

Salem Chapel's congregation.
Photo: Salem Chapel

National Park Service
1849 C Street NW – Washington, DC 20240



Steven Sims named superintendent of Independence National Historical Park

Steven Sims has been named the [new superintendent of Independence National Historical Park](#) in Philadelphia, which includes Gloria Dei Church National Historic Site, Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site and Thaddeus Kosciuszko National Memorial. He is expected to begin his new position in mid-November.

Sims has served as superintendent of both Gettysburg National Military Park and Eisenhower National Historic Site since January 2020. His previous assignments include the superintendency of Valley Forge National Historical Park, Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site and the Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail. Sims has also previously worked in the Northeast Regional Office, Independence National Historical Park and National Mall and Memorial Parks. Prior to Steve's National Park Service career, he was an engineering consultant as well as an engineer and commissioned officer for the U.S. Army. *NPS Photo*



Hope for a Distressed Coal-Country Town: Dickson City Borough's Revitalization with NPS Assistance

By Julie Bell

In 2010 Dickson City Borough, a town of approximately 6,000 residents north of Scranton, Pennsylvania, was categorized as a "distressed" community, with a significant portion of the population living below the poverty line. In addition, a mall on the edge of the Borough pulled businesses and visitors away from Dickson City's Main Avenue, leaving dilapidated buildings and a loss of community pride.

Efforts to revitalize the downtown core started in 2015, with the Borough Council developing the Dickson City Downtown Market Study and Downtown Revitalization Plan, purchasing a vacant lot to create a riverfront park, and securing funding to design a walkable downtown streetscape and rehabilitate existing parks for greater accessibility. In 2021, the Borough enlisted NPS Rivers, Trails & Conservation

Assistance to broaden the partnership, secure additional funding, and develop a 15-year strategic plan for downtown revitalization with a public art component. Along with assistance for the strategic plan, NPS RTCA helped support the Borough in showcasing its successes at the recent Pennsylvania Greenways & Trails Summit hosted by WeConservePA in Scranton.

To date, Dickson City Borough has obtained more than \$4.5 million dollars in funding for the construction of their downtown streetscape, the rehabilitation of several parks, the extension of the Lackawanna Valley Heritage Trail, installation of shared bike lanes and the design of public art. Positive outcomes for the community include new businesses and skilled employment, a doubling of the average family income in five years, increased use of the existing parks and a safer, more accessible, pedestrian and bicycle trail network.

Dickson City Borough is a successful case of a former industrial community leveraging existing natural assets to promote economic development, implementing strategies focused on prescribed outdoor access, unique public gathering spaces, and recreational components that highlight connections to its Class A trout stream, the Lackawanna River. *NPS Photo: PA Greenways & Trails Summit Mobile Workshop, with completed section of the Lackawanna Valley Heritage Trail*

Employee News



Jaci Wells to begin detail as acting superintendent at Fort Monroe

Jaci Wells begins her detail as acting superintendent at Fort Monroe National Monument on October 22. She succeeds Jeff Jones, also serving an acting detail. Jaci comes from South Florida Parks and Preserve, where she is a cultural resources manager. She has more than 15 years' experience working with the federal government, plus a bachelors degree in archeology and a masters in public history. She specializes in historic preservation and compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act. An avid animal lover, Jaci is a pet mom to two cats and one dog. In her free time, Jaci spends time with her husband and pets and enjoys reading, writing and hiking. *Photo: Wells*

Training

Orientation to IR1 Regional Office for New Managers: This orientation provides managers who are new to the GS or WG 11-12 level and above (or simply new to Region 1) with the understanding and alignment of the regional office's programs and staff. It is also an opportunity to network and build professional relationships with peers, regional office leadership and staff to facilitate open and ongoing communication. Training will begin at 12:00 noon on Tuesday, **October 24** and will conclude at 1:00 p.m. on Wednesday, **October 25**. [Use this form to register.](#)