New Philadelphia Ballfield Habitat Project

On the week of Sept. 12, SHA completed a trout habitat project with a partnership through Schuylkill County Trout Unlimited and the Schuylkill Conservation District. Along with creating a renewed natural meander in the stream for restored fish and wildlife habitat, the completion of this project will enhance recreational opportunities such as fishing and park use for the community and tourists. The project is located downstream from the Silver Creek abandoned mine drainage (AMD) treatment system at the New Philadelphia Ballfield Park. Since SHA began AMD mitigation efforts upstream, this project brings a long term vision of restoring healthy fisheries and wildlife to fruition in the waterway.

This Fall we:

- Completed 19 Fish Habitat Structures
- Completed Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey with 16 students
- Hosted approx. 79 people for tours at our AMD systems
The New Philadelphia habitat project was a combined effort of Blythe Township Water Authority, the New Philadelphia Borough, National Trout Unlimited, Schuylkill County Trout Unlimited, and the Conservation District. The project was funded by a Trout Unlimited Embrace-A-Stream grant received by Schuylkill County Trout Unlimited. The project was designed and given oversight by National Trout Unlimited’s Phil Thomas. There were a total of 37 volunteers working on various sections of the habitat site. Logs for the structures, made of larch trees, were supplied through DCNR Weiser Forest District. K&S Tree Service delivered the logs as a donation. R.E. Pearson Middleport Quarry provided stone at a reduced rate and New Philadelphia Borough hauled the stone to the site. Both Blythe Township Water Authority and Madonna Enterprise Construction Company provided equipment and operators.
Big Creek Limestone Sand Reclamation

Through a partnership between Schuylkill County Conservation District, Blythe Water Authority, and Pennsylvania DEP Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation (BAMR) SHA had 330 tons of limestone sand delivered and dosed in Big Creek near New Philadelphia; a stream affected by acid rain.

On the week of Oct 3rd, Miller Bros. Construction took two days to deliver the limestone sand and another two days to move it into the head of the stream channel.

For this project, SHA and the above mentioned partners received a grant through the 2016 Exelon Schuylkill River Restoration Fund Grant Program. SHA and BAMR have monitored prior pH/alkalinity and will be continuing post monitoring with anticipation that pH will be raised to natural levels and stormwater events will be reduced. This project aims to restore the 3.9 mile main stem to a viable coldwater fishery.

Support SHA Through AmazonSmile

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop and at no cost to you. Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. Follow the link below to select Schuylkill Headwaters as your charitable organization.

https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-3070445

See Schuylkill Headwaters in the media!

Project Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey

As an extension of the OSM VISTA program and a partnership with the Schuylkill River Heritage Area, SHA designed and facilitated a highly interactive and scientifically integrative 10-week learning experience for the eighth grade class of Gillingham Charter School. Project Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey (SOLO) consisted of 10 field and classroom experiences designed to give the students both knowledge and a real world career-centered perspective of the outdoor, environmental, and scientific fields. Fifteen students of teacher Taia Bachman’s eighth grade class successfully completed the odyssey. We are happy to boast that the students not only enjoyed the experience but they also demonstrated a real interest in what it takes to work in an outdoor environmental career. The Project SOLO students learned some possibilities for their own future.

Schuylkill Acts & Impacts 2017 – Save the Date!

This year’s Schuylkill Acts & Impacts expedition will be held from **June 17-24, 2017**. As we begin to prepare the 2017 schedule, we will be contacting speakers and presenters to be involved in the 4th year of the expedition.

Applications will be available to students within the next few weeks. As a reminder, Schuylkill Acts & Impacts is for students in the Schuylkill River watershed in grades 9-12 including 2017 high school graduates. If you are an educator, parent, or mentor of a student who you think would be interested in the trip, please share this opportunity! Check our website, [www.schuylkillheadwaters.org](http://www.schuylkillheadwaters.org), or Fairmount Water Works’ website, [www.fairmountwaterworks.org](http://www.fairmountwaterworks.org) for updates to the 2017 program and to download the application when it becomes available.
Graduating Senior Awards Offered by SHA Through Schuylkill Area Community Foundation

Graduating high school seniors from Pottsville and Minersville should check out these award opportunities from the Schuylkill Area Community Foundation. **Applications and more information can be found** on the Schuylkill Area Community Foundation’s website at [www.sacfoundation.com](http://www.sacfoundation.com) under the “Students” tab and then “Educational Awards”. **Applications are due by April 1st, 2017.**

**David Derbes Schuylkill River Watershed Conservation Award Fund**

This fund provides an award to a graduating senior of **Pottsville Area High School** who has demonstrated a commitment to the community by participating in environmental and conservation projects or programs outside the classroom and maintained a cumulative G.P.A. of 3.0 or greater for five consecutive marking periods over the last three years.

**Paul Lohin Schuylkill River Watershed Conservation Award Fund**

This fund provides an award to a graduating senior of **Minersville Area High School** who has demonstrated a commitment to the community by participating in environmental and conservation projects or programs outside the classroom and maintained a cumulative G.P.A. of 3.0 or greater for five consecutive marking periods over the last three years.

Nativity High School Field Day

On October 4, SHA took Nativity High School’s senior environmental science class, led by teacher Danielle Fox, to the Silver Creek Environmental Education Trail & Recreation Park to learn about water quality testing and local abandoned mine drainage (AMD) issues. The class tested multiple parameters at the beginning and end of the discharge site and were given worksheets with questions designed to help the students understand the relationship of those parameters to aquatic life. Students then ventured downstream to see the work SHA did in partnership with Schuylkill County Chapter Trout Unlimited on the new fish habitat construction in the Schuylkill River near New Philadelphia. This field day allowed students to take a needed break from the classroom for fresh air but most importantly helped them to understand the whole AMD remediation process.
Upcoming Events:

Saturday, March 11, 2017, 7:30 a.m.-3:15 p.m.: Schuylkill Watershed Congress
Held at Montgomery County Community College-West Campus, Pottstown PA
The watershed congress melds science, policy and practical applications into one program and is a highly anticipated event for people interested in understanding, protecting, and restoring their local streams. Register online.

Sunday, June 4, 2017, 12:00 noon-4:00 p.m.: Bear Creek Festival
Schuylkill County Fairgrounds, 2270 Fair Road, Summit Station, PA
Come learn about all things environmental, outdoors, natural, and agricultural in Schuylkill County. This is a family fun day filled with free activities, free admission, and free parking! Contact Schuylkill Conservation District at 570-622-3742 for more information.

More media coverage for Schuylkill Headwaters: