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Once-unsightly site at Paterson's Great Falls gets restored as parkland



DON SMITH/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

National Park Park Ranger Darren Boch and Paterson Mayor Jose "Joey" Torres during the Ribbon cutting.

BY JOE MALINCONICO

PATERSON PRESS

PATERSON On an embankment that not long ago was a barren, weed-strewn lot, officials and community members on Wednesday celebrated the restoration of a small parcel of parkland at the Great Falls.

“You could barely see the Passaic River from this vantage point,” said national park superintendent Darren Boch, describing the thick brush that once obstructed the view.

Using a \$10,000 donation from the National Parks Conservation Association and \$65,000 from the Passaic Valley Sewerage Commission, a partnership of various government entities landscaped the 1.25-acre site near the corner of Wayne Avenue and Maple Street, providing some walking paths and benches.

The site overlooks the north side of the Passaic River just as it is about to spill downward in the cascade known as the Great Falls. Nearby is the area of the national park known as Mary Ellen Kramer Park, which is undergoing far more extensive improvements.

“Think about 10 years from now what this is going to look like,” proclaimed Rep. Bill Pascrell Jr., adding that the Kramer area would “be top of the line.”

Pascrell praised Paterson Mayor Jose “Joey” Torres and his efforts on the national park improvements. “Since you’ve become mayor this has been a lot easier to do,” Pascrell said.

Torres spoke with pride of his visit to the Nation’s Capital in 2009 when the Great Falls initially was picked for inclusion in the national park system. “What exciting times!” Torres said of the latest improvements to the national park area.

The City of Paterson contributed some of the trees and benches to the restored park.



DON SMITH/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Students from the Eco Explorer program at schools 7 and 28 were also on hand.
