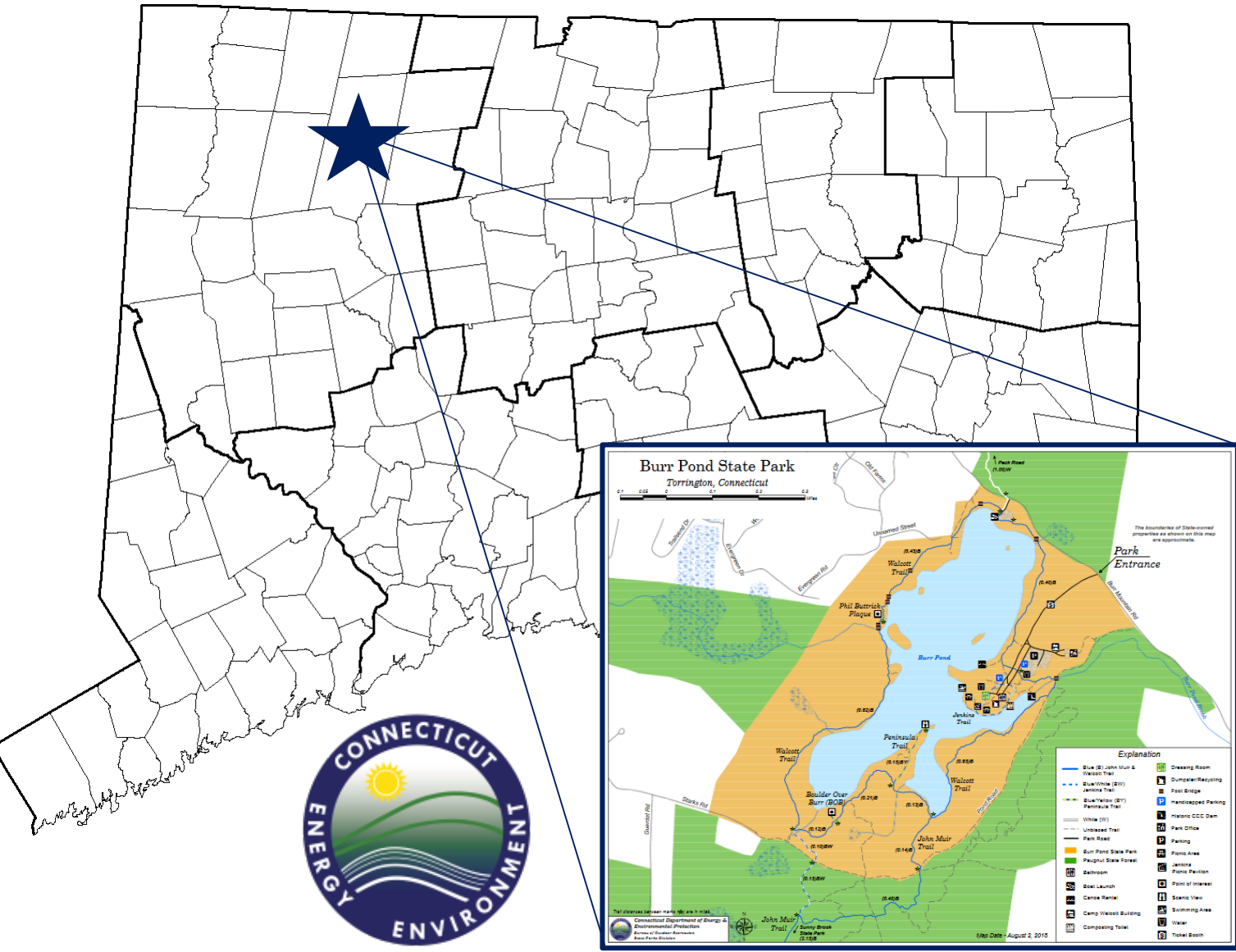
With increasing disconnect to the natural environment by many people, this project is intended to capture the imagination and spirit of exploration along two well-established trails within the park. The Walcott Trail loop around Burr Pond was created by the Civilian Conservation Corps in 1936 and the shorter Jenkins Trail picnic area loop was established in 2016. These trails were the main focus for the glacial boulder study area.



**Fig 1-4.** Distinctive boulders (such as “Volcano Rock”) can be found all throughout the terminal moraine at Burr Pond State Park in Torrington, CT. A glacial end moraine consists of a ridge-like accumulation of glacial debris that is pushed forward and dumped at the outermost edge of the ice advance. The ridge-like formation at the southern end of the flooded valley (now Burr Pond) has configured the shape of the pond from the lateral moraines in this area.



**Fig 5.** Burr Pond State Park is a 438-acre park adjacent to Paugnut State Forest in Torrington, CT. The park surrounds Burr Pond, an 85-acre, man-made waterbody with facilities for swimming, boating, and fishing. Map credit: CT DEEP

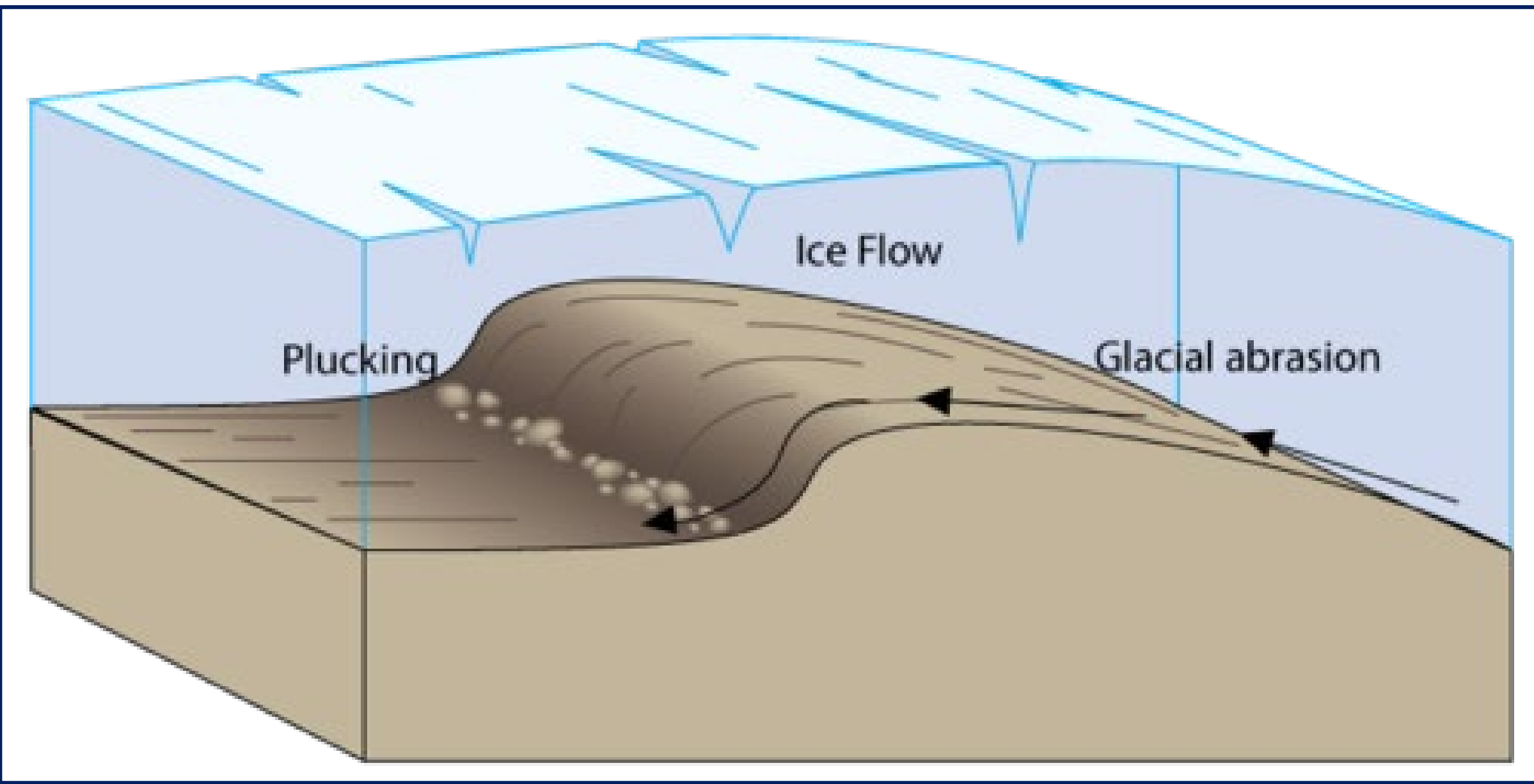


## MATERIALS AND METHODS

- Steps taken for the inventory involved multiple visits to Burr Pond State Park
- The original hike in summer 2019 was to determine what would include the study site
- The Track-Kit map (seen below) was created in fall 2019, documenting each distinguishable boulder to be included
- During the winter, the draft “*Burr Pond Rocks!*” brochure was started. It is anticipated to be completed in time for the 2020 Memorial Day weekend.



**Fig 6-9.** The Track-Kit GPS mapping app was used to create the map for the *Burr Pond Rocks!* brochure. The Walcott Trail and the Jenkins Trail at the park were inventoried using Track-Kit for the glacial boulders found along the trails. Once the boulders of interest were determined, unofficial names were given (such as “Elephant Rock”) to describe what participants should be looking for.



**Fig 10.** Glacial Erosion is a process defined as the carving and shaping of the land beneath a moving glacier. “Plucking” is the erosion and transport of large rocks that stick and get relocated (carried) by a glacier.

## PROJECT OUTCOMES

This project will spearhead the creation of wayside exhibit interpretive signage for the park regarding the local natural environment.

We expect park visitors will be interested in learning more about the geological history through this project, and hope to inspire the next generation of conservationists to appreciate this protected open space.



**Fig 11-13.** In the Summer of 2017, one glacial boulder of special interest along the Frederic C. Walcott Blue-Blazed Trail had a community naming event. Eighty-seven suggested names were submitted and a panel of four representatives determined the most popular name. This suggested name was submitted to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) for approval and future inclusion on the topographical map for the Torrington Quadrant.

## CONCLUSION

This exercise is intended to raise awareness of the natural history of the landscape around us. This specific project is for visitors to Burr Pond State Park to learn more about the glacial history of the site and observe the influence of geology for shaping the use and experience of these resources.

## REFERENCES

All photos were taken by Andrew Dombroski and Lance Hansen. Images such as the volcano and elephant were found from Google Images on the internet. The Glacial Erosion diagram and description was provided by retired CT DEEP Geologist, Ralph Lewis. The mapping images were created by the Track-Kit app.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



This experience has helped me to learn more about the natural resources found in my hometown. I would like to thank UConn NRCA faculty members, Laura Cisneros, Nicole Freidenfelds and Amy Cabaniss.