



SCHUYLKILL RIVER

NATIONAL & STATE HERITAGE AREA





SCHUYLKILL RIVER
NATIONAL & STATE HERITAGE AREA

April 2016

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to present the Schuylkill River Heritage Area's 2015 Annual Report. Perhaps our greatest success story of 2015 was of the Schuylkill River Trail being voted the Best Urban Trail in America in a *USA Today* readers' poll. We have, over the years, invested a great deal of time and energy into building, promoting and maintaining the trail, so naturally we are proud that it is so beloved. But the trail is only one of many projects we undertook in 2015. With a small staff of six employees and one AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer, the Schuylkill River Heritage Area has worked tirelessly to promote the region. We held a record-breaking Schuylkill River Sojourn, sold out nearly every one of our six pedal and paddle events, partnered with Sly Fox Brewery to introduce SRT Ale (a very popular Ale for the Trail), and hosted a colonial style dinner at Historic Morlatton Village.

As you flip through the following pages, keep in mind that all our work - the grant programs, the art show, the paddling events, the trail projects - is carefully designed to encourage stewardship of our environment and make this region a better place to live, work and play.



Silas on the Schuylkill River

Sincerely,

Silas Chamberlin, PhD
Executive Director

Rob Kuhlman
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.

2015 | BY THE NUMBERS

1700 HOURS

Schuylkill River Trail Ambassadors spent volunteering along the trail

\$275,000

Awarded in Schuylkill River Restoration Fund Grants to 9 projects that improve river water quality

3

Organizations joined our Adopt-a-Trail program agreeing to maintain a combined total of 9 trail miles

\$4,018

Raised through the sale of SRT Ale from April to September, benefiting the Schuylkill River Trail

#1

SPOT EARNED BY THE SCHUYLKILL RIVER TRAIL ON THE 10 BEST URBAN TRAILS IN AMERICA LIST IN A *USA TODAY'S* READERS' POLL

129

Underserved teens from three counties gained an appreciation for nature through our Student Outdoor Leadership Odyssey

90

People participated in our unique colonial dinner at Historic Morlatton Village

184 PADDLERS

From 14 states and Switzerland participated in the 17th Annual Schuylkill River Sojourn including 74 who took the full 112-mile week-long paddle

110 MILES

TRAVELED BY A SLY FOX BREWERY TWO-PERSON TEAM DURING THE APRIL SRT SPREE ANNOUNCING THE NEW SRT ALE

92 ART PIECES

exhibited in the 12th Annual Scenes of the Schuylkill Art Show

28,000

Schuylkill River Trail Maps distributed



AMERICA'S BEST URBAN TRAIL

WHAT WE'RE CELEBRATING IS NOT JUST ABOUT RECREATION. THIS PROJECT IS ABOUT BUILDING A CONSTITUENCY FOR THE RIVER.

*- John Quigley, Secretary
PA Dept of Environmental Protection*

The Schuylkill River Trail was voted America's #1 Urban Trail in a *USA Today* Reader's Poll, beating out 20 other trails across the nation. In September over 100 trail users and supporters gathered along Schuylkill Banks in Philadelphia to celebrate that honor. Some of Pennsylvania's top officials figured among the speakers: Secretary of the Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources Cindy Dunn, Secretary of the Dept. of

Transportation Leslie Richards, Secretary of the Dept. of Environmental Protection John Quigley and National Park Service Northeast Regional Director Mike Caldwell, along with other state and local officials. The event was highlighted by the unfurling of five banners recognizing the Schuylkill River Trail as the Best Urban Trail in America. Those banners were distributed to the five counties the trail passes through.

OTHER TRAIL NEWS

An Ale for the Trail

In April, we partnered with Sly Fox Brewery to introduce SRT Ale, a seasonal beer that benefits the Schuylkill River Trail. Its Earth Day release was launched with the weeklong SRT SPREE, in which a two-person team traveled 110 miles along the river and trail by kayak, bike, horseback and on foot inspiring trail cleanups along the way. In September, Sly Fox presented us with a check for over \$4,000 from the sale of SRT Ale to support trail projects.

Bike Pottstown/Bike Schuylkill

In 2015 we shared our Bike Pottstown and Bike Schuylkill cruisers over 1,000 times to people who used them for recreation along the Schuylkill River Trail and for transportation in three communities: Pottstown, Hamburg and Phoenixville.



New Schuylkill River Trail Maps

This summer, we printed 50,000 accordion-style, full-color Schuylkill River Trail maps that have proven to be incredibly popular. Over the course of the year we distributed 28,000 maps, posting them at trailheads and visitor sites throughout the region.

Trail Volunteers

Volunteers help us keep the trail clean and pruned in Berks and Schuylkill Counties. In 2015, we added three organizations to our Adopt-A-Trail volunteer program: Children's Home of Reading, Alvernia University and White Deer Run Blue Mountain. These groups will each hold several cleanups a year, maintaining a total of nine trail miles.



17th Annual Schuylkill River Sojourn

The 17th Annual Schuylkill River Sojourn was a record breaker, with 184 participants from 14 states. A total of 74 (more than ever before) made the full 112-mile trip from Schuylkill Haven to Philadelphia. Each day was filled with the maximum number of boats allowed on the water, 100-120, something we haven't done since the Sojourn's 10th anniversary in 2008.

EVENTS THAT SUPPORT RECREATION, CONSERVATION, HISTORIC AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION

A Unique Colonial Dinner at a Historic Site

Our dinner at the Historic White Horse Inn (c. 1762), in Morlatton Village, in Douglassville featured a colonial inspired-menu, a candlelit atmosphere, and waitstaff in period costume. It was an enjoyable evening that received rave reviews and gave a glimpse into local history.



Pedal & Paddles



Our round-trip Pedal and Paddle biking/kayaking adventures continue to be among our most popular programs. For 2015, we held six events - including our first Hike and Paddle at Lock 60 along the Schuylkill Canal. All together we took a total of 95 people along the trail and on the river.

12th Annual Scenes of the Schuylkill

The Annual Scenes of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area art show continues to draw more excitement each year. This year, we had 163 works submitted, 92 of which were juried into the show. In addition, a selection of works from previous shows were featured on an Art on the Trails banner in Norristown.



2nd Place: Memento Mori by Jonathan Bond

Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey



For the past three years we have been fortunate enough to have VISTA workers serving one-year terms in our office. They have created and expanded the Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey (SOLO), an educational program that connects underserved high school students to the outdoors. This year, 129 students from Philadelphia, Berks and Schuylkill Counties participated in the 10 to 12-week program that consists of classes with guest speakers, field trips, service projects and, when possible, a kayak trip on the river.

FINANCIALS & SPONSORS

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)	\$ 571,002
State Funding	
DCNR Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2)	\$ 9,998
DCNR C2P2 – Conservation Landscape	\$ 126,913
County & Local Funding	
Chester County	\$ 10,000
Schuylkill County	\$ 10,771
Philadelphia Water Department	\$ 53,198
Union Township	\$ 5,953
Private Funds, Grants, & Donations	
Exelon Nuclear	\$ 215,460
Memberships & Contributions	\$ 30,539
PPL	\$ 930
PA Organization of Watersheds & Rivers	\$ 5,900
Pottstown Area Health & Wellness	\$ 99,124
Sojourn & Special Events	\$ 85,889
William Penn Foundation	\$ 143,707
Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc.	\$ 5,000
MOM's Organic Market	\$ 768
DE Valley Regional Planning Commission	\$ 22,953
Safeco Insurance Company of America	\$ 2,230
Berks County Conservancy	\$ 819
Funding Total	\$ 1,401,152

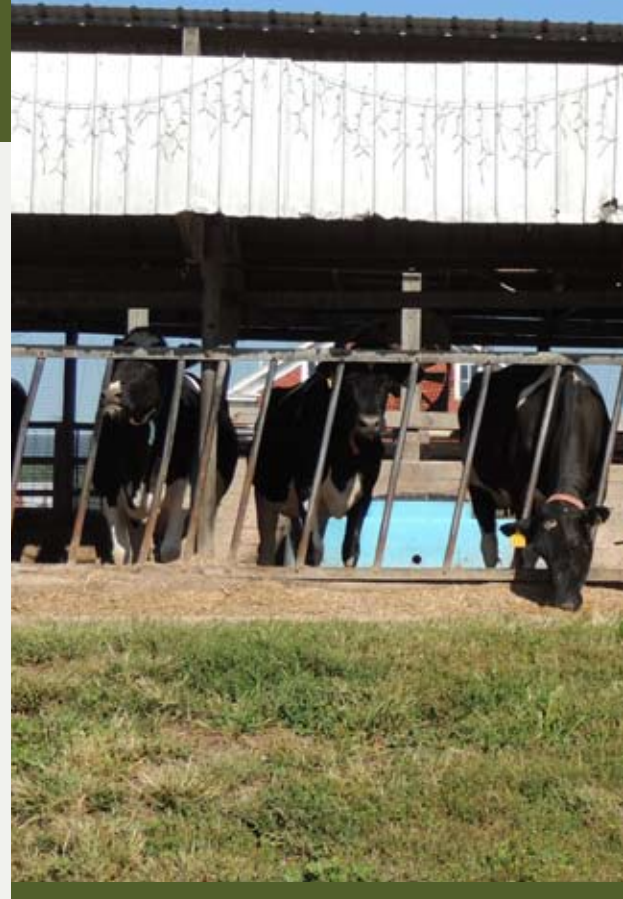
Event Sponsors

Schuylkill River Sojourn

Ateeco Inc.	Peter Johnston & Associates, LLC
B&G Glass	Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation
Bause Catered Events	POWR
BCM Engineering	PPL
Bird Control Services, Inc.	Reading Blue Mountain & Northern R.R.
Borough of West Conshohocken	Schuylkill County Visitors Bureau
Cabela's	TE Carroll Designs
Campbell Thomas & Co.	The Bad Adventure Company
Canoe Susquehanna	The H&K Group
DiCello Chiropractic	The Swisher Studio
Evans Network of Companies	Trace Pheasantry, Inc.
Lifetime Products, Inc.	Traffic Planning and Design, Inc.
LYNX Computer Technologies, Inc.	Warrick Jewelers
McTish, Kunkel & Associates	Wilson Consulting Group, PC
Montgomery County Community College	Wrigley's Office Supply
National Penn Bank	
O'Donnell, Weiss, & Mattei, P.C.	
Pennsylvania American Water	

Scenes of the Schuylkill Art Show

Art Lines	Montgomery County Community College
Campbell Thomas & Company	North Penn Art
DCNR	NPS
Dolan Law Group, LLC	Sager & Sager Assoc.
	The Hill School



Schuylkill River Restoration Fund

We distributed \$275,000 in Schuylkill River Restoration Fund grants to projects that will improve water quality in the Schuylkill River and its tributaries. Since the Restoration Fund was established in 2006 through a public/private partnership, it has garnered more than \$2.5 million and funded 73 projects that have reduced stormwater run-off, agricultural pollutants and abandoned mine drainage.

Implementation Project Grants

Berks County Conservancy, Jason Rice Farm Project: \$47,250. Manure storage systems to keep pollutants out of Maiden Creek.

Berks County Conservancy, Biehl and Kurtz Farms: \$81,663. Manure storage systems to keep pollutants out of two nearby creeks.

The Dobson School, Native Meadow and Woodland Walk: \$37,710. A native meadow installation for stormwater control and education.

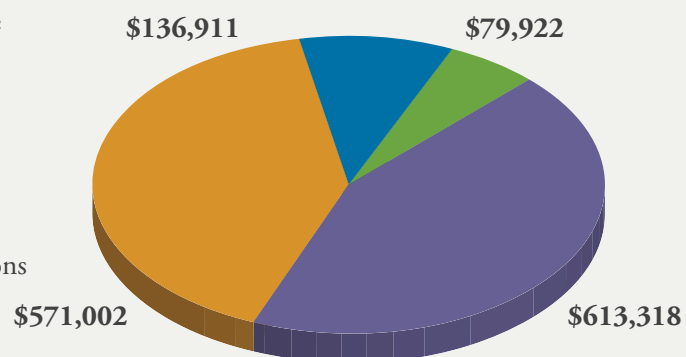
Montgomery County Conservation District, Perkiomen Township Basin: \$30,000. Stormwater basin improvements with native plantings, a community workshop and volunteer workdays.

Schuylkill Headwaters Association, Porter Floodplain: \$40,000. Removal of coal refuse from the floodplain.

West Philadelphia Coalition, Greening Lea Project: \$26,000. Transform a barren schoolyard into an active and sustainable community space.

Sources of Funds as a Percentage of Total Investment

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



Land Transaction Assistance Projects

- Berks County Conservancy, Miller Woodland: \$4,000
- Berks County Conservancy, Gehris Property: \$4,000
- Natural Lands Trust, Yoder Tract: \$4,000



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Tim Fenchel, *Grants Program Coordinator*

Kaitlin Flahive, *Trail Sustainability Coordinator*
Robert Folwell, *Trails Project Manager*
Cindy Kott, *Administrative Assistant*
Dwight Powell, *Consulting Engineer*

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SCHUYLKILL RIVER HERITAGE AREA

Managed by the Schuylkill River Greenway Association

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DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
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