

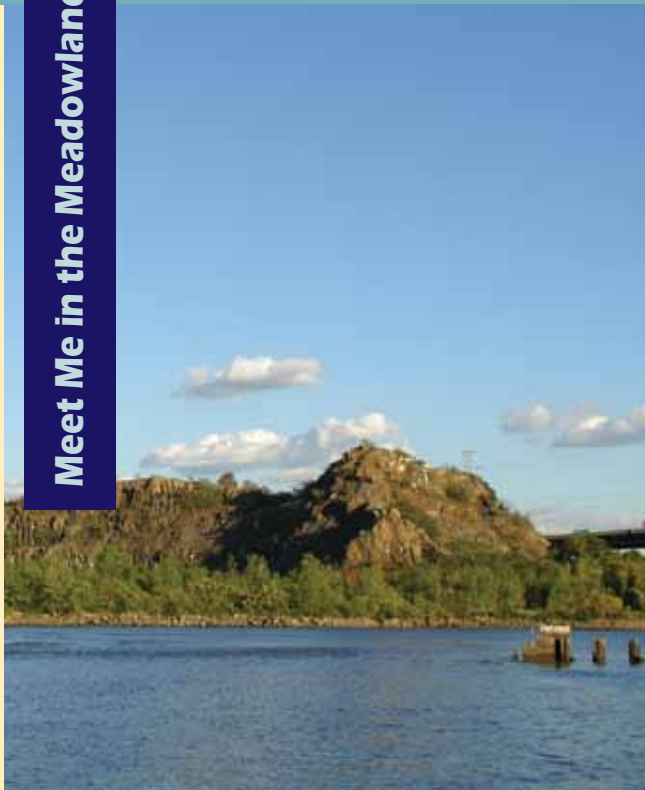
Experience it all... in the Meadowlands



- ☞ Guided pontoon boat cruises, canoe tours and nature walks
- ☞ Children's programs, including our annual Halloween Party and Spooky Walk
- ☞ Guided birding walks, talks and bird-banding demonstrations
- ☞ Annual Butterfly Day in July
- ☞ The Flyway Gallery, featuring local environmental artists
- ☞ Meadowlands Environment Center's interactive educational displays
- ☞ Thousands of acres preserved, 21 parks, eight miles of trails
- ☞ Environmental themed public programs including live animals, historical talks, concerts and more
- ☞ Free trail guide, butterfly guide and other pamphlets

Boating and Paddle Guide Hackensack River

Meet Me in the Meadowlands



Discover the hidden beauty of the Meadowlands

Sit back, relax, and enjoy

The thriving marshes and recreational opportunities along the Hackensack River are among the best kept secrets of the 30.4-square-mile Meadowlands District.

Through our guided pontoon boat cruises and canoe tours of the river and its smaller tributaries, visitors from near and far will discover the hidden beauty here in the Meadowlands. These boating opportunities offer a chance for people to capture photos of rare birds and to learn about the area's ecology and history. We invite you to relax and enjoy a few hours on the water, with the Manhattan skyline in the background and egrets soaring overhead.

See the local wildlife

More than 280 bird species have been seen in the Meadowlands, from metallic-blue Tree Swallows perched on nest boxes to Snowy Egrets wading along the shoreline. Watch for Double-crested Cormorants on top of tide gates and Peregrine Falcons perched under bridges. Listen to the song

of the Marsh Wren coming from the reeds. Check out Fiddler Crabs digging in along the riverbank. Diamondback Terrapins can be seen in the shallow waters, and Muskrat huts rise from the marsh. Even in the midst of this urban area, the Meadowlands is home to some of nature's greatest wonders.

Learn about the region's history

A combination of natural and human actions created today's Meadowlands. Our expert staff will discuss the Wisconsin Glacier that shaped the region, the Lenape Native Americans who first lived here and the early Europeans who cleared its Atlantic White Cedar forests. Find out how the construction of the Oradell Dam and fierce storms all played a role in the reshaping of the Meadowlands landscape. Listen to tales of river barges and railroads, pirates hiding in the Meadows, and black snakes scaring settlers away from Secaucus' Laurel Hill. Learn about preservation of parks and wetlands, as well as our ongoing efforts to restore the ecosystem.



**New Jersey
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Administrative Offices and Environment Center
located in Richard W. DeKorte Park, Lyndhurst.

Come and Explore the New Jersey Meadowlands

Cruise and relax on one of our Pontoon Boat Tours

This region has made a remarkable environmental comeback in the past four decades, and one of the best ways to see the revitalization is on an NJSEA guided pontoon boat cruise of the Hackensack River and its tributaries.

The river, once so polluted that all marine life was struggling to survive, has played a pivotal role in this incredible rebound – as evidenced by abundant wildlife along the water's edge and overhead.

Pontoon boat cruises depart from scenic River Barge Park in Carlstadt and last for about two hours.

Paddle the Mill Creek Marsh

The former New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC), now the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority, acquired the 140-acre Mill Creek Marsh in Secaucus in 1996 and began wetland enhancement activities at the site two years later.

This work included re-establishing tidal flows and creating open water impoundments and intertidal marsh areas. The Commission also added native plantings to attract a diversity of aquatic life, birds and mammals.

The gateway to the creek is marked by Mill Creek Point Park, a 5-acre public space designed by the NJMC and maintained by the Town of Secaucus.

South of the park is the Secaucus High School Wetlands Enhancement Site, where an elevated boardwalk provides students from the nearby High School and other visitors a unique view of a restored urban wetland. At the other end of the marsh is the 1-1/2 mile Mill Creek Marsh walking trail, where you can see stumps of Atlantic White Cedars that once forested the region.

Paddle the Saw Mill Creek Wildlife Management Area

Across the Hackensack River from Laurel Hill County Park in Secaucus is one of the largest and most ecologically diverse marshes in the Meadowlands District. The Saw Mill Creek Wildlife Management area encompasses 750 acres of wetlands, mudflats and open water in Lyndhurst and North Arlington. Two types of vegetation dominate – cordgrass (Spartina) and the common reed (Phragmites).



Paddle Responsibly

The tidal currents on the Hackensack River can be strong, and it pays to know when they are going in or out. Paddling is easiest at high or low tide, or heading south when the tide is going out and heading north when the tide is coming in. Tides occur roughly every six hours with tidal changes up to six feet. For daily tide information visit www.saltwatertides.com.

For tide charts, use the following locations:

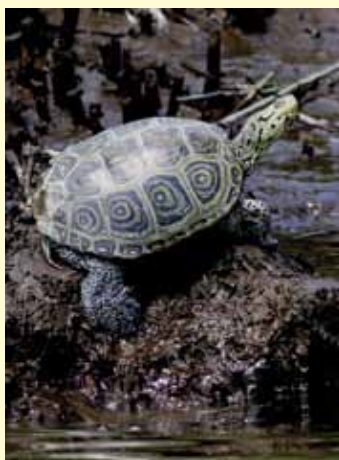
Saw Mill Creek Trail and Laurel Hill: use Amtrak R.R. Swing Bridge

River Barge Park: use Carlstadt, Garretts Reach

Mill Creek Point: use North Secaucus, Garretts Reach

Be sure to follow the list of safety tips below and always let a friend know where you are going and when you expect to return.

- Come prepared with the knowledge and skills necessary.
- Know weather, water conditions and water temperature.
- Don't paddle alone. Consider joining a local boating program.
- Always wear your life jacket and carry a cell phone and whistle.
- Bring water, sunscreen and insect repellent.
- Stay visible and be aware of what is in the water around you.
- Stay close to the shore to avoid powerboat activity on the river.



Hackensack River Boating and Paddle Guide

NJMC websites:

Our home page: njsea.com

Our research arm: meri.njmeadowlands.gov

Our nature blog: meadowblog.net



The Hackensack River is roughly 50 miles long, beginning in Lake Lucille in Rockland County, New York, filtering down to the Newark Bay. The Meadowlands portion of the river transitions from fresh water to brackish water, which is a combination of fresh and salt water.

The River runs through the Meadowlands District, which includes parts of 14 municipalities in Hudson and Bergen counties. They are: **Jersey City, Kearny, North Bergen, Secaucus, Carlstadt, East Rutherford, Little Ferry, Lyndhurst, Moonachie, North Arlington, Ridgefield, Rutherford, South Hackensack and Teterboro.**

1. River Barge Park and Marina (Carlstadt) This 5.5-acre site was once home to the Barge Club, a waterfront bar and restaurant for nearly 30 years. In 2012, the NJMC opened the park, which includes the first public marina on the western bank of the Hackensack River in decades. It is the launch point for the NJSEA's guided pontoon boat tours in the warmer months, and a great place to launch a kayak, canoe or small motorboat. It is also an excellent birding spot, with a view of the Manhattan skyline in the distance. The park is open seven days a week from dawn to dusk.



2. The Richard P. Kane Natural Area (Carlstadt, Moonachie, South Hackensack) This 43-acre portion of the 587-acre Kane Tract is owned by the Meadowlands Conservation Trust, a non-profit organization, which preserves and protects open space in the Hackensack River Watershed.

3. Mill Creek Point Park (Secaucus) The NJMC built this public park, which includes a gravel launch for canoes and kayaks, an area for wildlife viewing and catch-and-release fishing. The site was once home to a sawmill and more recently Tony's Old Mill Restaurant.



4. Mill Creek Marsh (Secaucus) This 140-acre marsh was purchased by the NJMC in 1996. It was the Commission's third wetlands enhancement project.



5. Secaucus High School Marsh (Secaucus) You can best view this site by walking along the boardwalk between Mill Creek Point Park and the high school. The wetland includes a diverse habitat, that offers a wide variety of wildlife.

6. Paterson Plank Road (Carlstadt, East Rutherford) This industrial artery was once one of the longest wood-surface roads in New Jersey. It stretched 15 miles, connecting Paterson to Hoboken, and featured a swing bridge across the Hackensack River. In East Rutherford, an exposed portion of the road abutment on the shore's edge has been identified as a piece of valuable history.



7. Meadowlands Sports Complex (East Rutherford) The sports complex is home to MetLife Stadium, the Izod Center, the Meadowlands Racetrack and the American Dream complex. The property is owned by the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority.

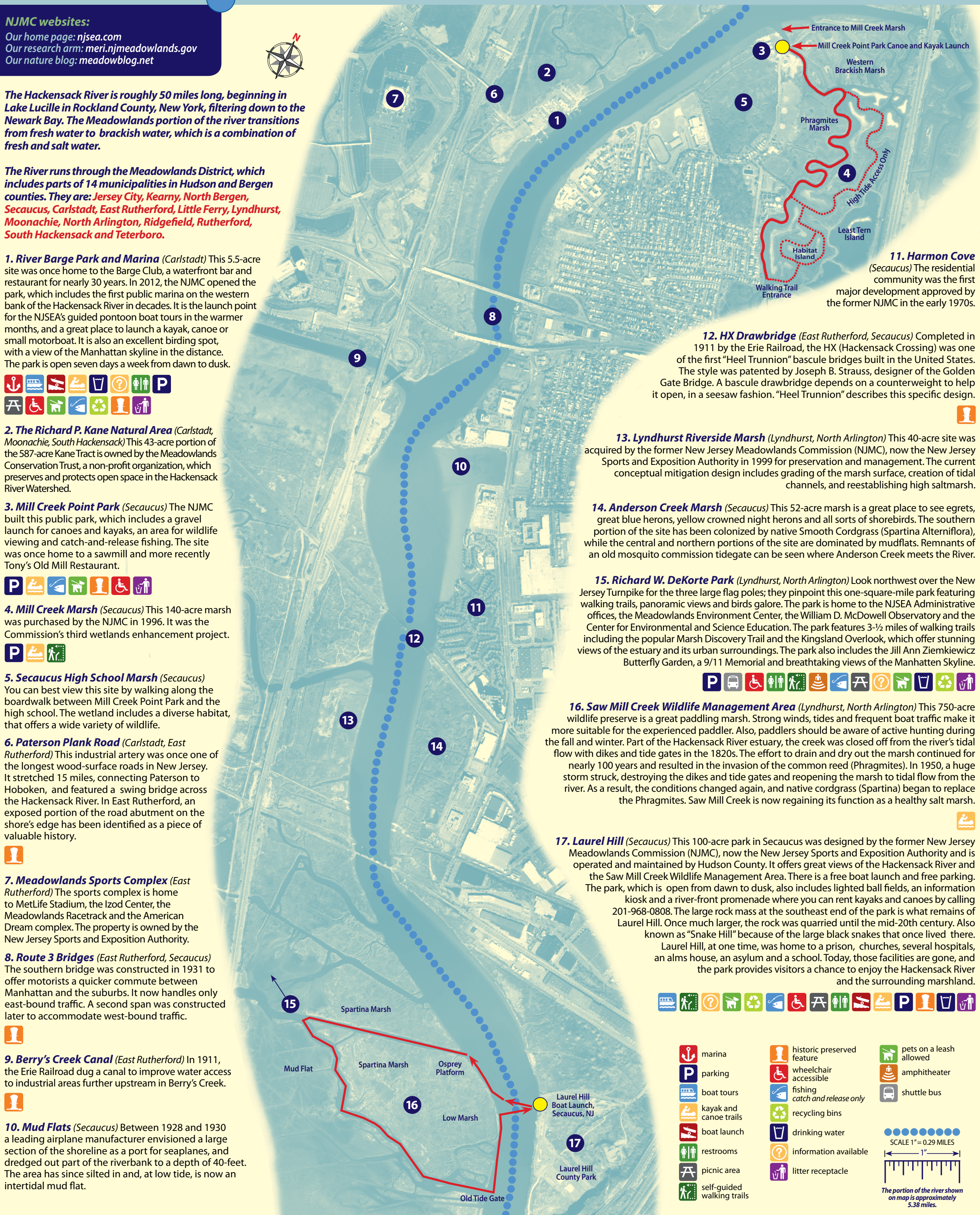
8. Route 3 Bridges (East Rutherford, Secaucus) The southern bridge was constructed in 1931 to offer motorists a quicker commute between Manhattan and the suburbs. It now handles only east-bound traffic. A second span was constructed later to accommodate west-bound traffic.



9. Berry's Creek Canal (East Rutherford) In 1911, the Erie Railroad dug a canal to improve water access to industrial areas further upstream in Berry's Creek.



10. Mud Flats (Secaucus) Between 1928 and 1930 a leading airplane manufacturer envisioned a large section of the shoreline as a port for seaplanes, and dredged out part of the riverbank to a depth of 40-feet. The area has since silted in and, at low tide, is now an intertidal mud flat.



11. Harmon Cove (Secaucus) The residential community was the first major development approved by the former NJMC in the early 1970s.

12. HX Drawbridge (East Rutherford, Secaucus) Completed in 1911 by the Erie Railroad, the HX (Hackensack Crossing) was one of the first "Heel Trunnion" bascule bridges built in the United States. The style was patented by Joseph B. Strauss, designer of the Golden Gate Bridge. A bascule drawbridge depends on a counterweight to help it open, in a seesaw fashion. "Heel Trunnion" describes this specific design.



13. Lyndhurst Riverside Marsh (Lyndhurst, North Arlington) This 40-acre site was acquired by the former New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC), now the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority in 1999 for preservation and management. The current conceptual mitigation design includes grading of the marsh surface, creation of tidal channels, and reestablishing high saltmarsh.

14. Anderson Creek Marsh (Secaucus) This 52-acre marsh is a great place to see egrets, great blue herons, yellow crowned night herons and all sorts of shorebirds. The southern portion of the site has been colonized by native Smooth Cordgrass (*Spartina Alterniflora*), while the central and northern portions of the site are dominated by mudflats. Remnants of an old mosquito commission tidegate can be seen where Anderson Creek meets the River.

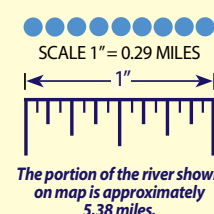
15. Richard W. DeKorte Park (Lyndhurst, North Arlington) Look northwest over the New Jersey Turnpike for the three large flag poles; they pinpoint this one-square-mile park featuring walking trails, panoramic views and birds galore. The park is home to the NJSEA Administrative offices, the Meadowlands Environment Center, the William D. McDowell Observatory and the Center for Environmental and Science Education. The park features 3-1/2 miles of walking trails including the popular Marsh Discovery Trail and the Kingsland Overlook, which offer stunning views of the estuary and its urban surroundings. The park also includes the Jill Ann Ziemkiewicz Butterfly Garden, a 9/11 Memorial and breathtaking views of the Manhattan Skyline.



16. Saw Mill Creek Wildlife Management Area (Lyndhurst, North Arlington) This 750-acre wildlife preserve is a great paddling marsh. Strong winds, tides and frequent boat traffic make it more suitable for the experienced paddler. Also, paddlers should be aware of active hunting during the fall and winter. Part of the Hackensack River estuary, the creek was closed off from the river's tidal flow with dikes and tide gates in the 1820s. The effort to drain and dry out the marsh continued for nearly 100 years and resulted in the invasion of the common reed (*Phragmites*). In 1950, a huge storm struck, destroying the dikes and tide gates and reopening the marsh to tidal flow from the river. As a result, the conditions changed again, and native cordgrass (*Spartina*) began to replace the *Phragmites*. Saw Mill Creek is now regaining its function as a healthy salt marsh.



17. Laurel Hill (Secaucus) This 100-acre park in Secaucus was designed by the former New Jersey Meadowlands Commission (NJMC), now the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority and is operated and maintained by Hudson County. It offers great views of the Hackensack River and the Saw Mill Creek Wildlife Management Area. There is a free boat launch and free parking. The park, which is open from dawn to dusk, also includes lighted ball fields, an information kiosk and a river-front promenade where you can rent kayaks and canoes by calling 201-968-0808. The large rock mass at the southeast end of the park is what remains of Laurel Hill. Once much larger, the rock was quarried until the mid-20th century. Also known as "Snake Hill" because of the large black snakes that once lived there. Laurel Hill, at one time, was home to a prison, churches, several hospitals, an alms house, an asylum and a school. Today, those facilities are gone, and the park provides visitors a chance to enjoy the Hackensack River and the surrounding marshland.



New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority

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