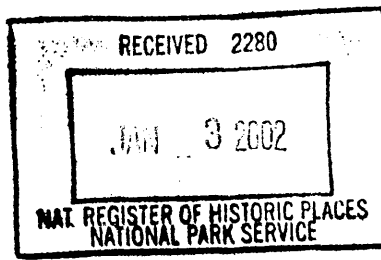


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Thetford Hill State Park

other names/site number \_\_\_\_\_

2. Location

street & number 622 Academy Road N/A not for publication

city or town Thetford N/A vicinity

state Vermont code VT county Orange code 017 zip code 05074

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Suzanne C. Jamelo National Register Specialist, 12-28-01  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Vermont State Historic Preservation Office  
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:)

Edson H. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 2/14/02

Thetford Hill State Park  
Name of Property

Orange County, Vermont  
County and State

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	6	buildings
6	1	sites
6		structures
15		objects
29	7	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Historic Park Landscapes in National & State Parks 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture/Outdoor Recreation

Landscape/Park

Landscape/Forest

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Recreation & Culture/Outdoor Recreation

Landscape/Park

Landscape/Forest

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Other: CCC State Park

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation concrete

walls wood

roof shingle

other wood

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

Thetford Hill State Park in Thetford, Vermont, is one of Vermont's fifty-one State Parks administered by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation in order to foster recreational activity in a scenic, natural capacity. Thetford Hill is located in Orange County, Vermont, in the Connecticut River Valley, across the river from the state of New Hampshire. Accessed by VT Route 113, the park lies just off I-91, a major thoroughfare of the region. Thetford Hill State Park was opened in 1932, offering scenic views and solitude in nature. A unit of the Civilian Conservation Corps, housed in nearby North Thetford from 1935-37, constructed the park. The 177-acre main block, which comprises the State Park, is part of Thetford Hill State Forest, of which the remaining 85-acre Sanborn block is non-contiguous, located across Vermont Route 113 just outside the village center. Topography and scenic views inspired the park to be built according to specific geographical landscape features, such as scenic overlooks, rolling hills and vegetation. Little encroachment by humankind has resulted in the illusion that nature has not been disturbed. Architectural elements are sympathetic to the environment. The use of a vernacular building tradition, replete with local materials, craftsmanship, and harmony with nature, remains an enduring legacy. These ideals, adopted by the CCC, led to the enhanced construction of scenic vista, a camping area with fireplaces, a toilet facility, parking lots and a picnic shelter in Thetford Hill State Park, using rough-hewn timber and gathered undressed field-granite. Thetford Hill State Park retains its integrity through location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.

In the 1920s, prior to state acquisition, Dwight Goddard owned the property. The landscape, which was fairly open, was planted with 20,000 softwood seedlings. Species included white pine, red pine, Norway spruce, white spruce, and European larch. In 1934, the state planted an additional 102,000 seedlings throughout the park. Red and white pine plantations now make up 45% of the vegetation cover. Moderately sloping to flat terrain with elevations ranging from 800 to 1,100 feet and relatively well-drained soil contribute to favorable growing and recreational conditions. A deer wintering area is also located within the State Park. The hemlock stands, which make up one-fourth of the forest type, provide ample cover from winter snow. Additionally these stands are comprised of northern hardwoods, with sugar and red maple being the most common.

Thetford Hill State Park was originally planned on a three-pronged, "y"-shaped axis, with the tail of the "y" being the 0.6 mile main road and the top prongs leading to the Sunset Hill scenic picnic area and the two CCC constructed parking areas. Topographical features of the landscape dictated this configuration, where the picnic vista would be the crowning feature of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

the park. Although still serving in its original function, additional recreational facilities have been added over time, beginning in the 1960s. Beyond the entrance gate (#1), the CCC-constructed main road (#2), now graveled, serves as the main access artery and leads northeasterly into the park along a straight path through a wooded landscape. A non-contributing contact station/ranger's quarters building (#3) is located midway down the road. Continuing up the road there is a network of award-winning trails (#4) utilized by hikers, recreational skiers, and snowmobilers who are connecting to private lands during the winter.

The right fork in the road leads up to a scenic vista on a grassy knoll known as Sunset Hill (#5), which attracted visitors even before the creation of the State Park. This area features an historic CCC picnic shelter (#6) and a non-contributing latrine (#7), with scenic views to the east, west, and south of the mountains and surrounding forest lands, comprised of hardwood saplings and pine plantations. There are numerous picnic tables (#28) and barbecue grills (#26). The middle road diversion leads to a clearing, situated to the north of the scenic picnic area that serves as the visitor's parking area (#8). Across from the road to Sunset Hill is a third drive leads to a lower area storage lot, which can also be used for parking (#11).

Adjacent to this area, to the northwest, is a wooded area with a CCC constructed camping area that is no longer utilized. The remains consist of fourteen scattered stone fireplaces (#9) and the ghost lines of trails and clearings. A CCC-built toilet facility (#12) is located on a trail in the woods between the storage area/lower parking lot (#11) and the main road (#2). Along this trail is also where a reservoir was located during the CCC era. The other additional road, which was paved with crushed asphalt in the late 1990s, is situated across from the contact station/ranger's quarters (#3). It leads westerly past a woodshed (#14) and park bulletin board (#30) before winding through the woods and over a scenic brook to a playground clearing (#15) that has a metal swing-set. The playground area is delineated from the road by a split-rail fence (#16). Two newly built lean-tos (#17) with new stone fireplaces (#23) are situated just beyond this area in a wooded alcove. Further, toward the southeast, the road leads past a dry laid stone wall (#18) to a camping loop (#19) constructed in the 1960s. The area is located in a secluded wooded area with fourteen tent/trailer sites (#19) each with a brick fireplace (#24) and picnic table (#28). A handicapped accessible bathhouse with showers (#20) is located centrally among the fourteen camping sites. Access to water (#22) and sanitary dumping areas (#21) are located here as well.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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## Thetford Hill State Park Structures and Features:

### 1. Entrance gate, circa 1930.

Stepped stone posts, which measure approximately three feet high, support a simple, timbered, swinging arm gate. The CCC constructed the pillars, but the current gate was added for furthered utilitarian purposes. Simplistic in design, yet functional, the wooden-armed gate echoes the sentiment that nature should be at the pinnacle of the park's existence. As Thetford Hill is a wintering habitat, for animals such as deer, the gate is a provision allowing animals to freely enter the wooded park area, while alerting visitors of the park's closure. Random stones lead the short distance from Vermont Route 113 to the park gate on one side of the road, while a wooden barrier lines the other side.

### 2. Main road, circa 1930s.

The CCC constructed road, now graveled, serves as the main access artery of the park. The 0.6-mile road leads into the park along a straight path through the park's wooded landscape. The wide road runs the length of the park's built area and was designed with the automobile in mind. The landscape was at the forefront of design philosophy. This is evident as the road is constructed in a way that the built environment is not visible until after a feel for the park's environment can be gleaned.

### 3. Contact Station/Ranger's quarters, circa 1960s, addition 1980s.

A small, three bay by two bay, wooden, two-bedroom cottage building houses the administrative duties for the park and living quarters for the seasonally employed park ranger. Constructed in a cabin-like style, the building's appearance lends itself well to the camping quality of the park. Centrally located, along the main road, the building is accessed easily by automobiles entering the park and by foot throughout the rest of the park. The building is clad in wooden vertical board sheathing with a water table that is located about a foot above the concrete foundation. The gable peak has horizontal boards and a small, trapezoidal slatted ventilation frame that follows the roofline at the peak. An overhanging gabled roof tops the building and is sheathed in asphalt shingles. The original block was altered in the late 1980s to provide a small office space/contact station and porch on the front of the building, which accounts for the irregular roof overhang on the front façade. The front façade consists of this small corner porch, which has a door with a wooden screen leading to the interior of the ranger's quarters and a window to the office, with a small wooden counter, which serves as an administration booth. A simple wooden balustrade adorns the front of the small porch. To the right, a small window with spaced plank shutters is present in the projecting office, with a larger version of the same style flanking it further to the right along the main façade. The

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

northwest side has the entrance to the porch with an additional two bays of equally spaced window fenestration that are centrally located in the sidewall, which also have spaced plank shutters and echoing the style of the windows on the front façade. The southeast side contains no fenestration, but has a ground level shed attached to the left side. The rear façade has three evenly spaced windows, which are similar to the other windows on the building. The left bay has a larger window than the remaining two bays. A small pipe is located in the roof that serves as the flue. The front yard contains a modern flagpole (#27), while the back yard has a metal clothesline support. The northwest side yard has a small graveled parking area and a picnic area with a table (#28), a stone fireplace (#23), and a metal barbecue grill (#26). Non-contributing due to age.

#### **4. Trails, circa 1960s.**

Award winning trails are utilized by hikers, cross-country runners and skiers, as well as by snowmobilers. The trails meander through the wooded landscape. Nearby Thetford Academy uses the trails on a regular basis. Non-contributing due to age.

#### **5. Overlook, circa 1900s.**

A scenic vista situated on a grassy knoll, known as Sunset Hill (#5), attracted visitors before the creation of the State Park. The CCC tree plantings further enhanced this area, which houses the historic picnic shelter (#6) and a non-contributing latrine (#7). The area offers spectacular views to the south, east, and west of the mountains and surrounding forestlands, comprised of hardwood saplings and pine plantations.

#### **6. Picnic Shelter, circa 1930s.**

Perched on scenic Sunset Hill, the historic CCC log picnic shelter serves as the focal point of the park. Now accessed by a road, a simple footpath originally reached the area. The picnic shelter has a pitched roof. Wooden shingles, arranged in an evenly coursed pattern, top the rectangular two by three bay hewn-log structure. The shelter is set on a concrete foundation, raised one to four inches around the border above the floor, which consists of randomly patterned large, flat slate stones, set into the concrete. The plan maximizes the scenic views of the surrounding mountains and forests, while sheltering from northerly weather with a closed in end wall. This entire north end is timbered with horizontally laid log construction, with flattened tops and bottoms, on the exterior until the gable level and measures 20 ½ feet in length. On both ends of the structure, the entire exterior roof gable wall is sheathed in hand split shingles. Although this construction material is probably original to the design, it appears the materials on the north end have been replaced in kind. The corner joints of the structure on

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 5Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

this end are stacked with extending log ends that are cut to appear as if they are somewhat saddle notched. The interior of the north end is clad in circular sawn wooden sheathing in the gable area. The wall below this reflects the exterior log timbering method.

The west façade faces the incline leading up Sunset Hill. It is three bays wide and measures 32 ½ feet in length. The northernmost bay is closed in with horizontally placed log sheathing while the remaining two bays are left open and are divided by rustic posts, which are splayed at the top for support. The southern endwall is open below the gabled roof, except for a waist level balustrade, constructed of two horizontal beams placed approximately two feet apart that stretches the length of the endwall. Three evenly spaced rustic support posts are also present. The east façade overlooks the mountains and echoes the design of the western side. Four post and beam trusses offer the main support for the structure. The two central interior trusses, with log crossies, struts and rafters, are constructed in a modified and inverted “W” Truss method of construction, while the end wall trusses are of the king-post design. There are numerous non-contributing picnic tables housed in the structure.

**7. Latrine, circa 1960s.**

A modern, one stall, shed-roofed outhouse, with a central doorway, rests on a rubble stone foundation on the top of the scenic overlook known as Sunset Hill (#5). The latrine, which was built in the 1960s, is clad in wooden plywood sheathing and has a translucent fiberglass roof, which serves as the structure’s light source. A small triangular screened ventilation window follows the roofline beneath the projecting eaves on the two sidewalls. A CCC latrine may have been on the site, but no conclusive evidence remains. Non-contributing due to age.

**8. Parking lot, circa 1930s.**

At the bottom of Sunset Hill, the middle road fork leads to a clearing, constructed by the CCC, which serves as the park’s parking lot. The parking area remains faithful to CCC park philosophies because of its natural appearance and its hidden location. The park builders understood the growing leisure time of the American population and the growing popularity of the automobile. However, the issues surrounding this, in terms of park philosophy, were non-compatible. Therefore, a balance was reached with the desire to place parking areas in unobtrusive landscaped areas, hidden from view. The parking lot is unpaved, with cut hay serving as the base.

**9. Stone Fireplaces, circa 1930s.**

Approximately fourteen CCC-constructed fireplaces are present in a remote wooden area that no longer serves in the camping capacity (#10) for which it was designed. The fireplaces are

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 6

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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about three feet high with projecting arms that are about half this height. Constructed of undressed granite fieldstone bases with flat dressed-stone granite caps, other features include an interior concrete flue and metal flue base. The condition of these structures varies from excellent to poor.

### **10. Camping site remains, circa 1930s.**

A wooded area contains a camping site that was constructed by the CCC. Although no longer in use, fireplaces (#9) are still present.

### **11. Storage Area/Parking facility, circa 1930s.**

A hidden clearing is used for storage and parking needs. At the bottom of Sunset Hill, the other side of the road fork leads to a clearing, constructed by the CCC, which serves as the park's parking lot. The parking area remains faithful to CCC park philosophies because of its natural appearance and its hidden location. The park builders understood the growing leisure time of the American population and the growing popularity of the automobile. However, the issues surrounding this, in terms of park philosophy, were non-compatible. Therefore, a balance was reached with the desire to place parking areas in unobtrusive landscaped areas, hidden from view. The parking lot is unpaved, with cut hay serving as the base. The area is adjacent to the original CCC camping site (#10) and has a trail, which leads to the CCC-constructed toilet building (#12).

### **12. Toilet Building, circa 1930s.**

The CCC constructed a small, one-story, side-gabled, rectangular toilet facility with a concrete foundation. The building is sheathed in wide horizontal ship-lapped wooden clapboards and has a hand split shingled pitched roof with a wooden ridge course that extends the length of the roof. The main façade is on the northeast side of the building, facing the forest area. A central side entrance, leading to a storage and mechanics room is constructed of rustic vertical planks, with two iron strap hinges stretching almost the entire width of the door. The door is flanked on each side by a small six-paned fixed sash wooden framed window, which provides light to the toilet areas. The end walls each have an off-center door to the toilet area. A slatted ventilation frame is located in the gable peaks. The overhanging eaves display the exposed roof rafters. The rear façade of the building is devoid of architectural features except for the clapboards and three evenly spaced ventilation frames, horizontally slatted, which are located just beneath the overhanging eave. Two, small, shed-roofed structures are adjacent to each toilet room on the ground level of the rear of the building and provide access beneath the building. The building has been out of commission since the 1960s.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 7

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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### 13. Culverts, circa 1930s.

About six small CCC constructed field stone culverts, providing drainage, are located at various locations along the main road. Horizontally laid stones create a retaining wall that holds a galvanized steel drainage pipe. A stone lintel is present above the pipe. Additional culverts have been added over time.

### 14. Woodshed, late 1980s.

A wooden woodshed built for the purpose of holding firewood for purchase by campers was erected in the late 1980s on a concrete slab foundation. The building also serves as the park's maintenance shed. The exterior is sheathed with wooden vertical boards with small, evenly spaced, open slats between them for ventilation. The structure has a corrugated metal roof that slopes further down the rear façade. Exterior, metal-track mounted sliding doors, constructed in the same slotted wooden materials as the building, provide the only access area. Non-contributing due to age.

### 15. Playground clearing, circa 1960s.

Through the woods, just beyond a scenic brook, is a small playground clearing (#15), with a metal swing-set, that is delineated from the road by a split-rail fence (#16). Non-contributing due to age.

### 16. Split-rail fence, circa 1960s.

A traditional split rail fence erected in a zigzag pattern delineates the road from the playground area. Non-contributing due to age.

### 17. Lean-tos (Two, named Birch and Pine), circa 1990.

Built circa 1990. The lean-tos are of wooden construction with gable roofs in the saltbox style and are raised off the ground by concrete footings. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The front façade of the lean-tos is open to provide access to the platformed activity area, and sheltered by the sloped roof, which is supported by a diagonal support beam that leads from the roof to the platform on each side. The lean-tos have vertical planked exterior wooden sheathing on the three closed sides. The slope of the roof and to the rear of the lean-to creates a short interior back wall. Overhanging eaves extending from the body of the structure's exterior back wall provide an external storage area for camping gear, firewood or additional supplies. The floors consist of tongue and groove planks that are nine inches wide, one and a half inches thick and eleven feet long. The interior dimensions are eleven feet deep by fourteen feet wide and the open end is seven feet high. At present, the color scheme is original, which consists of a grayish-blue interior and the exterior is a brown that is

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 8

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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harmonious with the environment. Picnic tables (#28) and non-contributing stone fireplaces (#23) are present at both lean-to sites. Non-contributing due to age.

**18. Dry-laid stone wall, circa 18<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> century.**

An historic, non-CCC-era, dry-laid stone wall leads to the camping loop. Numerous stone walls can be found throughout the forested areas as reminders that the land served as pastureland prior to its existence as a park.

**19. Camping Loop with 14 tent/trailer sites, 1964.**

A small loop of tent/ trailer sites, built in 1964, is an integral feature of the recreational philosophy of the park system. Mass camping is avoided through such small, individualized loops, which foster individualism of recreational activities and an intimate affinity to the environment. Sites consist of small, simple clearings with brick fireplaces (#24) and picnic tables (#28). Non-contributing due to age.

**20. Bathhouse, circa 1960s.**

Centrally located within the camping loop and thought to be the most necessary building in the park, the one-story, shallow-pitched roof, constructed in a modified saltbox style with the long slope facing the front, serves as the bathhouse. The building was constructed in the 1960s and provides toilet and shower facilities for the park. The building is constructed of wide, wooden vertical board siding with standing seams and is supported by a concrete foundation. The roof has asphalt shingling and the eaves are overhanging with exposed joists on all sides and the porch ceiling. The front façade faces west and has a central door, located on a small porch, that leads to the mechanical area of the facility. A small vertical, fixed, single-paned window flanks the door on the right. The porch extends the length of the building. However, porch walls mask the toilet area entrances, which are located on each end. From the front, it appears that the main block walls simply extend to the edge of the structure, as the sheathing is consistent with the rest of the building. An open area in the porch, located directly in front of the central door, serves as the only entranceway to the bathhouse. The space is flanked on either side by a small waist-high balustrade that is supported on each side by a single post on one end and the sheathed porch wall on the other. A door and a horizontal window, located at the top of the wall, are located on each end of the main façade behind the porch wall and serve the men's and women's facilities. The end walls have eight equally spaced vertical beams, which have a screen-like appearance and run the width of the porch to the building. The eaves of the endwalls have exposed rafters and project slightly more at the center, creating an irregularly shaped roof. Two trapezoidal, single paned windows are located in each gable peak, providing light to the facilities. Together with the flanking ventilation

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 9

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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slats that resemble louvered shutters, this configuration forms a combined trapezoid shape that fills the gabled end beneath the shallow roofline. Two additional skylights were added to the roof to provide additional light to the bathing areas. Non-contributing due to age.

**21. Dumping Station, circa 1960s.**

Sanitation areas are present at the camping loop. Non-contributing due to age.

**22. Water Access, circa 1960s.**

Clean water is available at the camping loop. Non-contributing due to age.

**23. Fireplaces, Stone, circa 1960s.**

Fireplaces are located throughout the park at camping and picnicking sites. The three non-contributing stone fireplaces are constructed in a semi-circular pattern of randomly stacked stones. These are located at each of the lean-tos (#17) and at the Ranger's quarters/Contact station (#3). Non-contributing due to age.

**24. Fireplaces, Brick, circa 1960s.**

Brick fireplaces were added in the 1960s and are located at each of the fourteen tent/trailer sites in the camping loop (#19). They are cube based with arms that protrude forward and have iron grills. Non-contributing due to age.

**25. CCC Commemorative Marker, circa 1960s.**

A simple wooden marker commemorates the CCC in Vermont and their contributions to Thetford Hill State Park. The marker is located near the Contact Station/Ranger's Quarters (#3) and reads "In recognition of outstanding efforts in conserving the natural resources of Vermont. CCC and Perry H. Merrill, State Forester 1930-55." Non-contributing due to age.

**26. Grills, circa 1960s.**

Approximately a dozen, simple, modern, metal barbecue grills, which have a single-tube pedestal standing two and a half feet tall, are anchored throughout the park in the camping and picnic areas. Non-contributing due to age.

**27. Flagpole, modern.**

A modern metal flagpole is located in the front yard of the Ranger's Quarters/Contact Station (#3). Non-contributing due to age.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 10

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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### **28. Picnic tables, circa 1960s.**

The CCC built wooden picnic tables, but none are left in the park. However, about 10 in the all-wood style exist. Also wood and steel combination designs are present. Non-contributing due to age.

### **29. Entrance Sign, circa 1960s.**

A simple marker, in the form of an entrance sign, designed in a compatible rustic style, was erected to mark the location of the park. The sign consists of a simple flat board, with routed type, legible lettering, and is supported by two posts, which differ in height and have chamfered tops. The base is thin, rectangular stone foundation that serves also as a planter. Non-contributing due to age.

### **30. Marker/Bulletin board, circa 1960s.**

An outdoor marker is used to post general park information. This bulletin board structure is made of wood, with a glass protection layer. A simple, gabled roof protects the structure from the weather. Non-contributing due to age.

Thetford Hill State Park  
Name of Property

Orange County, Vermont  
County and State

### 8. Statement of Significance

#### Applicable National Register Criteria

( Mark " x " in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

#### Criteria Considerations

( Mark " x " in all the boxes that apply. )

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

#### Narrative Statement of Significance

( Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets. )

#### Areas of Significance

( Enter categories from instructions )

ARCHITECTURE

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

SOCIAL HISTORY

#### Period of Significance

1933-1942

#### Significant Dates

1932-1936

#### Significant Person

( Complete if Criterion B is marked above )

N/A

#### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

#### Architect/Builder

Civilian Conservation Corps

U.S. Department of the Interior

### 9. Major Bibliographical References

#### Bibliography

( Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets. )

#### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

#### Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other .

Name of repository:

Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and

Thetford Hill State Park  
Name of Property

Orange County, Vermont  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** 177 Acres

**UTM references**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>1</u> <u>5</u> <u>7</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u> <u>5</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>2</u> <u>2</u> <u>8</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>1</u> <u>0</u>

3	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>2</u> <u>5</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>7</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
4	<u>1</u> <u>8</u>	<u>7</u> <u>2</u> <u>2</u> <u>6</u> <u>0</u> <u>0</u>	<u>4</u> <u>8</u> <u>5</u> <u>4</u> <u>4</u> <u>2</u> <u>0</u>

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name / title Jennifer J. Bunting

organization IWM Historic Preservation Department date May 12, 1999

street & number Wheeler House 442 Main Street telephone (802)656-4006

city or town Burlington state Vermont zip code 05405

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

**Additional Items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name State of Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation c/o Larry Simino

street & number 103 South Main Street, 10-South telephone (802)241-3655

city or town Waterbury state Vermont zip code 05671-0601

**Paper Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number   8   Page   1  Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

The landscape and some structures of Thetford Hill State Park are historically important for their reflection of recreational and conservation trends of the 1930s as prescribed by agencies such as the National Park Service and the Civilian Conservation Corps. Inscribed in the landscape of Thetford Hill are the reminders of a decade in American history, when the nation's early conservation ethic and social reform movements were successfully wedded under these character-defining philosophies. Thetford Hill State Park in Thetford, Vermont is historically significant under the National Register Criterion A for its role in the social, political and economic impact of the Great Depression and the development of the Civilian Conservation Corps' success as a leader in conservation efforts in U.S. history. Thetford Hill State Park also represents the lasting result of this era of park and recreation design nationwide, specifically in Vermont, and is, therefore, also eligible under Criterion C. This is due to its architectural merit, according to agencies such as the Department of the Interior's and National Park Service's ideals of the built environment, which include being constructed in a rustic style, using native materials, that is harmonious with the natural environment. Although vernacular interpretations of the architectural designs were permitted, this established a significant continuity nationwide, resulting in a comprehensive national treasure. The park is an historic reminder, recalling the substantial accomplishments of the CCC, which left a lasting impression in terms of conservation, recreational development, landscape design, and unemployment relief. Thetford Hill State Park is being nominated under the Historic Park Landscapes in National and State Parks MPDF and meets the registration requirements for the state parks, country parks, and recreational demonstration areas property type.

Thetford, Vermont, is a Connecticut River town. It is a frontier between coniferous and deciduous forests that was once settled by Native Americans. The area of Thetford is comprised of seven villages, with rural land in between, which were originally settled because of waterpower from the Ompompanoosac River to run various mill operations. The villages were isolated from each other due to a lack of bridges, and each focused on their own church and school as civil and social centers. East Thetford was settled in 1761 by Israel Smith and focused on the manufacturing of soapstone. North Thetford was settled based on sawmills, slate, and a creamery. Post Mills, settled by Eldad Post in 1779, produced linseed oil, fish rods, and grain. Focusing on window sashes, cloth, a wheelwright, a brickyard, shingles, furniture, and tools, Thetford Center was settled in 1768 by Alexander Phelps. A forge and sawmill led to the settlement of Union Village in 1789. The village was originally known as Locke's Mill after its founder James Locke. Rice's Mill was named for Samuel Rice after being founded in 1777 by Richard Wallace. Saw mills and gristmills were located here. Located along the east branch of the Ompompanoosuc River, Thetford Hill was founded by Jesse Hawley in 1792. Early

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**Section number   8   Page   2  Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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economic mainstays included nails, pottery, stone cutting, a lead mine, a distillery, a sawmill, greenhouses, and a cobbler. Despite this manufacturing, which was a requirement of the original town charters, the economic basis for Thetford's early growth, particularly after 1830, was self-sufficient farming, which resulted in much of the land being cleared. Numerous historic, dry-laid stone walls from this pasturing era are still located throughout the woods around the area. By the mid-nineteenth century, the railroads brought economic competition. People also began to move west in search of larger communities in which to use their skills. These factors contributed to the decline in population of the area, as did the Civil War, which dislocated many families and left the many of the farms abandoned.

Thetford Hill State Park is located about one mile south of the Thetford Hill village center on Vermont Route 113, which leads north to Union Village. At the time of the park's development in the 1930s scenic views, particularly from the top of Sunset Hill, were the major attraction. Today, the same attractions are coupled with quiet and peaceful camping and picnicking sites, as well as award-winning trails through the woods.

The State Park consists of 177-acres within the Thetford Hill State Forest and comprises the entire main block section of the State Forest. The second parcel of land in the State Forest is an 85-acre area known as the Sanborn Block, which is the location of water supply springs deeded to the village of Thetford Hill. It is non-contiguous to the Main Block, but in the general vicinity on the opposing side of Vermont Route 113 toward the village center. The entire 262-acre State Forest was bequeathed to the state in 1931 by Dwight Goddard, with the stipulation that it remain a State Forest in perpetuity.

Opened in 1932, Thetford Hill offered majestic views of the Vermont and New Hampshire landscapes, as well as solitude in nature. The park was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps, an aim of which was to provide organized camping facilities as a means of educating youth to constructive use of leisure time during the Depression. A CCC unit was housed near the site, in North Thetford, from 1935-37. Their work consisted of gypsy moth control, the construction of a scenic picnic area and log shelter, a toilet facility, culvert additions, a camping site with granite fireplaces and a road system. Perry Merrill, Vermont State Forester from 1930 to 1955, oversaw the CCC building process in the state. Thetford Hill State Park stands as a testament of the CCC's recreational park planning ideals. The original, historic CCC era structures and landscaped areas are now intertwined with other buildings and sites that were built at later dates. The park was closed from 1982 to 1989.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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Recreation is the most prominent management objective for Thetford Hill by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Wildlife. Maintenance of an aesthetically pleasing site and the protection of wildlife habitats is a crucial element that requires timber management and habitat improvement. However, the landscape is the most important factor to consider in terms of historic integrity. Recreational aspects of park planning are subordinate to the fabric of the landscape, in a sympathetic and harmonious manner, as the enjoyment of native flora and fauna are at the pinnacle of the historic park design. Thetford Hill State Park operates from Mid-May to Labor Day.

The structures built by the CCC are architecturally significant as exceptional examples of the rustic architectural style, based on the theories of architects such as A.J. Downing and Frederick Law Olmstead, whose ideas came to fruition in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Distinctive as building types, the structures possess artistic qualities and elements of the picturesque, including the use of natural building materials, sensitivity to landscape features, and coloration patterns derived from the surrounding environment. The structures feature irreplaceable labor-intensive methods, replete with finely crafted details based on National Park Service design philosophies that ensured non-intrusive and environmentally sensitive developments in recreational facility construction. The simple, rustic, utilitarian structures were constructed in accordance with the design philosophy of the National Park Service, which called for all park structures to be subordinate to the natural landscape.

The original, historic CCC-era structures and landscaped areas of Thetford Hill State Park are now intertwined with other buildings and areas that were built at later dates. The plan of Thetford Hill follows the traditional philosophic approach to building employed by the CCC, allowing for variations in activity that work in tandem with the natural environment. Areas with structural additions were kept at a minimum, and often hidden from significant viewpoints, so as not to allow the built environment to encroach upon the natural world, which was the most crucial element of the designs. The CCC constructed the entrance road, which stretches for 0.6-miles through the wooded 177-acre main block of Thetford Hill State Forest and it is one of the most significant features of the park, as it serves as a vehicle of understanding park philosophy through experience. Therefore, a simple graveled road leads into the park, with no built structures visible after the gate, until a sense of environment can be understood. Historically, the entrance was simply a road off of Vermont Route 113.

Minimal changes have been made to the park, but those that have occurred for utilitarian reasons have been sympathetic to the naturalistic ideals. A marker, in the form of an entrance sign, designed in the rustic style was erected. A park gate was added to CCC

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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constructed stone posts. Simplistic in design, yet functional, the wooden gate echoes the sentiment that nature should be at the pinnacle of the park's existence. Thetford Hill State Park is a wintering habitat for animals such as deer, so the gate allows animals to freely enter the wooded park area, but alerts visitors of the park's closure.

Shelter from environmental elements, while enjoying the natural, scenic beauty of the landscape is permissible under park philosophy, provided that the structures are subservient to the natural environment. The avoidance of rigid, straight lines was important in terms of this harmony with nature ideal. The picnic shelter at Thetford Hill balances these conflicting ideals and stands as the penultimate example in the park of CCC park design. The artistic design, rustic style, natural log building materials, fine craftsmanship, open plan except for the north wall which serves as protection against prevailing winds, incredible views of the surrounding mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire, and integration with the landscape are all elements served by the shelter. Many of the structures and parking lots created by the CCC are significant examples of their philosophies due to a natural appearance and placement in unassuming locations.

The park planners and builders understood the growing leisure time of the American population and the growing popularity of the automobile. The issues surrounding were not compatible with park philosophy. A balance was reached by placing parking areas in unobtrusive landscaped areas, hidden from view, while remaining easily accessible. Park philosophy realized the importance of sanitation structures in built parks, but, again, placed them in non-obtrusive locations that were easily accessible, yet kind to the eye. The park policy is particularly significant in its deference to the environment.

Thetford Hill State Park retains its integrity of landscape. Topography and scenic views encouraged the park to be built according to specific geographical landscape features, such as scenic overlooks, rolling hills and vegetation. Minimal encroachment by humankind has resulted in the illusion that nature has not been disturbed. The historic integrity has not been tarnished by noise pollution or inconsistent building in the vicinity beyond the boundaries of the park.

Recreation is the most prominent management objective for Thetford Hill by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation. Maintenance of an aesthetically pleasing site and the protection of wildlife habitats is a crucial element that requires timber management and habitat improvement. In the 1920s, prior to state ownership, the property, which was fairly open, due to its historic use as pastureland, was planted with 20,000 softwood seedlings. Species included white pine, red pine, Norway spruce, white spruce, and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   8   Page   5  

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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European larch. In 1934, the state planted an additional 102,000 seedlings. Red and white pine plantations now make up 45% of the vegetation cover.

Thetford Hill State Park has architectural significance, which was achieved through use of the rustic, Adirondack camp style of architecture for its structures. The roots of this style in the United States can be traced back to Andrew Jackson Downing's 19<sup>th</sup> century ideas on the construction of the ideal country cottage. Downing promoted the concept of a house in harmony with its environment and expression of truth in architecture through materials and style. Downing's country house ideal combined his philosophies with those of John Ruskin and the English Arts and Crafts Movement, becoming the foundation for the rustic cabins and lodge design in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. New York's Adirondack region elements included massive stone chimneys, unpeeled logs and oversized timbers. This style greatly influenced the design of National Park architecture. Although the National Park Service later abandoned this concept, the vernacular building tradition of local materials craftsmanship and harmony with nature remains. National Park Service brochures guided the design of parks built by the CCC. The CCC employed illustrative plans ranging from building design to cistern construction to door hinge details in their construction endeavors, although vernacular interpretations were encouraged. A. J. Downing's ideals, which the CCC embraced, were further expanded with the use of local building methods, resulting in the picturesque.

According to an archeological survey that was conducted in 1985, archeologically sensitive areas have not been identified in Thetford Hill State Park.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number   9   Page   1  

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Thetford Hill State Park  
Thetford, Orange County, Vermont

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### *Geographical Data*

#### **UTM References:**

Zone/Easting/Northing

5. 18/722310/4854001
6. 18/721490/4854006
7. 18/721450/4854160
8. 18/721450/4854280

#### **Verbal Boundary Description:**

The boundary of Thetford Hill State Park is shown as the entire southwest block of Thetford Hill State Forest printed on the accompanying USGS map entitled "Lyme, NH-VT" dated 1981. The boundary is further delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the following UTM Reference Points:

1. 18/721570/4855005
2. 18/722280/4855010
3. 18/722500/4854760
4. 18/722600/4854420
5. 18/722310/4854001
6. 18/721490/4854006
7. 18/721450/4854160
8. 18/721450/4854280

#### **Boundary Justification:**

The boundary description includes the entire historic Thetford Hill State Park and thus is sufficient to convey its historic significance.

