

# Cleaned up pond area open at LSP

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Visitors to Liberty State Park in Jersey City can now enjoy a taste of the freshwater wetlands that once filled the area before the arrival of high-rise condominiums.

A newly opened section of the park — a pond surrounded by paths and benches behind the Nature Interpretive Center on Freedom Way — marks the completion of the first stage of the park's wildlife restoration plan, said Frank Gallagher, administrator at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection's Division of Parks and Forestry.

The \$8-million project, funded by the state agency's Site Remediation Program and a settlement with Honeywell International Corp., involved removing chromium-contaminated soil from the marsh, re-filling the pond and planting a variety of native plant species, Gallagher said.

Metal fences and "hazardous materials" signs surrounding



**LIBERTY STATE PARK'S** pond seen here on Thursday.

the area came down two weeks ago allowing people to visit, but plants and other wildlife have been taking advantage of the wetlands for months, with three families of ducks and a snapping turtle moving in this summer, he said.

Gary Illman visited the pond Thursday to take photos.

"People in the Midwest think of this area as just high-rises. But if we post a picture of the Manhattan skyline with nature, it shows the city is not only buildings," he said.



**MICHAEL T. DEMPSEY** JOURNAL PHOTOS

**EDWARD COLEMAN**, of Jersey City, gives his thoughts about the pond at Liberty State park in Jersey City.