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Arlen Specter

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Charlie Dent
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Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

Edward G. Rendell, Governor

**PA Department of Conservation
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Michael DiBerardinis, Secretary

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Susan K. Fordyce Cindy Kott
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Schuylkill River Heritage Area
Managed by the Schuylkill River Greenway Assn.
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Cover Photo: Schuylkill Canal Association's Grand Opening celebration for the restored Lock 60 at Mont Clare -Montgomery County

April 28, 2006

Dear Friends:

As we submit this Annual Report to citizens and communities of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area, it is with great pride that we look back on 2005 as a year great with accomplishments.

We have, as our Management Plan outlines, developed programmatic linkages to build the regional identity and image of the heritage area, worked toward the completion of the Schuylkill River Trail System, continued to develop the heritage area gateway network, and planned numerous events and programs that promote community and economic revitalization.

By far, the most significant project was the completion of the long awaited Lancaster Avenue Bridge on the Thun Trail in the City of Reading. This project has invigorated the recreation community all along the Thun Trail and enabled us to raise the funds needed to close the three remaining trail gaps between Pottstown and Reading. This resulted in the organization picking up new partners, communities, and organizations as supporters. Because of the cooperation of Montgomery and Berks Counties, it is now within our reach to have the Thun Trail completed from Pottstown to Reading within the next two years.

During 2005, we also initiated the Reading to Hamburg Trail Study which will be completed in the summer of 2006 and received PennDOT approval to construct approximately nine miles of the Bartram Trail in Northern Berks and Schuylkill Counties. We established, then convened, the Schuylkill River Trail Council to promote regional trail cooperation.

On the program side, we entered into an agreement with Exelon Nuclear to establish the new Schuylkill River Restoration Fund designed to provide nearly \$160,000 for watershed grants to partners whose projects result in improving the water quality of the Schuylkill River and its tributaries.

In partnership with Montgomery County Community College, the proposal for the new Schuylkill Riverfront Academic and Heritage Center was completed. This plan includes the establishment of classrooms in our office building to teach heritage related subjects. It also calls for the opening of an interpretive center designed to invite the visitor to begin their heritage area experience here and learn more about the things to see and do in the five county region.

Notably, the Schuylkill River Heritage Area was the focus of state and national visitors when we hosted a three day trip by Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Michael DiBerardinis and members of his staff in August. The Secretary's visit focused on projects funded by the Schuylkill River Heritage Area in partnership with DCNR.

In October at Valley Forge for three days, the Alliance of National Heritage Areas held their fall business meeting. Two days were spent for business while the third day was spent visiting numerous attractions in the region.

As our funders and partners grow and our reputation for results is witnessed by the public, we are positioned to have a positive impact on this five-county region of Pennsylvania for years to come.

Sincerely,

Kurt D. Zwikl
Executive Director

Ronald C. Downie
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.

2005 At A Glance

THE SCHUYLKILL COUNTY ETHNIC HERITAGE STUDY

Folklorists Michael and Carrie Nobel Kline, of Maryland, spent a year studying and documenting the rich cultural heritage of Schuylkill County. They discovered the county contains a multiplicity of ethnicities, and a tremendous mix of cultural traditions, old and new, that have never homogenized.

The Schuylkill River Heritage Area sponsored the study, with support from the Institute for Cultural Partnerships and the Schuylkill County Visitors Bureau.

In November, the Klines presented their findings to the public at three well-attended and lively forums, in which participants were encouraged to share stories of their own cultural traditions.

The report produced by the study will be used toward a variety of heritage tourism goals that will help support the community and preserve its many cultural traditions.

LANCASTER AVENUE BRIDGE

The new Lancaster Avenue Pedestrian Bridge, in Reading, opened at a ribbon-cutting ceremony in December, creating a vital link in the Schuylkill River Trail.

The 115-foot structure, which cost just shy of \$900,000, provides a safe crossing for pedestrian commuters and outdoor enthusiasts. It connects a 2,000-foot isolated segment of the trail with a larger, heavily used section in the western part of Reading.

Hikers and cyclists can now make their way across busy Lancaster Avenue (Business Route 422) near the intersection of Route 10, and follow the trail into the center of Reading, without entering the dangerous roadway.

The 10-foot wide steel and



Finely detailed Pysanky eggs, a Slavic tradition, painted by Mary Osilka, an accomplished Schuylkill County Folk Artist. Photo by Carrie N. Kline.

concrete bridge fills a major gap in the Thun Trail and provides a critical link in the Schuylkill River Trail which, when complete, will stretch from Schuylkill County to Philadelphia.

The eight-month construction project began in April with J.D. Eckman, of Atglen, as contractor. The bulk of the project was funded by a federal grant. When bids came in \$400,000 higher than anticipated, the SRHA closed the funding gap with money from the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

TIDAL SCHUYLKILL PADDLE

In 2005, the Sojourn added a three-hour, six-mile journey through the Tidal Schuylkill, an area below Fairmount Park where the river is affected by tides. Paddlers made their way from Historic Bartram's Garden to the Fairmount Water Works, going against the tide, then returned flowing with the tide.

The trip ended with a tour of the pre-Revolutionary home and gardens of John Bartram, America's first great botanist.

The Sojourn presented a rare opportunity for paddlers to experience this section of the river.

The event was made possible through the assistance of the Schuylkill River Development Corp., Historic Bartram's Garden and the Fairmount Water Works.

WEB PAGE UNVEILED

A new SRHA Website was unveiled in November that provides visitors with detailed information about areas of interest, events and partners.

Funded through a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Community Economic Development, the site was created by Sheffey Integrated Marketing, in Lancaster.

The new user-friendly site presents a treasure trove of information to tourists and residents looking for places to visit throughout the Heritage Area. Programmed to develop routes for people interested in traveling to multiple locations, the Website allows visitors to build their own itineraries.

Visit the site by logging onto www.schuylkillriver.org.



The Fairmount Waterworks from the tidal section of the Schuylkill River. Photo by Dennis DeFrancesco.

FISCAL YEAR 2005 APPROPRIATIONS, GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area is managed by the Schuylkill River Greenway Association, a non-profit 501c3 organization and 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	Fiscal year 2003	Fiscal year 2004	Fiscal year 2005
National Park Service	\$ 18,955	\$ 12,335	\$ 203,610
STATE APPROPRIATIONS			
DCNR - Heritage Park Implementation Grant	\$ 50,000		
DCNR - Heritage Park Study Grants	\$ 37,000		
DCNR - Heritage Park Management Grants	\$ 150,000		
DCNR - Community Conservation Partnership Program	\$ 163,739		
DCED - Heritage Tourism Grant (webpage)	\$ 80,000		
PennDOT	\$ 399,635		
COUNTY APPROPRIATIONS			
Schuylkill County	\$ 171,500		
Berks County	\$ 25,000		
Montgomery County	\$ 10,000		
LOCAL GRANTS			
Upper Providence Township	\$ 8,000		
PRIVATE FUNDS & GRANTS			
Memberships & Contributions	\$ 15,900		
Corporate sponsorships	\$ 10,950		
Exelon Schuylkill River Watershed Restoration	\$ 158,042		
Pottstown Area Health & Wellness Foundation	\$ 100,000		
George & Miriam Martin Foundation	\$ 33,261		
Wyomissing Foundation	\$ 22,333		
Merchandise Sales	\$ 10,852		
Freedom Trail	\$ 5,000		
Institute for Cultural Partnerships	\$ 3,000		
Schuylkill County Visitors Bureau	\$ 3,000		
PA Organization of Watersheds and Rivers (POWR)	\$ 6,000		
Sojourn & Special Events	\$ 35,772		
Various Other Funds	\$ 18,256		

FISCAL YEAR 2005 PROJECTS

2005 Sojourn	\$ 43,803
Scenes of the Schuylkill Art Print	\$ 7,542
Reconnections 5K	\$ 2,421
Gateway Center Development	\$ 16,308
Trails Design & Construction	\$ 53,859
Heritage Parks Programs	\$ 395,792
Ethnic Heritage Study	\$ 15,150
Streetscape Projects	\$ 15,000
Website Development/Branding/Capacity Building	\$ 44,061
Master Sign Plan	\$ 10,187
RiverPlace	\$ 46,705
Lancaster Avenue Bridge Construction	\$ 660,072
Webpage Redevelopment (DCED Heritage Tourism)	\$ 72,588
Other Events	\$ 13,384

Schuylkill River Society Members

Donations of \$1,000 or greater received for 2005

- Alcoa Foundation
- Exelon Nuclear
- Flatrock Partners, LP
- Mr. & Mrs. Jack Gindlesperger
- Mr. & Mrs. John A. Koury, Jr.
- Lewis Environmental
- George & Miriam Martin Foundation
- Mrs. Eleanor Morris
- National Penn Bank
- Pottstown Health & Wellness Foundation
- Ryan, Russell, Ogden & Seltzer, LLP
- Sovereign Bank
- Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Stevens
- Wyomissing Foundation



2005 Autumn Reception, held at Phoenixville's restored Colonial Theatre.



2005 PA HERITAGE PARK GRANTS

- Schuylkill County Ethnic Heritage Traveling Exhibit
- Schuylkill River Trail Wayside Bike Stop at Smith's Run, The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education
- Reading RiverPlace Interpretive and Directional Signs, Berks County
- Major Attraction Signs, Chester County Conference and Visitors Bureau
- Tamaqua Historical Society Museum Renovation
- Residential/Riverfront Linkage Project, Borough of Conshohocken
- Oley Vally Driving Tour Publication, Friends of Daniel Boone Homestead
- Viewshed and Path Restoration at Lemon Hill, Philadelphia



Pleasantville Covered Bridge in Berks County, a potential point of interest for the Oley Valley Driving Tour.

PENNSYLVANIA HERITAGE PARKS PROGRAM

The 2005 Heritage Parks grants projects were awarded to a variety of projects covering all five counties of the Heritage Area while promoting the core goals of resource conservation, recreation, community revitalization, education, and heritage tourism. Each partner has matched the state funding with private and local money to see their project to completion over the next four years. The Heritage Area also seeks to build relationships with new partners each year. This year, four new Heritage Partners were recipients of Heritage Park grants for exciting projects in our region. We look forward to working with all of our partners on their projects and anticipate the benefits of these programs in our community.

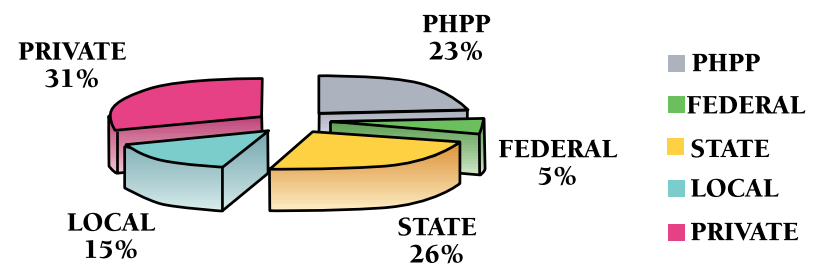
Below is a breakdown of the funding that represents the history of the partnership between DCNR and the Heritage Area.

Resources leveraged by Heritage Parks Grants 1993-2005

	TOTAL
PA HERITAGE PARKS GRANTS	\$ 2,609,088
FEDERAL	\$ 605,310*
STATE	\$ 2,875,000*
LOCAL	\$ 1,635,065*
PRIVATE	\$ 3,498,388*
TOTAL INVESTMENT	\$11,222,852
LEVERAGED DOLLARS	\$ 8,493,211

*The above numbers for federal, state, local, and private match are projections based on the 2005 HP grant applications.

SOURCES OF FUNDS AS A PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL INVESTMENT



Noting the installation of a Water Trail sign at the Betzwood, Valley Forge, landing are L-R: John Wood, Montgomery County Parks & Recreation; Peter Samuel-National Park Service; Ruth Damsker, Montgomery County Commissioner; Kurt Zwikl, SRHA Executive Director; and Joe DiBello, National Park Service. Photo by Beth Pilling.



The American Canoe Association selected the Schuylkill River Water Trail as a 2005 Recommended Water Trail.

It was one of only 12 water trails throughout the United States and Canada to receive the first-time designation.

In addition, the ACA also named the Schuylkill River Heritage Area as Champions of Water Trails, applauding their "success in providing safe, enjoyable access" to the Schuylkill River.

As an ACA Recommended Water Trail, the SRHA has earned the right to use a special ACA seal of approval in maps, signs, and other printed materials related to the trail.

The recommendation assures that the trail has met certain requirements. It must have public access points for paddlers;



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Managed by the Schuylkill River Greenway Assn.

it must be covered by a map, guide, signage or website of reasonable quality; and printed materials must communicate low-impact ethics for trail users, according to Paul Sanford, director of stewardship for the American Canoe Association.

He pointed to the quality of the water trail maps offered by the SRHA as one key reason the trail was chosen. Also, he noted that the commitment to "leave no trace" is well communicated in all SRHA water trail materials.

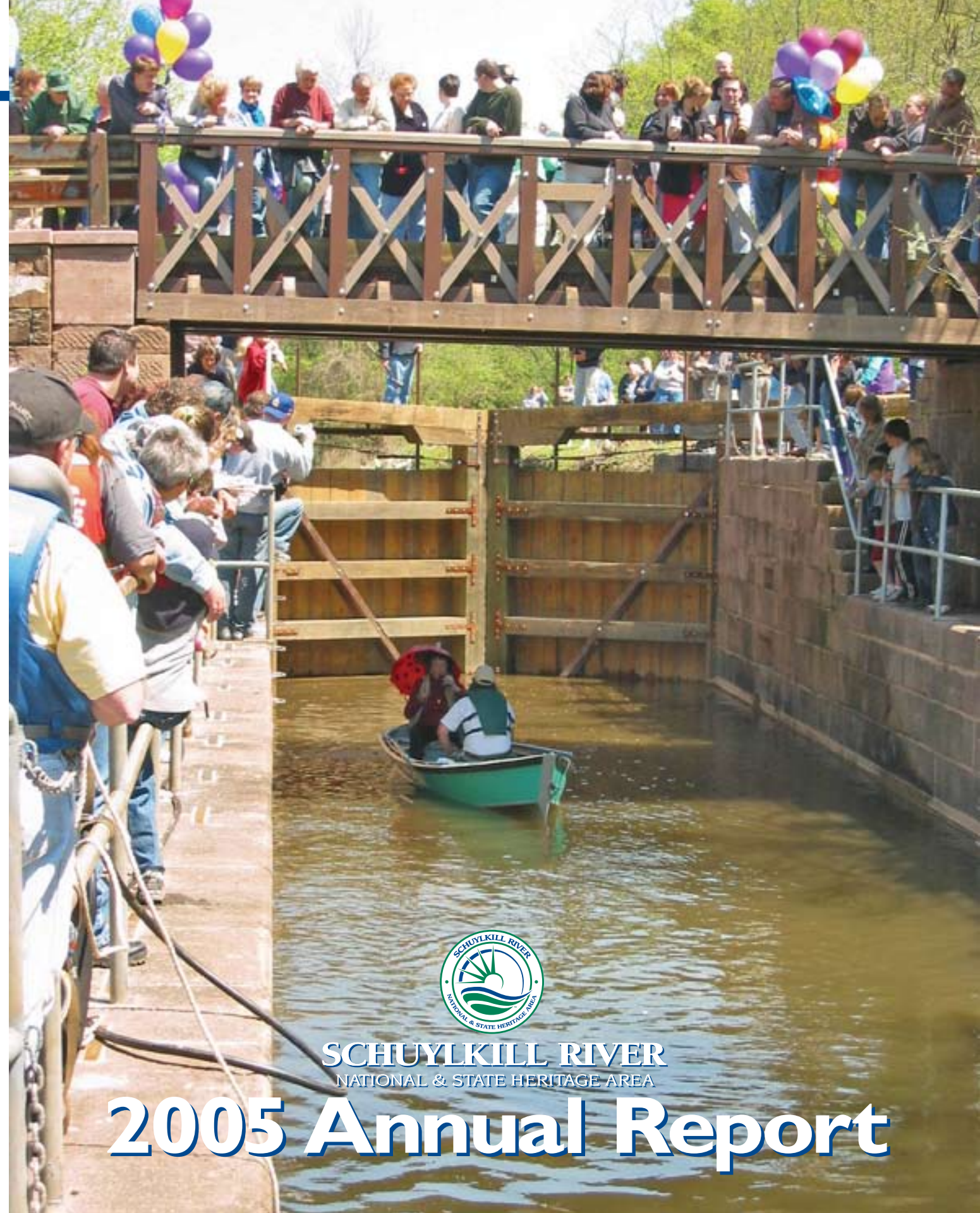
In addition, Sanford praised the SRHA's commitment to communicating the significance of the river beyond recreation. He observed that the SRHA had won a \$50,000 grant for an environmentally inspired art project along the water trail. By having a public art component, the SRHA has the potential to attract many more people to the river.

DCNR SECRETARY MICHAEL DIBERARDINIS VISITS SCHUYLKILL RIVER HERITAGE AREA

On August 3, 4 and 5, Michael DiBerardinis, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, visited the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. He was introduced to projects, partners and local officials that provided him with an overview of the heritage area and its many programs.

His full itinerary included visits to Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Hay Creek, the John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove and the Schuylkill Canal Association's renovated Lock 60, in Mont Clare. He also took a driving tour of Berks County Conservancy projects, heard a presentation from Montgomery County Community College, and met with Chester County officials, as well as local officials in Reading and Phoenixville.

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SCHUYLKILL RIVER
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2005 Annual Report