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Ground broken on Ryerson Station swimming complex

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Ground was broken Thursday morning on a swimming complex in Ryerson Station State Park.

John Norbeck, deputy secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and other state officials participated in the ceremony.

The project will include demolition of Pavilion 1 and construction at that site of a gradually sloping "zero entry" pool, slide and spray park. A parking lot will be built at the old pool site, which will include solar shading structures designed to limit electricity use.

"This state-of-the-art pool complex, coupled with major park campground renovations underway, are direct results of public input and participation centering on the future of Ryerson Station," Norbeck said in a news release.

Re-Vision Ryerson Station State Park Task Force, a group formed to study future recreational opportunities, had sought swimming and camping improvements in the park. Campground work is near completion and will include new shower facilities; three deluxe camping cottages; full hookups on seven campsites; and a newly paved road and redesigned entrance.

The pool complex will cost an estimated \$9.6 million, which will be financed from funds from the settlement of a lawsuit involving DCNR and Consol Energy Inc.

The park's Duke Lake was drawn down in July 2005 for safety reasons, following inspections that found seepage and dam foundation movement. Continued ground movement and an unstable foundation eliminated the possibility of replacing the dam,

and forced DCNR to withdraw its permit application to rebuild the structure.

In April 2013, those two bodies settled a lawsuit related to the impact longwall mining had on the dam. Included among the settlement terms was the state had no additional recourse against Consol for any movement or destabilization of the dam.

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