



SCHUYLKILL RIVER NATIONAL & STATE HERITAGE AREA

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Schuylkill River Heritage Area Distributes Over \$364,00 in Grants to Improve Water Quality in the River and Streams

POTTSTOWN — The Schuylkill River Heritage Area distributed grants totaling \$364,193 to 11 projects that will improve water quality in the Schuylkill River.

The Schuylkill River Restoration Fund grants were awarded to eight projects that will focus on stormwater runoff, abandoned mine drainage and agricultural pollution. Also awarded were three land transaction grants that will assist with protection of a priority watershed parcel. (See 2017 Project Summaries for list of recipients and project descriptions).

The grant fund is administered by the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. This year, funds were provided by Exelon Generation's Limerick Generating Station, the Philadelphia Water Department, Coca Cola, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Aqua PA and MOM's Organic Market.

The grant announcement took place at Meadowood Senior Living, a 2012 grant recipient for a project that includes stormwater management and rain gardens for a preserve that serves as outdoor classroom for Worcester Elementary School.

The Schuylkill River Restoration Fund announcement was held in conjunction with a Schuylkill Action Network Project Tour that visited several watershed project sites.

Speakers included Schuylkill River Heritage Area Executive Director Elaine Paul Schaefer, Delaware River Basin Commission Executive Director Steve Tambini, Environmental and Chemistry Manager for Limerick Generating Station Chris Gerdes and Kelly Anderson, Source Water Protection, Philadelphia Water Department.

“Over the past 12 years, the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund has distributed \$3.3 million—and leveraged another \$5 million—for 95 projects that improve water quality in the Schuylkill River watershed,” said Schuylkill River Heritage Area Executive Director

Elaine Paul Schaefer. “The success of this fund is the result of a combined effort from non-profit, government, and private sectors working together to protect the Schuylkill River, which is a source of drinking water for 1.5 million people and an important driver for the economies of the communities in its watershed.”

Grant recipients were carefully selected by an advisory committee consisting of: Exelon Generation, Delaware River Basin Commission, Philadelphia Water Department, Environmental Protection Agency, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Partnership for the Delaware Estuary, Schuylkill River Heritage Area, Aqua PA, and the Schuylkill Action Network.

“It is a real pleasure for me to be with you today at Meadowood Senior Living, a 2012 Schuylkill River Restoration Fund grant awardee, as we announce this year’s grant recipients,” said Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) Executive Director Steve Tambini. “The Schuylkill River, the largest tributary to the Delaware, has truly benefitted from the nearly 100 grassroots water quality improvement projects funded by the SRRF since 2006, and the DRBC is proud to be a part of this very worthwhile partnering effort.”

This year, fund donations came from Exelon Generation (\$186,812), Philadelphia Water Department (\$100,000), Aqua PA (\$15,000) and MOM’s Organic Market (\$1,414). All funds not distributed this year will be rolled over into 2018.

The Land Transaction Assistance Grants program provides matching grants of up to \$4,000 per project to pay for costs associated with property purchases and conservation easements on high priority lands for water quality and habitat protection.

Exelon has provided over \$2.4 million to the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund since it was founded in 2005; the Philadelphia Water Department has contributed \$800,000 over the past eight years. Aqua PA has donated \$40,000, Coca Cola has given \$26,000 and MOM’s Organic Market over \$3,000.

The Schuylkill Action Network and the Schuylkill River Heritage Area continue to seek additional contributors in an effort to further expand the fund.

The fund was originally created under a Delaware River Basin Commission docket approved in 2004 and Exelon Generation’s desire to support restoration efforts in the Schuylkill River and its tributaries.

The Philadelphia Water Department’s contribution to the fund is leveraged by other watershed partners and is directed towards addressing stormwater management and pollution mitigation projects upstream of the City’s two drinking water intakes on the Schuylkill River.

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The Schuylkill River Heritage Area, managed by the non-profit Schuylkill River Greenway Association, uses conservation, education, recreation, historic preservation and tourism as tools for community revitalization and economic development.

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