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SCHUYLKILL RIVER
NATIONAL & STATE HERITAGE AREA

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Grant Awarded For Trail Improvements



Reviewing the outcome of the initial William Penn Foundation's grant are L-R: Kara Wilson, Bob Folwell-SRHA; Andy Johnson, Feather Houstoun, Diane Schrauth of William Penn; SRHA Executive Director Kurt Zwikl.

The Schuylkill River Heritage Area has received a two-year, \$735,000 grant from the Philadelphia-based William Penn Foundation to improve the Schuylkill River Trail.

The money will fund projects that enhance accessibility, management and stewardship of the trail.

The award is essentially an extension of an earlier grant received by the SRHA in 2006. That grant, totaling \$660,000, also supported Schuylkill River Trail projects.

Funding from the new grant will go toward expanding a signage system to better mark the trail, developing a promotional program, and coordinating implementation of a uniform maintenance and management plan for the entire trail.

"This project will have a major impact on the residents of the Schuylkill River Region," said SRHA Executive Director Kurt Zwikl. "It enables us to improve and expand the Schuylkill River Trail, which is already an

invaluable recreational amenity for many, and fast becoming a much needed route for pedestrian and cycling commuters."

The trail, when complete, will run the entire length of the river from Philadelphia to Pottsville, totaling about 130 miles and traversing through five counties. It has been under construction for many years, but its various parts are owned and maintained by a number of public and private agencies.

Among the new projects to be undertaken is the introduction this summer of a trail ambassador pilot program, fabrication and installation of signs and trailheads for a proposed Chester County segment of the trail, and signage for a 20-mile Reading-to-Hamburg piece, much of which will be on-road initially.

In addition, \$200,000 of the grant funding will go to the Fairmount Park Commission for continued development of the Fairmount Bikeway, a recreational trail connecting the Schuylkill River Trail to the Northwest section of Philadelphia.





Celebrating the Past

Daniel Boone was born at this Berks County homestead in 1734 and lived there for the first 16 years of his life. Today, the state historic site tells the story of his youth and the region's 18th century settlers.

The Daniel Boone Homestead, located near Reading, is a PA Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) historic site that preserves not only the Boone family home, but a number of other historic structures that have been moved onto the 579-acre site.

The Boone family first settled this location in 1730. Daniel Boone was born four years later and resided here until the age of 16, when the family moved to North Carolina. However, this region left a lasting impact on Daniel Boone's life and on the history of Pennsylvania.

Today, the site interprets the lives of English and German settlers in eastern Berks County, and includes a number of historic buildings, some moved from other locations. Included among the buildings are the Boone house, a blacksmith shop, bank barn, the Bertolet Log House, Bertolet Sawmill and visitor center.

When Squire Boone first built the Boone house in 1730, it was a one-room, one-story log house that included a cellar with a spring. Sometime around the mid-1700s, the large, stone two-story section of the present house was built and attached to the log house. John DeTurk, a later owner, razed the log-house in 1779 and replaced it with another two-story stone addition, while retaining the original log-house foundation and cellar.

The DeTurk family also probably built the stone smokehouse on the property in the late 18th century, as well as the Pennsylvania German bank barn, portions of which are original. In addition, a building constructed by Samuel DeTurk in 1812 now houses the site's education center.



Blacksmith Shop



Visitors to the Daniel Boone Homestead can also see the Bertolet Log House which was built in 1737 in the Oley Valley and relocated to the Daniel Boone Homestead in 1968 as an excellent example of 18th century Pennsylvania German log architecture. The Bertolet sawmill, a water-powered, vertical-blade sawmill built circa 1810, was also moved to this site from the Oley Valley in 1972.

The 1769 blacksmith shop on the property was moved from nearby Amityville, and is similar to the one Squire Boone, who was a blacksmith by trade, would have had on his farm. The site also includes picnic areas, trails and a man-made lake.

The Daniel Boone Homestead features a number of different activities and events that tell the story of the region's earliest settlers. On May 17 and 18, the homestead hosted a Revolutionary War Encampment—one of the

largest in the country. Approximately 1,500 re-enactors portrayed various soldiers who fought in the war and civilians who aided them.

Other events offered at the homestead include summer camps, children's workshops and a lecture series.

To learn more visit the site's webpage at www.danielboonehomestead.org.



Summer Camps, Events and Programs

Many of our Heritage Partners offer summer camps and special programs that provide children with opportunities for unique and enlightening experiences. Below is a sampling of some of the many programs available this summer.

Wissahickon Watershed Association, in **Ambler**, holds a summer Ecology Camp that lets kids ages 5-10 explore the woods, creek and pond at Penllyn Woods, Lower Gwynedd. For more information or to register visit www.wwa.org.



Green Valleys Association

Green Valleys Association in **Chester County** (above), offers a series of week-long nature camps through the summer, at their beautiful 197-acre property, Welkinweir, where forests, fields and five brook-fed ponds provide ample areas for hands-on learning. www.greenvalleys.org.

The GoggleWorks, in **Reading**, has a full slate of full and half-day summer art camps for children ages 7-11 and studio sessions for teens in a variety of art forms. For information on what's offered, download a brochure at www.goggleworks.org.

Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, in **Kempton**, teaches students entering 4th and 5th grade all about birds of prey in its Raptor Day Camp. Activities include bird demos, hikes, crafts and much more. Call 610-756-6961 or visit www.hawkmountain.org.

The Nature Ramblers Summer Camp by the **Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education**, in **Roxborough**, offers hiking, hands-on discoveries and art experiences for children aged 4-15. Visit www.schuylkillcenter.org.

Hiking, bug catching and stream stomping are all part of the fun at **Riverbend Environmental Education Center's** summer exploration camps.

Twelve weeks of camps are offered. www.riverbendec.org

Gallery on High, in **Pottstown**, holds camps throughout the summer, including a Life on the Schuylkill camp which includes arts, crafts and kayaking on the river. www.galleryonhigh.com

Riverbend Environmental Education Center in **Gladwyne** offers a Summer Exploration Camp and a year round Exploration Camp. Riverbend offers camps for different age groups: 4, 5-6, 7-8, 9-11 and 11-13 year olds. For more information visit www.riverbendec.org.



Solar Flair

RiverPlace Development Corporation, in **Reading**, held its Solar Flair Music and Arts Festival on June 21 with live musical performances, working artists and dancers along the Art Walk Trail along the riverfront. www.riverplacepa.com

The **Schuylkill Headwaters Association**, in **Pottsville**, is seeking volunteers to help with fish and wildlife stream bank restoration projects. Call (570) 385-2122.

The Schuylkill River Heritage Center at the Foundry Building, in **Phoenixville**, was awarded the 2008 Achievement Award from the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia. The museum showcases the industrial legacy of Phoenixville and the Schuylkill River. The Hankin Group, which now owns the building, is restoring the major portion of the Foundry Building for use as a multi-use catering and event facility. www.phoenixvillefoundry.org

Norristown Fish Ladder Dedicated

On May 2 Exelon executives officially dedicated the Fish Ladder Exelon built on the Bridgeport/Upper Merion side of the Norristown Dam. The ladder will provide shad passage up the Schuylkill River in the hopes this once common fish will again breed in the Schuylkill River.

A fish ladder on the Black Rock Dam is in progress, and when its complete shad should have passage all the way to Kernsville Dam above Hamburg in Berks County.

Mini-Grants Offered

The Schuylkill River Heritage Area is introducing a new mini-grant program that will provide \$1,000 for 10 small scale projects that promote cultural and natural resource preservation.

The mini-grants, available for the first time this year, will support small projects, such as publications, special events, educational programs and community endeavors. These projects, while more modest and less costly than those traditionally funded by the SRHA, can still have a significant impact on communities throughout the Heritage Area. The mini-grants will be available to non-profit organizations and local governments within the five-county region that makes up the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. All funding for the grants comes from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Heritage Area Grant Program, which the Schuylkill River Heritage Area annually distributes to projects and programs all along the river corridor. The SRHA will continue to support large projects.

"We wanted to reach out and engage more partners," said Schuylkill River Heritage Area Executive Director Kurt Zwikl. "These mini-grants allow us to broaden our base and touch organizations that may not have been involved with us in the past. They also enable us to support projects at a different level than those typically awarded through planning and implementation grants."

Projects will be considered based on how well they meet one or more of the five goals in the SRHA's Management Plan, which calls for promoting resource conservation, education, recreation, community revitalization and tourism.

Recipients must provide a 50 percent cash match, at least 10 percent of which must be in private, non-governmental funds.

For more information, contact Tim Fenchel, SRHA Grant Coordinator at (484) 945-0200 or tfenchel@schuylkillriver.org.



Charles Campbell, Exelon Power's Project Manager for the Norristown Fish Ladder, invites guests at the dedication into the video chamber.

Schuylkill River Sojourn 2008

The 10th Annual Schuylkill River Sojourn, June 7-13, broke all records, taking almost 250 paddlers down the river—up from last year's record 195 participants. A total of 56 people registered for the full trip, and every day had more than 100 people on the water.

The Schuylkill River Sojourn is a seven-day, 110-mile guided canoe and kayak tour that takes paddlers through the five-county (Schuylkill, Berks, Chester, Montgomery and Philadelphia) Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area.

This year's sojourn was an amazing event full of fun and discovery, despite some sweltering hot days (around 100 degrees!) early in the week.



Photo: Tim Fenchel

The APS Museum canoes, named for the five explorers, were christened with bottled Philly tap water, courtesy the Philadelphia Water Department. Mal Bartram (L) christens a boat while expedition leader Brett Keyser talks about the explorer the boat is named after.



The APS Museum created over 150 handcrafted distributed to Sojourners who chronicled their adventures, like explorers of old. Book conservator and artist Denise Carbone, who designed the journals. Instructions were given at Saturday's lunch, and materials were provided at every evening stop.



LEFT: Sue Ann Prince, APS Museum Director and RIGHT: Ellen Owens, Education Program Manager, were responsible for the APS Museum's programming for the 10th annual Schuylkill River Sojourn.



LEFT: At every major stop, educators from the Stroud Center for Water Research sampled the water, and explained how to interpret the data at Monday's lunch program. Contact Christina Medved, cmedved@stroudcenter.org, for more information.

BELOW: Sojourners paddled 14-18 miles a day. Here they're leaving Gibraltar on Tuesday morning.



ABOVE: Four of the APS Museum's five explorer boats. Daily programs about astronomy, entomology or ornithology were presented during the week long event. Evening programming invited Sojourners to gather around campfires as Keyser, a performance artist, told folk tales or read from historic explorer journals. Modern day explorer Doug Morgan also related tales of his personal adventures. Expedition Team Leader Brett Keyser and Jake Gambon led herbarium walks throughout the week to collect, identify and record plant and tree specimens along the river. The collected material will create a modern herbarium of the river that will be displayed August 2008 at the APS Museum.



The celebration began with fireworks Friday night in Schuylkill Haven, safely situated near the camping area.

The sojourn is supported by hundreds of people and dozens of organizations up and down the river. Major sponsors for 2008 include: The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, Pennsylvania American Water, Heritage Philadelphia Program of the Pew Charitable Trust administered by University of the Arts, PPL, B&G Glass, Pennsylvania Organization of Watersheds and Rivers, Emotion Kayak, REI, and the National Park Service.



ABOVE-LEFT: Antonia Davis and staff from the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove brought several unreleasable live birds, including this Great Horned Owl. RIGHT: Native flora and fauna illustrator Scott Rawlins talked about illustrations as means to scientific observation and record-keeping.



ABOVE: At lunch after the Moth Ball, an evening insect-collecting program at Pottstown, bug expert Greg Cowper demonstrated pinning and identifying the insects. He also explained bugs' roles as indicators of an ecosystem's health.



State Senator Andrew Dinniman joined the Sojourn at Lock 59 on Wednesday.



LEFT: Betsy Quant, Canoe Susquehanna, cools off in the river during 90°F temperatures.

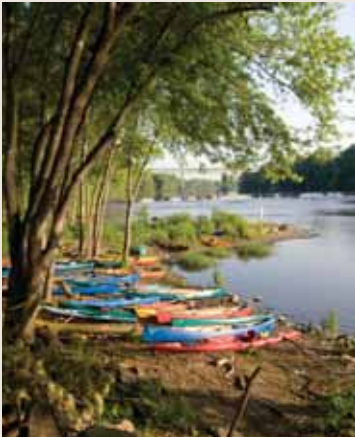
Celebrity Paddlers Join this Year's Sojourn

For the 10th anniversary of the Schuylkill River Sojourn, the SRHA wanted to introduce some local "celebrities" to the event. Each day featured at least one celebrity paddler or speaker who experienced, first hand, the fun and excitement of the river. Below is a list of government, business and community leaders who joined in.

- June 7: Congressman Tim Holden sent sojourners on their way with a speech at the Pottsville launch.
- June 8: State Representative Tim Seip paddled 18.5 miles from Port Clinton to Jim Dietrich Park in Muhlenberg Township.
- June 9: Tom Strauss, president of Emotion Kayaks, came along, as did Don Moll, president of B&G Glass. Emotion Kayaks donated a free kayak which was raffled off on Saturday. B&G Glass was a financial sponsor.
- June 10: Edie Shean-Hammond, superintendent of Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, paddled from Gibraltar to Pottstown, along with Susan Turcmanovich, of Pennsylvania American Water, which also sponsored the sojourn
- June 11: State Senator Andrew Dinniman kayaked from Lock 59 to Mont Clare
- June 12: Barbara Pollarine, Assistant Superintendent of Valley Forge National Historical Park and Joe DiBello of the National Park Service joined sojourners for the trip from Mont Clare to West Conshohocken.
- June 13: American Philosophical Society President and Nobel Prize winner Dr. Barry Blumberg, best known for the discovery of the Hepatitis B virus, traveled from West Conshohocken to Philadelphia. He was joined by Montgomery County Commissioner Joseph M. Hoeffel and Brenda Barrett, DCNR Director of the Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis spoke to the sojourners at the Manayunk lunch stop and also at the culminating breakfast in Philadelphia on Saturday.



This year, for the first time, the final day included lunch at Manayunk Restaurant and Brew Pub. The Restaurant and Manayunk Dev. Corp. worked together to install the boat landing for paddlers.



Landing at West Conshohocken Friday morning. That's the Blue Route (I-476) bridge in the distance.

RIGHT: A page in one of the Sojourners' journals that will be displayed during August at the APS Museum in Philadelphia. The journal shown was created by Kathryn Powers from Washington, DC.



Photo by Ellen Owens



The Sojourn culminated with breakfast and a talk by DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis in the APS' beautiful Thomas Jefferson Garden. It was followed by an inside tour of the UNDAUNTED museum exhibition and tour of Winifred Lutz's art installation "Drawing Dock Creek".



SRHA Photo

Barbara Hove, Phoenixville, won the kayak donated by Emotion Kayak plus a \$100 gift card from REI Outfitters in Conshohocken.

Schuylkill River Trail Pottstown-to-Reading Section



"This essentially completes all the pieces we need for ownership of the trail from Pottstown to Reading," said SRHA engineer Dwight Powell.

While small, the new trail piece is significant because it completes the Schuylkill River Trail's Thun Section through Birdsboro. The trail, which begins at Riverfront Park in Pottstown, ends at Armorcast Road. After that, a four-mile on-road piece links Birdsboro to Gibraltar. New signs directing trail users have recently been erected along River and Schuylkill Roads.

The Schuylkill River Heritage Area recently added .68 miles to the Schuylkill River Trail's Thun Section in Birdsboro.

The link was made possible by Greg Flynn, owner of the former Armorcast property, located on Armorcast Road. Flynn has agreed to a license agreement with the Schuylkill River Heritage Area, allowing the non-profit organization to build the trail on his property and to access it from the privately owned Armorcast Road.

Construction of 500 feet of new trail behind the Birdsboro Optimist baseball field has been completed by Barwis Construction, Limekiln, who cleared and graded the trail, laid stone base and a fine stone surface. The project cost \$28,000.

With the addition of the new Birdsboro piece and the on-road signs, it is now much easier for hikers and bikers to complete the 19 miles from Pottstown to Reading Area Community College.



Trail On-Road Signage

A new on-road signage system has been installed along the Schuylkill River Trail's Thun Section.

The signs point the way for trail users traveling between Birdsboro and Gibraltar—an on-road piece stretching about four miles. The directional signs will make it easier for hikers and bikers to find their way from the points where the off-road trail ends in Birdsboro to where it picks up again in Gibraltar, and vice versa.

The 57 signs include arrows, east and west directional prompts and Schuylkill River Trail logos. They were paid for by a Berks County Open Space & Recreation Grant administered through the Berks County Open Space & Recreation Advisory Council.

It is currently possible to follow the Schuylkill River Trail 19 miles from Pottstown to Reading. The Birdsboro-to-Gibraltar piece located along that section has always followed River and Schuylkill Road, but in the past only a single sign in Gibraltar pointed the way. The new signage system will make the route clear to anyone using the trail coming from either direction.

In addition to guiding trail users, the signs will serve as a demonstration system for other proposed on-road routes. A 20-mile piece of the Schuylkill River Trail is planned for Reading to Hamburg. That piece will be constructed in sections, but will be established almost entirely as an temporary on-road trail initially. As funding becomes available, the on-road pieces will be replaced with off-road trails.

For more information contact Robert Folwell at 484-945-0200 or rfolwell@schuylkillriver.org

Memorial Benches Installed



Two benches were installed near the Stilling Basin at Blue Marsh Lake by the Keystone Canoe Club.

The benches are memorials to Jay Hunsinger, former KCC President, and Ralph Kofroth (aka the Rainbow Rocker or Rainbow Ralph).



Schuylkill River Heritage Area contributed the monies from Ralph Kofroth's memorial fund to his bench.

They are located in the picnic area below the Stilling Basin where many people launch their boats to paddle the Tulpehocken Creek.

Volunteers Recognized

A total of 27 people attended a trail volunteer recognition buffet at the Schuylkill River Heritage Area headquarters in March. The buffet served up good food and plenty of appreciation to volunteers whose hard work is essential to maintaining the Thun and Bartram Trail sections of the Schuylkill River Trail.

Since local tax dollars are not available, volunteers are responsible for all trail maintenance including mowing access areas, vandalism repair, removing felled trees and large branches, cutting back overgrowth, and a variety of other tasks. In nearby Montgomery County, where the trail is owned by the county and Pottstown Borough, maintenance is performed by municipal and county workers.

The Thun Trail section, which runs through Berks County from Pottstown to Reading, is owned by the SRHA. Along the Thun Trail, volunteers are coordinated by Greg Marshall who organizes about four regular clean-up days a year to clear away debris and address any issues associated with repairs and upkeep.

The Bartram Trail, coordinated by Wayne Bowen, travels from Hamburg, Berks County to Auburn in Schuylkill County, with a separate segment near Landingville in Schuylkill County.

In 2007, 51 volunteers contributed 213 hours, a remarkable achievement that included clearing for the new trail piece in Birdsboro. The success of these volunteers, who have been maintaining the trail for more than a decade, is now being used to start other volunteer organizations along the entire trail.

Bartram Trail Update



Visitors to the Bartram Trail trailhead will notice several improvements, including a sign for the Kernsville Dam Recreation Area (right), installed by Blue Mountain Wildlife.

Trail Ambassador Program Launched

The SRHA has introduced a pilot Trail Ambassador program that has volunteers serving to inform and assist people along the Schuylkill River Trail.

Trail Steward Kara Wilson has organized a small group of volunteers—mostly people who regularly walk or bike the Pottstown-to-Reading section of the trail—who have agreed to spend a minimum of eight hours a month as Trail Ambassadors.

Volunteers wear red T-shirts identifying them as Trail Ambassadors, and carry a backpack with maps, informational materials and first aid supplies.

Trail users seeking additional information about the trail, or looking for directions to a nearby site, or simply wondering where the trail leads can get assistance from the Trail Ambassador.

Wilson decided to start the Trail Ambassador program, using funds from a William Penn Foundation grant, because she, and other members of the Trail Council, saw a need for it.

“Whenever I’m on the trail, people often stop me and ask questions, even though I have nothing identifying me as the Trail Steward,” she said.

Commonly, people want to know how far it is to the next town, or when the trail will be completed. With Trail Ambassadors regularly on the trail, people can more easily get their questions answered quickly and correctly.

Volunteers do not need to agree to work on certain days or at specified hours. Their only requirement is to serve a minimum of eight

hours a month and document their hours.

Anyone interested in volunteering or learning more about the program should contact Wilson at 484-945-0200 or kwilson@schuylkillriver.org.

The Trail Council includes representatives from the counties of Schuylkill, Berks, Chester and Montgomery; Fairmount Park Commission; Manayunk Dev. Corp.; Schuylkill River Dev. Corp.; East Falls Economic Dev. Corp.; RiverPlace; Rails to Trails Conservancy; DCNR; Valley Forge NHP; Pottstown Borough and Natural Lands Trust

Schuylkill River National & State Heritage Area

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www.schuylkillriver.org

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Trail Volunteer Coordinator

Greg Marshall

Upcoming Events

Community Paddle

In September, the SRHA will invite business, government and community leaders to experience the river for themselves, through a short, scenic guided kayak tour from Douglassville to Pottstown. Dates to be announced. Call 484-945-0200 if you want to participate.

Scenes of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area Art Show and Sale

The art show that celebrates the beauty of the region will be on view from September 8-October 24 at the Montgomery County

Community College West Campus art gallery, 16 High Street, Pottstown. For the first time, the show will be expanded to include entries from photographers as well as artists.

Artists and photographers interested in submitting up to two pieces of work are encouraged to download the prospectus from www.schuylkillriver.org's home page. Artwork submission date is August 21 from 2-7 p.m. at MCCC's West Campus gallery.

Schuylkill River Festival

On Saturday, October 11, Riverfront Park in Pottstown will be filled with fun activities, artists,

and great food. New this year is a traditional paddle making class, where participants can learn to make a Greenland kayak paddle from cedar.

The evening Reception for the Scenes of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area will be October 10 from 5:30-8 p.m. at Montgomery County Community College's Art Gallery at 16 High Street.



Parting shot - Philadelphia "salute" from this year's 10th Annual Schuylkill River Sojourn - photo by Cody Goddard

Support the Schuylkill River Heritage Area

Join or renew online at www.schuylkillriver.org

The Schuylkill River National & State Heritage Area is dedicated to assisting communities, and citizens of the Schuylkill River region to preserve and sustain their cultural heritage and natural environment for future generations.



140 College Drive
Pottstown, PA 19464

