



SCHUYLKILL RIVER NATIONAL & STATE HERITAGE AREA

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Schuylkill River Heritage Area Distributes Over \$278,000 in Grants to Improve Water Quality in the River and Streams

POTTSTOWN — The Schuylkill River Heritage Area distributed grants totaling \$278,832 to eight projects that will improve water quality in the Schuylkill River.

The Schuylkill River Restoration Fund grants were awarded to six projects that will focus on stormwater runoff, abandoned mine drainage and agricultural pollution. Also awarded were two land transaction grants that will assist with protection of a priority watershed parcel. (See 2016 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, Aqua PA and MOM's Organic Market.

About 50 people attended the award announcement, which took place at the scenic Marty Nothstein Property in Port Clinton, PA, a 170-acre property that received funding and a permanent conservation easement through a restoration fund award in 2012. This property has been identified as a high-priority parcel that includes over 1,000 feet of river frontage.

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

Speakers included Schuylkill River Heritage Area Executive Director Silas Chamberlin, 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 11 years, the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund has distributed \$2.7 million—and leveraged another \$4.7 million—for 82 projects that improve water quality in the Schuylkill River watershed,” said Schuylkill River Heritage Area Executive Director Silas Chamberlin. “The success of this fund demonstrates how non-profit, government, and private sectors can work together to protect and restore the Schuylkill River, which is a source of drinking water for 1.5 million people.”

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.

“The Schuylkill River Restoration Fund clearly shows what can be achieved by partners working together to implement grassroots water quality improvement projects that benefit all who rely on the Schuylkill and its tributaries,” said Delaware River Basin Commission (DRBC) Executive Director Steve Tambini. “On behalf of the DRBC, I am pleased to be here today as we announce the eight projects selected this year to receive grants and to thank the awardees for their efforts.”

This year, fund donations came from Exelon Generation (\$183,885), Philadelphia Water Department (\$100,000), Aqua PA (\$7,500) and MOM’s Organic Market (\$1,087). All funds not distributed this year will be rolled over into 2017.

“Protecting and preserving the Schuylkill River is very important to us,” said Rick Libra, Limerick site vice president. “We are proud to be part of this unique partnership that recognizes the innovative stewardship efforts of these projects to improve the quality of the Schuylkill River.”

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 million to the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund since it was founded in 2005; the Philadelphia Water Department has contributed \$700,000 over the past seven years. Aqua PA has donated over \$22,000 and MOM’s Organic Market over \$2,700.

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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