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May 2014
Dear Friends,

We are pleased to present the Schuylkill River Heritage Area’s 2013 Annual Report. Please take a few moments to look through this document. You will see 2013 was another successful year for us, filled with cycling and paddling events, Schuylkill River Trail projects, book signings, educational programs, grant awards and more. We invest a great deal of time and energy into these projects and programs because we know that the Schuylkill River is important. It provides drinking water to 1.5 million people; its scenic waterfronts bolster the economies of river communities, and its greenways, trails and waters are recreational destinations. The river is a shared commons that links us to our nation’s history, and joins together 3.2 million people across five counties who live in its watershed.

With a small staff of six employees and one AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer, the Schuylkill River Heritage Area works tirelessly to promote the region. As you read through our annual report keep in mind that all the programs we manage—the bike rides, the art show, the paddling events, the trail projects—are carefully designed to encourage stewardship of our environment and make this region a better place for everyone who lives and works here.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your help and support in the past, and ask that you consider making a donation in addition to your membership renewal to the organization this year. An increase in your membership donation is also appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kurt D. Zwikl
Executive Director

Carl V. Raring
President, Board of Directors

The Schuylkill River Heritage Area is dedicated to assisting communities, organizations, and citizens of the Schuylkill River region to preserve and sustain their cultural heritage and natural environment for future generations.
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Allen J. Zimmerman
Stan Zona
A Look Back on the
Schuylkill River Heritage Area’s
2013 Achievements

Conservation. Education. Recreation. Cultural and historic preservation. Tourism. Those words are our mantra here at the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. Those concepts are the tools we use to revitalize communities throughout the region and spur economic development. They fit together like pieces of a puzzle that join to form our overarching view of an improved Schuylkill River Region. Below is a brief overview of our key projects and programs for 2013, all of which are founded on the concepts above.

Cycles & Cemeteries Ride.
In September we held the second ride in our Schuylkill River Trail Bike Tour Series. The Cycles & Cemeteries Ride was a tremendous success, with 140 cyclists riding 14 to 28 miles along the Schuylkill River Trail and visiting burial sites of Civil War notables at the historic Laurel Hill and Montgomery Cemeteries. In 2014 the Bike Tour Series will continue with our Pedaling through our National Parks Ride.

10th Annual Scenes of the Schuylkill Art Show.
The juried art show once again showcased regional talent and highlighted the beauty of the river valley. A total of 83 original works were on display in the Montgomery County Community College West Campus Gallery from Aug. 28 to Oct. 18.

River of Revolutions Interpretive Center.
Our Interpretive Center, which opened last year, welcomed hundreds of visitors throughout 2013. Located in our Pottstown offices, its interactive exhibits on river history, recreational and historic sites, environmental awareness and more have proven to have wide appeal.

15th Annual Schuylkill River Sojourn.
Over 200 paddlers took the journey from Schuylkill Haven to Philadelphia during the 15th Annual Schuylkill River Sojourn, with a record number, 59, making the full trip. The programming theme, A Civil War Odyssey, celebrated the region’s role in the Civil War with programs that featured re-enactors, informative presentations, music, and a talk by the Gettysburg National Park superintendent. The sojourn’s popularity continues to grow. Since1999, over 3,000 registrants from 21 states and Canada have participated.

Lectures and Book Signings.
We launched a new series of lectures and book signings that focused on the region’s history and environment. Books featured were: The African American Experience at Hopewell Furnace by Frances Delmar; More Trees Please, by Rich Wood; and Legendary Locals of Pottstown, by Sue Repko and Ed Berger. We also held two showings of the documentary The City Dark, about the loss of night.

Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey.
Our VISTA volunteer, Anesa Owen, who worked in our offices through 2013, joined forces with the I-LEAD Charter School in Reading to develop the Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey, a new educational program that connects at-risk urban youth to the outdoors and environmental careers. The 14-week mentoring program for 9th & 10th graders was highlighted by a kayaking trip on the Schuylkill. The program will continue in 2014.

Pedal and Paddle.
Our round-trip Pedal and Paddle biking/kayaking adventures continue to be among our most popular events. In 2013, we held one each month from May through September. Over the course of the summer, we introduced 75 people to a 4.5 mile ride along the Schuylkill River Trail in Pottstown, a tour of Historic Morlatton Village and a return trip via kayak.

Community Bike Shares.
Bike Pottstown and Bike Schuylkill are completely free bike share programs that we have made available in three communities: Pottstown, Phoenixville and Hamburg. This year we expanded our commitment to the bike shares with a new website at www.bikeschuylkill.org. We also encouraged people to try Bike Pottstown by offering free water bottles to first time participants and free backpacks to people who borrowed a bike 10 times.
2014 River of the Year Programs.
The Schuylkill River is the 2014 Pennsylvania River of the Year and we have been named the lead agency in developing a year-long celebration of the river. We are creating a River of the Year theme for the 16th Annual Schuylkill River Sojourn and working with partner on a calendar of events that honor the river. We are developing a series of speaker programs that focus on the river, including a talk by Chari Towne about the mid-20th century desilting project, and two presentations in October by Beth Kephart, author of the book Flow: An Autobiography of the Schuylkill River.

Pedaling Through Our National Parks Ride.
The third ride in our Schuylkill River Trail Bike Tour Series will be a two-day event featuring a bike ride along the trail and visits to three national parks: Hopewell Furnace, Valley Forge and Independence.

What We Are Working On in 2014

Trail Sustainability Programs.
We continued to grow our volunteer base and our Trail Ambassador, Sponsor-a-Trail and Adopt-a-Trail programs in Berks and Schuylkill Counties where we operate and maintain 28 trail miles. With help from our VISTA Americorps worker, who served as our Trail Sustainability Coordinator, we added more Trail Ambassadors and improved our volunteer communications. We also added a new trail sponsor, with the Chicago-based Sloan Valve Company signing on as a three-year Sponsor-a-Trail member. In addition to a monetary donation for trail upkeep, Sloan also presented the Heritage Area with a custom bike that we will use to promote the trail. Other Sponsor-a-Trail members include: UGI Corp., Brentwood Industries, Safeco Insurance and PPL Corp. Adopt-a-Trail members agree to help clean up a section of trail. They include: Bethany Children's Home, Penn State Schuylkill, South Manheim Township and West Brunswick Township.

Trail Construction.
We cut the ribbon on a new section of trail in Bern Township. One of the first pieces built along the proposed 20-mile Reading to Hamburg stretch of the Schuylkill River Trail, the new 2,100-foot segment will be expanded in 2014 to 2.5-miles.

Mile Markers.
We added mile posts along 18 miles of the Thun Section of the Schuylkill River Trail in Berks County, marking distances in miles, quarter-miles, and, along some spots, tenths of miles. Distances are measured from the Schuylkill River Trail’s start in Philadelphia, thus the first Berks County marker begins at mile 45. Eventually it is hoped that mile markers will be installed along the entire Schuylkill River Trail. The markers create a reference point for emergency 9-1-1 calls. They will also help trail users keep track of distances.

Gateway Centers.
Two new Schuylkill River Heritage Area Gateway Centers will be added in Pottsville and Schuylkill Haven bringing to 21 the number of centers now located in well-visited sites throughout the five-county Heritage Area. Gateway Centers are information booths with literature and information about cultural, historic and recreational tourism opportunities in the region.
Schuylkill River Rail Projects.
We are always working to expand and improve the Schuylkill River Rail. In 2014 a new section of trail is being added in Leesport that will connect to the piece built in 2013.

Revolutionary War Illustration Exhibit
Bringing the War of Independence to Life.
We are collaborating with two national parks and the Crossroads of the American Revolution National Heritage Area, in New Jersey, in displaying our unique exhibit, Bringing the War of Independence to Life: 19th Century Illustrations of the American Revolution. The traveling exhibit of 42 illustrations from the personal collection of Heritage Area Executive Director Kurt Zwikl is being shown throughout 2014, first at Valley Forge National Historical Park and then at Morristown National Historical Park in the Washington's Headquarters Museum, in Morristown, NJ.

New Water Rail Guide.
The Schuylkill River Water Rail Guides and Maps make the river more accessible and safer for recreational boaters. We are working to create a brand new water rail guide, with more details and updated maps that account for new access points and removed dams.

Schuylkill River Restoration Fund
The Schuylkill River Restoration Fund provides grants to government agencies and non-profit organizations for projects that improve the quality of water in the river and its tributaries. The grants focus on three major sources of pollution: stormwater run-off, agricultural pollution and abandoned mine drainage. In 2013, we distributed over $350,000 in Schuylkill River Restoration Fund grants to 10 projects. Since the Fund was established in 2006 by Exelon and the Heritage Area, the public/private partnership has garnered over $2 million for 42 projects. Additional Funders include: Philadelphia Water Department, Aqua PA and Partnership for the Delaware Estuary.

Project Statistics
- 42 projects funded, 22 completed
- 5 Stormwater basins retrofitted
- 5 Abandoned mine drainage projects completed
- Over 6,500 feet of protected streams
- Over 10,000 feet of steambank fencing installed
- Over 1,500 native trees and shrubs planted
- Agricultural improvements to 12 Berk Co. Farms
**Appropriations, Grants, and Contributions**

The Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area, managed by the Schuylkill River Greenway Association, a non-profit 501c3 organization, is supported by federal and state appropriations and receives public and private sector grants and donations. Funding supports a variety of projects as well as administration and program development.

**Federal Appropriations**
National Park Service (funds spent) $ 509,897

**State Funding**
DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) $ 6,249
DCNR C2P2 – Conservation Landscape Initiative $ 163,000
Dept. of Transportation (DOT) $ 4,460

**County & Local Funding**
Berks County $ 1,000
Chester County $ 10,000
Schuylkill County $ 5,771
Philadelphia Water Department $ 94,410

**Private Funds, Grants, & Donations**
Exelon Nuclear $ 323,878
Memberships & Contributions $ 22,902
Merchandise Sales $ 1,447
PPL Services Corporation $ 3,000
PA Organization of Watersheds & Rivers (POWR) $ 5,900
Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation $ 25,000
Sojourn & Special Events $ 77,543
William Penn Foundation $ 160,678
Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc. $ 4,015
Arcadia Publishing Royalties $ 108
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission $ 31,104
J. P. Mascaro & Sons $ 15,000

**Funding Total**
$ 1,465,362

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**Event Sponsors**

**Schuylkill River Sojourn**
Ateeco Inc.
B&G Glass/Gallen Insurance
Bank of American with Jamie Middleton
Barwis Construction, LLC
Candy & Bill Trace
Carroll Engineering Corp
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The H&K Group
The Swisher Studio
Traffic Planning and Design, Inc.
Wade Goldstein Landau & Abruzzo
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**Scenes of the Schuylkill Art Show**
Campbell Thomas & Co.
National Penn Bank
Normandeau Associates, Inc.

**Schuylkill River Trail Bike Tour Series**
422 Commercial Realty
B & G Glass Service, Inc.
Christopher & Jane Degruych (Cast Rite Metal Co.)
Invata Intralogistics (Formerly GRSI)

**Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey**
Body Kneads
PA Outdoor Lighting Council

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**Fiscal Year 2013**

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**Sources Of Funds As A Percentage Of Total Investment**

- Federal Appropriations
- State Funding
- County & Local Funding
- Private Funds, Grants, & Donations

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