

Friends Of Minsi Lake Receive \$38,000 In Grants for Fish & Turtle Habitat Structures

By Michael Ortoski and Jim Wilson FOML board members

Friends Of Minsi Lake (FOML) last week received word from Pa. Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) that FOML through Northampton County Jr. Conservation School (NCJCS) was awarded \$30,000 grant request from the Reservoir Fisheries Habitat Partnership (RFHP) to build 861 fish & turtle habitat structures as part of their Minsi Lake Project.

There were a total of three projects awarded monies. The other two project awardees were in the PA Highlands and Kentucky.

Slate Belt Rising awarded FOML \$3,000 thru their youth engagement committee to have youth groups from the Slate Belt help build the fish & turtle habitat structures at the lake and at the 2018 Trail To Town – Jamboree at wind Gap Park.

Martins-Jacoby Watershed Association's (MJWA) also donated \$5,000 to FOML toward projects for the lake and (NCJCS) donated in kind services of the aerial mapping from a drone flown over the lake by H&K Group, one of the largest mid Atlantic business for construction materials and project site planning.

The Northampton County Junior Conservation School, a 501-(c)3 organization, formed the Friends of Minsi Lake (FOML) as a standing committee to work with Northampton County.

FOML is asking you to join our team by helping us fund an exciting, much needed capital improvement project at Minsi Lake. As you probably know, Minsi Lake and its surrounding parkland are incredible natural and recreational resources. Minsi is the largest, most popular fishing and boating lake in Northampton County and one of only three public lakes in the entire Lehigh Valley. Surrounded by thousands of acres of forestland and located just miles from the Delaware River, Minsi is the only lake in Northampton County surrounded by a large county park and open to the public 365 day a year. However, not everyone can use the facilities at Minsi Lake in the state they are currently in, and much of the park infrastructure is in serious need of repair; something we hope to start doing next year!

With your help, we will replace, renovate and rebuild decades-old park amenities



Artists conceptual drawing of the West entrance

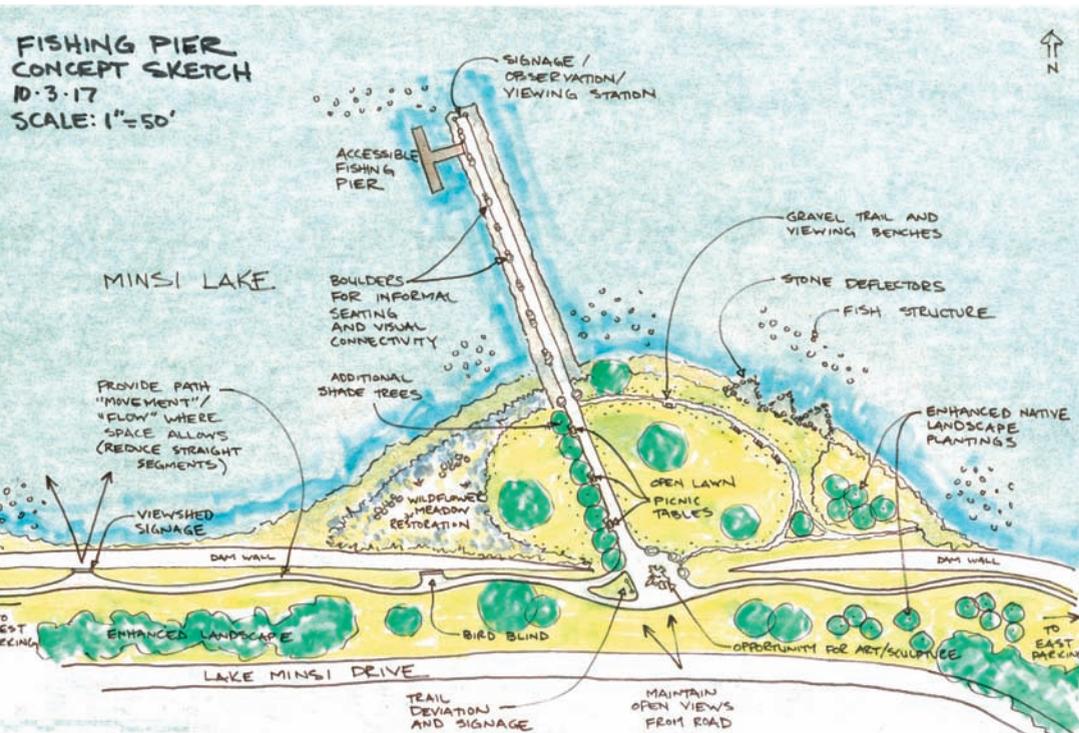
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and infrastructure; build new recreation and park facilities; improve both fish habitat and fishing success; and most of all, make Minsi Lake an accessible recreation area for everyone, opening access to all our community members, regardless of their physical abilities.

In total, Friends of Minsi Lake and Northampton County Parks & Recreation have identified \$3.5 million in capital improvement projects that will be needed over the next five years. This is work that will not be funded entirely with government funding—it will need to come from those of us who love the lake.

We have already begun planning for these much-needed improvements by completing a site improvement study and developing a fish habitat restoration plan. To date, we have raised \$38,000 toward funding the habitat restoration project at Minsi Lake. In June, the lake was drained to prepare for a \$4 million dam rehabilitation and spillway reconstruction project, which is scheduled for completion in 2019. Friends of Minsi Lake organized as a coalition of community leaders, state and local officials, partner organizations and concerned citizens to help Northampton County Parks & Recreation plan critical in-lake and lakeside infrastructure and recreational facility improvements during this drawdown period.

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Artists conceptual drawing of the fishing pier

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