



## *Why are we creating the Stewardship Fund?*

Thank you for your support of SRG! We are embarking on a new effort to raise a \$5 million fund for stewardship of the Schuylkill River Trail and we hope you will join us. The interest and earnings income generated by the Stewardship Fund will eventually provide a sustainable source of capital to bridge the funding gap for increasingly common large-scale maintenance, repair, and upgrade projects required to keep the SRT open, accessible, and safe for all. Typically, grant financing is not available for these types of projects.

*Earnings from the Stewardship Fund will fund trail projects that are large scale, more visible and require substantial expertise and financial commitment. These projects involve significant time and investment and have a more tangible impact on the trail user experience than typical routine maintenance. They are difficult to fund through government*

Throughout its history, Schuylkill River Greenways has been fortunate to attract government awards that enable us to take on substantial, complex, multi-year and multi-partner projects that result in new trails, furthering our mission to connect residents, visitors and communities to the Schuylkill River and Schuylkill River Trail. Historically,

donations and membership fees from our loyal membership base have helped to cover the cost of our routine maintenance, such as regular mowing, trimming, keeping the trail clear of poison ivy, and picking up trash that the wind carries onto the trails.

Our challenge is that to date there has been no stable funding source to ensure our ability to take on and absorb the high cost of bigger maintenance, upgrade, and repair projects – like resurfacing existing trails, repairing our trail bridges, or removing large fallen trees after a bad storm. As we grow our trail footprint throughout the region, the need for dedicated funding to support these extraordinary community amenities also grows. ***We anticipate that the annual interest income and earnings from a \$5 million fund will cover these growing needs.*** These expenses are over and above the ordinary funding needed to continue our mission to complete new trail projects and connections, which are largely supported by government funding.

***This financial gap is why Schuylkill River Greenways is launching the Stewardship Fund*** to ensure that we have a ready and reliable source of funds for the critical large maintenance, upgrade, and repair projects that are not covered by grants or from our membership dollars. The Stewardship Fund will ensure we have flexible funds that we can quickly direct to projects requiring immediate and expert attention, such as:

- Restoring and repairing bridges – We own five major river bridges!
- Tree work – removal of dangerous trees and pruning of healthy trees.
- Improving safety features to elevated sections, including the installation of fencing.
- Keeping the trail and river obstruction-free, particularly after extreme weather events.
- Improving and maintaining trail surfaces (some asphalt and some natural surfaces).
- Repairing sink holes and other surface damage.

