



Everything Jersey

Paddling the Hackensack

By czusman

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Lisa Ryan, operations director, and Nick Vos-Wein, project manager, demonstrate new kayak launch ramp.

Now you don't have to get mud on you...announcement from the Riverkeeper

"Paddling The Hackensack River Just Got A Lot Easier"

Hackensack Riverkeeper, Hudson County officials dedicate new canoe/kayak dock

Secaucus - Hudson County Executive Thomas A. DeGise and Hudson County Division of Parks officials joined Captain

Bill Sheehan and the staff of Hackensack Riverkeeper Thursday afternoon at the Grand Opening of the Hackensack River's newest canoe & kayak launch dock.

Located at Laurel Hill County Park in Secaucus, the new dock will enable paddlers to launch and retrieve canoes and kayaks with greater safety and with more efficiency.

The location is the first of thirteen new and rebuilt launch points that will soon be opening along the Hackensack River Water Trail. The Water Trail is a U.S. National Park Service (NPS) project conducted in partnership with Hackensack Riverkeeper, Inc. (HRI).

In 2004, Hackensack Riverkeeper and the NPS Rivers and Trails Program published a Draft Action Plan written by HRI Project Director Nick Vos-Wein and Jerry Willis, Program Director for the NPS's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Section.

The Plan delineates a 21-mile water trail along the Hackensack River between Oradell to Jersey City, and recommends a total of 13 dedicated canoe/kayak launch docks along the route.

"Our region already has a diverse National Park Service presence: Gateway National Recreation Area, Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, Morristown National Historic Park, Fire Island National Seashore and numerous historic sites," said Sheehan. "The Hackensack River Water Trail will make a great addition to the list."

Manufactured by Jet Dock Systems of Cleveland, Ohio, the new dock/launch ramp is constructed of rigid plastic cubes that are fit together into a modular, changeable and expandable floating dock system.

Each air-filled cube weighs approximately fourteen pounds, has a surface area of 20" x 20" and provides over 200 pounds of buoyancy. Because of the product's modular design, Jet Dock facilities are flexible and can be assembled to serve virtually any type of small craft from kayaks to personal watercraft to harbor patrol boats to float planes.

"Laurel Hill Park has welcomed paddlers since June 1999 when we opened our Paddling Center in partnership with the Hudson County Division of Parks; and each year more and more people take advantage of it," explained Captain Sheehan. "As paddling grows in popularity and the Hackensack River continues to improve, I'm sure this new dock will get plenty of use."

Among the other recommended launch dock sites, it is expected that the next installations will most likely take place at River Barge Park, a New Jersey Meadowlands Commission project on the river in Carlstadt; and Hackensack River County Park, a Bergen County Park located in Hackensack.

"As of today, paddling the Hackensack River just got a lot easier, but it's not going to end here," added Sheehan. "Jerry also helped put together a Draft Action Plan for an NPS Passaic River Water Trail, too. So stay tuned!"

Laurel Hill County Park is located at the end of New County Road, Secaucus, NJ and is open daily from dawn to dusk. River access is free and available to boaters with craft up to 24 feet in length.

Hackensack Riverkeeper's Paddling Center opens this weekend (April 25-26) and will be open weekends through October 31 for canoe/kayak rentals and guided tours.

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