

MINNEWASKA VISITOR CENTER CAMPAIGN

Frequently Asked Questions

What services will the visitor center offer?

- Orientation and maps for planning park exploration
- Exhibits exploring the park's geological, ecological and human history
- Central location to find staff and emergency services
- Public Restrooms
- Fireplace and hearth area for warming and gathering
- Classroom space for school visits and public programs
- Outdoor deck and terrace

When will the visitor center open?

Construction on the visitor center is scheduled to start in the spring of 2019; with a planned opening in 2020.

Why does a state park need a private philanthropic campaign?

From the earliest history of New York's incredible state parks, they have been shaped and supported by the generosity of private citizens and organizations. Private philanthropy leverages public dollars and provides a special "margin of excellence" that turns a beautiful landscape into an unforgettable place in the heart.

OSI and its supporters have doubled the size of Minnewaska State Park and restored 12 miles of its carriage roads. Together, we have the opportunity to leverage the state's historic investments in the park system to give Minnewaska the visitor amenities it deserved from the start.

OK, so what is New York State contributing to the visitor center?

The state is picking up \$3-4 million for essential infrastructure improvements at Minnewaska. The site's substandard parking areas will be completely overhauled and upgraded. New and existing utilities (plumbing, drainage, electricity, communications) will be updated and reinstalled underground. Together, OSI and Minnewaska supporters will provide the leadership to build the center itself. The state has given the campaign a shot in the arm with the promise of \$650,000 in public grants for the center.

How much money needs to be raised?

The budget for the building, including outdoor amenities and exhibits is \$4.8 million, of which \$2.3 million has been raised. OSI needs your help to raise an additional \$2.5 million.



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Will the visitor center really have restrooms?

Yes, visitors to Minnewaska deserve public restrooms and access to clean drinking water and with this new visitor center, they will finally get both!

Will the visitor center be open in winter?

Yes! A major purpose of the visitor center is to promote winter use of the park, and the main hall will feature a fireplace for gathering.

Will the visitor center be open in the evenings?

In general, no. Just like Minnewaska itself, the center will be a dawn to dusk facility. With care for the unspoiled views of the ridgeline from neighboring communities, the center will not be illuminated at night, and there will be minimal outdoor lighting in the parking or paths.

Will parking capacity be expanded?

No. The goal of the project is to improve the park experience and extend its season, not to increase peak capacity at an already heavily used area of the park. The new center will attract more people to the park in colder seasons, but this increased visitation will be spread across the year. The State's investment will dramatically improve and simplify parking areas making it easier and safer for park visitors.

How will this benefit the community? Why should I contribute?

While all visitors to Minnewaska will enjoy an improved experience, the new visitor center will particularly benefit the mid-Hudson region. The center will strengthen educational programs, provide exhibits highlighting the special character of the Shawangunks region, and complement the region's spectacular natural landscapes. Comfortable, better informed visitors are likely to linger in the mid-Hudson region longer, patronizing local businesses. They are also more likely to return to the area.

Will the visitor center be green?

Yes. The visitor center will incorporate passive solar design, and rely seasonally on natural ventilation in public areas. Energy-efficient fixtures and heating will be incorporated. Solar panels are planned for a more suitable location with appropriate light exposure, atop a nearby maintenance facility.

Will there be a restaurant?

No. Snacks will be available for purchase, and there will be a filling station for water bottles.

Will the center be available for event rental?

In general, no. The visitor center will have minimal capacity for events. The center is truly dedicated to helping people get out on the land and enjoy Minnewaska and its astounding landscapes.



Who will run the visitor center?

State Parks will operate and maintain the visitor center as its first-ever hub for visitor support and park operations.

Will schools be able to schedule field trips to the Minnewaska Visitor Center?

Absolutely! Education is one of the driving values behind building the center. Minnewaska has an incredible array of lessons to teach. The center will feature indoor and outdoor classrooms, and will offer permanent interpretive displays. Teaching the next generation to care for this special place is one of the primary benefits of the new visitor center.

Why are you doing this now?

New York State has made huge commitments to Minnewaska and the rest of the state park system. OSI's supporters have pulled together nearly half the capital needed to seize the day and provide Minnewaska with a long-overdue visitor center. If the moment passes without action, the need will persist, but the opportunity may not return for a generation or more.

Why does Minnewaska have to evolve? I like it the way it is.

We get it. We love Minnewaska the way it is too! It's gorgeous, it's an ecological oasis, and it's worked just fine as a recreational playground for generations. But for many patrons, including families with young children and seniors, the disabled community and first-time visitors the park and all it offers is out-of-reach. For some first time visitors, the lack of a place to get warm or access to a real comfort station may mean they never return. The new visitor center, with its contained footprint and low profile will speak to what we love about Minnewaska, while helping to grow greater appreciation for our natural world.

I'd like to make an impact, but my budget is limited, and right now is not a great time.

You're not alone! Every gift makes a difference ... you can participate at any level that works for you. As for timing, if you would like to extend your impact, we're happy to talk with you about making a pledge. Time your gift for later in 2018, or spread it over two or three years. If you want to be part of this historic moment at Minnewaska, we will work with you to make it happen!



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