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CONTACT: Mayor's Office, 973-321-1600

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City announces new Raceway Demonstration Project And reuse of the Ivanhoe Wheelhouse at Great Falls National Historical Park

<http://patersontimes.com/2015/10/19/paterson-to-reuse-ivanhoe-wheelhouse-for-raceway-demonstration-project/>

Paterson -- Mayor Jose "joey" Torres today announced new projects at the Paterson Great Falls National Historical Park: a demonstration project for the Raceway system and the reuse of the Ivanhoe Wheelhouse as a new interpretive center.

"As the most significant historic resource within the district, it is crucial that the Society for the Establishment of Useful Manufacturers' (S.U.M.) Raceway system be reopened with water flowing through it to serve as a key historic interpretive feature of the national park," said Mayor Jose 'joey' Torres.

The S.U.M. raceway system in the Great Falls Historic District was seriously damaged in 2010 by hurricane Irene, which resulted in its shut down. The City of Paterson's division of Historic Preservation will commission an engineering study of the S.U.M. raceway system to identify its current deficiencies and hydrology characteristics.

The study, to include cost estimates, seeks to make recommendations for methods of permanent rehabilitation and reuse and will also examine the feasibility of re-watering the system from the Levine Reservoir, located just above the upper raceway, as a mitigative measure to the proposed enclosure of the reservoir into two large concrete tanks.

The Ivanhoe Wheelhouse a small brick industrial structure, adjacent to the Upper Raceway on Spruce Street, will function as the field center for the Raceway Demonstration project, and also as a water power interpretive center for the national park.

"Some initial displays will serve to interpret for our visitors the vital function of the 1830's raceway system and of water power to the growth of the S.U.M. industrial district," said Darren Boch, Great Falls National Historical Park Superintendent.

"This is an appropriate use for the Wheelhouse, which once housed a water turbine that was turned by the water from the raceway to generate the mechanical power needed to operate mill machinery," noted Gianfranco Archimede, Paterson's Director of Historic Preservation.

The wheelhouse is what remains of the Ivanhoe Manufacturing Co., a large, state-of-the-art paper mill that occupied the location beginning in 1850; its history will also be interpreted in the building. The raceway system and wheelhouse are now owned by the City of Paterson.

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