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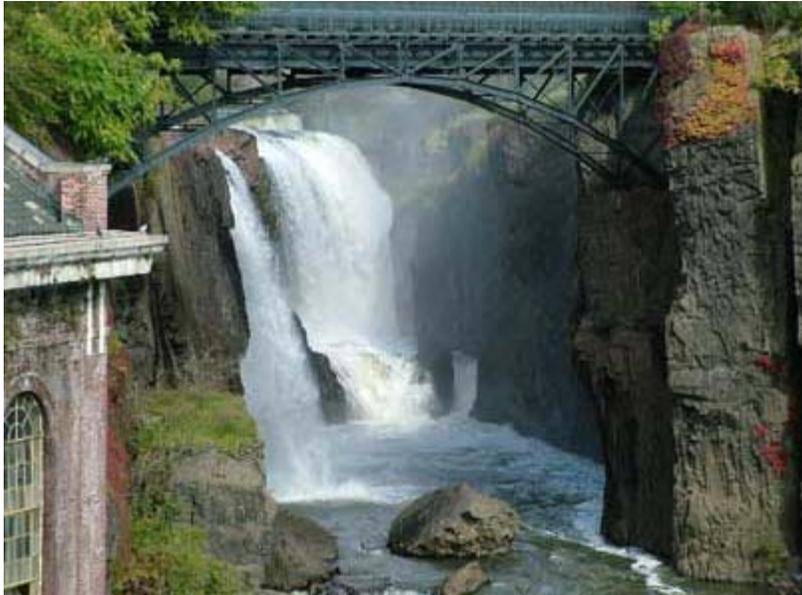


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Paterson Great Falls NHP Joins National Park System

By DOI Public Affairs
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Paterson Great Falls. NPS photo.

An agreement was signed yesterday that paves the way for the establishment of Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park as the nation's 397th national park.

Secretary Salazar and Mayor Jeffery Jones of Paterson, New Jersey, were joined by U.S. Senators Frank Lautenberg and Robert Menendez, U.S. Representative Bill Pascrell, National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis, and Darren Boch, who was recently name superintendent-designate for Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park. A native of Paterson, Boch previously served as deputy superintendent for the National Parks of New York Harbor, which include the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island.

"Paterson and its falls played an integral role in the industrial growth of our nation and in the lives of immigrants who labored in the mills and ultimately joined unions to seek better working conditions and pay," said Secretary Salazar. "By establishing this park, we not only tell the story of Paterson but we also contribute to the economic growth of the city today by attracting visitors and supporting jobs in local communities."

Recreation at national parks, refuges, and other public lands alone led to nearly \$55 billion in economic contribution and 440,000 jobs in 2009, Salazar noted.

The agreement Secretary Salazar and Mayor Jones signed today will transfer property and establish easements that will fulfill the requirements of the law authorizing the establishment of the new national park, signed by President Obama in March 2009.

"This is an historic time for the Great Falls and my home city of Paterson," said Senator Lautenberg. "With this designation, the Great Falls is America's newest national historical park, and one of our nation's most beautiful and historic landmarks will finally get the recognition it deserves. This new park will showcase the majesty of the falls and

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encourage more tourists, families, artists, students and businesses to come to Paterson and help strengthen this great city.”

“I’m incredibly proud, as a New Jerseyan and as the son of immigrants, to witness today’s declaration of Paterson Great Falls as a National Historic Park,” said Senator Menendez, who fought to get the legislation authorizing the new park approved by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. “From the Great Falls through the raceways and waterwheels along the Passaic flowed the blood, sweat, and tears of the men and women who powered the industrial revolution and made this nation great. The park’s history is now part of the story of America.”

“The dedication that Secretary Salazar made today is much like the Great Falls – a testimony to the past work that has brought us to where we are today, and a promise of the rewards and achievements we have yet to realize,” said U.S. Representative Bill Pascrell, Jr. (D-NJ-8), a former Paterson mayor who sponsored the legislation authorizing the new park. “Today marks a momentous occasion that will serve as the starting gun for the establishment of Paterson Great Falls National Historic Park. I truly believe that our prized natural and historic resource will one day be the crown jewel of the National Park System.”

“Paterson Great Falls is a place rich with stories, from the powerhouse of the Industrial Revolution to the generations of immigrants who came here to make a better life for themselves and a stronger nation for their children,” said Director Jarvis. “The National Park Service looks forward to telling those stories.”

“The many years of effort to make this park a reality is a tribute to all who made it possible, said Boch. “I look forward to working with many partners and citizens as we plan the future of Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park.”

“Just as our Founding Father [Alexander Hamilton](#) envisioned using the power of our magnificent Great Falls to help create a self-sufficient new nation, I am envisioning the many possibilities that will present themselves for our city and our citizens,” said Mayor Jeffery Jones. “Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park not only heralds our strong past, but more importantly offers Paterson the potential to take a step back in time with our feet firmly planted in the now. Utilizing the examples of the historic use of the waterfall, and the surrounding areas, we can clearly visualize embracing alternative energy sources in the form of hydroelectric power, wind power and solar power to re-emerge as a leader in the American renewable energy revolution.”

The history of the City of Paterson includes beginnings as the ambitious project of Hamilton and the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures in 1792 at the Great Falls, roots in the early development of water power systems for industrial use, and key involvement in the various types of manufacturing that occurred in the district’s mills into the 20th Century. The industries developed in Paterson were powered by the 77-foot high Great Falls of the Passaic, which combined with a system of water raceways to harness the power of the falls.

The Great Falls of Paterson became a National Natural Landmark in 1967, and part of the City of Paterson was designated as a National Historic Landmark District in 1976. The legislation signed by President Obama in 2009 authorizes Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park “to preserve and interpret for the benefit of present and future generations certain and natural resources associated with the Historic District.”

A general management plan will guide long-term management and staffing of the park for the future. The first public scoping meeting was held in Paterson on October 31st. Today’s meeting was the first of several public forums that will allow the public to make their voices heard on ways to guide program, activities and preserve the new park.

For information on upcoming sessions, visit the park’s website at the link below.

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