



Reading Eagle: Susan Keen | Temple University senior Jen Cubbler checks the strike and dip of the rock along the Colebrookdale Spur Railroad near Pottstown on Saturday.

Temple University geology students study rocks near railroad

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Teams of undergraduate Temple University geology students traveled from their Philadelphia campus to Pottstown on Saturday for a look at an unusual site along the Colebrookdale Spur Railroad.

The valley of the Manatawny and Ironstone creeks near the railroad was once home to several tribes of the Leni-Lenape and holds unique rock formations the tribes held to be sacred. The rocks contained magnetic iron ores, which the students examined.

"We're thrilled to be able to study this unique geology that impacted the course of Pennsylvania and American history in such remarkable ways," said Allison R. Tumarkin-Deratzian, Ph.D., associate professor in Temple University's department of earth and environmental science.

The 8.6-mile Colebrookdale line, which links Pottstown to Boyertown, is being reintroduced to the public as a tourist railroad.

"The Colebrookdale Railroad provides a rare window into Pennsylvania's past - culturally, historically, and geologically," said Nathaniel Guest, president of the Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust. "We're only recently rediscovering the importance of the history all around the railroad."