

SCHUYLKILL ACTION NETWORK (SAN)

Scope: Regional/Watershed

Location: Pennsylvania

SCOPE:

- » Schuylkill River Basin, where the River is the drinking water source for over 3 million people.
- » Effort to work closely with relevant stakeholders to address regional water quality concerns throughout the watershed.

COLLABORATIVE FORMATION:

- » Philadelphia Water Department connected with all regions of watershed to develop basin-wide source water protection plan
 - Conducted regional stakeholder meetings to identify concerns, needs and actions for addressing water quality issues.
 - Formed workgroups around focus areas (e.g. agricultural runoff, abandoned mines, stormwater, etc.).
- » Initially funded by EPA Watershed Initiative Grant; sustained funding from Pennsylvania Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Set-asides, Growing Greener grants from PADEP, Schuylkill River Restoration Fund, and Philadelphia Water Department.

MEMBERS:

- » Over 175 organizations working in some capacity with the workgroups.
- » Partners include all levels of government, businesses, educational institutions, water utilities, nonprofit land trusts, and watershed groups.

WATER CONCERNS: (BY WORKGROUP)

- » Abandoned Mine Drainage Workgroup
Goal: To maximize reduction and/or treatment of abandoned mine drainage discharges.
- » Agriculture Workgroup
Goal: To maximize reduction and/or prevention of agricultural impacts to water quality
- » Education and Outreach Team
Goal: To improve public support for watershed protection actions.
- » Water Suppliers Team
Goal: To improve public support for watershed protection actions.
- » Pathogens/Compliance Workgroup
Goal: To improve NPDES compliance, reduce discharges, and prevent drinking water outbreaks.
- » Storm Water Workgroup
Goal: To maximize reduction and/or prevention of stormwater runoff pollution.
- » Watershed Land Protection Workgroup
Goal: To develop products and tools for municipalities and nonprofit groups to identify land preservation areas based on habitat and drinking water protection.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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STRATEGIES:

- » Create long-term watershed stewardship and restoration through education and outreach
- » Share the experience and lessons learned with other communities
- » Enhance intergovernmental communication and coordination
- » Maintain existing uses and attain of designated uses in the Schuylkill River Watershed
- » Improve public perception of Schuylkill River Watershed as a vital regional natural resource
- » Reduce annual pollutant loadings to source water

RESULTS:

- » Schuylkill Action Committee Strategic Plan describes mission, objectives and strategic goals for years 2011 - 2015.
- » SAN successfully connected workgroups with over 80 percent of the water utilities in their respective regions.
- » Over the past 10 years, \$14 million has been invested in the watershed to implement nearly 45 projects. Dozens of partners have worked together to develop new treatment technologies, leverage resources, and implement projects to clean up the river.
 - Abandoned Mine Drainage Workgroup has made significant progress in remediating or eliminating abandon mine drainage, restoring floodplains, and educating and involving the public in the effort to improve the quality of the River as a resource.
 - Under the leadership of the Berks County Conservation District, the Agriculture Workgroup developed a prioritization process to select agricultural projects on a sub-watershed scale. They also decided to implement a “whole farm” approach, addressing all of the major pollution problems at each site. The Ag Workgroup has completed more than 175 farm improvement projects such as streambank fencing, riparian buffer plantings, animal crossings, and worked with USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) on the selection of projects for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding.