

MARK C. HATCHEL

KIMLEY-HORN & ASSOCIATES

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If a public sector waterpark has been featured in "World Waterpark Magazine" in recent years, then chances are that Mark C. Hatchel, ASLA, might have had a hand in its design. Over the past 35 years, Hatchel has designed many innovative and leading edge park projects in Texas, throughout the United States and internationally.

Although Hatchel completed his first public pool project in 1979, it was in 1983 when he was contacted by George Millay, Bill Getz and Gary Danning of Wet 'n Wild that his fate as an industry leader was sealed. Millay and the others tasked Hatchel with doing some drainage and shade improvements to their new park in Arlington, Texas. The next year, Millay asked Hatchel to head up the design of a new 80-foot-tall triple drop slide called "Der Stuka." During the next ten years, Hatchel was the lead design consultant on more than forty Wet 'n Wild capital improvement projects in Texas, Florida, Las Vegas and San Juan, Puerto Rico. These Wet 'n Wild projects included many innovative, leading edge and award-winning projects, as Wet 'n Wild was one of the true innovators in the waterpark industry during that time.

In addition to his many Wet 'n Wild projects, in 1992, Hatchel did the master planning for the first two public sector family aquatic centers to be built in Texas. Hatchel recommended that these parks be built in a mini-waterpark style and the two projects were a huge success and helped place Texas at the forefront of the family aquatic center trend.

In 1993, Hatchel joined Wet 'n Wild as Director of Design Services and spent the next four years leading the design of five new Wet 'n Wild waterparks in Brazil and Mexico. These projects had to be designed in metric scale and in Spanish or Portuguese and Hatchel learned to do both assembling a multi-national design team overseas and at the Wet 'n Wild offices in Texas. In Tim O'Brien's book, "The Wavemaker," Millay (who didn't lavish praise often) said: "Hatchel's work in Rio and Sao Paulo is a hallmark standard that will be copied for years to come."

Between 1997-1999, Hatchel served as Vice President of Design and Development with Schlitterbahn Waterparks/NBGS International. During his tenure with Schlitterbahn, Hatchel was responsible for all park design efforts and travelled extensively to Singapore, Taiwan, China, Bolivia, the United Kingdom and Turkey. Three notable NBGS parks designed by Hatchel remain in use today, including: Schlitterbahn South Padre Island; OCT- Playa Maya in Shenzhen, China; and Aqua Fantasy Waterpark in Selcuk, Turkey.

In 1999, Hatchel joined Kimley-Horn & Associates (a nationally known engineering consulting firm), where he leads Kimley-Horn's national aquatics design practice as a Vice President and Senior Park Planner. Over the past 17 years, Hatchel has directed all of the firm's family aquatic center and waterpark design efforts including: 10 commercial waterpark expansion projects, 40 public sector aquatic projects, 20 splash pads, 15 strategic enterprise plans for waterpark and 10 city-wide aquatic master plans. Currently, Hatchel and his design team are developing plans for six new state-of-the-art family aquatic centers for the City of Dallas, Texas.

Along with his numerous projects and many awards, perhaps what sets Hatchel apart from others is he is the only waterpark designer to have successfully worked on multiple projects with industry pioneers Millay and Henry as Head of Design. This background has served Hatchel well in his current work in public sector waterpark design.

