

Dutchman's Creek Pedestrian Bridge and Trail Wins ACEC Engineering Excellence Award

Columbia, SC- For the second consecutive year, Dennis Corporation was awarded an Engineering Excellence Award from the South Carolina Division of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC). Dennis Corporation was honored for their innovative work on the Dutchman's Creek Pedestrian Bridge and Trail located in Fairfield County over Lake Wateree. The Dutchman's Creek Pedestrian Bridge and Trail finished first in the small projects category and will be competing with five other projects for the Palmetto Award, the highest award among all projects, which will be awarded in February. Because it placed first in its category, Dennis Corporation's entry will represent the state of South Carolina at the ACEC national convention in Washington, D.C. this April.

Engineered and managed by Dennis Corporation, the Dutchman's Creek Pedestrian Bridge and Trail consisted of a pedestrian walkway attached to the Dutchman's Creek Bridge, a walking trail, and an adjacent parking lot. The project was developed in order to provide a safe passageway for the high volume of pedestrian traffic and fishermen in the area, while providing connectivity to adjacent Lake Wateree State Park, local homes, and Lake Wateree. Dennis Corporation provided the pedestrian mobility study, design, grant assistance, and construction management for this project.



Two fishermen enjoy fishing from the newly constructed Dutchman's Creek Pedestrian Bridge which recently received an engineering excellence award from the American Council of Engineering Companies.

Prior to the construction of the steel platform attached to the bridge, the existing bridge was not safe for pedestrian use or recreation. Standing or sitting only a few inches away from traffic traveling at 55 mph, many fishermen used the bridge to gain access to Lake Wateree where they fished to provide food for their families. After several accidents and many near misses involving fishermen and motorists, Fairfield County selected Dennis Corporation to provide a solution to the pedestrian problem on the Dutchman's Creek Bridge. After reviewing several design options, Dennis Corporation designed the plans for the new galvanized steel pedestrian bridge, which would be attached to the existing structure and connect to a pedestrian walkway, off the shoulder of the roadway.

This original project design is like no other in South Carolina and will set the precedent for similar pedestrian bridges throughout the state due to its innovative design. Currently, there are approximately 10,600 bridges in South Carolina, 8,330 of them maintained and inspected by the SCDOT. The Dutchman's Creek Pedestrian Bridge is the only one of its kind within South Carolina. To successfully complete this project, Dennis Corporation secured funding from seven different county, state and federal entities, including the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, South Carolina Department of Transportation, Fairfield County, Duke Power, South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, Fairfield County Transportation Committee, and the Federal Highway Administration.

In addition to providing safety for pedestrians, the Dutchman's Creek Pedestrian Bridge and Trail has also contributed to the interconnectivity of the community, linking local neighborhoods, Lake Wateree State Park, Lake Wateree Baptist Church, and other area establishments to one another. As Lake Wateree State Park continues to attract more than 100,000 visitors each year, this project will contribute to the increased tourism in the area, allowing pedestrians to access Lake Wateree for recreational activities including fishing, hiking and bird watching.

Dennis Corporation is a South Carolina licensed civil engineering, surveying and construction management firm. Dennis Corporation's specific fields of expertise include civil infrastructure, construction management, construction services, expert witness services, special projects, surveying, traffic engineering and transportation engineering.