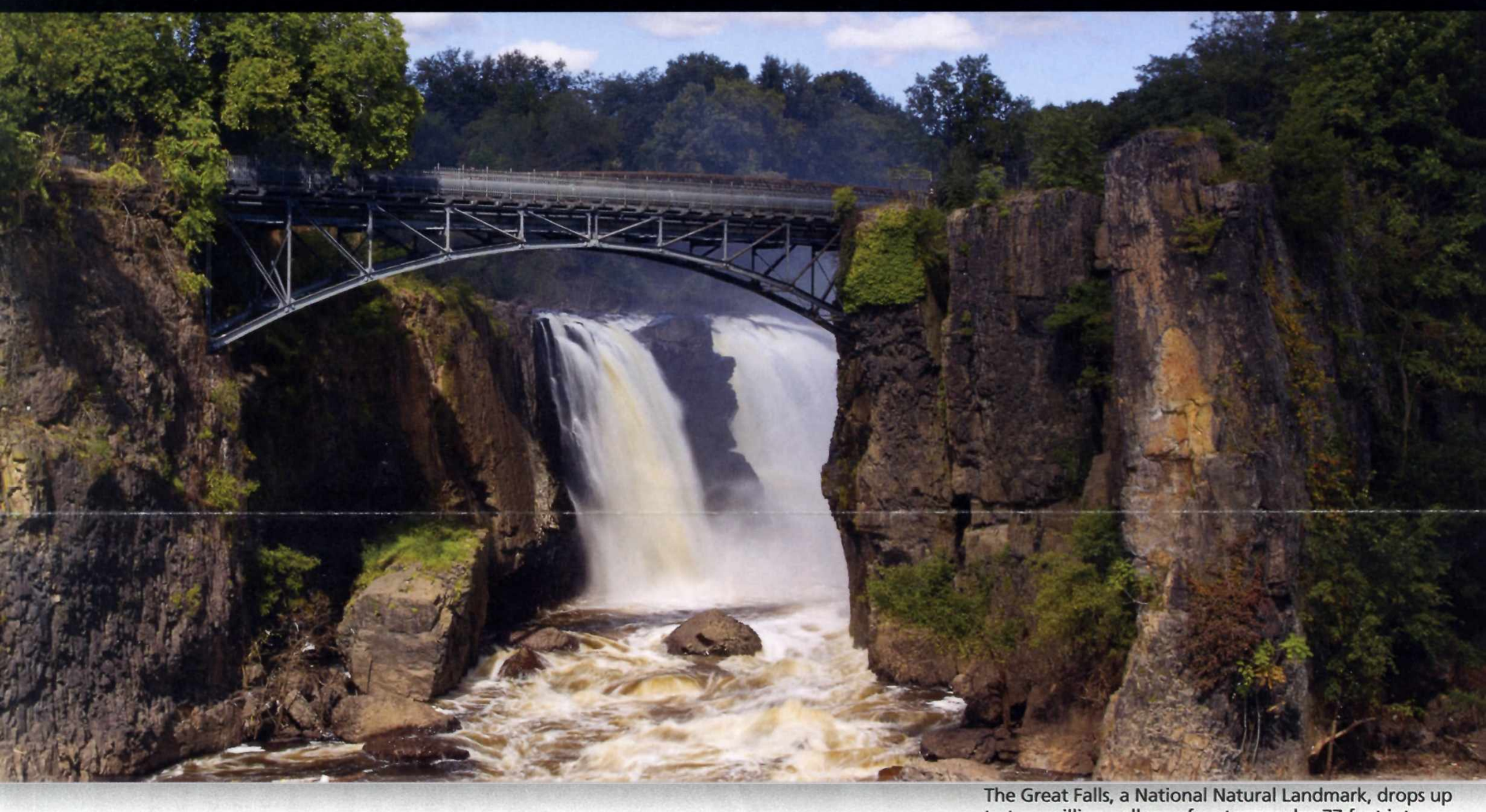
Paterson Great Falls

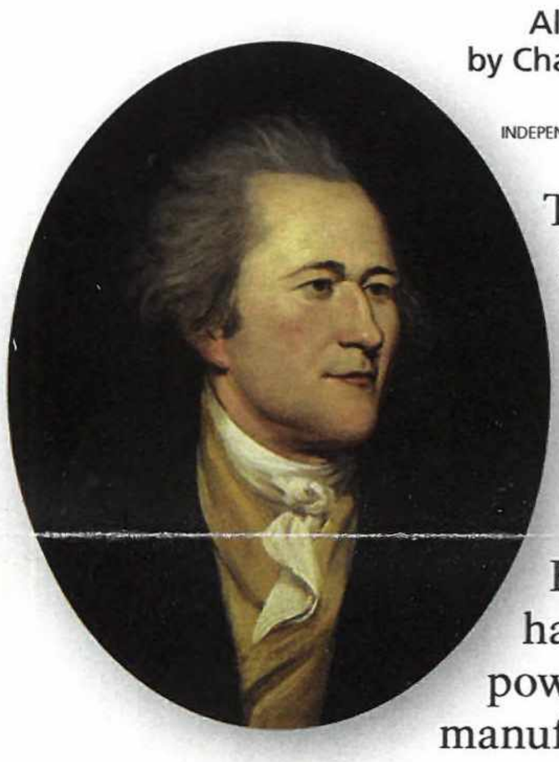
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

National Historical Park
New Jersey



The Great Falls, a National Natural Landmark, drops up to two million gallons of water per day 77 feet into a 260-foot wide chasm of basaltic rock.
© DANIEL C. KREBS

Powering a Free Economy



Alexander Hamilton
by Charles Willson Peale
about 1790–95
INDEPENDENCE NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

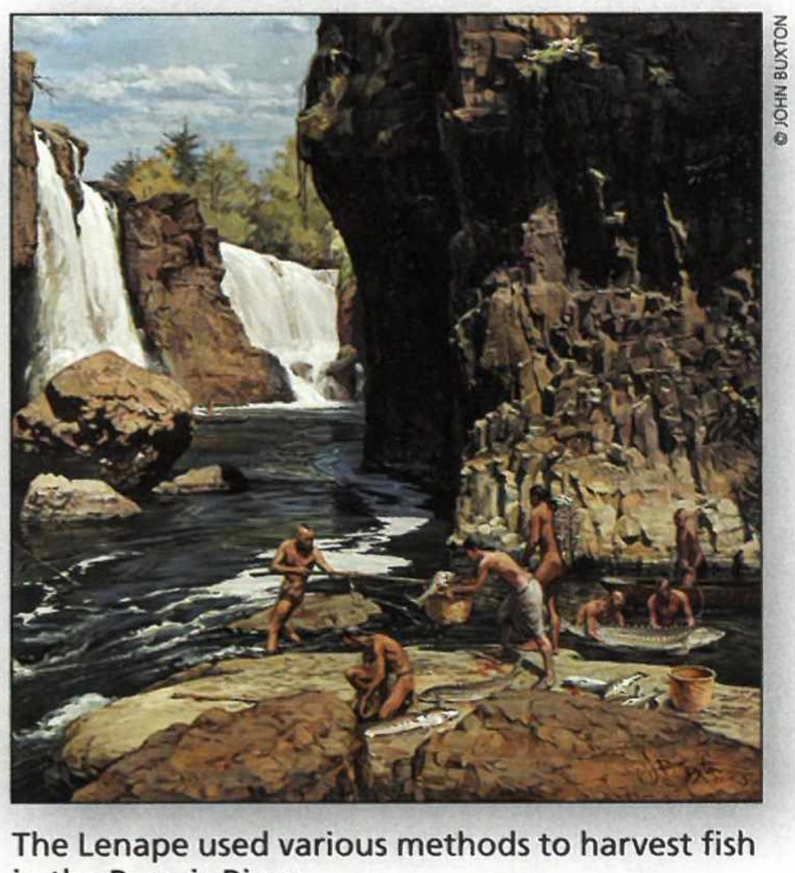
The Great Falls of the Passaic River drove the imagination of a young Alexander Hamilton to harness the power of water to manufacture goods in the United States. The story of Paterson and the Great Falls is one of national importance. Here in 1792 Hamilton founded America's first planned city of industry and innovation, helping to spur what would become the world's largest and most productive economy.

After the Revolutionary War, Hamilton, the first secretary of the treasury, knew this county needed to be economically independent. He led the founding of Paterson and the Society for Establishing Useful Manufactures (S.U.M.), New Jersey's first corporation. The S.U.M. constructed America's first multitiered waterpower system to attract entrepreneurs and workers who would manufacture goods and develop new inventions. A system of water channels or raceways, the most significant power system of the day, diverted water from the Passaic River above the falls to mills along its route.

Paterson became the manufacturing hub for locomotives, textiles, silk finishing and dyeing, machine tools, paper, sailcloth, twine, and airplane engines. By the mid-1800s, the city was home to the largest producers of locomotives in this country and nearly half of the nation's silk trade, earning Paterson the nickname "Silk City." Paterson is also the birthplace of the Colt Revolver and the prototype for the first operable submarine.

The S.U.M. fulfilled the vision of its founder for more than 150 years, moving the United States from an agrarian, slave-based economy to one based in industry and freedom. Paterson attracted successive waves of immigrant entrepreneurs, skilled craftsmen, and workers, the "diversity of talents" Hamilton had hoped would be drawn to America. Immigrants still settle here to pursue their "American Dream" and to weave their threads into the storied fabric of Silk City.

This area formed about 13,000 years ago at the end of the last glacial period and was later home to the Lenni Lenape Indians. They called their homeland *Acquackanonk*. The plentiful plant and animal life along the Passaic River supported the American Indians and later Dutch settlers and English colonists.



© JOHN BUXTON
The Lenape used various methods to harvest fish in the Passaic River.



THE PASSAIC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Dye house where workers dipped skeins of silk thread in vats of hot water and chemicals.



THE PATERSON MUSEUM
Steam locomotive number 144 at Paterson's Erie Railway Depot, circa 1875.



THE PATERSON MUSEUM
In 1927 a group of Paterson students raised the hull of John P. Holland's first successful submarine, fifty years after it was scuttled.



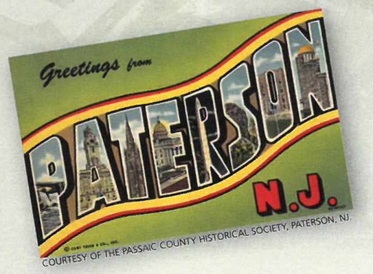
Panoramic view of Paterson, NJ, 1897.
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



Visiting Paterson Great Falls

Welcome to America's first planned city of industry and innovation. Begin your visit at Overlook Park. View the iconic Great Falls and a monument to Paterson's founder, Alexander Hamilton. Cross McBride Avenue to the Welcome Center where you can visit the facilities, purchase a gift, and learn about tours and programs.

To get a closer look at the river that powered Paterson to prominence, follow the path behind the hydroelectric plant over the Passaic footbridge to Mary Ellen Kramer Park. From there you can peek into Hinchliffe Stadium, one of the few remaining stadiums that hosted Negro League Baseball. Come back across the river, follow the short loop trail along Upper Raceway Park, ending at the Ivanhoe Wheelhouse. Walk across Spruce Street and visit the Paterson Museum, a park partner.



COURTESY OF THE PASSAIC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY, PATERSON, NJ.

Exhibits include textile machinery, the first Colt firearms, steam locomotives, and the first prototype of the submarine.

Regularly scheduled guided tours of the park are available during the summer season. From fall through late spring, reservations are required for all guided tours. You may also download a self-guided tour or smartphone app from our partner, the Hamilton Partnership, at www.millmile.org.

Accessibility We strive to make our facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. For information go to a visitor center, ask a ranger, call, or check our website.

Firearms For firearms regulations check the park website.

Getting to the Park From I-80:
West: Take Exit 57 B-A. Follow the Downtown Paterson signs. Turn left at second light onto Cianci Street, and left at first light onto Market Street for ¼ mile. Turn right onto Spruce. Go one block and turn right onto McBride Avenue Extension, then immediately left into Great Falls Overlook parking area.

East: Take Exit 57B, circle onto Grand Street exit. At end of exit ramp turn left onto Grand. At second light on Grand turn right onto Spruce Street. At second light on Spruce bear right onto McBride Avenue Extension, then turn immediately left into the Great Falls Overlook parking area.

Emergencies call 911

More Information
Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park
72 McBride Avenue, Paterson, NJ 07501
www.nps.gov/pagr

Follow us on Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, and Facebook.

Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park, established in 2011, is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks visit www.nps.gov.

National Park Foundation
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org

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