The Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area

Evaluation Findings

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August 2016

Prepared for

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Executive Summary

Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this report is to evaluate the accomplishments, investments, and sustainability of The Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area (SRHA) from its inception to the present (review period 2000 to 2015).

In 2000, United States Congress through Public Law 106-278 officially designated the Schuylkill River Heritage Corridor. The area was designated as a State Heritage Area in 1995 by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA), headquartered in Pottstown, Pennsylvania, was designated as SRHA's coordinating entity.

A National Heritage Area/Corridor (NHA) can be any size and is intended to encourage conservation and an appreciation of the unique natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that represent a nationally important American story. SRHA is one of now 49 designated areas and has been receiving National Park Service (NPS) Heritage Partnership Program (HPP) funds since 2001.

When an NHA is authorized by Congress, the designation lasts in perpetuity, but the funding has a finite ceiling and time period. The funding authority must be extended through an Act of Congress. According to the original authorizing legislation, SRHA was due to sunset in 2015. SRHA was reauthorized on December 19, 2014 through PL 113-291 Section 305(a)(1)(D) which extended the authorization of appropriations to 2021. In part, the extension was granted to allow time for this evaluation to be completed. Based on the evaluation findings, the Secretary will prepare a report with recommendations for the NPS' future role with respect to the SRHA (see Appendices 1 and 2 for NHA legislation).

Key Evaluation Questions

The key findings from the evaluation are organized by the three questions introduced in Section 1 and derived from the legislation, Public Law 111-11, which serves as a framework for this evaluation:

Evaluation Question 1	Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the heritage area achieved its proposed accomplishments?
Evaluation Question 2	What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal and local government, and private entities?
Evaluation Question 3	How do the heritage area's management structure, partnership relationships, and current funding contribute to its sustainability?

Key Findings

Evaluation Question 1 Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the heritage area achieved its proposed accomplishments?

The evaluation determined that over the last 15 years, SRGA has addressed each of its legislated purposes as outlined in the management plan with the support of the Federal resources provided. As outlined in Figure 1, the legislated purposes for SRHA and the goals of the management plan have centered around three strategies: Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization, Building the Schuylkill River Trail (SRT), and Resource Conservation and Stewardship. The accomplishments and impacts in each of these areas are briefly described below. A more complete assessment of each of the areas is provided in Section 3.

Program Area #1: Heritage Tourism/ Community Revitalization

SRGA has fulfilled the legislative requirements in meeting Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization goals. Since 2001, SRGA has invested $5,920,473 or 38 percent of total expenditures in projects related to heritage tourism and community revitalization. Projects included:

- **Heritage Towns and Tours Program** that convened over 100 business and community leaders in 2009 and 2010 and awarded $399,270 in grants to communities to support strategic planning and the implementation of community plans for heritage tourism and community revitalization. SRGA also supported the *Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area Outdoor Recreation Business Study,* which guided project planning; Economic Impact Studies in 2005, 2009 and 2015 that captured outcomes from this

Figure 1. SRHA Legislative Purpose, Management Plan Goals and Activities

Purposes as Specified in Legislation	Management Plan Goals	Implementation Framework and Activity Areas
"To foster a close working relationship with all levels of government, the private sector and the local communities in the Schuylkill River Valley of southeastern Pennsylvania and enable the communities to conserve the heritage while continuing to pursue economic opportunities; and To conserve, interpret, and develop the historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources related to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley"	Foster awareness and appreciation of the Schuylkill River Valley's heritage resources and the stories they have to tell. Increase heritage tourism and associated economic benefits for the Schuylkill River Valley region and its communities. Strengthen the Schuylkill River Valley's historic communities through sustainable community development related to heritage resources. Complete development of the SRT. Conserve and enhance the Schuylkill River Valley's significant historical, cultural, and natural resources. Increase outdoor recreational opportunities related to the Schuylkill River Valley's natural and cultural heritage.	*Implementation framework:* 1. Implement the Plan through collaborative partnerships 2. Establish a variety of programmatic and physical connections among sites, attractions, and resources throughout the SRHA 3. Focus on programs and actions that will most effectively build a regional identify for and increase visitation within SRHA 4. Enhance the quality of life of local communities through conservation and development of heritage resources *Activity Areas:* Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization Building the Schuylkill River Trail Resource Conservation and Stewardship

initiative, and the *Schuylkill River Heritage Towns and Tours Toolkit* to promote sustainable change in this area.
- SRGA, partnered with Montgomery County Community College (MCCC) for a $3,750,189 capital campaign and the development of Schuylkill Riverfront Academic and Heritage Center.
- From 2000 to 2008, SRGA also administered the Heritage Park Program for the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Over the 9 years, the program funded 100 projects for a total of $1,752,700 to support heritage tourism and community revitalization. Since 2009, work in this area has been supported through the DCNR Partnership Program.

Most sources highlighted the success of the Heritage Trail Towns Project as one of the major accomplishments for the SRHA. The program has promoted businesses along the trail including restaurants, canoe and kayak rental, outdoor and recreation businesses. For example, *The Trail Town Economic Impact Study (2008)* captured the following outcomes:

- **18.8 percent increase in outdoor/trail related businesses**
- **25.5 percent of the business received was attributed by business owners to the area's biking/hiking trail**
- **64.4 percent of business owners reported that their sales/revenue has increased *at least somewhat* with 84.6 percent attributing the increase to outdoor/trail related business and 79.2 percent to increased restaurant business**
- **62.4 percent of business owners credited the trail with having *at least some* influence on the location of their business**
- **92.1 percent reported expanding or making plans to expand current operations**

The Economic Impact of NHAs: A Case Study Analysis of the Schuylkill River NHA (2015) indicated that **SRHA generates $589.9 million in economic impact, supports 6,154 jobs and generates $37.7 million in tax revenue.** The impact was calculated based on a 3-year average of 7.8 million visitors and tourists to the SRHA.

Program Area #2: Building the Schuylkill River Trail (SRT)

The SRGA has fulfilled the legislative requirements in meeting the goals in the program area of Building the SRT. Since 2001, SRGA has invested $6,165,274 or 39 percent of total expenditures for projects related to the planning, development, and maintenance of the SRT.

The SRT is owned, managed, maintained and developed by multiple entities across five counties. SRGA is the only organization whose mission includes all 128-miles of the SRT. Partners indicate that the SRHA plays an important unifying role and that the standards and technical guidance is extremely valuable and would not otherwise be available.

Approximately, 50 percent of the SRT is currently developed. Since 2001, SRGA has been involved in the development of 38.46 miles of the SRT including the development of new trail sections, bridge construction, and the creation of trailheads and water landings to promote access to and use of the Schuylkill River and SRT. SRGA was involved with the following outcomes:

- The development of 38.46 miles of the SRT since 2001
- The creation of 32 Trailheads along the SRT
- The development of 20 water landings since 2004
- The maintenance of approximately 50 percent of the SRT
- Coordinating 6,459 volunteer hours through the SRHA's Trail Keepers program since 2002; 5,901 volunteer hours through SRHA's Trail Ambassadors Program between 2011-2014; and 815 volunteer hours through the Adopt-A Trail program between 2010–2015
- The development of standards for the region to promote trail safety and standardized trail design, development, and management

Schuylkill River Trail User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis (2009) **documents 802,239 annual trail user visits. Most users (78%) purchased "hard goods" such as bikes, bike accessories, clothing, etc.) averaging $406.31. Approximately 50 percent of respondents purchased "soft goods" such as water, soda, candy, ice cream, or lunch, averaging $9.07 per person per trip.**

SRGA was able to document **11 Schuylkill River and SRT related-awards received since 2002.** Most notably, SRGA was the primary driver in achieving the **designation for the SRT of Best Urban Trail in 2015 by USA Today's 10 Best Reader's Choice Awards.** Partners indicated that SRGA's efforts to promote and publicize the SRT are very valuable for the whole region.

Program Area #3: Resource Conservation and Stewardship

SRGA has fulfilled the legislative requirements in meeting resource conservation and stewardship goals. Since 2001, SRGA has invested $3,659,734 or 23 percent in Resource Conservation and Stewardship.

Between 2006 and 2015, 58 awards were made through the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund supporting 73 projects for a total of $2,551,875. As of December 2015, 55 projects were completed, resulting in the following outcomes:

- 9 stormwater basins retrofitted
- 6 abandoned mine drainage projects completed
- Over 6,500 feet of protected streams
- Over 10,000 feet of streambank fencing installed
- Over 2,500 native trees and shrubs planted
- Agricultural improvements to 20 Berks County farms

Additionally, between 2011 and 2016, 33 projects received a total of $387,334 through the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Initiative Landscape Grants funding a range of small projects including brochures and historical signs, walking tours, environmental programs, riparian buffers, and bio-swales.

SRGA has found that the best way to promote stewardship is through recreational events that link education on conservation, preservation, and heritage history to the Schuylkill River and SRT. The largest of those events is the Schuylkill River Sojourn, which draws attention and publicity to the SRHA and its communities. **Over the first 16 years, the Sojourn introduced more than 3,000 registrants from 23 states, Canada, and France to paddling the river and the heritage of the region. An additional 1,438 people have been reached through other recreational and education programs since 2004.**

Evaluation Question 2 What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal and local government, and private entities?

This review shows that the SRGA expended NPS HPP funds for programmatic activities that address goals and objectives specified in the authorizing legislation as addressed in evaluation question 1. Since its authorization, SRHA was allocated $6,850,756 in NPS HPP funding. SRGA has obtained $16,652,811 in match funds. The matched funding included $6,241,668 in state funds, $1,735,529 in local government funds, $5,852,528 in corporation/foundation funds, $2,602,027 in other match that included membership dues, private contributions, merchandise sales, special event proceeds, investment income and land sales as well as unrestricted unspecified grants, and $221,059 in in-kind donations that included contributed services, volunteer hours, and gifts-in-kind.

Overall, the largest expenditures have occurred in the area of *Building the SRT* ($6,165,274 or 39 percent of total funding), with *Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization* as the second largest area ($5,920,473 or 38 percent) and $3,659,734 or 23 percent on *Resource Conservation and Stewardship*. Further details are reported in Section 4. The evaluation has concluded that SRGA has expended these funds on programmatic activities that address the goals and objectives specified in the authorizing legislation and management plan.

Evaluation Question 3 How do the heritage area's management structure, partnership relationships, and current funding contribute to its sustainability?

To guide the assessment of sustainability, we have adopted the definition developed by NPS with the assistance of stakeholders from a number of NHAs. Sustainability for an NHA is as follows:

> "...the National Heritage Area coordinating entity's continuing ability to work collaboratively and reciprocally with Federal, state, community, and private partners through changing circumstances to meet its mission for resource conservation and stewardship, interpretation, education, recreation and economic development of nationally significant resources."

In terms of the management structure, the evaluation found that SRGA currently has the governance and staff in place to operate a sustainable NHA organization. As discussed in Section 2, SRHA is governed by SRGA. The Board of Directors is composed of four Executive Officers and 20 additional Board members. Many Board members' occupations are in areas of interest and support to SRGA. The Board has an Executive Committee, Nominating Committee, and a Finance and Development Committee. Interviews with Board members indicated a strong understanding of the SRHA mission and programs as well as a commitment to the SRHA's vision and goals. Board members clearly articulated a shared understanding of their role. Board members seemed conscious of SRHA's limited resources, the need to capitalize with any potential efficiency, and the need for fundraising. The staff and Board of Directors appear to work together to adapt to resource changes so that programs may be effectively managed.

According to Board members and other key personnel within the organization, sustainability has been a key area of focus. **Key difficulties with sustainability in the absence of NPS HPP funds are requirements from and limitations of other funding sources. For example, state funding has a 50 percent matching requirement. Support for operations through state funding is limited to specific projects and programs. William Penn Foundation requires that grant money does not exceed 25 percent of the organization's budget. Many of the other funding sources are targeted for program expenses only. For this reason, it is believed that the withdrawal of NPS funding would have a detrimental impact.** SRGA staff and Board predicted that if NPS funding were sunsetted that:

- SRGA would not be able to meet the state funding matching requirement, and consequently, would also lose state funding
- Staff would be cut by two-thirds
- SRGA would not be able to manage the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund since the Grants Coordinator is funded in large part through NPS and State funds
- SRGA would not be able to continue recreational programming such as Pedals and Paddles
- Partnerships would suffer because SRGA would not be able to provide technical assistance
- SRGA would not be able to offer the Schuylkill River Sojourn, a long-standing tradition in the region
- Development of the SRT would be substantially slowed down

Structure of the Report

The report is divided into 5 sections

Section 1 defines and describes the NHA and coordinating entities in general and describes the evaluation methodology. It also introduces the SRHA which is the focus of this evaluation report.

Section 2 provides an overview of the SRHA, the SRGA's structure and organization; the NHA authorizing legislation, mission and goals; and relationships between community and NPS partners.

Section 3 explores the first evaluation question, "Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the heritage area achieved its proposed accomplishments?" It describes the SRGA's goals and objectives as required by the authorizing legislation and management plan; the relationship of these goals to program areas and activities; and the SRGA's relationship with various NPS organizations.

Section 4 explores the second evaluation question, "What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal and local government, and private entities?" It provides an overview of the investments made in SRGA and an analysis of how SRGA has used the investments, and their impact.

Section 5 explores the third evaluation question, derived from legislation (P.L. 106-278), "How do the coordinating entity's management structure, partnership relationships, and current funding contribute to the NHA sustainability?" This section presents an analysis of the interrelationship of SRGA staffing and ability to obtain resources and the sustainability of the SRHA.

Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 National Heritage Areas

A National Heritage Area Corridor (NHA) is a designation given by the United States Congress to an area that has places and landscapes that collectively represent a unique, nationally important American story. An NHA can be any size and is intended to encourage conservation and an appreciation of the natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources that have been shaped by the area's geography and history of human activity.

A management or coordinating entity is typically the organization within the boundary of an NHA that is tasked with bringing together diverse interests, goals and activities, resources and efforts to define and work collectively toward the common goals of the NHA. The management entity is charged with the responsibility for administering or implementing a management plan that will achieve the goals specified in the NHA's enabling legislation. It also manages the Federal and additional funding obtained by the NHA. The management entity may be a Federal commission, state agency, local university, local government, or nonprofit organization. The management entity usually creates an Advisory Board and/or working groups whose members provide a balanced representation of diverse interests, disciplines, backgrounds, and ethnicities to plan and implement actions that meet the requirements of the legislation and plans. Members of the Boards or working groups may include elected officials, nonprofit practitioners, business representatives, historians, naturalists, landscape architects, educators, and civic organization leaders.

1.2 Report Purpose

"...National Heritage Areas are places where natural, cultural, historic, and scenic resources combine to form a cohesive, nationally important landscape arising from patterns of human activity shaped by geography." President Reagan signed into law the Illinois and Michigan NHA on August 24, 1984, the first time this designation was utilized. As of today, Congress has authorized 49 NHAs, each with Federal funds provided over a subsequent amount of years as specified in the individual authorizing legislation. Oversight of this program was assigned to the National Park Service (NPS). The purpose of this report is to detail the evaluation findings, to document accomplishments of the Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA) since its designation in 2000, and to establish whether it has succeeded in meeting the goals established by the authorizing legislation.

This evaluation follows four previous major NHA evaluation projects:

2008 - Development of a National Heritage Area Evaluation Strategy: Report on Phase 1 (NPS Conservation Study Institute)

Based on Conservation Study Institute's (CSI) experience conducting evaluations of three Heritage Areas

- John H. Chaffee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, 2005
- Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, 2006
- Cane River National Heritage Area, 2008

Incorporated substantial input from the Alliance of National Heritage Areas (ANHA) Peer-to-Peer Committee

Provides a comprehensive overview of the core ingredients, guiding strategies, implementation activities, and accomplishments of a generic heritage area

2009 – First Congressionally-Mandated Evaluations (CPM/Westat)

The Center for Park Management (CPM) conducted an evaluation of the Essex National Heritage Commission which:

- Built on the structure and content of the program models developed by CSI;
- Differed from the CSI evaluations in its objectives and focus by highlighting processes that help accomplish legislative goals as well as the role/benefits of partnership and collaboration; and
- Focused on outcomes as they related to the authorizing legislation/management plan; the impact of financial investments; and the role of partnerships in sustainability.

CPM/Westat evaluations of Augusta Canal NHA and Silos and Smokestacks NHA build on CPM's evaluation of the Essex National Heritage Commission.

- Differs from the first CPM evaluation in that it focuses on developing a replicable model of evaluation that can be conducted by a consultant working for NPS.
- Model is based on triangulated qualitative data collection through topic-centered interviews and document review. It does not include large-scale surveys due to cost and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Paperwork Reduction Requirement issues.

2012 – Six Congressionally-Mandated Evaluations (Westat)

- Tennessee Civil War National Heritage Area; South Carolina National Heritage Corridor; Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area; National Coal Heritage Area; Ohio and Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor; Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area.
- Followed model used for Augusta Canal National Heritage Area and Silos and Smokestacks National Heritage Area.
- Based on the findings from each evaluation, the Secretary of the Interior prepared a report to Congress with recommendations regarding the future role of NPS with respect to each NHA.

2015 – Four Congressionally-Mandated Evaluations (Westat)

Four evaluations were completed in 2015: Lackawanna Valley National Heritage Area, Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor, Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area, and MotorCities National Heritage Area. These were based on the model used for the 2012 evaluations and were referenced in Public Law 113-291 which states:

(B) Evaluation.—An evaluation conducted under subparagraph (A)(i) shall —

(i) assess the progress of the local management entity with respect to—
  (I) accomplishing the purposes of the authorizing legislation for the national heritage area; and
  (II) achieving the goals and objectives of the approved management plan for the national heritage area;

(ii) analyze the investments of Federal, State, tribal, and local government, and private entities in each national heritage area to determine the impact of the investments; and

(iii) review the management structure, partnership relationships, and funding of the national heritage area for purposes of identifying the critical components for sustainability of the national heritage area.[1]

2016 – Three Additional Evaluations (Westat)

Since the initial congressionally-mandated evaluations were conducted, NPS has adopted a policy to evaluate all NHAs, preferably 3 years prior to their sunset date and using the model outlined in the National Heritage Area Evaluation Guide. There are currently three 2016 evaluations underway on the following heritage areas/corridors: National Aviation Heritage Area, Oil Region National Heritage Area, and Schuylkill River National Heritage Area.

[1] http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-113publ291/html/PLAW-113publ291.htm

1.3 The Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area

The Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area (SRHA) was designated as a State Heritage Area in 1995 and as a National Heritage Area in 2000. SRHA encompasses the Schuylkill River watershed in Schuylkill, Berks, Chester, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties. Over 3.2 million people reside within the SRHA; the river supplies 1.5 million individuals with drinking water. Along the river is the Schuylkill River Trail (SRT), which begins in Philadelphia and travels along the river to Pottsville; it will cover 128 miles once complete.

Key aspects of the heritage include the role that its people, places, and events played in the American, Industrial, and Environmental Revolutions. During the Revolutionary War, the region was site to several battles and events and its fertile land and natural resources used to support the encampments, arsenals, and food and water supplies of the colonists. The region's forests, limestone, granite, anthracite coal, and iron fueled the Industrial Revolution, with the waters of the river and its tributaries powering the mines, factories, mills, and forges that made Southeastern Pennsylvania an international industrial center. The river's use for transportation and industry supported a growing immigrant workforce, a diverse cultural landscape, and the exchange of languages, foods, music, and arts. The SRGA also has led the region's Environmental Revolution, supporting the dredging and desilting of the river, disposing of waste from abandoned mines and industries, removing naturally occurring acid, and cleaning up litter. Table 1.1 provides an overview of the SRHA, including information about its geography, historical significance, management, and partner relationships. A map of the SRHA is provided in Figure 1.1 (see Appendix 8 for full size map and additional maps).

Figure 1.1 Schuylkill River Heritage Area Map

The authorizing legislation (P.L. 106-278) outlined two broad purposes for the SRHA:

- Foster a close working relationship with all levels of government, the private sector and the local communities in the Schuylkill River Valley of southeastern Pennsylvania and enable the communities to conserve the heritage while continuing to pursue economic opportunities; and
- Conserve, interpret, and develop the historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources related to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley.

Table 1.1 Overview of the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area

Overview Area	NHA Description
Designated	1995 as a State Heritage Area; 2000 as a National Heritage Area
Location	Schuylkill Watershed including five counties in southeastern Pennsylvania
Encompasses	3.2 million people: 1,700 square miles; the Schuylkill River Trail; 81 National Historic Landmarks, 1,064 National Register of Historic Places properties and districts, 3 National Parks, Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Washing-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail
National Historic Themes	• Diverse history including Early American and Native American (Lenni Lenape Indians) • American Revolutionary War (Valley Forge) • Industrial Revolution (Iron, steel, coal, and textile) • Environmental Revolution (Desilting of the river, clean-up from abandoned mines)
Organizational Structure	• Coordinating entity: Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA) • Governance body: Board of Directors - Up to 25 members (no fewer than 15) - Committees: Executive Committee, Nominating Committee, Financing/ Development - Silas Chamberlin, Executive Director, reports to the Board and oversees the other SRGA staff
National Park Partners	• Valley Forge National Historical Park • Independence National Historical Park • Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site
Selected Other Partners	• State/local government: PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Department of Transportation, Philadelphia Water Department, County Commissioners • Foundations and corporations: Exelon Corporation, William Penn Foundation; Pottstown Health and Wellness; Sly Fox Brewing Co., PPL

1.4 Evaluation Methodology

1.4.1 Methodology

The methodology, captured in the *National Heritage Area Evaluation Guide, May 2014* is designed to maximize both the use of existing data and the ability to measure specific outcomes of SRHA activities. The period covered by the evaluation starts with the 2000 designation as a NHA through 2015, 15 years during which the NHA received Federal funding.

The following three questions—derived from the congressional mandate—guided the evaluation:

1. Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the management entity achieved its proposed accomplishments for the NHA?
2. What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, and local government, and private entities in the NHA?
3. How does the management entity's structure, partnership relationships, and current funding contribute to the NHA's sustainability?

The evaluation used a case study design to address these evaluation questions. This design allowed for the examination of multiple variables of interest and multiple sources of data. The evaluation also incorporated a collaborative approach with project stakeholders to ensure that the findings are grounded in the local knowledge of the site. To guide the evaluation design and plans for implementation, we included the perspectives of NPS, the NPS Regional representatives, the NPS Comptroller, the NPS Liaison for each NHA, and NHA leadership. The tailored data collection tools and the content of this report reflect the comments received. The following sections describe each phase of the evaluation.

1.4.2 Site Introduction and Background Research

During the initial phases of the evaluation process, Westat contacted the NHA management entity, SRGA, to discuss preliminary planning details and initial background research requests. Over the course of the two-day onsite face-to-face meeting (Meet & Greet Visit), multiple email exchanges, and several telephone conversations (November 2015 - May 2016), Westat introduced the evaluation team and evaluation methodology to the SRGA staff, select Board members, and partners.

During the Meet & Greet Visit in February 2016, Westat project staff worked with SRGA staff to develop a logic model, which was refined based on feedback from NPS and SRGA staff. Figure 3.2 is the final logic model that guided the development of the data collection protocols. Also, at this time, roles and responsibilities for all parties involved in this evaluation were discussed. The evaluation team also provided to SRGA staff an evaluation methodology (Appendix 3) and data collection protocols (Appendix 4).

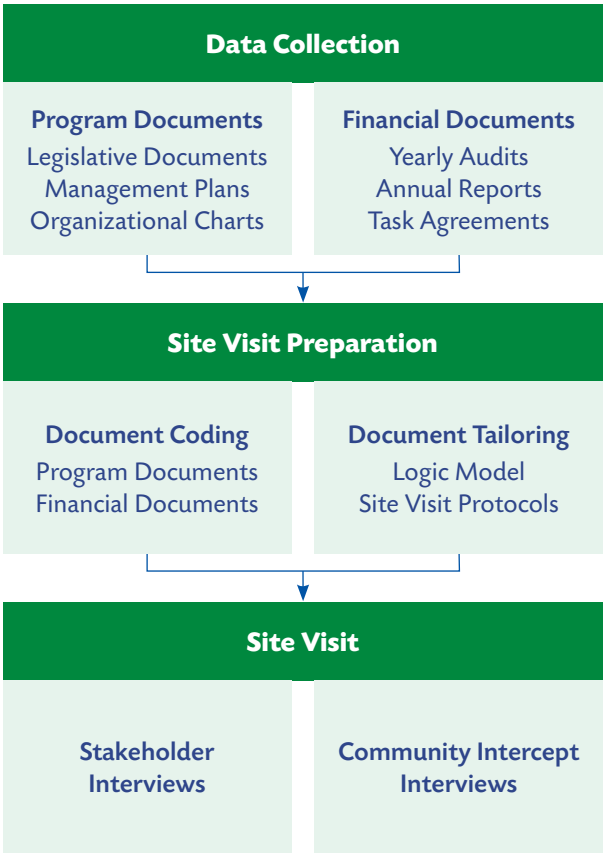
1.4.3 Data Collection

Data collection methods included reviews of documents and financial audits, in-person and telephone interviews with key informants from SRGA's partner and stakeholder organizations, and community intercept interviews with individuals visiting SRHA. A protocol guided the data collection, outlining the domains and measures of interest to collect from each identified source (i.e., prospective interviewees, program documents, financial documents, legislation). During data collection, evaluation staff used topic-centered guides for conducting interviews and abstracting documents. Data collection was concluded in May 2016.

Numerous documents were reviewed to understand the background of SRHA (e.g., legislative documents, plans, by-laws); its staffing and structure, funding received and expenditures (e.g., yearly audit reports); and strategies and activities conducted (e.g., annual reports, management plans, strategic plans, economic impact studies). These documents also provided information on the outcomes that have occurred from SRGA activities.

Individual interviews were conducted with SRGA staff, board members, partners, grantees, and individuals within the community. These interviews helped the

Figure 1.2 Data Collection Process



evaluators gain an understanding of the background and history of SRHA, SRGA's activities and investments and their associated outcomes, and SRGA's contribution to SRHA's sustainability.

Interviews were conducted with representatives from many stakeholder and partner organizations. These interviews discussed the genesis of the organization's relationship with SRGA; the influence and impact that the stakeholder perceives that SRHA has made in the community; and additional ways the interviewee believes SRHA could serve the needs of the region. Stakeholder interviewees were selected by Westat from a list of organizations with which SRGA has relationships and who have a vested interest in SRHA. We also utilized snowball sampling to select additional interviewees based on suggestions and comments from the partners we interviewed. Stakeholder representatives of the three strategy and activity areas specified in the logic model were selected: Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization, Building the Schuylkill River Trail, and Resource Conservation and Stewardship.

Community conversations were conducted with 38 members of the public at SRT trailheads, historic sites and other location sites within the SRHA. The goal of these conversations was to learn how familiar members of the public were with the history, goals, and activities of SRHA and the ways in which they gained this knowledge and familiarity, whether they had visited SRHA sites or used the SRT, and their views of SRHA activities impact on the community (i.e., economic, cultural, historic, restorative).

See Appendix 4 for the management interview protocol, partner interview protocol, stakeholder interview protocol, and community intercept interview protocol.

1.4.4 Data Analysis

The focus of the data analysis was to document the extent to which SRGA had achieved its organizational and programmatic goals as articulated in the mandating legislation, approved management plan and foundational documents. Findings discussed have been triangulated; that is, each finding has been documented from multiple sources. In addition, efforts have been made to ensure that the information gathered from key informants also has been substantiated with data from documents and other written sources.

1.4.5 Evaluation Limitations

To the greatest extent possible, Westat tried to ensure this evaluation methodology thoroughly addresses the three research questions. However, we recognize that there are parameters to this methodology that result in a few limitations on evaluation findings. In some instances, there is a trade-off between maximizing time and efficiency with comprehensiveness and level of precision in findings. For instance, to obtain input from community stakeholders, a survey is not possible within the current evaluation due to OMB Paperwork Reduction Requirements. Therefore, the data received from intercept conversations provide a more qualitative assessment of the community's perceptions of the SRHA. As noted, limitations to the community input include convenient, rather than representative, samples of tourists, local residents, and volunteers, and perceptions rather than hard evidence on the impact of the activities within the SRHA on stakeholder knowledge, attitudes, and involvement with SRHA. We collected 38 community conversations at SRHA sites including Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, Valley Forge National Historical Park, the Phoenixville and Pottstown trailheads, and Tamaqua Train Station. We also held informal conversations with community members in other location sites such as Reading, PA; these conversations allowed us to obtain additional commentary on topics included in the interview protocol.

Additional limitations relate to our ability to provide definitive evidence of SRHA's achievement of outcomes based on the evaluation design, especially attributions to the NPS funding and NHA designation. Any changes in data over time can also be influenced by confounding variables, such as overall local and regional trends in spending or shifts in community activities by other organizations. Without a closely matched control site with very similar characteristics

(another limitation), any conclusions drawn from trends in one location have to be taken with caution. Furthermore, although it is likely that the NPS funding has helped to leverage other funding, the extent to which SRGA may have been successful in receiving some of this funding without the Heritage Partnership Program (HPP) resources and NHA designation is unclear. It is hard to infer what would have happened without the funding of the SRHA, but it is clear there have been many accomplishments. We have designed this study to triangulate findings from a variety of sources and use a logic model to provide structure in organizing goals, activities, and outcomes.

1.5 Roles

1.5.1 Westat (External Evaluator)

Westat served as the external evaluator. Westat implemented the methodology shown in Appendix 3. This included minor revisions to the methodology used in the four earlier evaluations. For this report, Westat used the replicable model to prepare a logic model to guide the evaluation in collaboration with SRGA staff, develop data collection protocols, collect and analyze the data, and prepare this document.

1.5.2 National Park Service (NPS)

NPS provided advice and resources for the evaluation team and oversight of the entire evaluation process. The NPS representatives included the NPS National Coordinator for Heritage Areas and two NPS Assistant National Coordinators for Heritage Areas. In addition, the Evaluation Team members met with the NPS Regional NHA Coordinator for their respective regions. For this evaluation, we spoke with the NPS Regional NHA Coordinator for the Northeast Region.

1.5.3 The Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area

SRGA staff including the Executive Director, Financial Manager, Communications Director, Trails Project Manager, Grants Program Coordinator, and Administrative Assistant played key roles in facilitating this evaluation. They provided data and documents, helped with scheduling and planning site visits, identified a pool of contacts for interviews, provided feedback on the evaluation process, and participated in interviews. SRGA collaborated with the evaluation team to develop the logic model. SRGA was not involved in the development of the methodology or data collection protocols though they were provided an opportunity to comment. SRGA staff and the Board of Directors had the opportunity to review this document for factual accuracy after the draft was completed by Westat in May 2016.

Westat (External Evaluator)
- Revised methodology
- Prepared and finalized logic model
- Prepared data collection protocols
- Collected and analyzed the data
- Prepared this findings document

National Park Service (NPS)
- Evaluation sponsor
- Provided advice, resource, oversight for the evaluation

SRGA Staff
- Facilitated the evaluation
- Provided foundation and data documents
- Assisted in scheduling and planning
- Participated in interviews

Section 2– Overview of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area

This section of the evaluation report begins with an overview of the physical and operational aspects of the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area (SRHA), the roles and responsibilities of the coordinating entity, SRGA, and a timeline of key events in the management of SRHA. This section also describes the types and significance of relationships that exist between and among the SRGA staff, stakeholder/partners organizations, and the National Park Service (NPS).

2.1 Introduction to the SRHA & SRGA

The first inhabitants of the Schuylkill River were Native Americans with stories of the Lenni Lenape Indians calling the river "Ganshowahanna" or Falling Water. The Dutch were the first Europeans to settle in the region in the 1600s and named the river "Skokihl," which means Hidden Creek. Over time, the name changed to the Schuylkill River.

Beginning in the 1700s, the Schuylkill River Valley played a significant role in the development of the region with the City of Philadelphia situated on the Schuylkill and Delaware Rivers as the nation's first capitol. The river was used to develop one of the first public water systems. Many significant events of the American Revolutionary War such as Valley Forge occurred along the river and within the watershed.

In the 1800s, the Schuylkill Valley became an important manufacturing and agricultural region. The Schuylkill Canal was built between 1816 and 1825 by the Schuylkill Navigation Company to carry anthracite coal from the coal region in Schuylkill County, at the northern end of the Schuylkill River, to Philadelphia and meet the large demand for coal generated by the Industrial Revolution. It covered a distance of 108 miles, beginning in Port Carbon, running through five counties, and ending at Philadelphia. Use of the canal reached its peak in 1859, when 1,400 boats traveled the Schuylkill, carrying a total of 1.7 million tons of merchandise; mostly coal (1.4 million). However, the opening of the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad in 1842 and the floods in 1850, 1862, and 1869 had a negative financial effect on the Schuylkill Navigation Company causing significant financial instability. In 1870, the canal was leased to the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad, but the expansion of the railroad eventually led to the demise of the canal.

Coal silt from washing the coal before shipment made its way into the canal, making it impossible to maintain sufficient depth for navigation. Dam No. 1, in Port Carbon, was closed in 1853, and the section of canal between Schuylkill Haven and Port Clinton was shut down in 1888.

By 1915, only 30 boats remained in service. A few canal boats continued until as late as 1925, after which time the canal was used recreationally, with motorboats, rowboats, and canoes traveling in and below Reading. By the 1930s, so much silt had accumulated that the river was no longer navigable, and its value as a water supply was threatened.

In 1949, Schuylkill Navigation Company deeded all its properties to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The state initiated the Schuylkill River Desilting Project to reverse the damage from more than 3 million tons of silt waste from the coal operations washing into the river annually. The Commonwealth's desilting project dredged silt from the river and poured it into canal beds and silt basins. This major environmental undertaking vastly improved the river. However, it destroyed the Schuylkill navigation channel, as many locks and dams were either buried by silt, dismantled, or simply neglected.

The oldest parts of the Schuylkill River Trail were built in the late 1900s on the remains of the canal towpath. During the late 1970s and mid-1980s the trail was called the Philadelphia to Valley Forge Bikeway. Sections were built on over time. In 1987 the state recognized the Schuylkill River as the first "Scenic River" raising interest in the historic and recreational significance of the area.

In 1995, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Heritage Parks Program designated part of the watershed as a State Heritage Corridor. Recognizing the need to expand the geographic borders to conserve significant recreational and cultural resources in the region, the designation as a NHA was sought.

Today, 28 miles of the original 108-mile canal system remain, as well as remnants of dams and locks. Several old Schuylkill navigation sites have since been restored for their historic importance and value as tourist attractions. Additionally, more than 50 percent of 128-mile Schuylkill River Trail has been developed.

The Schuylkill River is called the "Revolutionary River" and SRGA educates on the history of three revolutions; the American Revolutionary, the Industrial Revolution, and the Environmental Revolution. The following are a few highlights from SRHA history that demonstrate the area's unique characteristics and highlight the three revolutions of the Schuylkill River:

Prior to the 1600s: Native Americans such as the Lenni Lenapi called the river "Ganshowahanna" or Falling Water
1600s: Dutch settlers called the river "Skokihl" or Hidden Creek, which over time became Schuylkill
1700s: Many significant events of the Revolutionary War occurred in the region such as the events at Valley Forge
1816–1825: Schuylkill Canal was built
1833: Canal and its operation were enlarged with a double line of locks and bigger boats
1842: Philadelphia & Reading Railroad opens
1859: Canal use peaks with 1,400 boats carrying a total of 1.7 million tons of merchandise, mostly coal
1850, 1862, 1869: Floods stop business on the canal causing financial instability as the use of the railroad increases.
1870: Canal was leased to the Philadelphia & Reading Railroad
1853, 1888: Sections of the canal are shut down
1915: Only 30 boats remained in service
1930s: Accumulated silt from coal operations leaves the river non-navigable
1949: The state funds the Schuylkill River Desilting Project that improved the river but buried many of the canals' locks and dams
1970: First sections of the Schuylkill River Trail are built

Authorizing Legislation:
Public Law 106-278

Purpose:
"To foster a close working relationship with all levels of government, the private sector and the local communities in the Schuylkill River Valley of southeastern Pennsylvania and enable the communities to conserve the heritage while continuing to pursue economic opportunities; and

To conserve, interpret, and develop the historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources related to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley."

2.2 Introduction to Schuylkill River Greenway Association

SRHA is managed by the non-profit 501(c)(3) Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA). SRGA was founded in 1974 as an organization focused on the preservation of the riverfront in Berks and Schuylkill Counties. The organization grew in its mission and geographic scope and in 1995 became the management entity for the Schuylkill River State Heritage Corridor. The 2000 authorizing legislation for the NHA specified SRGA as the administrating organization to manage Federal funds and the implementation of the management plan. At the time, SRGA was headquartered on the Wyomissing River, across from Reading, PA, but in 2002, to achieve a more central position within the heritage area, moved to its current location in Pottstown, PA.

Still headquartered in Pottstown, SRGA continues to operate as SRHA's management entity. Today, use of the name SRGA is typically reserved for legal and financial purposes, and members of the Board and staff refer to the organization as the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. However, for the purposes of this report SRGA is used to refer to the management entity and SRHA is used to refer to the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area.

2.2.1 Authorizing Legislation and Vision and Mission

The 2000 legislation, PL 106-278, required SRGA to develop and submit a management plan to the Secretary of the Interior within 3 years that provided "comprehensive recommendations for the conservation, funding, management and development of the Heritage Area." Specific requirements for the management plan were specified in the legislation. The legislation indicated that SRGA could meet the requirements by creating a new management plan or updating the Schuylkill Heritage Corridor Management Action Plan that was created to meet the requirements of the State Heritage Areas Program and approved in March 1995. SRGA updated the 1995 Management Action Plan in 2003. Key differences between SRGA's 1995 management plan and the 2003 management plan include:

- The NHA expanded the geographic area to approximately 1,740 square miles from the original 1,135 square miles.
- The NHA broadened the range of resources to include historical, cultural, natural, and recreational while the original state heritage corridor was focused on the industrial legacy of the Schuylkill River Valley.
- The 2003 Management Plan is more detailed than the 1995 Management Action Plan providing strategies, programs and criteria to guide decision-making.

Furthermore, the 2003 Management Plan includes an Environmental Impact Statement required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which was not required in 1995.

Living with the River: Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area Final Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement was completed in July 2003, submitted to NPS in September 2003, and approved by the Secretary of the Interior on December 3, 2003.

Table 2.1 presents a timeline of major events and milestones for SRHA.

Table 2.1 The Schuylkill River Heritage Area Timeline

Year	Activity
1987	• The state recognized the Schuylkill River as the first "Scenic River"
1992	• A study of the historical influences of the region called, "River of Revolutions" is published that identified regional heritage themes and potential heritage resources
1995	• Commonwealth of Pennsylvania designated the Schuylkill River and its major tributaries as a state heritage corridor under the Heritage Parks Program, designated SRGA as the management entity and approved the Management Action Plan to guide the organization, management, and promotion of the corridor
2000	• PL 106-278 designated the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area and approved SRGA as the management entity
2001	• SRGA convened a Task Force to develop the Management Plan
2002	• SRGA moved from Wyomissing to its current location in Pottstown, PA
2002	• Schuylkill River Water Trail becomes the first PA river designated as a National Recreation Trail by the US Department of the Interior
2003	• SRGA began installing Gateway Centers throughout SRHA
2003	• Management Plan approved by the Secretary of the Interior
2003	• Second Executive Director hired
2004	• The Schuylkill River Heritage Area Outdoor Recreation Business Study was released
2005	• Master Sign Design Manual was released
2006	• SRGA entered into an agreement with Exelon to establish the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund
2006	• The Pottstown Riverfront Park trailhead opened
2007	• The Feasibility Study for the Schuylkill River Trail (Reading to Hamburg) and the Freedom Trail was released
2008	• SRGA hosted the 10th Anniversary of the Schuylkill River Sojourn
2008	• First Schuylkill River Restoration Fund funds ($134,900 total) awarded to 3 projects
2009	• SGRA organized and hosted its first Trail Town Conference.
2009	• Launched the Schuylkill River Trail website (www.schuylkillrivertrail.com)
2010	• SRGA created the Adopt-A-Trail and Sponsor-A-Trail programs
2010	• SRGA takes ownership of the Bike Pottstown bike sharing program
2012	• The River of Revolutions Interpretive Center opened
2012	• SRGA introduced the Pedal and Paddle program
2012	• SRGA launched www.bikeschuylkill.org.
2014	• PL 113-291 reauthorizes the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area until 2021
2015	• Current Executive Director hired

The management plan/EIS was prepared by Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC Economics Research Associates History Now with funding support from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources as well as funding and guidance from the NPS. SRGA has recently contracted with Philadelphia-based business management consulting firm Schultz & Williams to undergo a 10-12 month strategic planning process (see Section 5 for more information). From this process, SRGA will develop a roadmap for SRHA and update the 2003 management plan. The planning process includes partners, Board member, and staff interviews; a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis; partnership interest assessments; and a retreat for the Board of Directors to discuss the SRHA's mission, values, goals and activities. The new management plan will be a 10-year plan.

2.2.2 SRGA Organizational Structure

SRGA Staff

Historically, the SRGA has had eight fulltime staff members; however, the economic decline and reduction of state allocated funds in recent years (see Section 4) has forced the SRGA to reduce its staff. Currently, there are six fulltime staff members, in addition to the Executive Director—a Financial Manager, Communications Director, Trails Project Manager, Grants Program Coordinator, and an Administrative Assistant. SRGA is also in the process of applying for a new VISTA Coordinator. The organizational structure is flat; all staff positions report to the Executive Director.

There have been three Executive Directors since the inception of the SRHA. The current Executive Director began on May 4, 2015. The previous Executive Director served for 12 years before stepping down. He remained for three months to assist the current Executive Director with the transition and has since retired.

According to interviews with stakeholders, the Executive Director from 1998 to 2003, was mainly responsible for the NHA designation. The second Executive Director was brought in after the national designation, and helped expand the SRGA's reach and partner network, moving to more regional focus and developing collaborative relationships with key entities to move forward with the development and use of the SRT and conservation of the Schuylkill River. The current Executive Director is leading SRGA through a strategic planning process to refine SRHA's mission and goals, increase efficiency, establish priority areas and outline expected outcomes for the next 10 years.

Volunteer Staff

As early as 2003, SRGA began to expand its staffing infrastructure with targeted recruitment and use of volunteers as part of a concerted effort to get the people who live in the SRHA to be stewards for the resources it contains. For example, frequent users of the SRT can apply to join the Trail Ambassador program, through which they will be trained to provide information, materials and assistance to users; report issues on the trail; and provide input for trail improvements. SRGA has also leveraged their partnerships to recruit volunteers from outside of the SRHA to also participate in heritage area activities. Working with Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site and Valley Forge National Historical Park, SRHA jointly applied for the AmeriCorps VISTA program, through which both sites have shared volunteers who have worked on community engagement and stewardship building projects. Additional volunteer programs include: Adopt- a-Trail, which began in 2010 to engage schools and community members; and the Trail Keepers program, through which volunteers agree to regularly participate in pruning, litter pick-up, and other trail maintenance activities.

Volunteers can also join special one-time projects or events, which do not require SRHA membership for participation. Any person, business, or entity can become SRHA members with various membership level options available. All members are entitled to participate in SRGA events and activities; however, they do not have any voting privileges unless elected to the Board of Directors.

SRGA Board of Directors

SRGA is overseen by a Board of Directors and is guided by the bylaws of the SRGA. Currently, the Board has 24 members who represent all five counties within the Heritage Area and several SRHA partners (See Appendix 7). As set forth in the bylaws, the Board can range from 15 to 25 members, including the Executive Director, and must meet six times per year. The Board is divided into three groups so that the term of one group expires at the Annual Election Meeting each year. For example, in 2016, five board members terms expired and a new group of five board members was elected. Board members can serve up to two consecutive terms. Each term of service is three years. After two consecutive terms, an individual is ineligible to serve on the Board or as an Officer of the SRGA for a year. The bylaws designate four Executive Officers for the SRGA (a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer). The Board elects and oversees these Officers. Board members can also elect ex officio members. In the past, SRGA has had up to six ex officio members. These members serve until the next Annual Election Meeting, and have traditionally been representatives from state agencies, historic sites and parks, and Congress.

There are two committees set forth in the bylaws: the Executive Committee and the Nominating Committee. The Executive Committee comprises the Officers, two directors as voted by the Board, and the Executive Director. This committee conducts SRGA business between Board meetings, typically meeting one week prior to the full Board meeting. The Nominating Committee comprises at least three Directors. This committee presents candidates for election to the Board of Director and SRGA Officers for the next Annual Election Meeting. Additional standing committees, as well as special (select or ad hoc) committees, may be established by the Board or by a Standing Rule. These committees are task specific and serve functions not currently performed by existing committees. Currently, the Board of Directors includes two active committees that meet approximately every other month; Financing and Development. Select or ad hoc committees may be open to non-SRGA members, including volunteers. SRGA is reviewing Board membership and structure as a part of the 10 year strategic planning process.

2.3 Schuylkill River Greenway Association's Relationships with Partners/Stakeholders and NPS

One of the core commitments of SRGA is to facilitate partnerships and strengthen local capacity. SRGA works to maintain both formal and informal partnerships in which there is mutual benefit, including well over 140 organizations. Partnerships serve to extend SRGA's capacity and reach, support the staff in carrying out diverse activities, and facilitate the exchange of mutually beneficial information and resources. For example, to assist in work related to building the SRT, SRGA participates in the Schuylkill River National Trail Council, which facilitates the exchange of information regarding development of the various trail segments. Several SRGA partners are part of this Council. SRHA's mission allows SRGA to promote the trail as a unified regional trail system, facilitate access to regional signage and encourage standards for trail development, maintenance and safety. Partners are asked to foster a sense of regional identity by including the SRHA logo on literature and public sites and using universal signage. SRGA manages a website for the SRT (http://schuylkillrivertrail.com/) benefiting its partners by listing businesses and restaurants on the SRT as well as Trail heads and water landings.

2.3.1 Partners and Stakeholder Organizations Relationships

From its inception, SRGA's staff has focused on building relationships with Federal, state, and local partners and stakeholders to support SRHA activities. These partnerships include Federal, state, and county agencies including the NPS, the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, and the County Commissioners. SRGA has also partnered with local universities, including Montgomery County Community College. SRGA has demonstrated partnership with leadership in the region, including Circuit Coalition, Greater Philadelphia Delaware River Basin Commission, Schuylkill Action Network and the Partnership for the Delaware Estuary.

SRGA works closely with private foundations and corporations, including Exelon, Pennsylvania Aqua, and Sly Fox Brewing as well as the three National Parks in the SRHA.

Below is a list of a small sample of these key partners:

Federal & State Agencies:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- PA Environmental Protection Agency
- PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- PA Department of Community and Economic Development
- PA Environmental Council

National Historic Parks and Sites:

- Valley Forge National Historical Park
- Hopewell Furnace Historic Site
- Independence National Historical Park

Local Agencies & Public Resources:

- Philadelphia Water Department
- Fairmount Water Works
- Schuylkill Canal Association
- County, Borough, and Township governments
- County Conservation Districts

Local Nonprofits and Associations:

- Delaware River Basin Commission
- Schuylkill Action Network
- Partnership for the Delaware Estuary
- Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia

Local Development Corporations:

- East Falls
- Manayunk
- Schuylkill River

Local Businesses and Foundations:

- William Penn Foundation
- Pottstown Health & Wellness Foundation
- Exelon Corporation
- Pennsylvania Aqua
- Sly Fox Brewing Company

Convention & Visitors Bureaus:

- Schuylkill County
- Berks County (Go Greater Reading)
- Valley Forge
- Brandywine
- Philadelphia

Universities:

- Montgomery County Community College
- Alvernia University

Media:

- Pottstown, local newspapers, radio, and TV stations
- Schuylkill, local newspapers, radio, and TV stations
- Reading local newspapers, radio, and TV stations
- Philadelphia local newspapers, radio, and TV stations

SRGA and its partners have a reciprocal relationship in which each partner helps to sustain the other. Examples of such partnerships are included below (see Section 3 for more discussion on partner activity outcomes).

Local Agencies & Public Resources: Before it moved, the SRGA shared space with the Berks Nature (formerly Berks Conservancy) in Reading, PA. Both organizations were founded in 1974 by the same individuals. Because both organizations do trail-related work, they created the Greater Reading Trail Partnership. That partnership has met quarterly for the past 11 years. They look for gaps in trails and connect spurs to the SRT.

Universities: When SRGA moved to Pottstown in 2002 and was developing its new site, SRGA and the Montgomery County Community College arranged to share space. They have developed joint educational and recreational programming and partnered on the creation of the Schuylkill Riverfront Academic and Heritage Center (See Section 3 for more discussion).

Local Nonprofits and Associations: The Partnership for the Delaware Estuary (PDE) has been the leading fiscal agent for the Schuylkill Action Network, a network of partners working to conserve the Schuylkill River Watershed, since 2004. When the Schuylkill River Restoration fund was created in 2006, the partnership grew and deepened. SRGA administers the Fund, setting up eligibility criteria and assisting with the application selection, while PDE brings staff capacity and technical assistance. Both organizations also cross promote each other's messaging and programming.

Local Businesses and Foundations: The SRGA's partnership with Exelon Corporation began in 2006 when Delaware River Water Basin Commission compelled Exelon to mitigate the impact of withdrawing water from the River for their cooling system and operating a nuclear power plant downriver. The corporation was required to pay a large payment to a nonprofit that was working on watershed issues based on the amount of water (in gallons) the corporation used. SRGA was chosen to manage the payment and how it was used via the Schuylkill Restoration Fund grant program. Exelon was required to make the payment for a number of years, but after the mandatory payments ended, the corporation continued to contribute on a voluntary basis. Several permanent, high-priority land, water quality, and habitat protection projects within the Schuylkill River watershed are supported by these funds. SRGA is working with the William Penn Foundation on a collaboration of 23 environmental centers along the river and trail. The foundation is funding the development of this network which is in the formative stages at this point. SRGA's partnership with the Sly Fox Brewing Company is its newest partnership. The two partnered to create a Schuylkill River-themed beer. The proceeds from sales go to SRHA for watershed protection. Additional promotional events have also centered on the themed beverage, increasing brand awareness for SRHA.

Federal & State Agencies: The Philadelphia Water Department has contributed to the Restoration fund for 6 years, specifically for water restoration projects. The PA Environmental Council partner around the River Towns, which shares the same goal as SRHA's Trail Towns projects: strengthening the towns up and down the Schuylkill River Trail. The PA Department of Conservation of Natural Resources (DCNR) has funded SRHA activities, and SRGA participates in several DCNR programs, including the Natural Lands Trust, a land conservancy in the southeastern part of the state, and the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape, another large preservation initiative.

National Historic Parks and Sites: Valley Forge National Historical Park, Hopewell Furnace Historic Site, and Independence National Park have each partnered with SRGA for events and activities, including the annual Schuylkill River Sojourn or Pedaling through our National Parks park-to-park bike ride. For these events and activities, the historic parks and sites have worked together to derive themes and plans and host onsite programming. The sites have co-hosted press conferences, co-led trainings, shared interns and volunteers, and donated space in support for each other's activities and events. SRGA has also provided technical assistance for wayside exhibits signs and facilitated networking opportunities and collaboration with county and state level agencies, while the parks and sites have provided interpretive and other skills-based training.

Media: The SRGA forged partnerships with media: newspaper, TV, and radio channels in the five counties it spans. SRGA regularly works with local papers like the *Mercury* and the *Reading Eagle.* SRGA is working to increase its work with Philadelphia media outlets like *The Philadelphia Inquirer* as well as Philadelphia-area TV that occasionally features stories about the Sojourn and the trail.

2.3.2 SRGA Partnership with NPS

Another partnership is with the National Park Service. NPS and SRGA have been resources for each other for technical and financial assistance. HPP funding is established through a cooperative agreement between SRGA (on behalf of SRHA) and the regional office of the NPS. SRGA has also worked with NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program on past grant opportunities.

SRGA participates in NPS programs. For example, SRHA is officially a part of NPS's Passport to your National Parks Program; it received a passport stamp in 2004. In 2012, NPS also partnered to create programs and organize and host events. SRGA has partnered with NPS and the Federal TRIO Upward Bound Program to create Youth Heritage Treks. Each trek takes a dozen local high school students who are enrolled in Upward Bound programs in underserved communities and provides them with bikes to ride on the trail and visit neighboring NPS parks and sites, including Valley Forge National Historical Park, Hopewell Furnace Historic Site, and Independence National Park. The youth also participate in conservation activities in local creeks. Previous treks have taken youth on a ride from Norristown to Valley Forge and from Pottstown to Hopewell Furnace.

As discussed previously, SRGA has partnered with other NPS historic sites and parks. The Superintendents of Valley Forge National Historical Park, Hopewell Furnace Historic Site, and Independence National Park have served interchangeability as liaisons on the SRGA Board of Directors. SRGA has also worked with other NHAs, through the Alliance of National Heritage Areas. This alliance partners with NPS regularly. SRGA staff has been an active member of the Alliance, serving on the Board of Directors and Executive Committee and attending meetings. SRGA hosted Alliance business meetings in fall 2005 and 2006. At these meetings, SRGA staff was asked to speak and provide technical assistance to the other NHAs.

Section 3 – NHA Fulfillment of the Authorizing Legislation and Management Plan

3.1 Goals and Objectives of the SRHA

As outlined in Section 2, PL 106-278 designated the Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area (SRHA) in 2000. The legislation mandated that the Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA) develop a management plan within 3 years. See Figure 3.1 for a comparison of the SRHA legislative purpose and management plan.

Figure 3.1 Comparison of Legislative Purpose and Goals, Strategy and Activity Areas in the SRHA Management Plan

Purposes as Specified in Legislation	Management Plan Goals	Implementation Framework and Activity Areas
"To foster a close working relationship with all levels of government, the private sector and the local communities in the Schuylkill River Valley of southeastern Pennsylvania and enable the communities to conserve the heritage while continuing to pursue economic opportunities; and To conserve, interpret, and develop the historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources related to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley."	Foster awareness and appreciation of the Schuylkill River Valley's heritage resources and the stories they have to tell. Increase heritage tourism and associated economic benefits for the Schuylkill River Valley region and its communities. Strengthen the Schuylkill River Valley's historic communities through sustainable community development related to heritage resources. Complete development of the Schuylkill River Trail (SRT). Conserve and enhance the Schuylkill River Valley's significant historical, cultural, and natural resources. Increase outdoor recreational opportunities related to the Schuylkill River Valley's natural and cultural heritage.	*Implementation framework:* 1. Implement the Plan through collaborative partnerships. 2. Establish a variety of programmatic and physical connections among sites, attractions, and resources throughout the SRHA. 3. Focus on programs and actions that will most effectively build a regional identify for and increase visitation within SRHA. 4. Enhance the quality of life of local communities through conservation and development of heritage resources. *Activity Areas:* Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization Building the Schuylkill River Trail Resource Conservation and Stewardship

In order to fulfill the legislative purpose, SRGA hired Wallace Roberts &Todd, LLC, Economics Research Associates, and History Now and established a Management Plan Steering Committee to prepare the management plan that was mandated through the original legislation. In 2003, the management plan entitled, *Living with the River: Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area Final Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement* was completed, accepted by Governor July 2003, and transmitted to the Secretary of the Interior.

As specified in the legislation, SRHA was "to foster a close working relationship with all levels..." SRGA incorporated this purpose into the implementation framework for the management plan. Since its inception, SRGA has established over 140 partnerships to further the goals stated both in the legislation and management plan. After 10 years, SRGA created *2000-2012 Ten Years of Living with the River* to capture the SRHA's accomplishments.

Other planning documents that SRGA created to guide and operationalize its work on the specified goals and objectives are captured in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 List of SRHA Strategic Plans and Their Purpose

Year	Name	Purpose
Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization		
2004	SRHA Outdoor Recreational Business Study	Study determined that economic indicators are strong and there is great potential to partner, promote and support businesses and services related to outdoor recreation. SRHA was divided into three sections and outlined opportunities, drawbacks and specific locations for potential business development.
2005	Schuylkill Riverfront Academic and Heritage Center Proposal	A $2M proposal for a partnership between SRHA and Montgomery County Community College (MCCC) to develop the Interpretative Center (see Section 3.2.1) environmental and recreational courses, and community cultural events. This proposal was followed by a capital campaign which was completed in 2012. The Interpretive Center opened June 2012.
2006	Ethnic Heritage Study	A 71-page report with more than 60 life-story interviews, church services and cultural events telling the stories of Schuylkill County's ethnic heritage. Findings were presented during public meetings to more than 150 attendees. Report was sent to all public libraries, schools and historical societies in Schuylkill County.
2008	Trails Towns Economic Impact Study	The study surveyed 117 businesses to assess gross sales revenue and trail attributed revenue, perceived economic impact, and trail influenced expansions.
Building the SRT		
2003	Feasibility Study	Planning document for section of the SRT from Hamburg to Auburn.
2004	Schuylkill River Land and Water Emergency Response Location System: Audit, Analysis and Recommendations	Sections of the river and land trails within the SRHA were assessed through site observations, surveys and interviews to establish an emergency management sign system and increased the use and safety of river water trails.

Table 3.1 List of SRHA Strategic Plans and Their Purpose (continued)

Year	Name	Purpose
2007	Feasibility Study	The study examined the feasibility for a 20-mile section of the SRT from Reading to Hamburg.
2009	Schuylkill River Trail User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis	The study looked at user characteristics, needs, trail maintenance strengths and weaknesses and economic impact of the trail.
2011	Trail Property Design, Operation, and Management Guidelines	SRGA created a 58-page guide to standardize trail programming, design, maintenance, communication, and operations across the different organizational and municipalities that manage the SRT. The accompanying CD compiled 26 State and local planning guides/tools and 4 feasibility/evaluation studies to help municipal decisions makers with trail development and maintenance.
2011	Trail Preservation Ordinance Provisions and Conservation Guidelines	These guidelines (on CD) help municipal decisions makers develop and refine land use regulations to enhance trail development, access and preservation.
Resource Conservation and Stewardship		
2001	Feasibility Study for Fricks Lock Village Historic Park	The study determined the feasibility of preserving, restoring or reusing the 18 structures at Fricks Lock Village.

SRGA staff has established over 140 partnerships, built infrastructure, developed programs, and provided leadership and support to organizations and individuals throughout SRHA to fulfill the legislative purpose and goals and objectives in the management plan. During the Meet and Greet Visit in February 2016, SRGA staff and the evaluation team constructed a logic model that depicts the relationships between SRHA goals, resources, partners, strategies and activities and outcomes. The SRHA logic model is presented in Figure 3.2.

3.2 SRHA Activities and Impacts

As depicted in the SRHA logic model, activities outlined in the management plan may be grouped into three areas; Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization, Building the SRT, and Resource Conservation and Stewardship. This section describes activities in each of these areas and the impacts of the efforts.

3.2.1 Area #1: Heritage Tourism/ Community Revitalization

Activities undertaken to increase heritage tourism and revitalize the communities within the SRHA include: Heritage Trail Towns Project; Riverfront Academic and Heritage Center Heritage Park Program, Gateway Centers, Schuylkill County Ethnic Heritage Activities; Art Programs/Events, and Marketing and Communications.

Heritage Trail Towns Program

In 2004, SRGA funded the *Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area Outdoor Recreation Business Study* to examine the potential of business development within the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. The study found great potential for new business development within the SRHA indicating that economic trends were in favor of investments, the population was increasing in the area and government/local support for new businesses were strong for outdoor and recreational-related businesses. The 73-page report outlined local and national trends providing a business case for investments in businesses that promote

Figure 3.2 Schuylkill River Heritage Area Logic Model

hiking, biking, kayaking and recreational boating, cross-country skiing, fishing and wildlife watching. The study laid the groundwork for future community revitalization activities that fell under the Heritage Trail Towns Project.

In 2009, the SRGA convened 121 businesses and community leaders for a conference to provide information including updates on the trail development, impact of trail use on the region, and a dialogue on how businesses can benefit from the trails growing popularity and use. As a result of the enormous interest, a second Trail Town Conference was convened in 2010 with 133 community and business leaders in attendance. Later that year, SRGA introduced the Heritage Towns and Tours Program that provided municipalities along the SRT with grant funding and how-to information on making their towns into destinations for trail users.

In 2011, SRGA created the *Schuylkill River Heritage Towns and Tours Toolkit*. The toolkit provides a CD with ongoing guidance to communities as they develop into Heritage destinations. The SRHA's model for community revitalization and economic development is to combine conservation, education, recreation, and historic and cultural preservation by linking all activities/events to the Schuylkill River and SRT. The Toolkit includes models, worksheets, forms, and checklists that help communities create and implement Heritage Action Plans using resources and case studies to develop their historic, commercial, recreational, and event offerings to increase visitation and improve the local economy.

The same year, SRGA began offering grants to communities to support the development of Heritage Action Plans and the implementation of those plans. Between 2011 and 2015, SRGA awarded $399,270 through 23 grants to communities to support plan development and implementation in the form of signage, brochures, and other changes that support heritage tourism and the engagement of trail users in historic, commercial, and recreational assets in communities along the trail.

Riverfront Academic and Heritage Center

Since SRHA's inception, SRHA partnered with MCCC to offer Heritage Area-themed continuing education classes. In 2005, SRHA's partnership with MCCC expanded with the planning and development of the Schuylkill Riverfront Academic and Heritage Center. SRGA developed a capital campaign showing three phases for the Center's development, totaling $3,750,189. The vision for the Center is to serve as a hub for education, culture, recreation, and conservation, offer academic and community programming on environmental education and community events, and host SRHA's Interpretative and Visitor Center.

Table 3.2 Number and Grant Amount for Heritage Action Planning and Implementation Grants by Year

Year	# of Communities Receiving Awards	Total Amount Awarded	Types of Projects
2011	9	$140,270	9 Heritage Action Planning Grants
2012	11	$219,000	3 Heritage Action Planning Grants and 8 Implementation Grants
2013	2	$32,000	1 Heritage Action Planning Grant and 1 Implementation Grant
2015	1	$8,000	1 Heritage Action Planning Grant

Table 3.3 Overview of Capital Campaign for Schuylkill Riverfront Academic and Heritage Center

	Funder	Allocated Amount
Phase I completed in 2010	Commonwealth of PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program	$500,000
	Environmental Protection Agency	$200,000
	Department of Housing and Urban Development	$37,500
	Montgomery County Community College	$388,898
Phase II completed in 2012	Commonwealth of PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program	$250,000
	Community Development Block Grant	$190,000
	Montgomery County Community College Foundation	$45,858
	Department of Housing and Urban Development	$142,000
	National Penn Bank	$10,000
	Montgomery County Community College	$585,433
Phase III completed in 2016	NPS Heritage Partnership Program (HPP)	$197,156
	PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	$86,716
	National Penn Bank	$10,000
	Martin Foundation	$30,000
	SRHA Board of Directors	$15,795

Phase I, completed in 2010, covered renovations to create a 202-space parking lot by removing contaminated soil, installing underground drainage facilities and blacktop, and planting 130 trees, shrubs, and bushes. The parking lot is currently used by students, area residents, and visitors who frequent Riverfront Park and the trail system.

Phase II, completed in 2012, involved renovations of a vacant 5,000 square foot area to serve as space for the College's new Environmental Science program, including an Environmental Science Laboratory, by replacing the leaking roof with an eco-friendly "green" roof, constructing a new and handicap-accessible ramp, cleaning and abating existing asbestos, updating the water and sewer service, and installing energy-efficient windows.

Phase II also included a comprehensive, interactive Interpretive Center featuring permanent exhibits on the SRHA, SRT, and Schuylkill River Water Trail called the River of Revolutions. The center includes interactive exhibits, maps, video monitors, and informative wall panels that both narrates tours of visitors' sites and teaches about the American, Industrial, and Environmental Revolutions in the SRHA.

SRGA celebrated the completion of Phase II in February 2012 with an event and reception attended by MCCC leadership and Pennsylvania State Senator, John Rafferty. The SRHA Interpretative Center was opened in June 2012.

Phase III, completed April in 2016, included the development and furnishing of the laboratory, classrooms, offices and student spaces. The vision for the Center also included an outdoor Learning Lab, Amphitheater, and additional outdoor amenities.

Heritage Park Program

From 2000 to 2008, SRGA administered the Heritage Park Program for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Over the 9 years, the program funded 100 projects for a total of $1,752,700 to support heritage tourism and community revitalization. The program generated substantially more applicants than it was able to fund. For example, in 2004, 30 organizations requested $1.2 million but only 11 projects were awarded for a total of $130,000. See Table 3.4 for an overview of grants by year.

Table 3.4 Heritage Park Program: Number, Amount, and Type of Grants by Year

Year	# of Projects	Grant Amount	Types of Projects
2000	12	$313,500	Canal restoration, watershed education, bike and pedestrian route, community reconnections, visitor center, and interpretive design
2001	15	$270,000	Visitor center, historic district nomination, steam locomotive restoration, canal interpretation, feasibility study, and master plan.
2002	17	$301,000	Trail design, gateway center, SRHA promotional video, ethnic heritage study, and visitor center marketing
2003	7	$185,000	Birding trail, train station restoration, trail study, Audubon strategic plan, and Hawk Mountain circular study
2004	11	$130,000	Historic trail restoration, signage projects, master plan, and heritage plan
2005	8	$150,000	Traveling exhibit, wayside bike stop, visitor attraction signs, and historic driving tour
2006	8	$165,000	Trail conference, locomotive restoration, historic audio tour, interpretive master plan, and anthracite museum
2007	8	$140,000	Heritage Area PBS film, centennial exhibit, brochures, interpretive center expansion, art center master plan, and gateway study
2008	14	$98,000	Interpretative displays, support for an archaeological field school, narrative history for the Schuylkill River Desilting Project, educational materials, and programs and events
Total	**100**	**$1,752,500**	

Until 2008, the SRGA was funded by the DCNR through a line item in the budget that funded State Heritage Areas. The funding for this line item was zeroed out in 2009. Valuing the work of the SRGA, DCNR created the Partnership Program, which continues to fund heritage programs and projects. See Table 3.5 for an overview of the Partnership Program.

Table 3.5 Partnership Program: Type and Funding Amount of Projects by Year

Year	Funding Amount	Types of Projects
2009	$60,000	This funding supported the Schuylkill Highlands Mini Grant Program and Nature Based Tourism projects
2010	$185,000	Schuylkill Highlands and Heritage Towns & Tours mini grant programs, Schuylkill River Trail, Heritage Area programs and events including the Sojourn, Scenes of the Schuylkill Art Show, and the River Festival
2011	$185,000	Schuylkill River Trail; Bike Schuylkill; Schuylkill Watershed Congress; Schuylkill Highlands mini grant program; Heritage Area programs and events
2012	$169,000	Schuylkill River Trail; Bike Schuylkill; Schuylkill Watershed Congress; Schuylkill Highlands mini grant program; Heritage Area programs and events
2013	$226,000	This grant is still open with projects still in progress. Projects include Heritage Area events, Bike Schuylkill bike share program, Schuylkill Watershed Congress, and other local and regional projects.
2014	$273,000	This grant is still open with projects still in progress. Projects include Heritage Area events, Bike Schuylkill bike share program, Schuylkill Watershed Congress, and other local and regional projects.
2015	$215,000	This grant is still open with projects still in progress. Projects include Heritage Area events, Bike Schuylkill bike share program, Schuylkill Watershed Congress, and other local and regional projects.
Total	**$1,313,000**	

Since 2009, $1,313,000 was received through the Partnership Program, which continued to fund heritage programs and events as well as other project described under Section 3.2.2 Area #2 Building the SRT and Section 3.2.3 Area #3 Resource Conservation and Stewardship.

Gateway Centers

In the management plan, SRHA's vision was to place four or five Gateways Centers in each county. SRGA sought willing partners and aimed to place Gateway Centers in areas with high visibility. Since 2003, 23 Gateways Centers were installed across the five counties; seven in Schuylkill County, five in Berks County, three in Montgomery County, two in Chester County and six in Philadelphia County. Each Gateway Center serves as an information booth to inform people about the region's natural, cultural, historic, and recreational resources. They include illustrative wall maps, a 3-minute video and brochure rack to allow people to access information on the SRHA, SRT, national and state landmarks, historic communities, and other key information about the SRHA's heritage.

SRGA partnered with organizations across the SRHA to create Gateway Centers including the National Parks, Delaware and Lehigh NHC, colleges such as Reading Area Community College, local visitors' bureaus, organizations such as the Area Revitalization Development Center, and businesses such as Cabela's. During the Meet and Greet and Evaluation Site Visits, nine Gateway Centers were visited. Observations indicated that some centers are staffed and receive a steady flow of traffic such as the Gateway Center at Valley Forge, while others are accessible but in areas with less visibility such as the Gateway Center at Manayunk Development Corporation. See Table 3.6 for locations of Gateway Centers by year opened.

Table 3.6 Location of Gateway Centers by Year Opened

Year Opened	Gateway Center Location	County
2003	SRHA Headquarters, Pottstown	Montgomery County
2003	Mahanoy Area Downtown Center	Schuylkill County
2004	Valley Forge National Historical Park	Montgomery County
2004	Reading Area Community College	Berks County
2004	Cabela's Hamburg location	Berks County
2004	Tamaqua Train Station	Schuylkill County
2005	Fairmount Water Works Interpretative Center	Philadelphia County
2006	Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site	Berks County
2006	Tri County Chamber of Commerce, Pottstown	Montgomery County
2007	Independence National Historical Park	Philadelphia County
2007	Bartram's Garden	Philadelphia County
2007	Schuylkill River Heritage Center, Phoenixville	Chester County
2009	French Creek State Park	Berks County
2009	Locust Lake and Tuscarora State Park	Schuylkill County
2009	Please Touch Museum	Philadelphia County
2010	Nolde Forest Environ Center	Berks County
2010	Trolley Cart Café	Philadelphia County
2011	Manayunk Development Corporation	Philadelphia County
2014	Pottsville	Schuylkill County
2014	Schuylkill Haven	Schuylkill County
2012	SRHA Interpretative Center	Chester County
2014	Visitor Center in Pottsville	Schuylkill County
2014	Walk In Art Center in Schuylkill Haven	Schuylkill County

Schuylkill County Ethnic Heritage Activities

In 2004, SRGA created a contract with Talking Across the Lines, LLC to conduct the Schuylkill County Ethnic Heritage Study. The results of the study was published in 2006 in a 71-page report documenting the rich mix of cultures and traditions in Schuylkill County and recommendations on how organizations and communities can use their cultural identity to strengthen heritage tourism. The report was shared with over 150 participants during three presentations in Orwigsburg, Mahanoy City, and Tamaqua.

In 2007, the Schuylkill County Ethnic Heritage Travelling Exhibit was created including a photo and informational display and a 19-minute video of oral history, music, and images. The exhibit travelled to camps, fairs, festivals, parades, and community events throughout the county. A second product resulting from the study was a compilation of 60 recordings on CDs of oral histories including Pennsylvania Dutch, African American, Mexican American, Jewish, Ukrainian as well as coal mining and canal men. The recordings are housed at the Pottstown Public Library.

Art Programs

SRGA introduced the first print, *Winter on the Schuylkill* by Linda Henry, in 2003 to residents in the SRHA to engage the art community, stimulate community pride in the heritage of the region, and raise funds for heritage projects. The interest led SRGA to develop the *Scenes of the Schuylkill: Celebrating the Heritage Area through Art,* which is an art show and sale that began in 2005 with 31 original paintings and photographs. Local artists submit artwork for the juried art show. Selected pieces are announced at a reception that is attended by approximately 100 community members, and thereafter, exhibited for a month or longer. The event has grown each year with 54 pieces featured in 2008 and 82 featured in 2014. SRGA has expanded the viewership of the artwork over time as well by partnering with organizations to allow the exhibit to travel throughout the SRHA. For example, this year some selected pieces were displayed at Valley Forge National Historic Park.

SRGA also supported artwork along the trail through Heritage Park Program Grants and Trail Town Implementation Grants (see above). In 2005, SRGA partnered with RiverPlace Development Corporation and was awarded a $50,000 from NPS Art and Community Landscapes. The funds were matched locally and used to create artwork that was placed along the Schuylkill River Water Trail known as RiverPlace.

SRGA also stimulated interest in the region's heritage through art by hosting events such as the 2004 Kutztown University Summer Art Institute, which introduced 20 elementary, middle, and high school art teachers to historic, recreational, and tourism sites in the SRHA.

Marketing and Communications

The SRHA's original website (http://www.schuylkillriver.org/) has been maintained since 2001. In addition to describing the SRHA and the heritage of the Revolutionary River, the original website included information on partners, maps and a section for studies and report. The website was redone in 2005 to provide more detailed information to visitors about areas of interest and events. The current website continues to build on that dual vision of information about the region's heritage and SRHA as well as guidance for visitors including an interactive Web tool that allows visitors to plan a visit. This website is updated daily. As seen in Table 3.7, Web traffic has more than doubled over the past 9 years that metrics were available.

Table 3.7 Traffic for schuylkillriver.org by Year

Year	Website Hits
2007	66,298
2008	85,023
2009	63,644
2010	104,730
2011	117,510
2012	107,013
2013	129,539
2014	129,749
2015	141,001

In 2009, a second website (http://schuylkillrivertrail.com/) was created providing maps of the full trail and each of the six sections with locations of trail heads and amenities off the trail including restaurants, shops and sites. Users may view pictures of the trail for each of the trail sections, check the status of various trail sections, and reach trail-related news/events. There is also a mileage chart. This website includes a page summarizing volunteer opportunities such as the SRT Ambassadors Program, Valley Forge National Historical Park, and other local volunteer opportunities such as Schuylkill Banks, East Falls, and Manayunk. SRGA migrated the site to WordPress recently but the design remains the original and the content is static. The change to WordPress provides SRGA with more flexibility in the future to allow updates and design changes.

In 2013, a third website (http://bikeschuylkill.org/) was launched to inform community members about the SRHA's Bike Share Program. The site provides

a map with the bike share locations and hours of operations, instructions, rules and regulations for sharing, and maps and pictures of places on the SRT to ride. The website also includes a page acknowledging the program partners. This site is mostly a static site; with content updated occasionally.

In addition to the website, SRHA information and events are disseminated through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Traffic has increased in the past 1-2 years (see Table 3.8). In 2008, SRGA started a blog where members were asked to contribute their stories, experiences, ideas, and comments. Since the inception, the blog has received 27,711 page views. SRGA also maintains an email LISTSERV of approximately 4,000 members.

Table 3.8 Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter Traffic by Year

Year	Facebook	Instagram	Twitter
2014	1,029	NA	NA
2015	1,825	495	394
2016	2,153	508	425

SRGA has developed numerous press releases, newsletter, brochures, guides, and other products to inform the community about the SRHA. See Table 3.9 for a sample of documents produced since 2001.

Table 3.9 Sample of Publications by Category and Year

Name of publications
Brochures/Maps
Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area – full color brochure (2007; rev. 2011)
Schuylkill River Trail – full color brochure/map (2010)
Schuylkill River Trail – Pocket Map (2012)
*Schuylkill River Sojourn brochure (ND)**
Schuylkill River Sojourn – annual event brochure
Schuylkill River Trail Safety Tips (ND)
Schuylkill River Trail Volunteer Opportunities (ND)
Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area Membership brochure (ND)
Name of publications
Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area: Welcome Trail Users (ND)
Schuylkill River Restoration Fund (ND)
Schuylkill River Heritage Area Ride for the River (2016)
Annual Scenes of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area Art Show and Sale Reception (annually)
Books/Booklets
The Schuylkill by J. Bennett Nolan (an in-depth source of historical information written in 1951 reprinted by the SRHA-2004))
Along the Schuylkill River by Laura Catalano and Kurt Zwikl (2009)
Bringing the War of Independence to Life by Kurt Zwikl (2014)
Linking Communities & Quality of Life: Schuylkill River Sojourn (ND)
Guides/Handbooks
Schuylkill River Water Trail Guide (2002)
A Federal, State, and Local Partnership Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area Sign Design and Guideline Manual (2005)
Birding and Wildlife Guide (2009)
Schuylkill River Heritage Towns and Tours Toolkit (2010)
Trail Property Design, Operation, and Management Guidelines (2011)
Trail Preservation Ordinance Provisions and Conservation Guidelines (2011)
Schuylkill River Trail Ambassadors Program Handbook (2011)
Newsletters
SRHA Update: Winter 2004
SRHA Update: Spring 2004
SRHA Update: Summer 2004
SRHA Update: Fall 2004
SRHA Update: Winter 2005
SRHA Update: Summer 2005
SRHA Update: Winter 2006
SRHA Update: Summer 2006
SRHA Update: Fall 2006
SRHA Update: Summer 2007
SRHA Update: Fall 2007
*SRHA Update: Fall 2008***

*ND stands for no date available
**transitioned to a monthly electronic newsletter

Table 3.9 Sample of Publications by Category and Year (continued)

Name of publications
Other Materials
Molly McGuire Auto Tour (2002)
SRGA Activities Agreement form (2008)
SRGA Maintenance Agreement form (2009)
PBS Documentary–Our National Heritage: The Revolutionary River (2010)
SRGA Volunteer Agreement form, timesheet (2011)
SRGA Adopt a Trail Program Agreement (2011)

SRGA also raises awareness and support for the SRHA through SRHA memberships. SRGA has offered a number of different membership packages over the years but has found that promoting a membership program is costly and does not produce a strong return on investment. Currently, the membership program largely operates as a mechanism for accepting donations. The SRGA offers seven membership levels: student ($25); individual ($50); household ($75); donor ($100-499); Patron ($500-999); River Keeper ($1,000 and up); and Business/Corporate ($500 and up). All members (except students) receive a 10 percent discount on the Schuylkill River Sojourn and other select SRHA events; a 20 percent discount on merchandise; news; and invitations to SRHA annual meeting and events. Currently, SRHA has 429 members. Table 3.10 demonstrates a steady increase in membership since 2009.

Table 3.10 SRHA Membership by Year

Year	Number of members
2009	249
2010	271
2011	300
2012	324
2013	330
2014	337
2015	383
2016	429

SRGA has sought creative solutions to engage diverse audiences. One example is the partnership between SRHA and the Sly Fox Brewing Company. As noted, in Spring of 2015, Sly Fox Brewing Company created SRT Ale, which disseminates information about the SRHA and SRT on the can. SRHA received over $4,000 in proceeds from the sale.

Impact/Outcomes for Heritage Tourism and Community Revitalization

In 2008, the Trail Towns Program and its partners contracted with Campos, Inc. to conduct an Economic Impact Study for the Heritage Trail Towns Program. Results of the study were documented in the *Trail Town Economic Impact Study: Phase I Business Survey (2008).* The study surveyed 117 businesses via mail, online, and phone between March and April in 2008. **Between 2006 and 2007, the study documented:**

- **18.8 percent increase in outdoor-/trail-related businesses**
- **25.5 percent of the business received was attributed by business owners to the area's biking/hiking trail**
- **64.4 percent of business owners reported that their sales/revenue has increased at least somewhat with 84.6 percent attributing the increase to outdoor/trail related business and 79.2 percent to increased restaurant business**
- **62.4 percent of business owners credited the trail with having at least some influence on the location of their business**
- **92.1 percent reported expanding or making plans to expand current operations**

In 2015, the Heritage Development Partnership contracted with Tripp Umbach to conduct an economic impact study of six NHAs including SRHA and case studies of each. **The SRHA case study indicated that it generated $589.9 million in economic impact, supported 6,154 jobs and generated $37.7 million in tax revenue over 3 years based on the number of visitors and tourists (n=7,791,979) to the SRHA during that time period.**

Evidence collected through the current evaluation highlighted the significant changes to the region over the past 20 years. For many years, industries dominated the access to the Schuylkill River and used the river as a "dumping ground." The Schuylkill River was viewed as "dirty;" not something that residents accessed. Any businesses nearby had their "backs to the river." Long-time residents describe the significant change in residents and business owner's attitudes towards the Schuylkill River and the SRT.

Most sources highlighted the success of the Heritage Trail Towns Project as one of the major accomplishments of the SRHA. The program has promoted businesses along the trail including restaurants, canoe and kayak rental businesses, and outdoor and recreation businesses such as Hidden River Outfitters. The program's success encouraged SRHA's partner, Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), to replicate the program expanding it to areas along the Circuit Rider Trails outside the SRHA and in more urban communities. SRGA advises PEC on the project and is collaborating on the sustainability of the efforts. See Table 3.11 for a sample of businesses by trail section.

Table 3.11 Sample of Businesses, Restaurants and Heritage Sites by Trail Section

Trail Section	Business, Restaurant, and Heritage Site
Philadelphia	The Pour House Tavern
	Franco's Trattoria
	Johnny Mananas
	Manayunk Brewery and Restaurant
	Philadelphia Museum of Art
	Fairmount Water Works Interpretative Center
	Human Zoom Bikes and Boards
Philadelphia to Phoenixville	Conshohocken Brewing Company
	Produce Junction Market
	Fitzwater Station Restaurant and Bar
	Frosty Falls
	Schuylkill Canal Park and Lock 60
	Valley Forge National Historical Park
	John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove
	Riverbend Cycles
	Bike Line of Valley Forge
Phoenixville to Pottstown	Sly Fox Brewing Company
	The Colonial Theatre
	Shearer Elegance Bed & Breakfast
Pottstown to Reading	Canal Street Pub and Restaurant
	Ugly Oyster Drafthaus
	Judy's on Cherry and The Speckled Hen
	The Peanut Bar
	Trooper Thorn's Irish Beef House
	Turkey Hill Mini Market
	The Brick House
	Coventry Ice Cream Parlor
	Rita's Italian Ice
	Scoupe De Ville
	Yellow House Hotel Restaurant and B&B
	Douglassville Hotel
	French Creek State Park
	Morlatton Village
	Tri County Bicycles
	Bike Line of Pottstown

Table 3.11 Sample of Businesses, Restaurants and Heritage Sites by Trail Section (continued)

Trail Section	Business, Restaurant, and Heritage Site
Reading to Hamburg	West Reading Diner
	Queen City Diner
	Blue Marsh Lake
Hamburg to Pottsville	Hecky's Sub Shop
	Port Clinton Peanut Shop
	The American House Hotel and B&B
	Port Clinton Hotel
	Blue Marsh Lake
	Cabela's

The SRHA's Heritage Trail Towns Project and Heritage Park Programs Grant helped communities become tourist destinations by educating the business community, encouraging the development of trail-related businesses, and showing communities how to reach out to trail users with historic, commercial, and recreational offerings. One example of results from these efforts include Reading, PA, which has become a destination for mountain biking with the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) recognition and designation of the Greater Reading Trail Systems (GRTS) as an official Bronze Level Ride Center. In 2007, NBC's *Today Show* featured Reading as one of the top four "Up and Coming Neighborhoods" in the United States, chosen by looking for areas of big change, renovations, cleanups of parks, and waterfronts.

SRGA has also promoted the heritage of the region through the development of the Riverfront Academic and Heritage Center, which serves as the SRHA's headquarters. Community and stakeholders interviews suggest that SRHA is viewed as having a significant impact in revitalizing Pottstown. The Gateway Centers are designed to disseminate information about the SRHA across the corridor. The impact of the centers varies by the visibility and accessibility of the information hubs.

SRGA's traditional educational programming on the heritage of the area is strategically limited. The leadership, members of the Board of Directors, and some partners noted that programming solely to educate on the heritage of the region draws a limited audience. While programs such as the *Scenes of the Schuylkill: Celebrating the Heritage Area through Art* are successful in engaging a specific audience (the art community), SRGA has interwoven educational programs into recreational events to reach a larger audience. See Section 3.2.3 for more discussion.

3.2.2 Area #2: Building the Schuylkill River Trail (SRT)

SRGA's vision is to complete the 128-mile SRT that passes through 5 counties and 35 municipalities. Activities undertaken to build the SRT include: planning activities for the SRT; SRT development, bridge construction and water landings; and SRT maintenance.

Planning Activities for the SRT

As mentioned in Section 3.1, SRGA has supported a number of planning activities to guide the development and maintain the SRT and landings to provide water access for boating on areas where the SRT runs along the Schuylkill River. The development of each trail section was guided by feasibility studies and preliminary engineering review. SRGA has supported some feasibility studies while others were undertaken by the Counties. In 2011, SRGA developed Trail Property Design, Operation, and Management Guidelines that captures the feasibility studies and planning documents on CD guiding the trail development. Decisions on which trail sections to develop are made by weighing the following factors:

- *Land ownership issues:* Property is often privately owned or owned by a railroad company. SRGA proceeds with sections that are more easily negotiated with easement agreements.
- *Bridge or other structural connections:* If the trail section passes under or over a bridge, construction or permissions may delay the trail development. This can be costly.

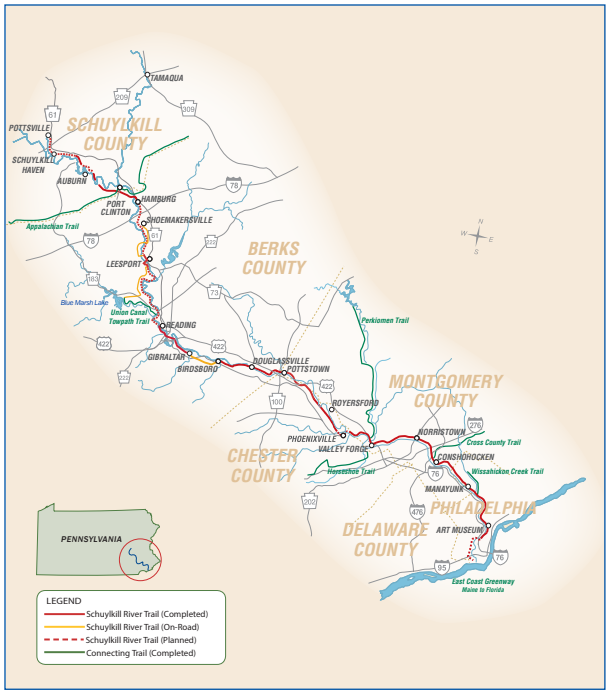
- *Community Buy-In:* Residents in rural, suburban and urban areas have different expectations of privacy. Rural residents may prevent access to trail sections that cross private property or otherwise resist trail development.

The SRT is owned, managed, maintained and developed by multiple entities. See Figure 3.3 for a map of the SRT. The regional mission of the SRGA allows it to serve an important role as a connector and uniting organization for the multiple trail stakeholders. In 2005, the SRT Council was formed. SRT Council members meet bimonthly to provide direction on the development, management and maintenance of the SRT. The SRT Council is comprised of 18 representatives from the following organizations: Schuylkill River Development Corporation, Fairmount Park, East Falls Development Corporation, Manayunk Development Corporation, Montgomery County, Valley Forge National Historical Park, Chester County, SRHA, Berks County Planning Department, Borough of Hamburg, Schuylkill County, and Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Members' interest in the SRT include:

- *The Schuylkill River Development Corporation* manages an 8-mile section of the SRT from the Fairmount WaterWorks to Locust Street, a section known as Schuylkill Banks.
- *Fairmount Park* owns and manages the Philadelphia section of the SRT that runs along Kelly Drive from Wissahickon Creek at Ridge Avenue to the Philadelphia Art Museum.
- *Manayunk Development Corporation* manages the SRT in Manayunk.
- *Montgomery County* built, owns, and maintains 18 miles of the SRT that runs from the county line in Philadelphia to Mont Clare, passing through Valley Forge National Historical Park. (The section of the SRT on the park grounds is managed by NPS).
- *Phoenixville Borough* is working to connect the SRT from Mont Clare to Phoenixville. *Pottstown Borough* manages and maintains the SRT in Riverfront Park. Montgomery County also developed and maintains the SRT from Pottstown to the Berks County line.
- *Chester County* developed, owns, and manages 6 miles of the SRT from Cromby (located just above Phoenixville) to Parkerford. Chester County plans to extend the SRT from Parkerford to Route 422 Bridge in Pottstown. Chester County supports SRHA with a $10,000 annual donation and includes SRHA signage on the SRT.
- *SRGA* developed, manages, and maintains 28 miles of the SRT in Berks and Schuylkill Counties including a nearly 20-mile stretch from the Pottstown line to Reading, a 7-mile length of trail from Hamburg to Auburn, and a 1.5-mile piece in Landingville. The property in Berks County is owned by the SRHA or by easement. The sections in Schuylkill County were developed by SRGA and the holdings were sold back to the county after its development. Schuylkill County supports the SRHA with an annual donation of $10,000-15,000.

Figure 3.3 Map of the Schuylkill River Trail



SRT Development, Bridge Construction, and Water Landings

Since its inception, the primary priority for the SRHA has been the development of the SRT. Progress on the development is captured in Table 3.12.

Table 3.12 Milestones in the Development of the SRT by Year

Year	Milestone
1970s	19 miles of the SRT from Philadelphia to Valley Forge was completed
2001	6 miles from Gibraltar to Brentwood Trailhead (Reading) was completed
2002	>2 miles between Wyomissing Road to Lancaster Avenue in Reading
2004	22 miles Perkiomen Trail was connected to the SRT at Valley Forge
2005	SRT's 115-foot Lancaster Avenue Pedestrian Bridge completed in Reading
2006	New Trailhead Pavilion opened at Pottstown Riverfront Park
2006	1.5 miles from Pottstown to Berks County was completed
2006	1.8 miles from the Berks County line to Morlatton Village in Douglasville (completing an 8 mile continuous path)
2007	7.5 miles completed in Upper Berks and Schuylkill County
2007	0.6 mile section completed that allowed SRT to be continuous from Reading Area Community College to Gibraltar
2008	0.68 mile section completed that allowed the SRT to be continuous for 19 miles from Pottstown to Reading
2008	0.33 mile section completed on the SRT from Reading to Hamburg
2009	17 mile on-road temporary SRT installed from Reading to Hamburg
2011	1.24 mile SRT extension between Hamburg and Kernsville Trailhead
2011	5.6 mile section cooperatively built by Chester County from Cromby to Parkerford
2013	0.47 mile SRT installed south of Leesport
	0.2 mile section in Landingville including masonry stone arch bridge reconstruction
2014	0.35 mile SRT installed north of Leesport, including 1.2 miles on on-road trail through Leesport
2014	0.5 mile boardwalk dedicated in Philadelphia
2015	0.2 mile section built south of Leesport, bring the total around Leesport to complete
2015	2.4 miles in four phases within the Reading to Hamburg trail gap
2015	1.75 miles completed in Phoenixville Borough
2015	2.2 miles at Mont Clare along the Schuylkill Navigation Canal
2015	2.2 miles Cynwyd Trail built in Manayunk, Philadelphia to Lower Merion Township
2016	0.1 mile at Auburn with new Trailhead
2016	0.34 RiverWalk Trail completed in Pottstown

Since 2001, SRGA has been involved in the development of 38.46 miles of the SRT. Milestones such as the bridge construction were costly multi-year projects that had a large impact on the area. For example, Lancaster Avenue Pedestrian Bridge in Reading cost $938,000 to build and connects a 2,000 foot isolated segment of the trail with a heavily-used section to allow hikers and bikers to cross Lancaster Avenue in Reading.

Most of the new trail segments were celebrated with press releases and ribbon-cutting ceremonies at the trailheads that interpretative signs that provide a map and overview of the SRT, identifying points of historical interest, emergency, and other information. See Table 3.13 for a list of the 32 Trailheads along the SRT.

Table 3.13 Trailheads on the SRT by County

County	Trailhead
Philadelphia County	Girard Avenue Bridge
	Walnut Street
	East Falls
	Columbia Bridge
	Manayunk
	Schuylkill Banks Information Center
	Lloyd Hall
	East Park Canoe House
Montgomery County	Spring Mill
	Conshohocken
	Norristown
	Betzwood
	Pawlings Road
	Port Providence
	Cromby
	Gay Street
	Pottstown Riverfront
	Keystone Boulevard
	Grosstown Road
Berks County	Morlatton Village
	Union Township
	Birdsboro
	Angstadt Lane
	Brentwood
	West Reading
	Stonecliff (Union Canal)
	Felix Dam
	Reading Railroad
	State Street
	Kernsville Dam
Schuylkill County	Auburn
	Tunnel Road

In addition to Trailheads, the SRGA also supported the development of water landings to provide access to the SRT for recreational boating. In 2004, the SRT had 23 water landings as compared to 43 in 2016.

William Penn Foundation was a significant supporter of the trail development work from 2006 to 2010. The Foundation provided the SRHA with three large grants that supported trail development and improvements, signage, and water landings. The grants also funded a Trail Steward position facilitating the development of the Ambassador Program described below. After 2010, the Foundation's mission changed to focus on water restoration. Table 3.14 provides an overview of the funding received from William Penn Foundation for the SRT.

Table 3.14 Overview of Support for the SRT from the William Penn Foundation

Year	Aim	Amount
2006	2-year grant aimed at unifying the SRT's sections	$600,000
2008	2-year grant to increase public awareness and accessibility to the SRT	$735,000
2010	2-year grant to improve the SRT and strengthen its economic development potential	$719,000

SRT Maintenance

While the SRGA has supported the development of the SRT and encouraged the counties to own, manage, and maintain the trail, some counties contend that the responsibility and liability for maintaining the SRT is too great to assume. Approximately 50 percent of the SRT is maintained by the SRGA. SRGA has a different agreement and arrangement with each of the counties. For example, SRGA has a lease agreement for the development and maintenance of the SRT in Schuylkill County while in Chester County, SRGA has arranged to include SRHA signage on the SRT that the Chester County developed, owns, and manages.

The cost of maintaining the SRT is approximately $500 a mile per year. Since the SRHA's inception, volunteers have been engaged in trail maintenance through a program called Trail Keepers. Volunteers sign a 2-3 year agreement to come out 3-4 times per year to work in crews of 15 for 6-hour shifts on pruning and litter pick-up. Volunteers are recruited for single projects, which usually involve particular skills such as carpenter, mason, or back hoe operator needed for specific improvements. Since 2002, 6,459 hours have been donated through the SRHA's Trail Keepers program (see Table 3.15 overview of volunteer participation by year).

The grants received from William Penn Foundation between 2006 and 2012 allowed SRGA to hire a Trail Steward and build the Ambassadors Program, an enhancement of the Trail Keepers program. Ambassadors report problems on the SRT, distribute maps and interact with the public, and provide input on SRT improvements. Some Ambassadors provide first aid. The program formalized volunteer responsibilities, providing ambassadors with an annual training, uniforms, and an identification tag. Although the SRT is managed by many different organizations, this program is for the entire SRT. Trail Ambassadors volunteer for a minimum of 8 hours a month between April and October. In 2014, there were 2,467 hours donated through this program (see Table 3.15).

In 2010, SRGA began an Adopt-a-Trail to engage schools and community members. Volunteers have contributed a total of 815 hours to trail maintenance through this program (see Table 3.15).

The increase in volunteer hours in 2015 is attributed to a new reporting system that allows volunteers to submit hours through a Google docs form, resulting in SRGA improved ability to capture volunteers' contributions. In 2015, Trail Keepers also added a new event called SRT Spree, which organized clean-ups over the course of a week along the full length of the Schuylkill River. Trail Keepers' SRT Spree event added several hundred volunteer hours.

Table 3.15 Trail Volunteer Hours Donated by Year

Year	Trail Keepers Hours	Trail Ambassadors Hours	Adopt-A Trail
2002	479	NA	
2003	485	NA	
2004	325	NA	
2005	209	NA	
2006	378	NA	
2007	213	NA	
2008	399	NA	
2009	196	NA	
2010	631	NA	12
2011	437	839	57
2012	335	1,512	114
2013	420	1,083	172
2014	443	2,467	176
2015	1,509	2,566	284

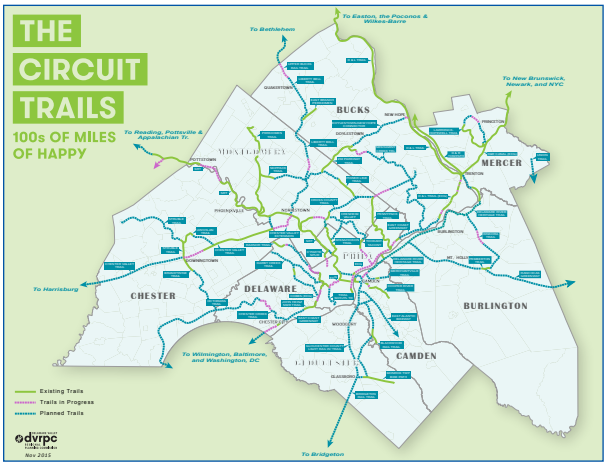
SRGA also began a Sponsor-a-Trail program in 2010 that encourages businesses and corporations to donate money for SRT maintenance. SRGA documented $13,950 received from trail sponsors in 2011, 2012, and 2014.

In addition to directly maintaining the SRT, stakeholders indicated that SRHA plays an important role in unifying the many trail stakeholders across the region by:

- Promoting the vision of a 128-mile SRT;
- Applying for joint funding when possible or supporting each other's funding applications;
- Providing guidelines to standardize trail development, signage, maintenance, and safety standards; and
- Promoting the success of the SRT through trail usage and economic impact studies.

SRGA fulfills these roles through its extensive partnerships. SRGA also participates in Circuit Coalition, the Greater Philadelphia Regional Trail Network that includes parts of the SRT and other trails across counties outside of the SRHA (See Figure 3.4).

Figure 3.4 Map of the Larger Area Wide Trail System Called the Circuit



Examples of how SRGA promoted standards across the region include:

- *Schuylkill River Land and Water Emergency Response Location System: Audit, Analysis and Recommendations (2004)* established an emergency management sign system and increased the use and safety of river water trail.
- *Trail Property Design, Operation, and Management Guidelines (2011)* standardized trail programming, design, maintenance, communication, and operations across the different organizational and municipalities that manage the SRT.
- *Trail Preservation Ordinance Provisions and Conservation Guidelines (2011)* provides sample land use regulations and other relevant information to enhance trail development, access and preservation.

Impact/Outcomes for Building the SRT

Overall, stakeholders agreed that building the SRT is the core piece of the SRHA's work. All other work on heritage tourism, community revitalization, education, conservation, and preservation are linked to the Schuylkill River and SRT. Partners and other stakeholders indicated that cleaning the river and building the SRT has had a significant impact on their towns and communities. **Interviews with partners, community members, and other stakeholders across the SRHA indicated that the SRT is:**

- **Widely used;**
- **A point of pride for the community;**
- **Stimulating residential and business growth; and**
- **An asset for the region.**

Schuylkill River Trail User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis (2009) provides evidence of the impact of the SRHA's work in building the SRT. In general, it states that the longer the trail, the more likely it is for people to travel to use it and spend more money in the trail town communities. SRGA has supported the development of 38.46 miles of the SRT since 2001, with approximately 50 percent of the 128-mile trail currently developed. In the 2009 study of 1223 survey respondents, responses were captured over 8 months at 21 trailheads along the SRT. Additionally, infrared counters were also placed at nine trailhead locations to measure movement and activity on the trail over the course of a year.

The study documents 802,239 annual trail user visits between 2006–2007. The economic impact of the trail was measured by asking users about purchases in the past year in conjunction to their use of the trail. **Most users (78 percent) purchased "hard goods" such as bikes, bike accessories, clothing, etc. averaging $406.31. Approximately 50 percent of respondents purchased "soft goods" such as water, soda, candy, ice cream, or lunch, averaging $9.07 per person per trip.**

Data suggested that the SRT was used frequently with 46 percent using the trail on at least a weekly basis, 23.3 percent using the trail 3 to 5 times a week, and 16.2 percent using the trail several times a month. The study also highlights the health benefits of the trail. The majority of the users (57.8 percent) indicated that they used the trail for health and exercise and 27 percent indicated recreation.

Most users (90 percent) reported that the trail maintenance was good to excellent and 80 percent rated the safety and security of the trail good to excellent as well.

Partners indicate that SRHA plays an important unifying role and that the standards and technical guidance provided for the development and maintenance of the SRT is extremely valuable and would not otherwise be available. Smaller organizations engaging in trail work indicate that the connection with the SRHA including the Federal designation and the ability to present their project as a piece of a larger vision has helped them to secure funding. Furthermore, **SRGA was the primary driver in achieving the designation for the SRT of *Best Urban Trail in the 2015* by USA Today's 10 Best Reader's Choice Awards. Partners indicated that SRGA's efforts to promote and publicize the SRT are very valuable for the whole region.** See Table 3.16 for a sample of SRHA and SRGA's Awards and Designations.

3.2.3 Area #3: Resource Conservation and Stewardship

SRGA's views conservation work as integrally related to heritage tourism, community revitalization, and building the SRT since a clean river is fundamental to the success of these other activities. SRGA has found that the best way to promote education, heritage history, and stewardship is through recreational events linked to the Schuylkill River and SRT. Activities undertaken to conserve resources and promote stewardships include: Schuylkill River Restoration Fund; Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative; Annual Schuylkill River Sojourn; Schuylkill Bike Program; Recreational Events; and Educational Activities.

Table 3.16 Sample of SRHA's Awards and Designations Received by Year

Year	Award/Designation	Awarding Entity
2002	Schuylkill River Water Trail was designated a **National Recreation Trail**	US Department of the Interior, first in Pennsylvania
2003	SRGA received the **Regional Planning Award**	Tri-County Chamber of Commerce
2004	SRGA received the **Regional Planning Award**	Tri-County Chamber of Commerce
2005	SRT designated as a **Recommended Water Trail** (one of 12 in the US and Canada)	American Canoe Association
2006	SRGA received the **Economic Development Award**	Tri-County Chamber of Commerce
2014	SRT designated as the **Pennsylvania River of the Year**	Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
2015	Greater Reading Trail Systems designated as a **Bronze Level Ride Center**	International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA)
2015	SRT designated the **Best Urban Trail**	USA Today's 10 Best Reader's Choice Awards
2015	Schuylkill Bike Share Program received the **Star Award** for exemplary leadership and inspiration in sustainability planning and implementation	Communities in Motion, a foundation associated with Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association
2016	Sojourn received the **Public Outreach Project Award**	National Society for Environmental History
2016	Manayunk Towpath recognized as the **Best Outdoor Recreation Area**	Best of Manayunk 2016

Schuylkill River Restoration Fund

Beginning in 2006, SRGA received funding from Exelon Nuclear (Exelon) that supported water restoration projects. Originally Exelon's payments were compelled by the Delaware River Water Basin Community to mitigate the impact of operating a nuclear power plant downriver. The amount of the payment depended on the number of gallons of water that Exelon withdrew from the river for their cooling system (6 cents/gallon). The payments were deposited into the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund and SRGA was chosen to manage the grant program and as a result of having strong grants management experience. SRGA formed a committee to create the grant application process, eligibility criteria, and review/award/oversee grants.

In 2008, Exelon's mandatory payments expired and the company continued to contribute on a voluntary basis viewing it as an important opportunity to give back to the community and show that they are environmentally conscious and friendly. The fund was also expanded to include other sponsors such as the Philadelphia Water Department, Coca-Cola, and Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc.

Grants were provided to non-profit organizations, county & municipal governments, and other related government agencies to implement projects to improve the quality and quantity of water in the Schuylkill River and its tributaries by addressing acid mine drainage, agricultural runoff, and stormwater issues. Grant funds were also targeted to assist land trusts and conservation organizations with the transaction costs associated with the preservation of targeted lands within priority watersheds. Grants were between $5,000 and $100,000 and required a 25 percent match. Some grant awards covered multiple projects. See Table 3.17 for an overview of awards by year.

Table 3.17 Schuylkill River Restoration Fund Project Awards By Year

Year	# of Awards	Total Amount Awarded	# of Projects	Types of Projects
2006	3	$158,000	4	Agricultural and stream bank restoration, agricultural improvements
2007	3	$250,275	6	Agricultural improvements, streambank fencing, improvements to three Acid Mine Drainage remediation sites
2008	3	$134,900	4	Stream bank restoration and mitigation of agricultural pollution
2009	2	$175,000	2	Implementing agriculture best management practices (BMPs); replacement of the Wheeler Run Flume for an abandoned mine to prevent drainage
2010	4	$222,500	8	Agriculture BMPs; stormwater basin naturalization; abandoned mine drainage remediation; schoolyard stormwater BMPs
2011	8	$400,205	10	Reduce stormwater runoff, abandoned mine drainage, agricultural pollutants; green roof, priority land conservation easements
2012	9	$239,315	9	Reduce stormwater run-off, agricultural pollutants and abandoned mine drainage, schoolyard native meadow, priority land conservation easements
2013	10	$358,821	13	Stormwater and agriculture BMPs, abandoned mine remediation, school student rain gardens and basins, priority land conservation easements

Table 3.17 Schuylkill River Restoration Fund Project Awards By Year (continued)

Year	# of Awards	Total Amount Awarded	# of Projects	Types of Projects
2014	7	$338,234	7	Stormwater and agriculture BMPs, priority land conservation easements
2015	9	$274,625	10	Stormwater and agriculture BMPs, floodplain restoration, schoolyard greening, priority land conservation easements
Total	**58**	**$2,551,875**	**73**	

Between 2006 and 2015, 58 awards were made funding 73 projects for a total of $2,551,875. Exelon's contribution is dependent on annual revenue. For example, the larger contribution in 2011 was attributed to the company having generated more revenue that year. As of December 2015, 55 projects were completed resulting in the following outcomes:

- 9 stormwater basins retrofitted
- 6 abandoned mine drainage projects completed
- Over 6,500 feet of protected streams
- Over 10,000 feet of streambank fencing installed
- Over 2,500 native trees and shrubs planted
- Agricultural improvements to 20 Berks County farms

Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative

Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Initiative is a mini-grant program supported in part through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Partnership Program described in Section 3.2.1. It is co-administered by SRGA and the Natural Lands Trust. Grants of up to $15,000 are made to municipalities, non-profits, watershed associations, and other 501(c)(3) organizations for natural resource based conservation and nature based tourism. Table 3.18 provides an overview of grant awards by year.

Between 2011 and 2016, 33 projects received a total of $387,334 funding a range of small projects including brochures and historical signs, walking tours, environmental programs, riparian buffers, and bio-swales.

Table 3.18 Overview of the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Initiative Landscape Grants

Year	# of Projects	Amount Awarded	Type of Projects
2011	11	$131,000	Tourism brochures, signs at historic sites, walking tours and support for conservation efforts
2012	9	$119,460	Creating environmental education programs, walking tour brochures, installing riparian buffers in a park; bio-swales to control runoff and erosion
2014	3	$35,000	Wayfinding signs, trail partnership, tourist railroad plan
2016	10	$101,874	Nature trail, brochures, trail easements, community redevelopment plan, walking tour brochure, interpretive signs
Total	**33**	**$387,334**	

Annual Schuylkill River Sojourn

The Schuylkill River Sojourn is an annual 112-mile guided canoe/kayak trip on the Schuylkill River that begins in rural Schuylkill Haven and ends seven days later in Philadelphia's Boathouse Row. Participants paddle 14-18 miles per day and engage in educational programming that follow the theme for the Sojourn each year. For example, the theme for the 2016 Sojourn is the Centennial of the National Park Service. SRGA has partnered with NPS on educational programming that will take place along the river. Examples of educational programs provided over the years include:

- Visiting the restored steam Locomotive 113 and learning about Schuylkill County's history with anthracite coal that fired the train's engine.
- Learning about the history of the canal and visiting restored Lock 60, the only operating lock remaining of the former Schuylkill Navigation System
- Ethnic contributions to the Canal
- Abandoned mine drainage cleanup efforts
- History and restoration of Fricks Lock Village
- Information about the Clean Water Act

A number of YouTube videos have been created over the years to capture this event. Table 3.19 provides participation for the event obtained from the SRGA's registration database, annual themes and some examples of YouTube videos.

Table 3.19 Schuylkill River Sojourn Participation, Theme and YouTube Examples by Year

Year	# of Participants for Full-trip	Total Participants	Theme	YouTube Link
2005	NA	180	–	
2006	NA	170	–	
2007	NA	195	–	
2008	NA	250	–	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14VcJDUyTCM
2009	NA	200+	Reading the River: The Science of the Schuylkill	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Jm62QOjuhk
2010	NA	200+	River of Revolutions	
2011	NA	200+	A Day on the "Hidden River"	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gyhnPvwJIGo
2012	NA	230	Recreation and the River	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hy2HlpkSHU4
2013	59	236	During the Civil War	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArFk5Ew5D5A
2014	65	198	Celebration of Pennsylvania's River of the Year	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q8w18bJF_Ug
2015	73	184	Legacy and Landmarks	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=chatZ3nY8_g
2016	79	205	Centennial of the National Park Service	

The event has increased in popularity over the years with more participants joining for the full event. There is a maximum number of paddlers allowed on the river and consequently, several days of the Sojourn have sold out during each of the past 5 years, including the entire 2016 Sojourn. According to the 2014 Annual Report over the first 16 years, the Sojourn introduced more than 3,000 registrants from 23 states, Canada, and France to paddling the river and the heritage of the region.

Overview of the Schuylkill Bike Share Program

Schuylkill Bike Share Program was initiated by Preservation Pottstown in 2008. Two years later, SRGA was asked to manage the free bike share program. Over the past 6 years the program has grown with locations in Phoenixville, Pottstown, and Hamburg.

Anyone aged 16 or over providing a driver's license or valid state ID may complete a liability waiver and borrow a single or three-speed yellow cruiser bike for up to a day. Riders are provided trail maps and a list of heritage sites on the bikeschuylkill.org website and free to use the bikes on or off the trail. Within the the Borough of Pottstown, the program is used by local residents for transportation. The Borough recently funded upgrades to the bus system so that people can bring bikes on the bus. Table 3.20 provides a summary of the bikes shared over the past 5 years.

Table 3.20 Schuylkill Bike Share Program Number of Bikes Shared by Location and Year

Year	# of Bikes Shared	Locations
2011	967	Pottstown
2012	1,007	Pottstown and Phoenixville
2013	1,153	Pottstown, Phoenixville, and Hamburg
2014	1,248	Pottstown, Phoenixville, and Hamburg
2015	1,093	Pottstown, Phoenixville, and Hamburg

Since 2011, 5,468 bikes were shared with the number of bikes per year remaining fairly constant. In 2015, Schuylkill Bike Share Program received the *Star Award* from Communities in Motion, a foundation associated with Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association.

Recreational Activities

The vision of the SRHA is to link the use of the SRT with heritage education. To promote this vision, SRGA has undertaken several types of recreational events including:

Reconnections 5K was a SRHA program to help communities reconnect to the river through a 5K race from Pottstown to North Coventry.

Riverfront Festival in Pottstown is an annual event that promotes the use of the SRT and local businesses. In 2007 and 2008, SRGA encouraged the use of the river working with partner Hidden River Outfitters to offer kayak lessons.

Trails to Tales, predating Pedal and Paddles, was a bike ride from Pottstown to Douglasville followed by a tour of Morlatton Village.

Pedal and Paddles is a 4.5-mile bike ride from Pottstown's Riverfront Park to Historic Morlatton Village in Douglassville, using bikes from the Schuylkill Bike Share Program. Participants take a guided tour of Morlatton Village's four 18th century buildings and continue the bike ride to Douglassville's Ganshahawny Park where they eat a picnic lunch and receive a brief introduction to kayaking from SRHA partner, Take it Outdoors Adventures. Then, they paddle back to Pottstown via the Schuylkill River. Food, bikes, kayaks, and all kayaking gear are provided. SRGA also offers other routes for the event such as the Lock 60 Pedal & Paddle that takes place at Schuylkill Canal Park in Mont Clare, and a Water Quality Pedal & Paddle, which replaces the tour of the Morlatton Village with an education program on water quality sampling, macro invertebrate sampling, and environmental issues.

Rails & River Towns Bike Ride was an 18-mile round-trip bike ride along the Schuylkill River Trail from Pottstown to Birdsboro. Participants learn about the history of the Pennsylvania Railroad and were given walking tours of Birdsboro's historic streets and Morlatton Village.

Cycles & Cemeteries Bike Ride was a 14- and 28-mile bike ride from Norristown to East Falls along the SRT with tours of two historic cemeteries where Civil War notables are buried: Montgomery Cemetery in Norristown and Laurel Hill Cemetery in East Falls.

Pedaling through our National Parks Ride is a 2-day, 60-mile bike ride that begins at Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, travels to the Schuylkill River Heritage Area headquarters in Pottstown, continues to Valley Forge National Historic Park, and ends at Independence National Historic Park in Philadelphia.

SRT Spreekend is an event in partnership with Sly Fox Brewing Company to celebrate Earth Day with a series of events including SRT clean-ups, group kayak paddles, a 50K relay race on the trail, and a group bike ride from Philadelphia to Mont Clare.

Since 2005, approximately 850 people have participated in recreational events. See Table 3.21 for a summary of the number of participants and type of recreational events by year.

Table 3.21 Number of Participants and Type of Recreational Events by Year

Year	# of Participants	Types of Event
2005	100	Reconnections 5K
2006	97	Reconnections 5K
2007	~ 15	Kayak lessons at Riverfront Festival
2008	~ 15	Kayak lessons at Riverfront Festival
2008	15	Trails to Tales
2009	7	Community Paddle
2011	30	Pedal and Paddles
2012	45	Pedal and Paddles
2012	110	Rails & River Towns Bike Ride
2013	45	Pedal & Paddles
2013	120	Cycles & Cemeteries Bike Ride
2014	90	Pedal & Paddles
2014	100	Pedaling through our National Parks Ride
2015	90	Pedal & Paddles
2015	~100	SRT Spreekend

Educational Activities

SRHA's educational activities were targeted to children, youth and adults covering preservation, conservation and heritage education. Some program also combined education with the promotion and use of the SRT. Type of educational activities included:

Kutztown Summer Institute was targeted to elementary school art teachers allowing them to visit sites on the SRT including Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Port Clinton, Kernsville Dam, Bartram's Garen, Lock 60 at Mont Clare, and others to learn about the heritage and develop public art projects to celebrate the region. Participants also biked and paddled on the Schuylkill River and SRT.

Upward Bound was a program targeted to inner city Philadelphia high schools students. In partnership with the University of Pennsylvania, SRGA provided information about the heritage area and the Schuylkill River.

LEAD Institute was a program targeted to college students in partnership with MCCC. Students visited SRHA headquarters and received a tour of the Schuylkill River and kayak lesson.

Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey, developed by a SRHA VISTA volunteer, is a 10 week program that connects at-risk urban 9th and 10th graders from three schools to the outdoors and environmental careers to foster stewardship for the Schuylkill River Watershed.

SRGA also developed three continuing education classes for Montgomery County Community College in 2005. See Table 3.22 for a summary of educational activities by year.

Table 3.22 Number/Type of Educational Activities/Participants by Year

Year	# of Projects	# of Participants	Types of Projects
2004	1	20	Kutztown Summer Institute
2005	1	20	Kutztown Summer Institute
2006	1	45	Hosted Upward Bound
2007	1	30	LEAD Institute
2008	2	~ 25	Summer programs for kids at Pottstown Galley on High
2008	1	45	LEAD Institute
2008	1	20	Upward Bound
2010	1	~200	Premiered PBS Documentary about the Schuylkill River region
2011	3	60	Youth Heritage Treks
2013	5	~170	Lectures, book signings, and film screenings
2013	1	25	Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey
2014	5	~160	River of the Year lectures
2014	2	75	Schuylkill Outdoor Leadership Odyssey
2014	2	120	Bringing the Revolutionary War to Life lectures
2015	5	129	Student Outdoor Leadership Odyssey

While SRGA's strategy was to provide education as a part of recreational or other events, SRGA has offered a limited number of discreet educational events on an array of topics. Since 2004, SRGA's hosted 32 educational events reaching approximately 600 children, youth, and adults attendees with a variety of educational activities that promote heritage education, conservation and preservation, and stewardship.

Impact/Outcomes for the Resource Conservation and Stewardship

SRGA's management of the Schuylkill River Restoration fund has made a significant impact in the region. Between 2006 and 2015, 58 awards were made funding 73 projects for a total of $2,551,875. As of December 2015, 55 projects were completed resulting in the following outcomes:

- 9 stormwater basins retrofitted
- 6 abandoned mine drainage projects completed
- Over 6,500 feet of protected streams
- Over 10,000 feet of streambank fencing installed
- Over 2,500 native trees and shrubs planted
- Agricultural improvements to 20 Berks County farms

While this fund began as compulsory, the SRGA was able to demonstrate benefits that encouraged Exelon to continue and expand donations on a voluntary basis as well as engaging other organizations and corporations.

In addition to promoting resource conservation through the Schuylkill River Restoration Grant and Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape Initiative, **SRGA promoted stewardship, an understanding and pride in the region's heritage, use of the Schuylkill River through recreational and education events.** The largest of those events is the Schuylkill River Sojourn, which draws attention and publicity to the SRHA and its communities. **Over the first 16 years, the Sojourn introduced more than 3,000 registrants from 23 states, Canada, and France to experience paddling the river and the heritage of the region. An additional 1,438 people have been reached through other recreational and education programs since 2004.**

SRHA links the heritage and conservation education to the use of the Schuylkill River and SRT has allowed SRGA to reach audiences that otherwise would not be engaged. For example, NPS stated that traditionally it has been difficult to connect with young adults within the geographic boundaries of a National Park such as Valley Forge. Its partnership with the SRHA has helped it go outside the boundaries and bring that heritage to new audiences by joining with SRHA's recreational events on the Schuylkill River and SRT. Another example of creative partnerships that promote access to new audiences is the collaboration with Sly Fox Brewing Company. The SRT-branded beer disseminates information and promotes the SRHA, SRT, and conservation, reaching new audiences such as families.

3.3 Summary

The evaluation determined that over the last 16 years, SRGA has addressed each of its legislated purposes and goals outlined in the management plan through the Federal resources provided. Accomplishments have been documented in the areas of:

- Heritage Tourism and Community Revitalization
- Building the SRT
- Resource Conservation and Stewardship

SRGA's ability to positively impact the region with their programming was repeatedly attributed to successful strategic planning and strong management. As one partner stated, "They aren't large but they organize and plan well." Program activities have been strictly aligned with the goals set forth in the legislation and the approved management plan. Board members indicated that the plan is reviewed at the beginning of each year as SRHA's annual goals are reviewed. It is also used for purposes of mid-year assessment on the achievement of SRHA's annual goals.

Additionally, work in each of the three programs areas was guided by a thoughtful planning process. For example:

- Heritage Trail Towns Program was preceded by the SRHA Outdoor Recreational Business Study that built a case for business development and community consensus of the economic benefits of trail development and use.
- Riverfront Academic and Heritage Center Proposal presented a business plan and expected outcomes for this work.
- Feasibility Studies and Economic Impact Studies presented the benefits of trail development, promoted community buy-in, and allowed resources to be targeted in a cost-effective manner.

Another common theme was SRHA's growth as a regional entity. As one partner described, "We are small cogs in a big wheel. No other organization has the entire trail as a part of their mission." SRHA was viewed as the entity that provides and promotes the vision for the region. The expertise that they hold specifically in trail development, trail maintenance and the promotion of trail use through heritage education, conservation and recreation was of great value to the region.

Partners shared many stories highlighting the tangible changes in the region. One that demonstrates the importance of the link between the water restoration efforts, trail use, economic development, and community revitalization is the story of Manayunk. Venice Island is a strip of land between the Schuylkill Canal and the Schuylkill River in Manayunk (Philadelphia County). A former mill site in the 19th century, Venice Island has a long history of flooding as it's located both in a flood plain and a floodway. Flooding of this area has caused severe damage with lives lost over the years and businesses and homes destroyed. Manayunk Neighborhood Council recorded as far back as 1902, "Everything is covered with a foul smelling mud that takes days of shoveling to remove."

Stakeholders explained that during floods the sewer system overflowed into the Schuylkill River. Over the past 10 years, Philadelphia Water Department, under mandate from the Environmental Protection Agency, modernized its flood control and sanitary runoff facilities by constructing an underground storage basin and a three-story pumphouse on Venice Island. The Department of Parks & Recreation joined the effort and created the Venice Island Performing Arts and Recreation Center positioning a community park on top of the underground storage basin and a new community theater next door overlooking the Schuylkill River. Completed in 2013, Venice Island was transformed into a new community hub, with businesses opening along the canal facing the river and townhouses constructed along the waterfront. SRGA consistently supported these efforts over the years, providing grant funding to Manayunk Development Corporation for the construction of one of the first bridges on Venice Island and other projects promoting access to and use of the canal and river. As one stakeholder stated, "The Schuylkill River used to be seen as something that was dirty. Now it's something that may raise the value of your home and makes people want to stay [in the area]."

Section 4 – Public/Private Investments in Schuylkill River Heritage Area and their Impact

The legislation that created Schuylkill River NHA (SRHA) mandated the following concerning Federal NPS appropriations to SRHA:

(a) IN GENERAL.–"There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title not more than $10,000,000, of which not more than 1,000,000 is authorized to be appropriated for any 1 fiscal year."
(b) FEDERAL SHARE.– "Federal funding provided under this title may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of any project or activity funded under this title."

The original legislation indicated that the SRHA would sunset in 15 years. SRHA was reauthorized on December 19, 2014 through PL 113-291 Section 305(a)(1)(D) which extended the authorization of appropriations to 2021.

In this section of the document, we describe the public and private investments that support SRHA activities, determine if the SRGA met legislative requirements with regard to additional investments required, and summarize the ways in which SRGA made use of NHA investments.

4.1 Investments in SRHA Activities

The financial investments that support SRHA activities can be divided into the following categories:

- Federal NPS Heritage Partnership Program (HPP) Funding–Funding provided to SRGA through NPS since 2001;
- Other NPS Fund–Funds provided through NPS funding streams other than HPP such as Historic Preservation Fund grants
- Non-NPS Federal Funds–Funding provided to SRGA through non-NPS Federal sources such as the Department of Transportation or the Department of the Arts since 2001; and
- Match/Leverage Funds–Match includes funds received by SRGA to meet the matching funds requirement including state, local government, private/foundation, in-kind donations, which includes funds received by partners to support the mission of SRHA.
- Leverage Funds–Match funds as well as other funds that SRHA received which could not be used as match.

As reflected in Table 4.1 SRGA was allocated a total of $6,850,756 in NPS HPP funds since 2001 and expended $6,625,107 during that same time period. Delay in receipt of funding was the primary reason for carry-over. SRGA received $16,652,811 over the 14 years in matching funds. Total investments received through NPS HPP and match funds totaled $23,503,567 since 2001.

As reflected in Table 4.2, funds documented through audit reports that SRGA had available to match NPS HPP funds included state, local government, corporation/foundations, other match/unrestricted grants, and in-kind donations for a total of $16,652,811 over the 14 years.

Table 4.1 Overview of NPS/NHA Investments Received by Year

Year	NPS HPP Funds Allocated	NPS HPP Funds Expended	Cumulative NPS Funds Carried Over*	Match Funds	Total Investments
2001	$200,000	$46,250	$153,750	$1,009,989	$1,209,989
2002	$210,000	$194,346	$169,404	$941,359	$1,151,359
2003	$497,000	$391,664	$274,740	$656,599	$1,153,599
2004	$491,000	$643,785	$121,955	$645,851	$1,136,851
2005	$493,000	$234,900	$380,055	$1,713,597	$2,206,597
2006	$443,000	$428,670	$394,385	$1,444,128	$1,887,128
2007	$532,055	$749,488	$176,952	$2,297,974	$2,830,029
2008	$523,701	$499,860	$200,793	$1,352,193	$1,875,894
2009	$524,000	$428,900	$295,893	$439,014	$963,014
2010	$524,000	$409,148	$410,745	$1,391,144	$1,915,144
2011	$505,000	$540,240	$375,505	$1,153,081	$1,658,081
2012	$491,000	$458,450	$408,055	$976,846	$1,467,846
2013	$435,000	$507,807	$335,248	$913,419	$1,348,419
2014	$491,000	$612,155	$214,093	$945,308	$1,436,308
2015	$491,000	$479,444	$225,649	$772,309	$1,263,309
Total	**$6,850,756**	**$6,625,107**	**–**	**$16,652,811**	**$23,503,567**

*Carry over funds were expended in a different year than received. Figures are cumulative.

The total amount of state funding received since 2001 was $6,241,668. State funding streams included the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, and Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development. Larger sums of support received in 2005-2007 were designated for the design and construction of a pedestrian bridge and other specific sections of SRT development. Since 2001, SRGA received $1,735,529 in local funding including funding from counties and municipalities. Corporate/foundation funds included money received from corporations such as Exelon and foundations such as Pottstown Area health and Wellness Foundation, which totaled $5,852,528 since 2001. Larger sums received in 2007-2008 included funding from the William Penn Foundation for research, planning, communications, and demonstration projects to support increased regional coordination, management, and stewardship of the SRT. Other match funds included membership dues, private contributions, merchandise sales, special event proceeds, investment income, and land sales. This category also included unrestricted grants that were not otherwise specified in the audits. Since 2001, SRGA received $2,602,027 in other match/unrestricted grants. In-kind donations such as non-monetary donations towards events and volunteer hours captured through the audits over the 14 years totaled $221,059. Notes from the audits indicate that the fluctuations in funding may be due to changing definitions and calculations for these contributions. Staff agreed that it is difficult to capture the monetary value of volunteer hours since the contributions vary greatly, depending on whether the volunteer was skilled or unskilled labor, the activity conducted, and the entity for which they volunteered. SRGA adopted the Financial Accounting Standards Board's Statement of Financial Accounting Standards (SFAS) No.116, "Accounting for Contributions Received and Contributions made" when determining calculations for the audits.

Table 4.2 NPS Expenditures and Matching Funds by Year

Year	NPS HPP Funds Expended	State Funds	Local Gov't Funds	Corporation/ Foundation Funds	Other Match/ Unrestricted Grants	In-Kind	Total Match	Match Ratio Equals or Exceeds 1:1
2001	$46,250	$534,393	$45,000	$327,000	$103,596	NA	$1,009,989	Yes
2002	$194,346	$663,278	$45,091	$82,445	$106,587	$43,958	$941,359	Yes
2003	$391,664	$487,214	$45,000	$500	$87,282	$36,603	$656,599	Yes
2004	$643,785	$449,100	$45,000	$5,275	$102,951	$43,525	$645,851	Yes
2005	$234,900	$736,975	$186,000	$289,636	$464,546	$36,440	$1,713,597	Yes
2006	$428,670	$652,864	$25,000	$333,274	$415,439	$17,551	$1,444,128	Yes
2007	$749,488	$1,080,190	0	$730,136	$487,429	$219	$2,297,974	Yes
2008	$499,860	$498,397	$79,650	$706,928	$66,563	$655	$1,352,193	Yes
2009	$428,900	$110,097	$37,048	$189,214	$99,259	$3,396	$439,014	Yes
2010	$409,148	$143,479	$426,377	$584,316	$225,858	$11,114	$1,391,144	Yes
2011	$540,240	$230,276	$261,471	$570,724	$86,396	$4,214	$1,153,081	Yes
2012	$458,450	$197,695	$60,013	$551,048	$161,669	$6,421	$976,846	Yes
2013	$507,807	$173,709	$111,181	$551,170	$68,860	$8,499	$913,419	Yes
2014	$612,155	$155,663	$263,458	$455,719	$64,885	$5,583	$945,308	Yes
2015	$479,444	$128,338	$105,240	$475,143	$60,707	$2,881	$772,309	Yes
Total	**$6,625,107**	**$6,241,668**	**$1,735,529**	**$5,852,528**	**$2,602,027**	**$221,059**	**$16,652,811**	

The review demonstrated that SRGA was able to meet the match requirement. SRGA's Federal NPS HPP funds received averaged 46 percent of the total funds received with the match ratio ranging from .05 to .99. The lower match ratio in 2004 and 2009 are related to manner in which the SRGA carried over and expended Federal funds on projects that span multiple years. All projects were fully matched with 50 percent NPS HPP funds and 50 percent matching funds.

Table 4.3 All Investments Leveraged by Year

Year	NPS HPP Funds Expended	Other NPS Funds	Other Federal Funds	Total Match	Total
2001	$46,250	$12,500	$159,643	$1,009,989	$1,182,132
2002	$194,346	$16,660	$40,778	$941,359	$998,797
2003	$391,664	$2,340	0	$656,599	$658,939
2004	$643,785	0	0	$645,851	$645851
2005	$234,900	0	$399,636	$1,713,597	$2,113,233
2006	$428,670	0	$305,305	$1,444,128	$1,749,433
2007	$749,488	0	$700,849	$2,297,974	$2,998,823
2008	$499,860	0	0	$1,352,193	$1,352,193
2009	$428,900	$20,000	0	$439,014	$459,014
2010	$409,148	$16,000	0	$1,391,144	$1,407,144
2011	$540,240	0	0	$1,153,081	$1,153,081
2012	$458,450	$63,000	$1,999	$976,846	$1,041,845
2013	$507,807	$25,000	$6,550	$913,419	$944,969
2014	$612,155	$51,000	$1,025	$945,308	$997,333
2015	$479,444	$75,382	0	$772,309	$847,691
Total	**$6,625,107**	**$403,532**	**$1,615,785**	**$16,652,811**	**$18,550,478**

SRGA also received $403,532 in other NPS funds such as Historic Preservation Fund Grants. Since 2001, $1,615,785 was received from other Federal agencies such as the Department of Commerce and the US Department of Transportation.

4.2 Use of Financial Resources

SRGA uses funding provided by the NPS to support operational expenses, including salary and administration funds, as well as programmatic activities.

Programmatic and Operational Expenditures

SRGA yearly expenses, funded through both Federal and non-Federal sources, are displayed in Table 4.4. Expenditures reported with audit reports are divided between operational expenses, and programmatic expenses. Operational expenses may include staff salaries, insurance, office supplies and equipment, utilities and phone, unemployment compensation, office moves, and other administrative expenses. Programmatic expenses are those resources dedicated to SRGA activities, such as: Heritage Tourism/ Community Revitalization, Building the SRT, and Resource Conservation and Stewardship.

Table 4.4 SRGA Operational and Program Expenses by Year

Year	Operational Expenses	Program Expenses	Total
2001	$379,106	$423,022	$802,128
2002	$495,237	$724,926	$1,220,163
2003	$272,685	$910,116	$1,182,801
2004	$217,179	$1,037,467	$1,254,646
2005	$220,648	$1,722,197	$1,942,845
2006	$463,222	$1,117,767	$1,580,989
2007	$191,535	$1,799,389	$1,990,924
2008	$347,234	$1,460,328	$1,807,562
2009	$292,208	$516,385	$808,593
2010	$241,045	$1,367,582	$1,608,627
2011	$226,359	$1,353,499	$1,579,858
2012	$235,033	$952,754	$1,187,787
2013	$251,385	$1,110,249	$1,361,634
2014	$271,790	$1,249,800	$1,521,590
Total	**$4,104,666**	**$15,745,481**	**$19,850,147**

As seen in Table 4.4, since 2001, SRGA has spent a total of $4,104,666 on operational expenses, with yearly expenses ranging from $191,535 to $495,237. The variation in numbers is due to office moves and changes in the number and roles of staff. A total of $15,745,481 was spent on program expenses for the reporting period. Program expenses fluctuated year to year, ranging from $423,022 to $1,799,389. Discussion of the type of activities that caused program expenses to fluctuate is presented after Table 4.5. In total, the programmatic and operational expenses sum to $19,850,147 since 2001. SRGA maintained detailed spreadsheets that captured expenses by project type, which were used to estimate costs by year in the three program areas and captured in Table 4.5 on next page.

Table 4.5 provides information on the priority of funding in each of the program areas by year. Overall, the largest expenditures have occurred in the area of Building the SRT ($6,165,274 or 39 percent of total funding), with Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization as the second largest area ($5,920,473 or 38 percent) and $3,659,734 or 23 percent on Resource Conservation and Stewardship. Largest program expenses occurred in 2005 and 2007 ($1,722,197 and $1,799,389 respectively). Substantial development of the SRT is largely related to the increased program expenses during these years with spending on Building the SRT equaling $946,524 in 2005 and $1,260,325 in 2007.

Table 4.5 Approximated Expenses by Program Area and Year

Year	Heritage Tourism/ Community Revitalization	Building the SRT	Resource Conservation and Stewardship	Total Program
2001	$262,284	$160,738	$0.00	$423,022
2002	$485,700	$239,226	$0.00	$724,926
2003	$555,171	$354,945	$0.00	$910,116
2004	$632,854	$404,613	$0.00	$1,037,467
2005	$691,162	$946,524	$84,511	$1,722,197
2006	$366,200	$664,429	$87,138	$1,117,767
2007	$452,740	$1,260,325	$86,324	$1,799,389
2008	$628,013	$479,639	$352,676	$1,460,328
2009	$284,959	$82,964	$148,462	$516,385
2010	$275,748	$571,913	$519,921	$1,367,582
2011	$384,482	$534,202	$434,815	$1,353,499
2012	$491,079	$58,759	$402,916	$952,754
2013	$214,770	$137,766	$757,713	$1,110,249
2014	$195,311	$269,231	$785,258	$1,249,800
TOTAL	**$5,920,473**	**$6,165,274**	**$3,659,734**	**$15,745,481**

Figure 4.1 illustrates the total expenditures from 2001 to 2014 by program area. While the overall spending was greatest for programs related to Building the SRT, priorities for programmatic funding changed over time. In 2001-2004 as well as 2008, 2009, and 2012, the majority of funds were given to Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization. From 2005-2007 as well as 2010-2011, the largest expenditures were for Building the SRT. During 2013 to 2014, the priority of funding switched to Resource Conservation and Stewardship programs.

Figure 4.1 Expenditures by Program Area, Total 2001-2014

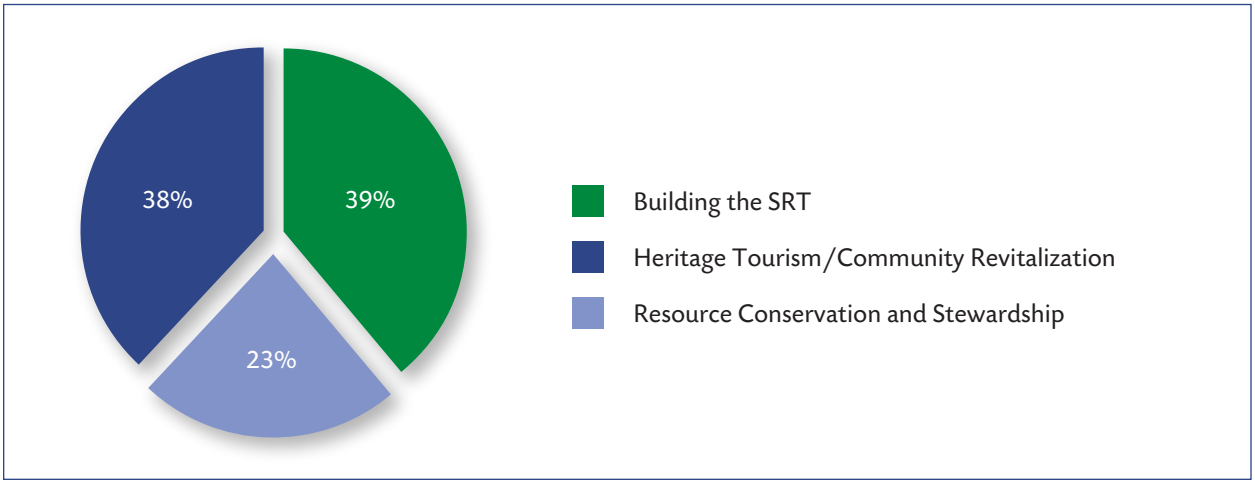
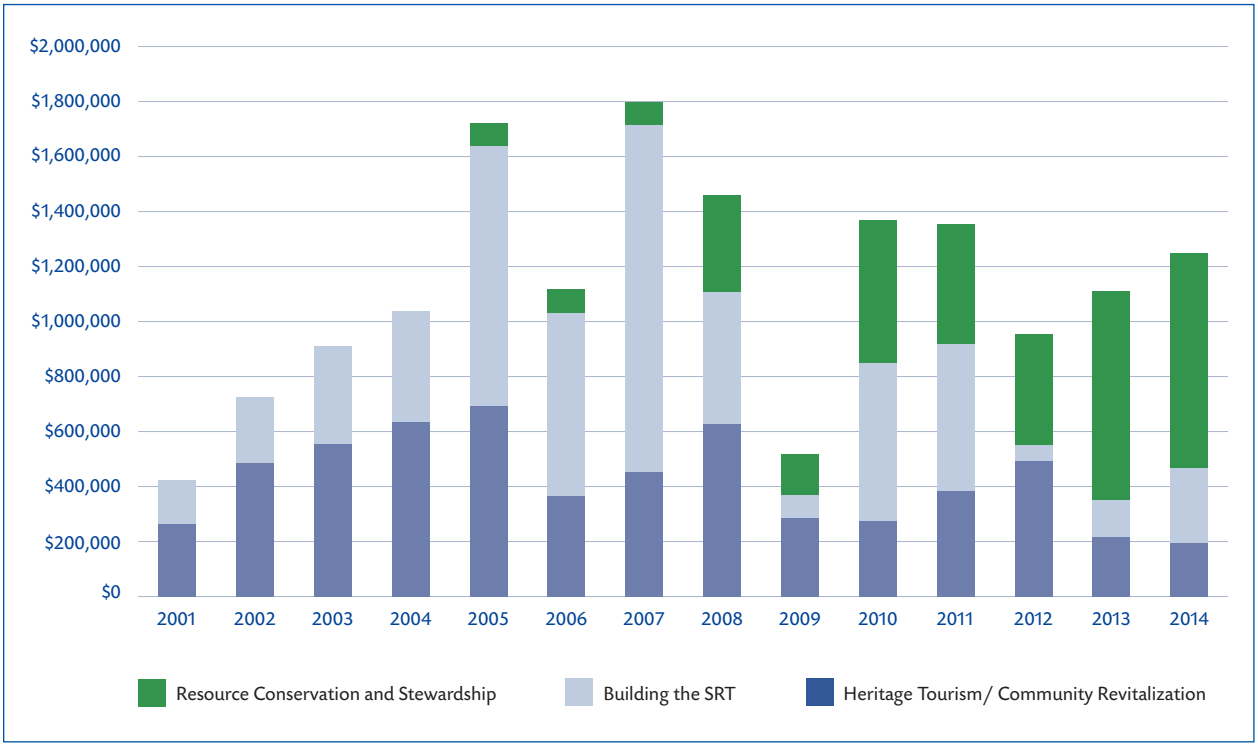


Figure 4.2 Expenditures by Program Activity and Year



4.3 Impact of Investments

The evaluation assessed the investments made to SRGA and expenditures since 2001. **The evaluation concludes that SRGA has been fiscally responsible in expending its funds for programmatic activities that address the goals and objectives specified in the authorizing legislation and management plan.** Total expenditures were distributed across the three program areas with 39 percent of funds used for Building the SRT, 38 percent expended for Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization and 23 percent on Resource Conservation and Stewardship. Program priorities alternated between the three program areas by year. Alternating priorities may be explained in part by funders such as the William Penn Foundation switching program priorities from trail development to water restoration. However, members' of the SRHA's Board of Directors also stated that they sought additional funders to meet the goals within the management plan.

Based on the analysis, it was found that SRGA has successfully met the 50 percent Federal funding match requirements over the entire funding period and annually since 2001 and leveraged $11,925,371 additional funds to support the goals and objectives outlined through the authorizing legislation. Of the funds expended by SRGA since 2001, $6,625,107 were NPS HPP Federal funds and $18,550,478 were match/leverage funds. The following section further examines the financial sustainability of SRGA as well as other aspects of SRHA's sustainability.

Section 5 – Schuylkill River Heritage Area Sustainability

5.1 Defining Sustainability

The third question guiding the evaluation, derived from legislation (P.L. 110-229) asks "How do the coordinating entity's management structure, partnership relationships and current funding contribute to the NHA's sustainability?" To guide the assessment of sustainability, we have adopted the definition developed by NPS, with the assistance of stakeholders from a number of National Heritage Areas. Sustainability for an NHA is as follows:

"...the National Heritage Area coordinating entity's continuing ability to work collaboratively and reciprocally with Federal, state, community, and private partners through changing circumstances to meet its mission for resource conservation and stewardship, interpretation, education, recreation and economic development of nationally significant resources." Critical components of sustainability for a National Heritage Area include, but are not limited to:

- The coordinating entity and NPS honoring the legislative mandate of the NHA;
- The coordinating entity's management capacity, including governance, adaptive management (such as strategic planning), staffing, and operations;
- Financial planning and preparedness including the ongoing ability to leverage resources in support of the local network of partners;
- Partnerships with diverse community stakeholders, including the heritage area serving as a hub, catalyst, and/or coordinating entity for ongoing capacity building; communication; and collaboration among local entities;
- Program and project stewardship where the combined investment results in the improved economic value and ultimately long-term quality of life of that region; and
- Outreach and marketing to engage a full and diverse range of audiences.

In the following sections, we address each of these components, drawing on the data provided in previous sections.

5.2 Honoring the Legislative Mandate of the NHA

As stated in the 2000 authorizing legislation (P.L. 106-278), the purpose of the SRGA is,

- "To foster a close working relationship with all levels of government, the private sector and the local communities in the Schuylkill River Valley of southeastern Pennsylvania and enable the communities to conserve the heritage while continuing to pursue economic opportunities; and to conserve, interpret, and develop the historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources related to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley"

This section of the document describes and assesses how SRGA management, leadership, and relationships with NPS and with stakeholder organizations aid in the development and sustainment of the SRHA.

5.3 SRGA's Management Capacity

5.3.1 Governance, Leadership, and Oversight

As discussed in Section 2, SRHA is governed by SRGA, a 501(c) 3 membership organization managed by a Board of Directors and staff. The Board of Directors is currently composed of four Executive Officers and 20 additional Board members. Board members serve 3 year terms and may have up to two consecutive terms, though Board members may take additional terms again after taking a term off. Therefore, many of the members have had long tenures. The Board meets six times a year, and Board members reported a high attendance rate. The role of the Board is multifaceted and includes responsibilities such as financial oversight,

strategic planning, deciding priority program areas, fundraising, conducting outreach activities, and serving as the public relations for SRHA events. Many Board members' occupations are aligned with the priorities of SRHA so that Board members are also partners.

Although there is likely a multitude of criteria that can be used to assess and evaluate a Board of Directors, one set of criteria that helps in assessing sustainability is the extent to which the Board of Directors has a clear understanding of its roles and responsibilities to move the organization forward. Interviews with Board members indicated a strong understanding of the SRHA mission and programs as well as a commitment to the SRHA's vision and goals. Board members clearly articulated a shared understanding of their role. They also seemed in agreement with a shift to have Board members undertake more fundraising responsibilities.

The Board has two committee set forth in the Bylaws; the Executive and Nominating Committees. The Executive Committee meets a week before the full Board meeting to assist with planning. Other committees have been developed over time related to specific activities and programs such as the Schuylkill River Sojourn. Currently, the Financing and Development committees are most active meeting every two months. Board members seemed well aware and in agreement with a review of the current bylaws and Board structure as a part of the 10-year strategic planning process. In part the review was assessing the current use of committees and subcommittees to maximize their efficiency. Board members seemed conscience of SRHA's limited resources and the need to capitalize with any potential efficiency.

5.3.2 Staffing and Operations

Since the inception of SRHA, SRGA has had three Executive Directors. The first Executive Director predated the Federal designation (1998 to 2003) and she was involved in securing the designation and managing the development of SRHA's management plan. The second joined as Executive Director in 2003, shortly after the management plan was approved and served for 12 years. The current Executive Director began on May 4, 2015. Stakeholder interviews indicated that the transition was smooth and leadership for the SRHA since the inception has been consistently strong.

Over the years, SRGA has had up to eight fulltime staff members; however, the economic decline and reduction of state allocated funds in recent years (see Section 4) forced the SRGA to reduce its staff. Currently, there are six fulltime staff members, in addition to the Executive Director—a Financial Manager, Communications Director, Trails Project Manager, Grants Program Coordinator, Administrative Assistant. SRGA is also in the process of securing a new VISTA volunteer. Many of the staff members have been with the organization from 8-10 years. The organizational structure is flat; all staff positions report to the Executive Director. Numerous examples were provided throughout interviews with staff, Board members, partners, and community members to indicate that staff members communicate frequently with each other, Board members, and partners informally and through committee and coalition meetings.

5.3.3 Strategic Planning and Adaptive Management

As mentioned in Section 3.2, strategic planning is one of SRGA's strengths. SRGA and its Board have engaged in thoughtful strategic planning to guide activities in the three program areas. A list of 11 strategic plans and their purpose may be found in Table 3.1.

As state funds and consequently staff were reduced in 2012, SRGA redefined staff roles and responsibilities to continue as many projects as possible. For example, without a staff person dedicated to coordinating volunteers and managing the Schuylkill River Sojourn, the current staff assumed pieces of that work along with their previous responsibilities. In response to staffing reductions, SRGA's Board of Directors indicated that they were engaged in prioritizing program initiatives. The staff and Board of Directors appear to work together to adapt to resource changes so that programs may be effectively managed.

5.3.4 Monitoring and Recordkeeping

SRGA has demonstrated an efficient capacity for monitoring and record keeping. Its annual reports and *Ten Years of Living with the River* provide highlights of accomplishments on a yearly basis. Registration for education and recreational events as well as membership is completed through an on-line system allowing SRGA to track attendance electronically since 2012. SRGA also publicizes the location of trail heads and water landings as well as businesses and restaurants on http://schuylkillrivertrail.com/.

Economic Impact Studies including *Schuylkill River Trail 2009 User Survey man Economic Impact Analysis, Trail Town Economic Impact Study: Phase I Business Survey (2008),* and *The Economic Impact of National Heritage Areas: A Case Study Analysis of the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area (2015)* capture the impact of the SRGA activities over time.

Additionally, SRGA provided us with a complete set of financial audits, 990s, 424s, 425s, and performance reports. Grant descriptions were publically available on line. SRGA have developed program spreadsheets to track all funded grants and projects by funding source. These data improved our understanding of the grant activities, amount of investment and match amount.

5.4 Partnerships

SRGA operates with many formal and informal partnerships as well as through collaboration and stakeholder relationships. In Section 2, we provide a detailed overview of SRGA's 140+ partners. These partnerships include Federal, state, and county agencies including the National Park Service, the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, and the Berks County Planning Department. SRGA has also partnered with local universities, including Montgomery County Community College. SRGA has also demonstrated partnership with leadership in the county, cities and boroughs within the NHA, including Schuylkill County, the Borough of Hamburg, and Pottstown. SRGA also works closely with private foundations and corporation, including Exelon and Sly Fox Brewing, and other National Historic Parks and Sites like Valley Forge National Historical Park.

These partnerships are reciprocal, with activities benefiting both SRGA and the partner organization. Partners reported receiving funding from SRGA through grants, as well as support from in-kind support, such as staff and volunteer time. In addition to the direct support of organizations and projects, partners also reported benefiting from their partnership though receiving technical assistance on strategic planning, trail development, trail maintenance, and signage. Many partners viewed SRGA's role as a convener as valuable for the region and attributed positive outcomes related to their common goals to partner/coalition meetings increasing their opportunities to network, form collaborations, apply jointly for grants, and support one another's funding applications.

Additionally, SRGA provides a large benefit to its partners and the community through its activities as a grants manager. Several partners stated that SRGA has been asked over the years to serve as a grants manager as a result of having "a strong reputation." In managing grant programs such as the Heritage Park Program for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) or the Water Restoration Fund, SRGA has formulated an application process, selection criteria, and specialized committees with an array of content experts to review applications.

Though partners reported receiving benefits from SRGA, the relationship was symbiotic. SRGA often collaborated with partner organizations in order to mutually support programs of interest, and partners regularly serve on SRGA's Board of Directors. Federal, state, counties, business and corporation partners often pledge financial support of SRHA activities. Finally, partners help to SRGA fulfill their mission to create a unified SRT by including universal signage, implementing trail development and maintenance standards and promoting the heritage of the region.

5.5 Financial Sustainability, the Importance of NPS Funds, and the Importance of NHA Designation

5.5.1 SRGA's Need for Financial Resources

SRHA's funding is roughly one-third NPS, one-third state and one-third private. Having faced reductions with state funding and the potential sunsetting of NPS funds in 2015 (before reauthorization was received), SRGA projected the impact of funding reductions on their current work. SRGA staff and Board predicted that if NPS funding were sunset that:

- SRGA would not be able to meet the state funding matching requirement, and consequently also lose state funding
- Staff would be cut by two-thirds
- SRGA would not be able to manage the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund since the Grants Coordinator is funded in large part through NPS and State funds
- SRGA would not be able to continue recreational programming such as Pedals and Paddles, Cycles and Cemeteries bike rides, or Pedaling through our National Parks bike rides (due to staff shortages)
- Partnerships would suffer because SRGA would not be able to provide technical assistance
- SRGA would not be able to offer the Schuylkill River Sojourn, a long-standing tradition in the region (due to staff shortages)
- Development of the SRT would be substantially slowed down

5.5.2 SRHA's Need for Financial Resources

Table 4.2 shows that SRGA has been successful in obtaining matching funds for Federal funds received from the time that it was created to the present. SRGA has received $6,241,668 from State funds, $1,735,529 in local funds, $5,852,528 in corporate and foundation funds, $221,059 from in-kind support and $2,602,027 in other match such as membership dues, investment income and land sales.

As mentioned above, state funding also has matching requirements and foundations such as the William Penn Foundation require that grant money does not exceed 25 percent of the organization's budget. For this reason, it is believed that the withdrawal of NPS funding would have a detrimental impact. Stakeholder interviews provided numerous examples of the negative impact on the region if SRHA's NPS funding were to sunset:

- "It wouldn't be good. [SRGA is] one of the primary drivers in managing the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund. Without the SRGA, we'd have a lack of connectivity."
- "If the trail weren't taken care of—not well marked or lit then it would have a dramatic impact on the local economy."
- "In the next week, no one would notice. In the long-term it would be detrimental. We need someone to connect us and help information to be shared so mistakes aren't repeated."
- "I would assume that the Federal funds go to the core staff and everything we do that I described is based on those core staff being at the table. If the core staff went away, the partnership would go away."
- "The trail development and maintenance would be lost. It would take many years of effort to get another group to take it over. The regional as a whole would suffer."
- "Locally, there are others involved but none that are regional and communities wouldn't be connected the way that they are without SRHA."
- "It would be a hole that couldn't be replaced. No other organization has the entire trail as a part of their mission."
- "Please don't stop now. We are in a carpe diem moment. … For this to end now, would be an untimely end."

Despite the ability to match and leverage funds as a result of the NPS HPP funds, much of SRHA's current work would not be financially sustainability without NPS HPP funds.

5.6 Sustainability Summary

The evaluation found that the SRGA has a number of the critical components of sustainability in place. It has the necessary governance and staff to operate a sustainable NHA. The Board of Directors has an ongoing role in planning and prioritizing activities, and approving the direction of SRHA programming.

Strategic planning is an important aspect of sustainability in which SRGA is actively engaged. Planning continues to be a strong emphasis of the SRGA with current work on developing a new 10 year management plan including a review of mission of the organization, strategic changes in Board membership, and attention being paid to fundraising and sustainability.

SRGA has received stable funding since its establishment in 2000, but despite significant efforts to become financially sustainable by 2015, it has nonetheless experienced difficulty in achieving this goal. SRGA's success in formulating innovative partnerships and diversify funding serves as a model to other NHAs in the Alliance of NHAs. However, SRGA staff concedes that while these have helped to leverage funds and maximize the impact of NPS' contributions for the region, they do not serve as a vehicle for financial sustainability for the organization if NPS funding were to sunset. This is due in part to SRGA relying on Federal funding to meet the state matching requirement as well as requirement for other funding streams such as the William Penn Foundation. Furthermore, despite receiving some operational funds through other funding streams, SRGA still depends on Federal funds to support operations, which is not otherwise supported.

Both the NPS funding and the NHA designation have been critical to SRGA and its activities. Information received through stakeholder interview indicated that the Federal designation not only has helped SRGA leverage funding, it benefits partner organizations to be operating within the SRHA and connected to a common regional mission as they apply for funding. The Federal funding has provided flexibility, a consistent source of discretionary funds, and ability to leverage other resources. If the NPS funding is discontinued, the general view among those interviewed is that the region as a whole will suffer.

Appendix 1 – Authorizing Legislation

PUBLIC LAW 106–278—OCT. 6, 2000

LACKAWANNA VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

TITLE II—SCHUYLKILL RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

Public Law 106–278
106th Congress

An Act

To designate the Lackawanna Valley and the Schuylkill River National Heritage Areas, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the ''Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area Act''.

SEC. 202. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds that—

(1) the Schuylkill River Valley made a unique contribution to the cultural, political, and industrial development of the United States;

(2) the Schuylkill River is distinctive as the first spine of modern industrial development in Pennsylvania and one of the first in the United States;

(3) the Schuylkill River Valley played a significant role in the struggle for nationhood;

(4) the Schuylkill River Valley developed a prosperous and productive agricultural economy that survives today;

(5) the Schuylkill River Valley developed a charcoal iron industry that made Pennsylvania the center of the iron industry within the North American colonies;

(6) the Schuylkill River Valley developed into a significant anthracite mining region that continues to thrive today;

(7) the Schuylkill River Valley developed early transportation systems, including the Schuylkill Canal and the Reading Railroad;

(8) the Schuylkill River Valley developed a significant industrial base, including textile mills and iron works;

(9) there is a longstanding commitment to—

(A) repairing the environmental damage to the river and its surroundings caused by the largely unregulated industrial activity; and

(B) completing the Schuylkill River Trail along the 128-mile corridor of the Schuylkill Valley;

(10) there is a need to provide assistance for the preservation and promotion of the significance of the Schuylkill River as a system for transportation, agriculture, industry, commerce, and immigration; and

(11)(A) the Department of the Interior is responsible for protecting the Nation's cultural and historical resources; and

(B) there are significant examples of such resources within the Schuylkill River Valley to merit the involvement of the Federal Government in the development of programs and projects, in cooperation with the Schuylkill River Greenway Association, the State of Pennsylvania, and other local and governmental bodies, to adequately conserve, protect, and interpret this heritage for future generations, while providing opportunities for education and revitalization.

(b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this title are—

(1) to foster a close working relationship with all levels of government, the private sector, and the local communities in the Schuylkill River Valley of southeastern Pennsylvania and enable the communities to conserve their heritage while continuing to pursue economic opportunities; and

(2) to conserve, interpret, and develop the historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources related to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley of southeastern Pennsylvania.

SEC. 203. DEFINITIONS.

In this title:

(1) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—The term ''cooperative agreement'' means the cooperative agreement entered into under section 204(d).

(2) HERITAGE AREA.—The term ''Heritage Area'' means the Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area established by section 204.

(3) MANAGEMENT ENTITY.—The term ''management entity'' means the management entity of the Heritage Area appointed under section 204(c).

(4) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—The term ''management plan'' means the management plan for the Heritage Area developed under section 205.

(5) SECRETARY.—The term ''Secretary'' means the Secretary of the Interior.

(6) STATE.—The term ''State'' means the State of Pennsylvania.

SEC. 204. ESTABLISHMENT.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For the purpose of preserving and interpreting for the educational and inspirational benefit of present and future generations certain land and structures with unique and significant historical and cultural value associated with the early development of the Schuylkill River Valley, there is established the Schuylkill River Valley National Heritage Area.

(b) BOUNDARIES.—The Heritage Area shall be comprised of the Schuylkill River watershed within the counties of Schuylkill, Berks, Montgomery, Chester, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, as delineated by the Secretary.

(c) MANAGEMENT ENTITY.—The management entity for the Heritage Area shall be the Schuylkill River Greenway Association.

(d) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—To carry out this title, the Secretary shall enter into a cooperative agreement with the management entity.

(2) CONTENTS.—The cooperative agreement shall include information relating to the objectives and management of the Heritage Area, including—

(A) a description of the goals and objectives of the Heritage Area, including a description of the approach to conservation and interpretation of the Heritage Area;

(B) an identification and description of the management entity that will administer the Heritage Area; and

(C) a description of the role of the State.

SEC. 205. MANAGEMENT PLAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3 years after the date of the enactment of this title, the management entity shall submit to the Secretary for approval a management plan for the Heritage Area that presents comprehensive recommendations for the conservation, funding, management, and development of the Heritage Area.

(b) REQUIREMENTS.—The management plan shall—

(1) take into consideration State, county, and local plans;

(2) involve residents, public agencies, and private organizations working in the Heritage Area;

(3) specify, as of the date of the plan, existing and potential sources of funding to protect, manage, and develop the Heritage Area; and

(4) include—

(A) actions to be undertaken by units of government and private organizations to protect the resources of the Heritage Area;

(B) an inventory of the resources contained in the Heritage Area, including a list of any property in the Heritage Area that is related to the themes of the Heritage Area and that should be preserved, restored, managed, developed, or maintained because of its natural, cultural, historical, recreational, or scenic significance;

(C) a recommendation of policies for resource management that considers and details application of appropriate land and water management techniques, including the development of intergovernmental cooperative agreements to protect the historical, cultural, recreational, and natural resources of the Heritage Area in a manner consistent with supporting appropriate and compatible economic viability;

(D) a program for implementation of the management plan by the management entity;

(E) an analysis of ways in which local, State, and Federal programs may best be coordinated to promote the purposes of this title; and

(F) an interpretation plan for the Heritage Area.

(c) DISQUALIFICATION FROM FUNDING.—If a management plan is not submitted to the Secretary on or before the date that is 3 years after the date of the enactment of this title, the Heritage Area shall be ineligible to receive Federal funding under this title until the date on which the Secretary receives the management plan.

(d) UPDATE OF PLAN.—In lieu of developing an original management plan, the management entity may update and submit to the Secretary the Schuylkill Heritage Corridor Management Action Plan that was approved by the State in March, 1995, to meet the requirements of this section.

SEC. 206. AUTHORITIES AND DUTIES OF THE MANAGEMENT ENTITY.

(a) AUTHORITIES OF THE MANAGEMENT ENTITY.—For purposes of preparing and implementing the management plan, the management entity may—

(1) make grants to, and enter into cooperative agreements with, the State and political subdivisions of the State, private organizations, or any person; and

(2) hire and compensate staff.

(b) DUTIES OF THE MANAGEMENT ENTITY.– The management entity shall–

(1) develop and submit the management plan under section 205;

(2) give priority to implementing actions set forth in the cooperative agreement and the management plan, including taking steps to–

(A) assist units of government, regional planning organizations, and nonprofit organizations in–

(i) preserving the Heritage Area;

(ii) establishing and maintaining interpretive exhibits in the Heritage Area;

(iii) developing recreational resources in the Heritage Area;

(iv) increasing public awareness of and, appreciation for, the natural, historical, and architectural resources and sites in the Heritage Area;

(v) restoring historic buildings relating to the themes of the Heritage Area; and

(vi) ensuring that clear, consistent, and environmentally appropriate signs identifying access points and sites of interest are installed throughout the Heritage Area;

(B) encourage economic viability in the Heritage Area consistent with the goals of the management plan; and

(C) encourage local governments to adopt land use policies consistent with the management of the Heritage Area and the goals of the management plan;

(3) consider the interests of diverse governmental, business, and nonprofit groups within the Heritage Area;

(4) conduct public meetings at least quarterly regarding the implementation of the management plan;

(5) submit substantial changes (including any increase of more than 20 percent in the cost estimates for implementation) to the management plan to the Secretary for the approval of the Secretary; and

(6) for any fiscal year in which Federal funds are received under this title–

(A) submit to the Secretary a report describing–

(i) the accomplishments of the management entity;

(ii) the expenses and income of the management entity; and

(iii) each entity to which the management entity made any grant during the fiscal year;

(B) make available for audit all records pertaining to the expenditure of Federal funds and any matching funds, and require, for all agreements authorizing expenditure of Federal funds by organizations other than the management entity, that the receiving organizations make available for audit all records pertaining to the expenditure of such funds; and

(C) require, for all agreements authorizing expenditure of Federal funds by organizations other than the management entity, that the receiving organizations make available for audit all records pertaining to the expenditure of Federal funds.

(c) USE OF FEDERAL FUNDS.–

(1) IN GENERAL.–The management entity shall not use Federal funds received under this title to acquire real property or an interest in real property.

(2) OTHER SOURCES.–Nothing in this title precludes the management entity from using Federal funds from other sources for their permitted purposes.

(d) SPENDING FOR NON-FEDERALLY OWNED PROPERTY.–The management entity may spend Federal funds directly on non-Federally owned property to further the purposes of this title, especially in assisting units of government in appropriate treatment of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

SEC. 207. DUTIES AND AUTHORITIES OF FEDERAL AGENCIES.

(a) TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.–

(1) IN GENERAL.–At the request of the management entity, the Secretary may provide technical and financial assistance to the Heritage Area to develop and implement the management plan.

(2) PRIORITIES.–In assisting the management entity, the Secretary shall give priority to actions that assist in–

(A) conserving the significant natural, historical, and cultural resources that support the themes of the Heritage Area; and

(B) providing educational, interpretive, and recreational opportunities consistent with the resources and associated values of the Heritage Area.

(b) APPROVAL AND DISAPPROVAL OF COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS.–

(1) IN GENERAL.–Not later than 90 days after receiving a cooperative agreement or management plan submitted under this title, the Secretary, in consultation with the Governor of the State, shall approve or disapprove the cooperative agreement or management plan.

(2) MANAGEMENT PLAN CONTENTS.–In reviewing the plan, the Secretary shall consider whether the composition of the management entity and the plan adequately reflect diverse interest of the region, including those of–

(A) local elected officials;

(B) the State;

(C) business and industry groups;

(D) organizations interested in the protection of natural and cultural resources; and

(E) other community organizations and individual stakeholders.

(3) ACTION FOLLOWING DISAPPROVAL.–

(A) IN GENERAL.–If the Secretary disapproves a cooperative agreement or management plan, the Secretary shall–

(i) advise the management entity in writing of the reasons for the disapproval; and

(ii) make recommendations for revisions in the cooperative agreement or plan.

(B) TIME PERIOD FOR DISAPPROVAL.–Not later than 90 days after the date on which a revision described under subparagraph (A)(ii) is submitted, the Secretary shall approve or disapprove the proposed revision.

(c) APPROVAL OF AMENDMENTS.–

(1) IN GENERAL.–The Secretary shall review and approve substantial amendments to the management plan.

(2) FUNDING EXPENDITURE LIMITATION.– Funds appropriated under this title may not be expended to implement any substantial amendment until the Secretary approves the amendment.

SEC. 208. CULTURE AND HERITAGE OF ANTHRACITE COAL REGION.

(a) IN GENERAL.–The management entities of heritage areas (other than the Heritage Area) in the anthracite coal region in the State shall cooperate in the management of the Heritage Area.

(b) FUNDING.–Management entities described in subsection (a) may use funds appropriated for management of the Heritage Area to carry out this section.

SEC. 209. SUNSET.

The Secretary may not make any grant or provide any assistance under this title after the date that is 15 years after the date of the enactment of this title.

SEC. 210. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.

(a) IN GENERAL.–There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this title not more than $10,000,000, of which not more than $1,000,000 is authorized to be appropriated for any 1 fiscal year.

(b) FEDERAL SHARE.–Federal funding provided under this title may not exceed 50 percent of the total cost of any project or activity funded under this title.

Approved October 6, 2000.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY–H.R. 940 (S. 905):

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 106–285 (Comm. on Resources).

SENATE REPORTS: Nos. 106–185 accompanying S. 905 and 106–342 (both from Comm. on Energy and Natural Resources).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Vol. 145 (1999): Sept. 13, considered and passed House.
Vol. 146 (2000): July 27, considered and passed Senate, amended; passage vitiated.
Sept. 18, considered and passed Senate, amended.
Sept. 21, House concurred in Senate amendments.

Appendix 2 – Evaluation Legislation

PUBLIC LAW 113–291—DEC. 19, 2014

CARL LEVIN AND HOWARD P. ''BUCK'' MCKEON
NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2015

Public Law 113–291
113th Congress

An Act

To authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2015 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

TITLE XXX—NATURAL RESOURCES RELATED GENERAL PROVISIONS

Subtitle D—National Park System Studies, Management, and Related Matters

SEC. 3052. NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS AND CORRIDORS.

(a) EXTENSION OF NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA AUTHORITIES.—

(1) EXTENSIONS.—

(A) Section 12 of Public Law 100–692 (16 U.S.C. 461note; 102 Stat. 4558; 112 Stat. 3258; 123 Stat. 1292; 127 Stat. 420; 128 Stat. 314) is amended—

(i) in subsection (c)(1), by striking ''2015'' and inserting ''2021''; and

(ii) in subsection (d), by striking ''2015'' and inserting ''2021''.

(B) Division II of Public Law 104–333 (16 U.S.C. 461 note) is amended by striking ''2015'' each place it appears in the following sections and inserting ''2021'':

(i) Section 107 (110 Stat. 4244; 127 Stat. 420; 128 Stat. 314).

(ii) Section 408 (110 Stat. 4256; 127 Stat. 420; 128 Stat. 314).

(iii) Section 507 (110 Stat. 4260; 127 Stat. 420; 128 Stat. 314).

(iv) Section 707 (110 Stat. 4267; 127 Stat. 420; 128 Stat. 314).

(v) Section 809 (110 Stat. 4275; 122 Stat. 826; 127 Stat. 420; 128 Stat. 314).

(vi) Section 910 (110 Stat. 4281; 127 Stat. 420; 128 Stat. 314). PUBL

(C) Section 109 of Public Law 105–355 (16 U.S.C. 461 note; 112 Stat. 3252) is amended by striking ''September 30, 2014'' and inserting ''September 30, 2021''.

(D) Public Law 106–278 (16 U.S.C. 461 note) is amended—

(i) in section 108 (114 Stat. 818; 127 Stat. 420; 128 Stat. 314), by striking ''2015'' and inserting ''2021''; and

(ii) in section 209 (114 Stat. 824), by striking ''the date that is 15 years after the date of enactment of this title'' and inserting ''September 30, 2021''.

(E) Section 157(i) of Public Law 106–291 (16 U.S.C. 461 note; 114 Stat. 967) is amended by striking ''2015'' and inserting ''2021''.

(F) Section 7 of Public Law 106–319 (16 U.S.C. 461 note; 114 Stat. 1284) is amended by striking ''2015'' and inserting ''2021''.

(G) Title VIII of division B of H.R. 5666 (Appendix D) as enacted into law by section 1(a)(4) of Public Law 106–554 (16 U.S.C. 461 note; 114 Stat. 2763, 2763A–295; 123 Stat. 1294) is amended–

(i) in section 804(j), by striking ''the day occurring 15 years after the date of enactment of this title'' and inserting ''September 30, 2021''; and

(ii) by adding at the end the following:

''SEC. 811. TERMINATION OF ASSISTANCE.

''The authority of the Secretary to provide financial assistance under this title shall terminate on September 30, 2021.''.

(H) Section 106(b) of Public Law 103–449 (16 U.S.C. 461 note; 108 Stat. 4755; 113 Stat. 1726; 123 Stat. 1291) is amended, by striking ''2015'' and inserting ''2021''.

(2) CONDITIONAL EXTENSION OF AUTHORITIES.–

(A) IN GENERAL.–The amendments made by paragraph (1) (other than the amendments made by clauses (iii) and (iv) of paragraph (1)(B)), shall apply only through September 30, 2020, unless the Secretary of the Interior (referred to in this section as the ''Secretary'')–

(i) conducts an evaluation of the accomplishments of the national heritage areas extended under paragraph (1), in accordance with subparagraph (B); and

(ii) prepares a report in accordance with subparagraph (C) that recommends a future role for the National Park Service with respect to the applicable national heritage area.

(B) EVALUATION.–An evaluation conducted under subparagraph (A)(i) shall–

(i) assess the progress of the local management entity with respect to–

(I) accomplishing the purposes of the authorizing legislation for the national heritage area; and

(II) achieving the goals and objectives of the approved management plan for the national heritage area;

(ii) analyze the investments of Federal, State, tribal, and local government, and private entities in each national heritage area to determine the impact of the investments; and

(iii) review the management structure, partnership relationships, and funding of the national heritage area for purposes of identifying the critical components for sustainability of the national heritage area.

(C) REPORT.–Based on the evaluation conducted under subparagraph (A)(i), the Secretary shall submit to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Natural Resources of

the House of Representatives a report that includes recommendations for the future role of the National Park Service with respect to the national heritage area.

Approved December 19, 2014.

LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—H.R. 3979:

HOUSE REPORTS: No. 113–360 (Comm. on Ways and Means).

CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 160 (2014):

Mar. 11, considered and passed House.
Mar. 31, Apr. 1–3, 7, considered and passed Senate, amended.
Dec. 4, House concurred in Senate amendment with an amendment.
Dec. 12, Senate concurred in House amendment.

Appendix 3 – Evaluation Methodology

Background and Purpose

In May 2008, Congress passed legislation[2] which requires the Secretary of the Interior to evaluate the accomplishments of nine National Heritage Areas (NHAs) no later than 3 years before the date on which authority for Federal funding for each of the NHAs terminates. Based on findings of each evaluation, the legislation requires the Secretary to prepare a report with recommendations for the National Park Service's future role with respect to the NHA under review.

The National Parks Conservation Association's Center for Park Management (CPM) conducted the first evaluation of Essex National Heritage Area in 2008. In 2010, CPM, in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS), then contracted with Westat to evaluate the next two NHA sites: Augusta Canals in Augusta, GA and Silos and Smokestacks in Waterloo, IA. Each evaluation was designed to answer the following questions, outlined in the legislation:

1. Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the Heritage Area achieved its proposed accomplishments?
2. What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal and local government, and private entities?
3. How do the Heritage Areas management structures, partnership relationships, and current funding contribute to its sustainability?

This document presents Westat's methodology for conducting the NHA evaluations for the six remaining Heritage Areas. This methodology includes: our core evaluation approach; evaluation design; associated data collection methods, sources, and measures; and analysis and reporting plans. Our methods build upon the methodology and instruments used in previous Augusta Canal and Silos and Smokestacks NHA evaluations.

In addition to outlining our core approach to the evaluation, this document describes the process Westat will use to tailor the approach for each of the specific NHA evaluations.

Core Evaluation Approach

Our approach to the NHA evaluation centers around three basic principles – stakeholder collaboration, in-depth and triangulated data collection, and efficiencies of time and effort. The evaluation will use a case study design, examining each NHA individually. The case study design is appropriate for addressing the NHA evaluation questions since there are multiple variables of interest within each NHA and multiple sources of data with the need for convergence or triangulation among the sources. As noted below, data sources in each site will include documents, key informants from the coordinating/management entity and partner organizations, and community stakeholders. Data collection will be guided by a case study protocol outlining the domains and measures of interest using topic-centered guides for extracting data from existing sources and for interviewing key informants (individually and in group interviews).

The evaluation will incorporate a collaborative approach with project stakeholders to ensure that it is relevant to all and is grounded in the local knowledge of the site as well as designed to meet legislative requirements. Therefore, in the design and implementation of each evaluation, we will include the perspectives of NPS and NHA leadership. Working products will be developed in close coordination with

[2] From P.L. 110-229, Section 462. EVALUATION AND REPORT, signed May 8, 2008

NPS and the NHA evaluation sites throughout the evaluation process. Involving all key stakeholders and including varying perspectives at each stage of the process will ensure that the data collection methods and indicators, the analysis, and interpretation of the findings reflect their views and concerns.

Core Evaluation Design and Measures

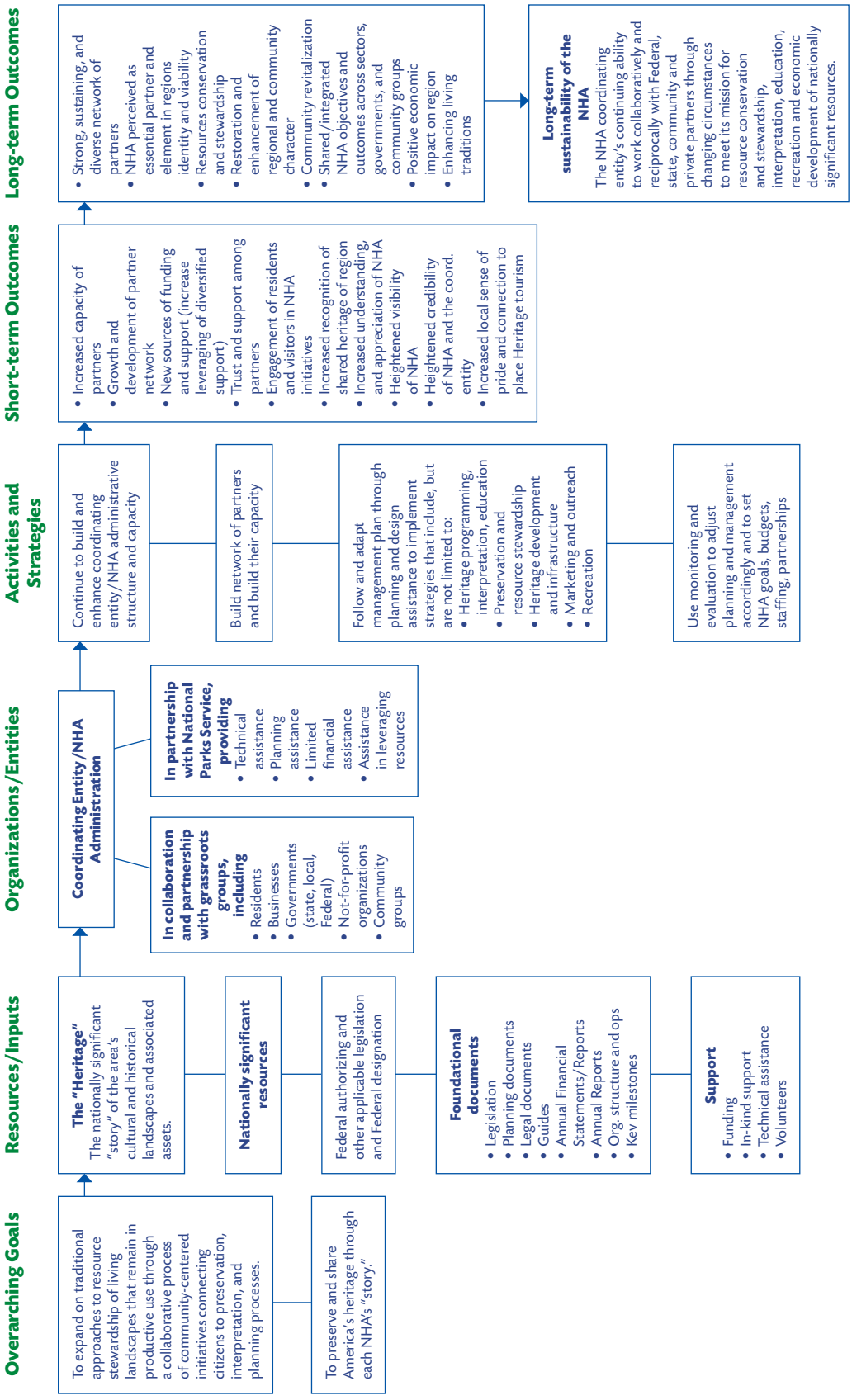
Westat is developing a core evaluation design that will then be tailored for each NHA evaluation. Three tools guide the development of the core evaluation design: the NHA logic model (Figure A3.1), the NHA Domain Matrix, and a comprehensive case study protocol. The basic structure of the NHA logic model is a visual representation of the:

- overarching goal for a NHA;
- resources and key partnerships available to help an NHA accomplish its goals;
- activities and strategies that are being implemented to accomplish the NHA goal;
- intended short- and long-term outcomes; and
- the linkages among the activities, strategies, and outcomes.

The logic model provides a blueprint for the case study design, outlining the components to examine, the indicators to measure, and the relationships to investigate between the various activities and outcomes. It therefore is a key tool for outlining the data that should be collected as well as the types of analyses that might be conducted. In addition, it provides an efficient way to display the underlying logic or framework of the NHA. For the core evaluation design, the NHA logic model has guided the development of the NHA Domain Matrix, which will in turn inform the development of a case study protocol to conduct the evaluation.

The NHA Domain Matrix is designed to thoroughly address the three key evaluation questions outlined in the legislation. The left-hand side of the matrix lists the key domains and measures required to answer each evaluation question. Each of these domains and measures are cross-walked with the potential data sources. Many of the domains will be informed by more than one data source, as is typical in a case study, to provide for more valid and complete results through triangulation of multiple perspectives. The sources for data collection include: existing NHA documentation, including foundational and financial documents; interviews with NHA staff and key partners; and input from citizens in the NHA community. A later section of this methodology will provide greater detail about the selected data sources and process for data collection. A brief synopsis of the Domain Matrix and how it guides our approach to addressing the key questions follows:

Figure A3.1 NHA Logic Model



Evaluation Question 1 Based on its authorizing legislation and general management plan, has the heritage area achieved its proposed accomplishments?

In addressing this question, we will collect data through interviews and documents on the nature of the proposed NHA activities; how these activities are being implemented by the local coordinating entity/management entity, partnership network and/or the local community; and, the impacts of the activities. The measures also will address whether the NHAs are implementing the activities proposed in the initial NHA designation, and if not, what circumstances or situations may have led to their adaptation or adjustment. This examination consists of in-depth interviews with staff to understand what activities have resulted from the NHA designation that was initially not intended or expected. Also, in assessing the goals and objectives of the NHA, we will try to discern if there were mechanisms in place prior to establishment of the NHA intended to achieve these goals.

Evaluation Question 2 What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal and local government, and private entities?

Addressing this question will begin with gathering information through interviews with key NHA management staff and a review of financial data forms. Understanding what investments have been made will involve collecting data on both financial and non-financial investments, including data on the amount, nature, and sources of these investments over time. We will also examine the impact of these investments and how they are helping the NHAs achieve their intended outcomes through data collected from reviewing NHA plans and interviews with key partners and local residents of the NHA community. In cases when an NHA has numerous investment sources, we will focus on the NHA's "major" sources and whether these sources are restricted or unrestricted funds. To identify "major" sources of investment, we will examine the range of investment sources and characterize them by financial or time commitment thresholds.

Evaluation Question 3 How do the heritage areas management structure, partnership relationships, and current funding contribute to its sustainability?

Data to inform this question will be primarily gathered from interviews with key NHA management staff and a subset of NHA partners, and by performing a review and analysis of the NHA financial documents. The definition of sustainability developed by the NPS working group[3] will be employed in addressing this question. We will examine the nature of management structure and partnership network and their contribution to sustainability. We will also assess the financial investments over time and their corresponding impact on the financial sustainability of those investments and their future with and without future Federal funding. Specifically, we will perform an analysis of the ratio of Federal funding to other fund sources and the change in this ratio over time overall and for specific activities. We will also interview NHA

[3] The National Heritage Area coordinating entity's continuing ability to work collaboratively and reciprocally with Federal, state, community and private partners through changing circumstances to meet its mission for resource conservation and stewardship, interpretation, education, recreation and economic development of nationally significant resources.

Critical components of sustainability of a National Heritage Area include but are not limited to:

- Coordinating entity and the National Park Service honoring the legislative mandate of the National Heritage Area;
- Coordinating entity's management capacity including governance, adaptive management (such as strategic planning), staffing and operations;
- Financial planning and preparedness, including the ongoing ability to leverage resources in support of the local network of partners;
- Partnering with diverse community stakeholders including serving as a hub, catalyst and/or coordinating entity for on-going capacity building, communication and collaboration among local entities;
- Program and project stewardship where the combined investment results in the improved economic value and ultimately long-term quality of life of that region; and
- Outreach and marketing to engage a full and diverse range of audiences.

leadership and board staff to understand the extent to which fundraising activities have been prioritized for specific activities. Based on these analytic and data collection activities, an attempt would be made to determine what the likely effects on the NHA would be if Federal funding was reduced or discontinued; specifically, which activities might have a prospect of continuing with reduced or discontinued Federal funding, which would likely end with reduced or discontinued Federal funding, and therefore, which goals and objectives might not be reached. The evaluation will also examine if there are activities that support issues of national importance, and thus, should be considered for other Federal funding. Finally, the evaluation will address how other organizations that exist within the Heritage Area be effected by the sunset of Federal funds, and if there are mechanisms in place for these organizations to work toward the Heritage Area goals post-sunset.

Data Collection Methods

The planned data collection methods include: topic-centered interviews with NHA management staff; topic-centered interviews with members of the NHA partner network; intercept conversations with community stakeholders; review of the NHA plans and legal documents; review of the NHA guides, brochures, websites and other descriptive documents; and review of the NHA financial data records. In the sections below, we describe each of these methods, including how we will select the data sources, what data we will collect, and the tools we will use to collect the data. For each of the methods, we will begin by developing a "generic" instrument that corresponds to the key elements outlined in the domain matrix. The process for tailoring the instruments to each of the evaluation sites include:

Foundation Documents Review

A first set of documents will be reviewed to frame the decisions and actions of the coordinating entity's role in implementing the designated NHA's objectives. These documents provide many of the objectives for the NHA and frame expectations for the local coordinating entity. These documents include:

- Legislation – all Federal, state and/or local legislation that provides the legal framework for the NHA
- Plans – all planning documents, including updates, developed by the coordinating entity and/or partners that are intended to deliver the legal mandates defined by Congress and/or other legislative bodies
- Legal documents – documents signed by the coordinating entity that allow it conduct/produce routine NHA business

Another set of documents will be obtained and reviewed to understand the nature of NHA activities and their relationship with NHA objectives. These documents include:

- Guides – documents designed to define how NHA business operates
- Annual financial statements and reports – includes audits, tax returns, budget activities and performance program reports
- Annual reports – includes reports to Congress, to partners and to the NPS and others
- Organizational structure and operations – how the coordinating entity, board(s) and committees do NHA work, their roles and functions
- Key milestones – a timeline of major events that document the evolution of the NHA to include outside influences affecting your planning and implementation process

We will collaborate with each of the NHA coordinating entities and NPS to gather these materials. We will also provide sample table shells to help NHA coordinating entity staff understand evaluation data needs and identify relevant documents to share with Westat.

In reviewing these documents, we will abstract information into tables that historically documents NHA activities, such as the number of visitors or number of workshops offered per year. We will also use a case study protocol to abstract key information and make use of data analysis software, such as NVivo, to meaningfully structure the data. This review of documents will be critical in helping us tailor the

specifics of the evaluation for each site, particularly in selecting NHA staff and partners to interview.

Financial Data Review

Our approach to the financial data review is informed by the Augusta Canal and Silos and Smokestacks evaluations, particularly with respect to the types of data collected and the nature of the analyses performed. We will review key NHA financial data records such as audits, tax returns, budgets and performance program reports to collect data on the amount and sources of funding for the NHA, trends in funding over a 10-year period, and the impact of these resources on the economic sustainability of the NHA. We will coordinate with each of the NHA coordinating entities and NPS to gather these materials and collect supporting documentation regarding external matching contributions and use of NHA resources according to program areas. We will use a protocol to guide the review of financial data needs with each NHA site.

Topic-Centered Interviews with Staff of the NHA Coordinating Entity

During a follow-up site visit, key staff from the NHA coordinating entity will be interviewed. The staff will include the Executive Director and staff in key roles identified through review of the foundational documents. For example, some of the staff selected for interviews could include managers of specific NHA activities (i.e., programming or marketing directors), or staff who work in finance, development or partner relationship functions. A topic-centered, semi-structured protocol will be used to conduct each of the interviews, obtaining information about the background of the NHA, NHA activities and investments, and their associated impacts, including their contribution to NHA sustainability. We will conduct individual interviews with the staff with the most history and scope of understanding of the NHA operations, such as the Executive Director or Finance Manager. Other staff, especially those with similar roles such as program assistants will be interviewed in groups to maximize the number of viewpoints gathered. Each of the topic-centered interviews will be semi-structured, outlining the key areas to cover and probes that are specific to the site. However, as new areas emerge, the interviews will be flexible to collect information on these areas. Although all interviews will be conducted on site at the coordinating entity, follow-up telephone conversations will be conducted as needed to capture additional information. We expect to spend 1 day interviewing up to nine staff in each NHA.

Topic-Centered Interviews with Members of the NHA Partner Network

Members of the NHA partner network, including NPS, will be interviewed to in order to gain an understanding about NHA activities and investments and their associated impacts, including their contribution to NHA sustainability. A topic-centered, semi-structured interview protocol will guide these interviews, some of which will be conducted individually, either in person or by telephone, and others that will be conducted through group interviews to maximize the number of viewpoints gathered. If applicable for the respective site, we expect to select 15-20 partners from each NHA to interview. In determining criteria for selecting partners to interview, we will review foundational documents and web site materials for each NHA site. These criteria will likely include the level of the partner's relationship with the NHA, the extent to which they participate and/or support NHA activities, their financial relationship and their geographic representation. We will share the list of selected partners with the NHA for completeness and will incorporate the NHA's suggestions of other partners who should be interviewed. Once this list is finalized, Westat will contact the partners for interview scheduling. We expect to have a range of stakeholders and organizations participate in these interviews adding to the multiple sources of data for triangulation.

Community Input

Members of the NHA community will be invited to provide their input about the nature and impact of NHA activities through intercept conversations with a sample of residents in the NHA community. These conversations may take place at the Heritage Area

site or at an event or place within the community. Conversations will help evaluation team gain an understanding of the community's familiarity with the Heritage Area and its unique and nationally significant aspects. The intercept conversations will also provide information about the residents' awareness of and appreciation for the Heritage Area. Westat will work with the NHA management entity to develop strategies for obtaining community input.

It is important to recognize the limitations in the data that will be collected through the community input strategies. First, as we will be identifying "convenient" groups of individuals, it is likely that those involved will not be fully representative of local residents, tourists, and volunteers. Depending on how they are identified, they have more or less motivation to be interested in the NHA. In addition, the data collected will be largely qualitative. We will not be able to develop quantitative indicators of the community input, but rather collect more impressionistic input that will provide an indication based on each respondent's background, prior involvement, and interest as to how well the NHA is enhancing community awareness of, appreciation of, and involvement in the NHA.

Analyze Data and Findings Document

The analysis and synthesis of each NHA's data will be guided by the overall protocol and the Findings Document outline. Data reduction will first begin by summarizing the data within each domain area, first within each source, and then synthesizing the data across sources. Attempts will be made to reconcile any issues or discrepancies across the sources by contacting the relevant parties at each NHA. Data will be summarized within each domain and analyzed for relationships, guided by the logic model. To the degree possible, results will be displayed graphically and in tables. Findings will reflect the triangulated information – where appropriate and feasible, it will be important to ensure that the results not only reflect the perspectives of the key informants but are substantiated with data from documents and other written sources.

Results of each NHA evaluation will be communicated in a Findings Document. The findings document will be guided by a modification of the outline finalized by the NHA Evaluation Working Group. The Findings Document outline was developed according to Westat's experience with the Augusta Canal and Silos and Smokestacks evaluation, and has been streamlined to present key findings in an Executive Summary, combine sections according to the three evaluation questions, and address sustainability questions regarding the impact of the sunset of Federal funds on NHA activities. Westat will first share a draft of the findings document with the Executive Director of the NHA coordinating entity for a review of technical accuracy. The Executive Director will have the opportunity to share the findings document with other staff and stakeholders as desired, and can provide comments to the evaluation team, either in writing or via telephone discussion. Finally, if necessary to discuss differences, a joint telephone conversation involving the NHA Executive Director, NPS and Westat can be held to discuss the comments and to arrive at a resolution. Once Westat has incorporated the feedback, the NHA coordinating entity will have another opportunity to review the findings document before it is shared with NPS. Once the NHA's final feedback is reviewed and incorporated, Westat will submit the draft findings documents to NPS for review. Westat expects to have the Final Findings Document for each evaluation complete by July 2012.

Tailoring the Evaluation Design for NHA Evaluation Sites

The core evaluation design will be tailored to the six NHA sites under evaluation. A preliminary "Meet and Greet" visit to the NHAs will largely inform how the protocols should be customized for each site, including the domains that are relevant, the probes that should be added to inquire about each domain, and the specific data sources that are relevant for the site. We will work with the Executive Director to determine the key staff to involve in individual and group interviews during a second site visit, partner organizations that should be represented, and strategies to obtain community input.

A customized logic model for each NHA will be developed during the initial site visit; detailing the respective NHA's goals, resources, partnerships, activities and intended outcomes. This process will involve a group meeting with NHA management staff and NPS partners to get a diverse range of perspectives and obtain a complete picture of the designated NHA. In preparation for this visit, we will review existing documentation for the NHA sites. We expect these preliminary Meet and Greet visits and logic modeling sessions to involve about 2 days of travel and meeting time.

Once the tailored logic models are finalized for each NHA evaluation site, Westat will then adapt the NHA Domain Matrix and the comprehensive case study protocol that were developed as part of the core evaluation design. These tailored tools will still address the evaluation research questions identified by the legislation, but will ensure that the questions are geared toward the specific aspects of each NHA site.

Interview data collection for each NHA evaluation will occur during a second visit to each NHA site, and is expected to last 3 to 5 days depending on the scope of the site. We will use memos to keep the NHA Executive Director informed of our evaluation activities both pre- and post-site visits.

We will also work with each NHA during the second site visit, and with email and phone communications post site-visit, to collect and analyze information for the financial review. The financial data protocol will provide the NHA coordinating entity with an understanding of the data needs to address the second evaluation question guide these conversations in identifying years in which there is audit information pertinent to the evaluation and will help NHA coordinating entity staff to identify other data sources that will support the financial analysis.

Evaluation Limitations

To the greatest extent possible, Westat has tried to ensure this evaluation methodology thoroughly addresses the three research questions. However, there are parameters to this methodology that result in a few limitations on evaluation findings. In some instances, there is a trade-off between maximizing the time and efficiency for the evaluation and the ability to thoroughly collect information from a range of stakeholders. For instance, to obtain input from community stakeholders, a survey is not possible within the current evaluation due to OMB Paperwork Reduction Requirements. Therefore, the data received from intercept conversations will be a more qualitative assessment of the community's perceptions of the NHA. As noted, limitations to the community input include convenient, rather than representative, samples of tourists, local residents, and volunteers, and impressionistic rather than quantitative data on the impact of the NHA on stakeholder knowledge, attitudes, and involvement in the NHA. Therefore, the data obtained will have to be viewed with these limitations in mind.

Appendix 4 – Evaluation Protocols

NHA Management/Staff Topic-Centered Interview Discussion Guide

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for talking with me today. As part of the Federally mandated evaluation of NHAs we are talking with SRGA staff who have the most history and scope of understanding of the SRHA's operations. We developed this logic model, based on our last visit to your area, and would like to use it as a guide throughout the interview. Using this logic model as a guide, our discussion will help us gain a more detailed understanding of the SRHA, including its background and history, your different activities and investments and their associated outcomes, and their contribution to the SRHA's sustainability.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary and it should take about 1 to 2 hours to complete.

[Begin with reviewing goals, etc. from logic model]

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

1. Could you tell us about the organizational history and evolution prior to the SRHA designation?

2. How did the SRHA designation come about? How did this designation affect your strategic planning processes and management plan?

3. What was your working relationship like with NPS? Has that relationship evolved over the time you have been working with them?

4. How are the management and operations of the SRGA currently structured?

   Probes:
   - Description of executive leadership and role in organization
   - Description of governance and role in organization
   - Description of staffing and volunteers

5. What is the mission and vision for the SRGA? What are the goals for the SRGA?

6. Can you describe the various planning processes that the SRGA has undertaken over time? When and how did you determine a need for this and what type of engagement of the larger community was necessary?

ACTIVITIES

We'd like to get a better understanding about some of the activities that you and other staff told us about during our first site visit. We'd like to learn about how these activities fit into your overall programming and vision for the SRHA and who/what is involved in their implementation?

[Begin with reviewing goals, etc. from logic model]
According to the logic model, the coordinating entity is involved in the following activities *[Choose from the activities listed below that pertain to the SRHA]*

Planning and Technical Assistance:

Activities that build local community capacity and assist individuals, organizations and communities who are involved in SRHA activities. These activities could include grant-making, provision of technical assistance, or other activities.

Grant-making

We'd like to learn more about your grant-making activities. We're interested in learning more about your grant programs, including:

- Schuylkill Highland Mini Grants
- Restoration Fund Grants
- Land Transaction Assistance Grants
- Any other types of grants we may have missed?

1. For each of these grant-making programs, could you describe:

   - When it began?
   - The impetus for starting it?
   - The activities it supports?

   Probe - how does it promote the preservation, interpretation and education and programming of America's unique story?

   - How it is funded? Does it leverage other funding?
   - Whether the grants are provided for a specific purpose/time period and/or if they could be sustained on their own without continued SRHA funding?
   - The grant-making process for this program:
     - How do organizations find out about and apply for grants?
     - What is the size of the grants?
     - What is the process for determining award?
     - What are the funding and reporting requirements?
     - What is time period of award?

2. Overall, how have the grants programs affected :

   - Partners – their capacity, the relationships among partners - in what ways?
   - The SRHA overall and how it is perceived more generally?
   - Community support for preservations, interpretive, educational activities?
   - Job creation – for partners, in the larger community, etc.?

3. Are there certain grant programs that have been more successful than others in achieving the goals of the SRHA? If so, why do you think these have better impacts for the overall SRHA area than others?

4. What challenges have you had in administering these grant programs? Are there certain ones that are more or less problematic? In what ways? What have you done to deal with these challenges? What has worked? What has not?

5. What challenges have grantees encountered in implementing the grants?

6. How do you evaluate and/or assess the effectiveness of your grant-making activities?

7. How would this activity be affected if the NPS NHA Federal funding sunsets or is reduced? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide grants that support the Heritage Area?

8. Are there documents you could provide us that describe these grant programs and how they have been implemented over the years?

Technical Assistance

We'd like to learn more about your technical assistance activities such as the information and guidance that you have provided to businesses to promote economic development and community revitalization.

1. Could you provide the following details about each of your technical assistance activities?

   - What are the types of topics covered? How do you determine topics?
   - Who are the recipients?
   - How you determine when and to whom to offer these services?
   - If it is an event, in what region/area is it delivered?
   - Who provides technical assistance (i.e. SRHA staff, NPS staff, partners, etc.)?
   - How often have you provided technical assistance? What is the length of time for each?
   - What are the costs and funding sources for technical assistance?
   - What are the goals and objectives of technical assistance?

2. Overall, what was the impetus for starting this activity?
   Probe - was it part of the original management plan? Seen as an unmet need in the community?

3. How has technical assistance affected:
   Probe - for each of these, how do you know any of these outcomes occurred?

   - Recipients – increased knowledge and skills?
   - Partners – their capacity, the relationships among partners - in what ways?
   - The SRHA overall and how the SRHA is perceived more generally?
   - Community support for preservation, interpretive, educational activities?

4. Any other technical assistance activities we may have missed?

5. Could you tell us what have been the overall accomplishments of technical assistance? What challenges have you encountered in implementing this activity?

6. How do you evaluate and/or assess the effectiveness of technical assistance?

7. How would this activity be affected if the Federal funding sunsets or is reduced? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide this activity in a way that support the Heritage Area?

8. Are there documents you could provide us that describe technical assistance, such as the types of assistance provided, to whom and the related outcomes?

Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization

Activities and programs that foster public support and appreciation for the SRHA site and tell the story of its natural, historical and cultural significance. These activities may include Gateway centers, heritage towns and tours, trail walks, events (regular or special), festivals, and as well as marketing and outreach activities.

Programming and Interpretation

1. Please provide the following details for each of these activities.

   - When did it begin? What was the impetus for starting it?
   - What has been the role of the SRGA?
   - What has been the role of the SRHA's partnership network?
   - What has been the role of the local community?
   - What have been the overall accomplishments of this activity in your area? What challenges have you encountered in implementing this activity?
   - How do you evaluate and/or assess the effectiveness of it?

2. What has/have been the greatest impact(s) of programming and interpretation activities in your area?

   Probes - Engagement of residents and visitors (# served/involved/affected)
   - Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming
   - Job creation

3. How would [Programming/Interpretation Activity] be affected if the NPS NHA Federal funding sunsets or is reduced? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide this activity in a way that support the Heritage Area?

4. Are there documents you could provide us that describe [Programming/Interpretation Activity] and how it has been implemented over the years?

Marketing and Public Outreach

Activities that increase public use and awareness of the SRHA and further its economic sustainability. Marketing and public outreach may encompass the use of guides, brochures, signage, newsletters, social media, and/or participation in community events to increase public awareness of the SRHA.

1. For each activity could you provide us details about:

- What it entails?
- The impetus for starting the activity?
- How long it has been in place?
- The role of SRHA staff?
- The role of the local community?
- The role of members of your partnerships?

2. How have these marketing and awareness building activities affected:

(*Probe* - for each activity, how do you know any of these outcomes occurred?)

- Partners – their capacity, the relationships among partners - in what ways?
- The SRHA overall and how it is perceived more generally?
- Engagement of residents and visitors/tourism?
- Community support for preservations, interpretive, educational activities?
- Economic impacts?
- Ability to provide a cohesive SRHA experience

3. Could you tell us the overall accomplishments of your marketing activities? What challenges have you encountered in implementing these activities?

4. How would [Marketing Activity] be affected if the NPS NHA Federal funding sunsets or is reduced? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide [Marketing Activity] in a way that support the Heritage Area?

5. Are there documents you could provide us that describe the SRHA's marketing and outreach activities and how they have been implemented over the years?

6. How would this activity be affected if the NPS NHA Federal funding sunsets or is reduced? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide this activity in a way that support the Heritage Area?

7. Are there documents you could provide us that describe this activity and how it has been implemented over the years?

Building the Schuylkill River Trail:

Heritage based development activities that further provide educational and inspirational opportunities for current and future generations. Examples of some of these activities include overseeing SRHA clean-up and management and performing or overseeing repair and management of the trail, bridge construction, feasibility studies and engineering reports, trail partners meetings, and the Trail Ambassador Program.

1. For each of these activities:

- When did it begin? What was the impetus for starting it?
- What has been the role of the SRGA?
- What has been the role of the partnership network?
- What has been the role of the local community?
- What have been the overall accomplishments of this activity in your area? What challenges have you encountered in implementing this activity?
- How do you evaluate and/or assess the effectiveness of it?

2. What kind of an impact do you think oversight and management of the SRHA and its resources has had in the community?

   Probes - Engagement of residents and visitors/ future stewardship
   - Educational/interpretational impacts
   - Preservation of SRHA and its historical resources
   - Restoration of SRHA resources
   - Economic impact/Job creation

3. How would this activity be affected if NPS NHA Federal funding sunsets? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide this activity in a way that supports the Heritage Area?

4. Are there documents you could provide us that describe this activity and how it has been implemented over the years?

Resource Conservation and Stewardship:

Activities that support the long-term preservation, conservation and reclamation of natural, cultural and historic resources. Related activities may include property rehabilitation, historic reenactments and environmental conservation efforts, watershed restoration, the sojourn, biking events, fundraisers, and child/youth/adult education programming.

1. For each of these activities please provide the following details:

   - When did it begin? What was the impetus for starting it?
   - What has been the role of the SRGA?
   - What has been the role of the SRHA Administrative staff (coordinating, sponsoring, promoting, attending, staff service on Boards)?
   - What has been the role of the SRHA's partnership network?
   - What has been the role of the local community (attending, promoting, supporting)?

2. What has/have been the greatest impact(s) of this activity in your area?

   Probes - Environmental, cultural and historic resources conservation
   - Artifact or building restoration
   - Greater amount/diversity in sources of funding committed to conservation and stewardship
   - Increased capacity of partners
   - Growth in partner network
   - Community revitalization
   - Job creation

Education

1. For each educational activity, could you provide details about:

   - The nature of the activity?
   - When it began?
   - What was the impetus for offering the activity?
   - When it is offered?
   - To whom you provide it? (i.e., teachers, students, etc.)
   - The role of SRHA staff in providing this?
   - The role of the community in implementing these activities?

2. How have the educational activities affected:

   - Participants – increased knowledge and skills
   - Partners – their capacity, the relationships among partners - in what ways?
   - This SRHA overall and how it is perceived more generally?
   - Community support for preservations, interpretive, educational activities?
   - Ability to provide a cohesive SRHA experience focused on the themes of American agriculture?

3. Could you tell us what have been the accomplishments of your educational activities? What challenges have you encountered in implementing these activities?

4. How do you evaluate and/or assess the effectiveness of your educational activities?

5. How would this activity be affected if the Federal funding sunsets or is reduced? Are there other organizations in the community who also provide this activity in a way that support the Heritage Area?

6. Are there documents you could provide us that describe these educational activities, such as the types of educational activities provided, to whom and the related outcomes?

BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND ADVISORY GROUPS

Board of Trustees and Advisory Groups

1. Can you tell us about the history of and/or your role on the Board of Trustees or Advisory Group? Has your/their role changed across the life of the SRHA?

2. What are the responsibilities of members of these committees? For instance, does it involve setting goals, establishing budgets and financial accountability for the SRGA?

3. How do the skills and expertise that members of these committees bring to the table contribute to the SRHA's sustainability?

4. Do you/members of these committees assist with fundraising? Contribute financially?

5. What kind of fundraising plan (immediate and long-term, sustainable impacts) is in place?

6. What is the process of communication between this SRHA's staff and members of the Board of Trustees and Advisory Groups?

7. What activities has the SRHA conducted over the years to garner community support? What have been your successes and challenges?

8. Can you tell us what you think have been your greatest successes and most serious challenges across the history of this SRHA?

9. Would you say that this NHA's Board has a leadership role in the partner network? If so, how?

Board's Contribution to Sustainability

1. How do the diversity of skills and expertise that members of the Board bring to the table contribute to the SRHA's sustainability?

2. Has the SRHA Board demonstrated a capacity for adaptive management over time (including changes in staffing levels, strategic planning, etc.)?

3. What kinds of investments has the Board made toward developing staff and career advancement opportunities?

4. Has the SRHA Board seemed to have set clear goals for the SRHA with well-defined timeframes?

5. What kind of system does the Board have in place for setting annual goals or for establishing budgets?

6. What kind of process does the Board have in place for collecting data on measurable SRHA goals and usage of those data (monitoring and evaluation)?

7. What kind of fundraising plan (immediate and long-term, sustainable impacts) is in place?

8. How does the Board of this NHA maintain financial accountability for the SRHA? What kind of system is in place for this?

9. How "transparent" is the Board's system for setting goals, establishing budgets and financial accountability for the SRHA? (Is this a public or private process)?

10. What kind of plan is in place for stakeholder development?

    Probe - How has the SRHA's partner network changed over the years?

11. How does the Board typically communicate with partners, members and local residents?

    Probes - What kind of communication systems are in place for communicating with these groups?
    - How "transparent" and effective are the Board's channels of communication with governance, staff, volunteers, partners, etc.?

PARTNERS AND PARTNERSHIP NETWORK

Partners and Nature of Partnerships

1. Who are the SRHA's key "partners" (e.g., city, state, other agencies, groups, foundations, businesses, exhibits/attractions)?

2. For each partner please provide the following information:

   - What do you see as the "purpose" of the SRHA's partnership with [partner name]?
   - Describe [partner name]'s level of involvement with the SRHA.
   - What kinds of resources has [partner name] committed to the SRHA? For what? For how long?

3. Could you describe how an organization becomes a partner? What is the partner designation process? What are the requirements for becoming a partner?

4. What types of services or support do partners receive from the SRHA?

5. What types of services or support do you receive from your partners?

6. How do partners support one another?

7. How has the SRHA's partnership network evolved over time?

   - Growth in number of partners and regions over time?
   - Different types of organizations that are partners – non-profits, volunteer-led organization, for-profits, etc.

8. In what ways has the partnership network influenced your organization?

   Probe - look at the logic model for examples of activities in which the partnership network may have been an influence

9. What challenges have you faced with your partnership network? For instance, have there been in challenges in identifying partners, meeting their needs, engaging partners over time or in making a cohesive network of partners?

Partner Network's Contribution to Sustainability

1. Does the SRHA have a broad base of partners representing diverse interests and expertise?

2. How do the partners/organizations contribute to accomplishing the goals and objectives of the SRHA? Do partners collaborate and combine their investments to accomplish SRHA objectives? If yes, how?

3. How has the number SRHA partners changed over time?

   Probe - What kind of partner retention has the SRHA had over the years?

4. What kinds of roles (if any) do SRHA partners have on the board?

5. Does there seem to be trust and support among partners?

6. How would partners, and their SRHA related activities be affected if NPS NHA Federal funding for the SRHA discontinued or reduced? Would their activities continue to work towards accomplishing the goals and objectives of the SRHA, and if so, how?

ACCOMPLISHMENTS, CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. In your experience, what have been some of the major accomplishments for this SRHA?

2. Could you tell us about some of the challenges the coordinating entity and the National Heritage Area face?

3. How would the National Heritage Area be affected if it could not be financially sustained with Federal NHA funding?

   Probes - Which program areas/activities would be affected and how?
   - What, if any, activities would continue?
   - What, if any, activities would end with the sun-setting of funds?
   - Are any of these activities of National importance and thus should be considered for further Federal funding?

4. What, if any, organizations or mechanisms currently exist outside of the SRGA for accomplishing the goals and objectives of the SRHA? Would these organizations or mechanisms continue to work toward the Heritage Area goals post-sunset of funding?

5. Are there ways this SRHA has changed the region since its inception? How? In what ways? How has the SRHA's impact changed over time?

6. What were some of the early lessons learned or unintended consequences (e.g. issues related to collaborating rather than competing with partners) in implementing the activities and strategies for this SRHA?

7. Could you tell us about any evidence of community support for the SRHA? What does this look like (i.e. volunteers, funding, invitation to participate on the boards of other organizations, engagement of State leadership, etc.?)

8. What additional things would you have the SRGA do, if any? What changes would it be helpful for the SRGA to make?

Partner Network Topic-Centered Interview Discussion Guide

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for agreeing to meet with us today about your organization's involvement with the Schuylkill River Heritage Area (SRHA). We are researchers from and we are conducting a study on National Heritage Areas. Specifically, we're interested in learning about your work with the Schuylkill River Greenway Association (SRGA) and any assistance you have either received from or contributed to the National Heritage Area. We are interested in collecting information about your relationship with SRGA, how it has evolved and how the SRGA has changed over time.

Your participation in this interview is voluntary and it should take about an hour to complete.

BACKGROUND

1. Describe your organization overall? Probe – what is the type of organization (i.e. museum, historical society, etc.), what does it do, size of organization, who does it serve, size of the organization (staffing, number of active volunteers, budget), length of time it's existed.

2. What is your position and role in the organization? How long have you been with the organization? Other positions held?

WORK WITH SRHA AND SRGA

1. Can you briefly the nature of your relationship with the SRHA and its coordinating entity?

2. What factors influenced your decision to become a partner with the SRGA?

3. When and how did your partnership with the SRGA begin? What, if any, requirements are there for being a partner?

4. What is the nature of the partnership?

   Probes - What types of services/programs/ benefits do you receive through the SRGA?
   - What types of services/programs/ benefits does the SRHA/SRGA receive through you?

5. Could you describe how your organization's program activities contribute to the SRHA's unique story?

6. Could you describe how your partnership with the SRGA has affected your organization?

   - Has it had any effect on the types of visitors you get? The number? Why or why not? How do you know?
   - Has it helped you identify others to work with? Did you know of these organizations before you partnered with SRGA?
   - Has it helped you receive funding? In what ways? What funding have you received that you may not have without the SRGA partnership?
   - Has it helped you have more community:
     - Visibility?
     - Involvement?
     - Etc.?
   - Does it help you identify or be in touch with other resources and best practices that you may not have known about?

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE & CAPACITY BUILDING ASSISTANCE

1. Could you describe the types of assistance and other types of non-financial support your organization has received from the SRGA?

   - What type of assistance did you receive (training, consultations, facilitated meetings, brainstorming ideas, site assessments, etc.)

- Who did you receive it from?
- Where did you receive it?
- How did you find out about this assistance?
- Were there requirements for participating in these activities?
- Did you need to pay for this assistance?

2. Could you describe how you've used this assistance to incorporate or enhance stories about the SRHA heritage into you programming?

3. How have this assistance and your activities/ offerings evolved over time?

4. What does this assistance from SRGA allow your organization to do? Has it allowed you to work and collaborate with other organizations in the area? What are the advantages of receiving this assistance?

COLLABORATION

1. Could you describe the ways your organization collaborates with SRGA and/or with other SRHA regional partners?

2. How does collaboration affect your organization's ability to meet its goals?

Probe - Has this collaboration helped you build your financial, programming or organizational capacity?

3. Have you gained access other organizations or resources in the community because of your collaboration with SRGA? How? Probe – NPS, other state resources

OVERALL IMPACT OF PARTNERSHIP WITH SRHA

1. How has your relationship with the SRGA evolved over time? Has the impact of SRGA changed over time – grown stronger, weaker or stayed the same?

2. Have you experienced any challenges as a result of your partnership with the SRGA?

Probe - limitations on ability to fundraise or collaborate with other organizations?

3. What leadership roles does the SRGA play in the community? Convener? Organizer? Funder? Other?

4. Are there ways in which the SRGA coordinating entity has changed the region over the past 16 years? How? In what ways? How has SRGA's impact changed over time?

Probe - were there mechanisms present before the SRGA designation?

5. Is it important for your organization to continue working with SRGA? Why? What factors influence your continued relationship?

6. What additional things would you have the SRGA coordinating entity do, if any? What changes would be helpful for SRGA to make? In general, in what ways could they serve your needs better and the needs of the region?

7. How would your organization be affected if the NPS NHA Federal funds that support the SRHA discontinued? Would any of your activities that contribute to the SRHA mission and story continue?

Probe - if there would be an impact on the quantity or quality of these activities?

8. What do you think would be the overall impact if the Federal funding that supports the SRGA discontinues? Are there other mechanisms or organizations that could support the unique features and heritage of the area?

SCHUYLKILL RIVER HERITAGE AREA
Discussion Guide for People Visiting an SRHA Event or Attraction

Site: Valley Forge Hamburg Trailhead Schuylkill Ribbon Cutting

Hi, my name is Mary Anne Myers/Tina Marshall and I'm working with the National Park Service to learn what individuals know about the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. Do you have about 5 minutes to chat with me? I'm interested in getting your opinions rather than your personal information. We can stop our conversation whenever you wish and you are free to move on at any time. Also, feel free to skip any questions you would rather not discuss.

Conversation Topics:

1. Residency:
   - ☐ Local resident
   - ☐ In-State resident
   - ☐ Out-of-State resident

   Probe: How long have you been a resident?
   Probe: Which state are you visiting from?

2. Reason for the visit? How often have you visited this attraction?

3. Have you visited one of the other Schuylkill River Heritage Area (Schuylkill River Greenway Association) Area destination sites? Show brochure.
   Probes: How familiar are you with the trail or the sites in Coal Country, Skippack Valley, Oley Valley, Perkiomen Valley, or other parts of the SRHA? When/How often have you visited? Reasons for visiting?

4. Familiarity with Schuylkill River Heritage Area's history and messaging? Show logo
   Probe: Are you familiar with this logo? Where have you seen this information? How often have you seen it?

5. Perspective of the impact of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area (or the Greenway) on the community?
   Probe: Has the information that you received changed your understanding of Schuylkill River Heritage Area? If so, how?
   Probe: Have the Schuylkill River Heritage Area (or the Greenway) had an impact on the local area and community? If so, how?

SCHUYLKILL RIVER HERITAGE AREA
Discussion Guide for People Visiting Areas Outside of the SRHA

Site: Outside of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area

Hi, my name is Mary Anne Myers/Tina Marshall and I'm working with the National Park Service to learn what individuals know about the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. Do you have about 5 minutes to chat with me? I'm interested in getting your opinions rather than your personal information. We can stop our conversation whenever you wish and you are free to move on at any time. Also, feel free to skip any questions you would rather not discuss.

Conversation Topics:

1. Residency:
   - ☐ Local resident
   - ☐ In-State resident
   - ☐ Out-of-State resident

   Probe: How long have you been a resident?
   Probe: Which state are you visiting from?

2. Have you visited any of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area (Schuylkill River Greenway Association) destination sites? Show brochure.
   Probes: How familiar are you with any Schuylkill River Heritage Area sites in Philadelphia, Valley Forge, Coal Country, Skippack Valley, Oley Valley, Perkiomen Valley or other parts of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. When/How often did you visit? Reason for visiting?

3. Familiarity with Schuylkill River Heritage Area's history and messaging? Show logo
   Probe: Are you familiar with Schuylkill River Trail. Where have you seen this information? How often have you seen it?

4. Perspective of the impact of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area (or Schuylkill River Greenway Association) on the community?
   Probe: Has the information that you received changed your understanding of Schuylkill River Heritage Area? If so, how?
   Probe: Have the Schuylkill River Heritage Area (or Greenway) had an impact on the local area and community? If so, how?

Appendix 5 – SRHA Domain and Source Crosswalk

Research Question, Domains, Measures Evaluation Q.1: Has the NHA coordinating entity accomplished the purposes of the authorizing legislation and achieved the goals and objectives of the management plan?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Web Sites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Heritage Tourism/Community Revitalization – Activities and programs that foster public support and appreciation for the NHA site and tell the story of its natural, historical and cultural significance to our nation.						
Describe nature of NHA activities						
Description of tourism and revitalization activities	X	X		X	X	X
Describe implementation of each activity						
Role of the NHA coordinating entity	X	X		X	X	
Role of NHA administrative staff	X	X		X	X	
Role of the partnership network	X	X		X	X	
Role of the local community	X	X	X	X	X	
Assess impact of activities						
Engagement of residents and visitors (# served/involved/affected)	X	X	X		X	
Increased understanding, awareness and appreciation of NHA resources & stories		X	X			
Increased recognition of shared heritage of region			X	X	X	X
Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to interpretive and educational programming	X				X	X
Economic Impact / Job Creation	X				X	

SRHA Domain and Source Crosswalk (continued)

Research Question, Domains, Measures Evaluation Q.1: Has the NHA coordinating entity accomplished the purposes of the authorizing legislation and achieved the goals and objectives of the management plan?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Web Sites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Resource Conservation and Stewardship – Activities that support long-term preservation, conservation and reclamation of natural, cultural and historic resources; includes implementing environmental conservation efforts.						
Describe nature of NHA activities						
Description of preservation and resource stewardship activities	X	X	X	X	X	
Description of conservation efforts related to folklore, folk life, life ways, and traditions	X	X		X	X	
Describe Implementation of each activity						
Role of the coordinating entity (e.g., administration of grants; provision of TA)	X	X		X	X	
Role of NHA administrative staff	X	X		X	X	
Role of the partnership network	X	X		X	X	
Role of the local community	X	X	X	X	X	X
Assess impact of activities						
Environmental, cultural, and historic resources conservation	X	X		X	X	
Artifact or building restoration	X	X	X	X	X	
Greater amount and diversity in sources of funding committed to conservation and stewardship	X	X		X	X	X
Increased capacity of partners	X	X				
Growth in partner network	X	X		X	X	
Community revitalization	X	X	X		X	
Economic impact/job creation	X					X

SRHA Domain and Source Crosswalk (continued)

Research Question, Domains, Measures Evaluation Q.1: Has the NHA coordinating entity accomplished the purposes of the authorizing legislation and achieved the goals and objectives of the management plan?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Web Sites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Building the Schuylkill River Trail – Heritage-based activities that promote the development of the Schuylkill River Trail system, including connections to tributary trails, enhanced existing and new outdoor recreational opportunities related to the Schuylkill River Valley's natural and cultural heritage.						
Describe nature of NHA activities						
Description of physical improvement and development activities	X	X		X	X	
Describe implementation of each activity						
Role of the coordinating entity (e.g., administration of grants; provision of TA)	X	X		X	X	
Role of NHA administrative staff	X	X		X	X	
Role of the partnership network	X	X		X	X	
Role of the local community	X	X	X	X	X	
Assess impact of activities						
Development/construction that is successful in meeting objectives	X	X	X	X	X	
Increased local sense of pride and connection to place			X			
Heightened visibility of NHA resources and stories			X			
Economic impact/job creation	X				X	X
Planning and Technical Assistance – Activities that build local community capacity and assist individuals, organizations and communities who are involved in NHA interpretation, education, preservation and development activities						
Describe nature of NHA activities						
Description of planning and technical assistance activities (e.g., leading conferences and workshops; technical assistance to local organizations; targeted financial assistance, catalyst, facilitation, convening, negotiating)	X	X		X	X	

SRHA Domain and Source Crosswalk (continued)

Research Question, Domains, Measures **Evaluation Q.1: Has the NHA coordinating entity accomplished the purposes of the authorizing legislation and achieved the goals and objectives of the management plan?**	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Web Sites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Describe implementation of each activity						
Role of the coordinating entity (e.g., coordinating, planning)	X	X		X	X	
Role of NHA administrative staff	X	X		X	X	
Role of the partnership network	X	X		X	X	
Role of the local community	X	X	X	X	X	
Assess impact of activities						
Increased capacity of partners	X	X				
Growth and development of partner network	X	X				
Trust and support among partners	X	X				
Heightened credibility of NHA	X	X				
Economic impact/job creation	X					X

SRHA Domain and Source Crosswalk (continued)

Research Question, Domains, Measures Evaluation Q.2 What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal, and local government and private entities?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Web Sites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Describe financial investments						
Amount of NPS NHA Federal funding over time	X			X		X
Amount of other Federal funding over time	X			X		X
Amount and sources of other funds over time						
In-kind match support over time	X			X		X
Nature/amount in grants sought and grants awarded over time						
Amount/diversity of donor contributions over time	X			X		X
Assess impact of financial investments						
Amount of dollars committed to each NHA activity (Heritage, revitalization, conservation, stewardship, and trail development) over time	X	X				X
Revenue generated from NHA program activities– heritage and revitalization	X					
Consistency of donor support	X		X			X
Expansion of base of donors over time	X		X	X	X	X
Economic impact/job creation	X					X
Describe other types of investment						
Partnership contributions (e.g., time, staff, resources)	X	X		X	X	X
Community contributions (e.g., volunteerism)	X	X	X	X	X	X
Other in-kind donations	X	X			X	X

SRHA Domain and Source Crosswalk (continued)

Research Question, Domains, Measures Evaluation Q.2 What have been the impacts of investments made by Federal, State, Tribal, and local government and private entities?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Web Sites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Assess impact of other investment sources						
Educational impacts	X	X		X		
Marketing and promotional	X	X		X		
Staff enhancement and retention	X	X		X		X
Land/facilities acquisition	X	X		X		X
Economic impact/job creation	X					X

Research Question, Domains, Measures Evaluation Q.3 How do the NHA management structure, partnership relationships and current funding contribute to its sustainability?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Web Sites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Describe nature of management structure						
Description of management structure	X	X		X	X	
Description of NHA mission and vision	X	X	X	X	X	
Description of NHA goals	X	X		X	X	
Description of staffing and volunteers	X	X		X	X	
Description of governance & role in organization	X			X	X	
Description of executive leadership & role in organization	X			X	X	

SRHA Domain and Source Crosswalk (continued)

Research Question, Domains, Measures Evaluation Q.3 How do the NHA management structure, partnership relationships and current funding contribute to its sustainability?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Web Sites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Assess SRGA's contribution to sustainability						
Diversity of skills and expertise	X	X		X		
Capacity for adaptive management over time (incl. changes in staffing levels, strategic planning, etc.)	X			X		X
Investments in developing staff and career advancement opportunities	X	X		X		X
Clear NHA goals with well-defined timeframes	X			X		X
System for setting annual goals or for establishing budgets	X	X		X		
Systematic process for collecting data on measurable goals and usage of data (monitoring and evaluation)	X			X		
Established fundraising plan (immediate and long-term, sustainable impacts)	X	X	X	X		
Established system of financial accountability	X	X	X	X		
Transparency of systems for setting goals, establishing budgets and financial accountability (a public or private process)	X	X		X		
Stakeholder development plan (sustainable impacts)	X					
Growth and development of partner network	X			X	X	
Transparent and effective communication channels with governance, staff, volunteers, partners, etc.	X			X		
Established and consistent communication mechanisms with partners, members and local residents	X			X		
Coordinating entity has leadership role in partner network	X					

SRHA Domain and Source Crosswalk (continued)

Research Question, Domains, Measures Evaluation Q.3 How do the NHA management structure, partnership relationships and current funding contribute to its sustainability?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Web Sites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Describe nature of partner network						
List of partners	X	X		X	X	X
Purpose of each partnership	X	X		X		
Partners' involvement with NHA	X	X		X		
Resource commitment from partners (for what? for how long?)	X	X				
Assess partner network's contribution to sustainability						
Broad base of partners representing diverse interests and expertise in the NHA	X	X		X	X	
Partner collaboration and combination of investments to accomplish NHA objectives	X	X		X	X	
Partner retention over time	X	X				
Number of partners over time	X			X	X	
Partners' role(s) on NHA boards	X					
Trust and support among partners	X					
Assess financial sustainability						
Amount of dollars committed to each NHA activity over time	X	X		X		X
Allocation of Federal funds over time	X			X		X
Sources and amount of leveraged funds over time	X	X		X		X
Activities that can continue post-sunset of Federal dollars	X					

SRHA Domain and Source Crosswalk (continued)

Research Question, Domains, Measures Evaluation Q.3 How do the NHA management structure, partnership relationships and current funding contribute to its sustainability?	NHA Management Interviews	Partner Network Interviews	Community Input	Plans, Legal Documents	NHA Guides, Brochures, Web Sites, Other Documents	Financial Data Forms
Assess economic impact on sustainability						
Resource stewardship resulting in improved economic value of NHA	X	X				X
Improved earned income over time	X	X				X
Trends in return on fundraising investment	X					X
Trends in contribution and grants ratio—indicates dependence on voluntary support	X					X
Trends in debt ratio	X					X
Trends in average annual operating revenue	X					X
Economic impact/job creation	X					

Appendix 6 – Timeline of SRHA Key Events

Year	Activity
1987	The state recognized the Schuylkill River as the first "Scenic River"
1992	A study of the historical influences of the region called, "River of Revolutions" is published that identified regional heritage themes and potential heritage resources
1995	Commonwealth of Pennsylvania designated the Schuylkill River and its major tributaries as a state heritage corridor under the Heritage Parks Program, designated SRGA as the management entity and approved the Management Action Plan to guide the organization, management and promotion of the corridor
2000	PL 106-278 designated the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area and approved SRGA as the management entity
2001	SRGA convened a Task Force to develop the Management Plan
2002	SRGA moved from Wyomissing to current location in Pottstown, PA
2002	Schuylkill River Water Trail becomes the first PA river designated as a National Recreation Trail by the US Department of the Interior
2003	SRGA began installing Gateway Centers throughout SRHA
2003	Management Plan approved by the Secretary of the Interior
2003	SRGA hired its second Executive Director
2004	The Schuylkill River Heritage Area Outdoor Recreation Business Study was released
2005	Master Sign Design Manual was released
2006	SRGA entered into an agreement with Exelon to establish the Schuylkill River Restoration Fund
2006	The Pottstown Riverfront Park trailhead opened
2007	The Feasibility Study for the Schuylkill River Trail (Reading to Hamburg) and the Freedom Trail was released
2008	SRGA hosted the 10th Anniversary of the Schuylkill River Sojourn
2008	First Schuylkill River Restoration Fund funds ($134,900 total) awarded to 3 projects
2009	SGRA organized and hosted its first Trail Town Conference.

Year	Activity
2009	Launched the Schuylkill River Trail website (www.schuylkillrivertrail.com)
2010	SRGA created the Adopt-A-Trail and Sponsor-A-Trail programs
2010	SRGA takes ownership of the Bike Pottstown bike sharing program
2012	The River of Revolutions Interpretive Center opened
2012	SRGA introduced the Pedals and Paddles program
2012	SRGA launched www.bikeschuylkill.org.
2014	PL 113-291 reauthorizes the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area until 2021.
2015	The current Executive Director is hired.

Appendix 7 – SRGA Board Members and Affiliations

OFFICERS

Bill Gladden
President
Director of Chester County Open Space

Bill Reichert
Vice President
Director of the Schuylkill Headwaters Association

Kelly Anderson
Secretary
Manager of the Source Water Protection Program for the Philadelphia Water Department

Edie Shean-Hammond
Treasurer
(retired) Superintendent of Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site

MEMBERS

Silas Chamberlin
Executive Director of the SGRA

Robert Kuhlman
(Immediate Past President)
Geology Professor at Montgomery County Community College

John A. Koury Jr.
Principal at O'Donnell, Weiss & Mattei, P.C.

Rodger Krause, CPA
Sole Proprietor in Wyomissing

Wendi Wheeler
Attorney-at-law

Joshua Nims
Operations Manager for Schuylkill River Development Corporation

David Thun
Community member

Tom Davidock
Senior Coordinator at the Schuylkill Action Network

Frank Sturniolo
Director of site engineering at Limerick Generating Station

David Coyne
Principal at Liberty Environmental, Inc.

Allen Sachse
Former President of the Alliance of National Heritage Areas

David DiMattio
Vice President of West Campus, Montgomery County Community College

Alicia Sprow
Sustainability Initiatives Coordinator for the Holleran Center for Community Engagement at Alvernia University

Mike Stokes
Assistant Director at the Montgomery County Planning Commission

Donald Moll
Owner, B&G Glass

Nathaniel C. Guest
Founder of the Colebrookdale Railroad Preservation Trust

Carl Raring
Former President of the SRGA Board of Directors

Christopher Linn, AICP
Manager at the Office of Environmental Planning at the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

EX-OFFICIO MEMBERS

David G. Argall
State Senator

William Hanley
Representative from the Office of Congressman Matthew Cartwright

NPS LIAISON

Kate Hammond
Superintendent, Valley Forge National Historical Park and Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site

DCNR LIAISON

Andrew Gilchrist
Regional Advisor, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Appendix 8 – Maps of Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area

SCHUYLKILL RIVER TRAIL
Schuylkill River Trail
TAMAQUA
POTTSVILLE
SCHUYLKILL HAVEN
AUBURN
PORT CLINTON
HAMBURG
SHOEMAKERSVILLE
Appalachian Trail
LEESPORT
Blue Marsh Lake
Union Canal Towpath Trail
READING
GIBRALTAR
BIRDSBORO
DOUGLASSVILLE
POTTSTOWN
ROYERSFORD
PHOENIXVILLE
VALLEY FORGE
NORRISTOWN
CONSHOHOCKEN
MANAYUNK
ART MUSEUM
PHILADELPHIA
SCHUYLKILL COUNTY
BERKS COUNTY
CHESTER COUNTY
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
DELAWARE COUNTY
Perkiomen Trail
Cross County Trail
Horseshoe Trail
Wissahickon Creek Trail
East Coast Greenway
Maine to Florida
PENNSYLVANIA
LEGEND
Schuylkill River Trail (Completed)
Schuylkill River Trail (On-Road)
Schuylkill River Trail (Planned)
Connecting Trail (Completed)

THE CIRCUIT TRAILS
100s OF MILES OF HAPPY
To New Brunswick, Newark, and NYC
To Easton, the Poconos & Wilkes-Barre
To Bethlehem
To Reading, Pottsville & Appalachian Tr.
To Harrisburg
To Wilmington, Baltimore, and Washington, DC
To Bridgeton
BUCKS
MONTGOMERY
CHESTER
DELAWARE
PHILA
MERCER
BURLINGTON
CAMDEN
GLOUCESTER
Existing Trails
Trails in Progress
Planned Trails
DVRPC
Nov 2015