



SCHUYLKILL RIVER NATIONAL & STATE HERITAGE AREA

Schuylkill River Heritage Area
140 College Drive
Pottstown, PA 19464
www.schuylkillriver.org

For Immediate Release
September 26, 2013

Contacts:

Tim Fenchel, SRHA
484-945-0200
Dana Melia, Exelon Generation
(610) 718-3025

Schuylkill River Heritage Area Distributes Over \$350,000 in Grants to Improve the Watershed

POTTSTOWN — The Schuylkill River Heritage Area distributed a total of \$358,821 in grants Thursday to ten projects that will improve water quality in the Schuylkill River and its tributaries.

Money was distributed to seven projects that will mitigate stormwater runoff, abandoned mine drainage and agricultural pollution. There were also three land transaction grants that will assist with costs associated with permanent protection of priority watershed parcels. (Please see 2013 Project Summaries for recipients and project descriptions).

The Schuylkill River Restoration Fund grants were funded by Exelon Generation's Limerick Generating Station, the Philadelphia Water Department and Aqua PA, and administered by the Schuylkill River Heritage Area (SRHA). The grant announcement took place at the East Norriton Middle School Campus, the site of a recently completed stormwater improvement project funded through a Schuylkill River Restoration Fund grant.

Speakers included Schuylkill River Heritage Executive Director Kurt Zwikl; Kelly Anderson of the Philadelphia Water Department; Chris Gerdes, Manager of Environmental and Chemistry for Limerick Generating Station; and PA State Rep. Matthew Bradford (D-70). About 50 people attended the announcement, including a group of East Norriton Middle School students.

“Over the past eight years, the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund has contributed over \$2 million to more than 30 projects that have all effectively reduced the amount of pollutants entering the river and its tributaries,” said Zwikl. “We are grateful to the unique partnerships that have formed to support this fund, which is helping us improve water quality throughout the watershed.”

Following the grant announcement, Montgomery County Conservation District Watershed Specialist Susan Harris led a tour of the Middle School project. That project, funded by a 2011 Schuylkill River Restoration Fund grant, included stormwater improvements and stream bank stabilization along a section of Stony Creek that runs through the campus.

It consisted of, among other things, planting over 200 trees, a rain garden and native grasses to establish a riparian buffer along the creek. It also provided educational opportunities for middle school students.

“Stormwater run-off affects everyone, but it’s hard for students to understand how,” said teacher Victoria Strickland who brought a class of gifted students to the announcement. “Seeing this makes it more reality based. They can see how stormwater can be a problem and how it can be fixed.”

All 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; and the Schuylkill Action Network.

All the projects will benefit the entire watershed because they reduce the amount of pollution that enters creeks, and ultimately, the river, which is a source of drinking water for 1.5 million people.

This year, Exelon Generation contributed \$220,422 to the fund, the Philadelphia Water Department (PWD) donated \$100,000, and Aqua PA provided \$4,015. All funds not distributed for 2013 projects will be rolled over into the 2014 grant round.

The Land Transaction Assistance Grants program, introduced two years ago, provide 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 \$1 million to the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund since it was founded in 2005. The annual fund began as part of a demonstration project for what is known as the water supply program at Exelon’s Limerick Generating Station. That program is under the purview of the Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC).

For the past several years, the Schuylkill Action Network (SAN) has been seeking additional funders. This is the fourth year the Philadelphia Water Department has contributed, and the second year Aqua PA has donated. SAN continues to seek additional contributors in an effort to further expand the fund.

###

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.

Exelon Corporation (NYSE: EXC) is the nation's leading competitive energy provider, with 2012 revenues of approximately \$23.5 billion. Headquartered in Chicago, Exelon has operations and business activities in 47 states, the District of Columbia and Canada. Exelon is one of the largest competitive U.S. power generators, with approximately 35,000 megawatts of owned capacity comprising one of the nation's cleanest and lowest-cost power generation fleets. The company's Constellation business unit provides energy products and services to approximately 100,000 business and public sector customers and approximately 1 million residential customers. Exelon's utilities deliver electricity and natural gas to more than 6.6 million customers in central Maryland (BGE), northern Illinois (ComEd) and southeastern Pennsylvania (PECO).