

## GROUNDBREAKING

# New Amenities



Officials begin the process of breaking ground on the visitor center.

## Ceremony held for new visitor center at Lake James State Park

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Though the wind made for chilly conditions, attendees were generally cheery Wednesday at Lake James State Park as the park celebrated its breaking ground on a new visitor center and pedestrian bridge at the Paddy's Creek Area of the park.

The visitor center will be a 7,800-square-foot, single-story building with site amenities to serve Lake James State Park's half a million annual visitors, according to a handout issued at the ceremony. The center will feature an exhibit hall, a retail gift shop, meeting



Lake James State Park Superintendent Nora Coffey gives her opening remarks at the groundbreaking ceremony for the park's new visitor center.

space and classrooms, public restrooms and an outdoor amphitheater. It also will have a proposed paved road, leading to a trail-head parking area for approximately 185 vehicles and a 200-foot-long bridge across Lake James with a view of the mountains that will serve as a focal point for the Fonta Flora State Trail and provide emergency vehicle access, according to the Lake James State Park General Management Plan.

The idea for a visitor center and bridge goes as far back as 2006, when the park devised a master plan to blueprint how to develop the nearly 3,000 acres the

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