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[Home](#) > [Newsroom](#) > [Press Releases](#) > 2015 > Lt. Governor Guadagno Celebrates Paterson's Mary Ellen Kramer Park

Lt. Governor Guadagno Celebrates Paterson's Mary Ellen Kramer Park

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Tags: [Other](#)

Revitalized Area Rededicated as Part of Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park

Trenton, NJ – Lt. Governor Kim Guadagno today joined federal, state, and local officials to celebrate the rededication of Paterson's Mary Ellen Kramer Park. Today's ceremony marked the transfer of ownership of the Park from the City of Paterson to the National Park Service.

"As First Lady of Paterson, Mary Ellen Kramer was its champion. She saw the beauty of its Falls, its history, and its architecture and she saw the need to save it. What better way to honor her than through a park this town can take pride in and where the community can gather to enjoy the Great Falls," said Lt. Governor Guadagno. "I was here in 2011 to dedicate the Falls as a National Park and am proud to say the State has continued its commitment to the Falls and to Paterson by helping to make this Park a reality."

The Mary Ellen Kramer Park site had been used as a public park since the 1770s but was closed during World War II. In the 1970s, volunteers, non-profit organizations and public funding through the City of Paterson brought the park to its current layout. The Park is named in honor of Paterson's former First Lady, Mary Ellen Kramer, who was instrumental in the designation and development of the Great Falls National Historic Landmark District and for reopening the park itself to the public in the 1970s. Mrs. Kramer was a strong advocate of the preservation and restoration of many historic sites, including the fight against building a highway over the Great Falls.

"We are grateful to our partners in the Federal and State government and the community in the designation and development of the Great Falls National Historic Landmark Districts and for the rededication of the Mary Ellen Kramer Park, now open to the public," said Paterson Mayor Jose Torres, a member of the Great Falls Federal Advisory Commission. "It took her courage and dedication to start a chain reaction of understanding the great value of this land and our Great Falls, the crown jewel of the City of Paterson."

The recent rehabilitation project completed by the City of Paterson has restored the park and its amenities with the assistance of its partners and funders, including the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Green Acres program, Passaic County's Open Space & Farmland Preservation Trust Fund, and the Passaic River Coalition. Green Acres assistance included a \$341,000 matching grant to the Passaic River Coalition, and approximately \$1.2 million in grant and loan funds awarded to Paterson City.

The Great Falls of Paterson became a National Natural Landmark in 1967. In 2009, President Obama signed the Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park Act as part of the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act, and the site was officially designated as the United States' 397th National Park on November 7, 2011.

More information on the Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park can be found on the National Park Service's website at <http://www.nps.gov/pagr/index.htm>.

Among others, Lt. Governor Guadagno was joined by Congressman Bill Pascrell, Jr. (NJ-9); Passaic County Freeholders Hector Lora, John Bartlett, and Theodore Best, Jr.; Paterson Mayor Jose Torres; former Paterson Mayors Pat Kramer and Tom Rooney; and National Park Service Regional Director Michael A. Caldwell.

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