



Partnering to Protect and Restore Schuylkill Waters

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Ideas for the next edition of SAN Connections?

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# SAN CONNECTIONS

*The Quarterly Newsletter of the Schuylkill Action Network*

## Nominations Sought for SAN Education Awards

In celebration of National Drinking Water Week, May 3 to 7, 2010, the SAN will again honor scholastic institutions in the Schuylkill River watershed with the SAN Source Water Protection Awards. The annual award serves to recognize schools that are protecting drinking water sources through educational programs and land management practices. Many schools in the watershed incorporate creative educational programs and curricula to promote awareness of source water protection, and may also incorporate innovative property management techniques to reduce and clean stormwater.

Winners will be selected based upon the scope of source water protection education, which should include significant student involvement. Programs

with a community outreach component are given special consideration. Previous winning projects include hands-on water quality testing of local creeks; classroom discussions of environmental stewardship with journals, observational sketches and reflective essay assignments; and multimedia public service announcements.

All schools, colleges and universities in the watershed are eligible. Awards will be given to elementary, middle, high school and college levels. Winning schools receive an award accompanied by a prize valued at \$200. The winners of each category will be honored at an award ceremony during National Drinking Water Week. Anyone can nominate a school. Teachers, parents, administrators and community



Students from Lingelbach Elementary School were thrilled to accept the 2009 Elementary School Award. Photo courtesy of Philadelphia Tribune

members are encouraged to recognize an innovative project, lesson plan or facility design that incorporated student involvement and education about protecting sources of drinking water.

The deadline to submit a nomination is Friday, March 5, 2010. Nomination forms will be available in early December via the SAN website:

[www.SchuylkillWaters.org](http://www.SchuylkillWaters.org)

## Exelon Grants \$169,149 to Schuylkill Projects

This August the Schuylkill River Watershed Restoration Fund grew by \$169,149 to address agricultural runoff and abandoned mine drainage. Exelon Nuclear has contributed more than \$750,000 into the Restoration Fund over the four years that the program has been in existence. The annual fund is part of a water supply demonstration project for Exelon Nuclear's Limerick Generating Station in which water is conveyed from the Wadesville Mine Pool to the Schuylkill River for eventual withdrawal by the generating station. This year \$75,000 is provided to the Berks County Conservancy to implement Best Management Practices at the Guntz Farm, located at the confluence of the Manatawny and Little Manatawny Creeks. Similarly, \$100,000 will assist the Schuylkill Headwaters Association in reducing runoff into the Pine Knot Mine Pool, part of the Wheeler Run Project to address abandoned mine drainage. The Schuylkill River Heritage Area oversees the fund, distributing money annually to non-profit organizations and government agencies for projects that will enhance water quality and quantity in the watershed.

**“The Schuylkill River has been an important part of my life.”**

**-Tom Davidock**



**Tom Davidock, SAN Coordinator, can be reached via email:**

**[Tdavidock@DelawareEstuary.org](mailto:Tdavidock@DelawareEstuary.org)**

## New SAN Coordinator On Board

The SAN is pleased to welcome Tom Davidock as the new SAN Coordinator. In Tom's words, "Over the coming weeks and months, I look forward to meeting with you and collaborating on all of the great projects and initiatives you have been working on over the past several years. Both personally and professionally, the Schuylkill River has been an important part of my life. I grew up in the headwaters of the Schuylkill and spent most

of my adult life living within a few blocks of its banks. I'm coming to the SAN with a background in watershed management and outreach and education. It was... in Schuylkill County where I had my first opportunity to work with the SAN through the AMD workgroup. As all of you know, there is no quick fix or easy solution for many of the problems facing the Schuylkill River. Addressing these challenges requires that all stakeholders take an

active role in protecting and restoring the health of our watershed. It is this principle of collaboration that has allowed the SAN to bridge the gaps of inaction and create real solutions to very real problems. I am extremely happy to be part of this effort and plan to do whatever I can to assist you in all of your future successes. Between now and when we have an opportunity to meet, please do not hesitate to call or email with any questions."

## Happy Ending for Schuylkill River Dog



*Photograph courtesy of Examiner.com.*

**River had a harrowing ordeal in the Schuylkill River, but is making a full recovery.**

A pit bull that went over the waterfall in the Schuylkill River behind the Philadelphia Art Museum on August 28 is lucky to be alive after a harrowing ordeal in which she furiously tried to save herself from drowning.

Officials at the Pennsylvania SPCA say the scars on the dog's face suggest that she was likely involved in a dog fighting operation. Investigators acknowledge that they may never uncover the identity of her owner or how she found her way into the river, though they suspect that she was probably tossed away

when she was deemed no longer useful.

The dog, estimated to be two years old, had a tough period of convalescence after being rescued. Water in her lungs and paws rubbed raw were the result of her frantic attempt to claw her way back up the rough and dangerous waterfall. Today, the dog has almost fully recovered. "She responded to all of our treatments really well, she was on a lot of IV medication," said Dr. Kim Russell of the PSPCA. "She doesn't seem to have any residual damage, which is amazing."

Animal welfare officials say that the most important action is to make sure that she is adopted into a loving and caring environment.

A bartender at the Waterworks Restaurant, one of the first to spot the dog desperately scrambling for life under the pounding of the waterfall, is the proud new owner and has even given her a new name: River. "Something special happened that day, and in the world that we live I don't think there are many good stories like this one," said Michael Karloustos, also of the restaurant.

## PADEP Proposes New Stormwater Regulations

The PADEP announced that the Environmental Quality Board (EQB) will accept comment on proposed changes to the state's erosion and sediment control and stormwater management regulations, which are expected to improve and protect water quality. The proposed changes include requirements to establish and protect existing streamside forest buffers and increase protection for

exceptional value waterways, incorporate existing post-construction stormwater management requirements to bring it in line with federal requirements, enhance agricultural stormwater management provisions, and an updated permit fee structure. A new permit-by-rule option offers a simplified process for low-risk construction projects that will reduce permitting delays while improving oversight.

The EQB, which promulgates Pennsylvania's environmental regulations, will conduct three public hearings to accept public comment on the proposed amendments. Prior to the hearings, DEP will conduct public meetings to explain the proposed rulemaking and to respond to questions from participants. For more information, visit [www.depweb.state.pa.us](http://www.depweb.state.pa.us), then select "Public Participation."



**The 90 day public comment period runs through November 30, 2009.**

## Creek to Be Dewatered Into Wissahickon

The EPA presented initial plans in late August for the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study of the BoRit asbestos site in Amble. The RI/FS will examine site conditions and evaluate potential remedial actions. The EPA estimates the RI/FS process to take about three years and will investigate for asbestos, metals and volatile organic com-

pounds. Currently in the removal stage, the EPA is preparing to stabilize stream banks along Rose Valley Creek. A temporary ramp to move equipment to the other side of the creek will be constructed. "We are starting to dewater some of the Rose Valley to prep," said Francisco Cruz, EPA community involvement coordinator. The dewatering

pumps will operate 24 hours per day to convey water from the Rose Valley Creek to the Wissahickon Creek. Daily air monitoring will assess if any asbestos-containing material is disturbed during the operation. Additional site information is available on the EPA website: [www.epa.gov/reg3hscd/super/sites/PAD981034887/](http://www.epa.gov/reg3hscd/super/sites/PAD981034887/)

**The dewatering pumps will operate 24 hours per day to move water from Rose Valley Creek to the Wissahickon Creek.**

## Maxatawny Township Proposes \$9 Million Plan

This past July, after ten years of planning, Maxatawny Township officials submitted plans to the state for a wastewater treatment plant and conveyance system designed to handle 140,000 gallons per day. According to officials, most residents have on-lot septic systems. A 1980's study showed that more than half within the

Bowers section of the township and an area near Kutztown were faulty, and some were pushing raw sewage above ground. The new plant would serve 250 homes and businesses, though the cost of connecting to the system is not yet known. Officials are currently awaiting permits and approvals, and the project

could take nine months to complete once the permitting, financing issues and construction bidding have concluded. Estimated at \$9 million, the Maxatawny Township Municipal Authority has already received a \$4.5 million state grant for the project. The balance will likely come from a loan, according to officials.



*The interior view of a septic tank.*

**A new sewage treatment plant would serve a portion of the township with failing tanks.**

- Oct 8: SAN Planning Mtg
- Oct 14-15: PA Stormwater Symposium at Villanova
- Oct 19: SAN Land Protection Collaborative Mtg
- Oct 21: SAN Ag Mtg
- Oct 22: SAN AMD Mtg
- Nov 12: SAN Planning Mtg
- Dec 10: SAN Planning Mtg



## Upcoming Event

### Pennsylvania Stormwater Management Symposium

October 14-15, 2009

This October, Villanova University's Urban Stormwater Partnership will be hosting the 2009 Pennsylvania Stormwater Management Symposium. The purpose of the symposium is to advance the knowledge and understanding of sustainable stormwater management for those dealing in all aspects of planning, design, implementation and regulatory compliance. A workshop for non-engineers will be held in conjunction with the symposium. Participants are expected to include Engineers, Planners, Water Resource Professionals,

Regional, State and Local Government Representatives, Land Development Professionals, and Watershed and Conservation Groups. This is the seventh symposium on stormwater issues that has been held at Villanova.

This year will include an address by John Hines, Deputy Secretary of Water Management, and Glenn Rider, Director of the Bureau of Watershed management in addition to many notable speakers from both the private and the public sector. The conference will also include podium and poster presentations, tours

and, of course, the wine and cheese reception with the vendors.

Municipal Workshop—The symposium will also include a specific workshop for municipal engineers in conjunction with the first day of the symposium. This 1-day workshop will present practical information and strategies for dealing with stormwater runoff in your municipality. The workshop will start with stormwater fundamentals, look at inspection and infiltration testing, and end with runoff controls and maintenance. This one-day workshop is for municipal elected and appointed officials, and their staff and planners.

For more information or to register for the workshop, please visit the VUSP website: [www.villanova.edu/VUSP](http://www.villanova.edu/VUSP)

SAVE THE DATE  
Annual SAN Workshop  
December 7, 2009



### Research

Corner

Researchers studying two beaver dams near the headwaters of the Colorado River have discovered unexpected downstream benefits. During floods, water diverted by dams flowed into larger areas and for longer periods than in non-dammed valleys. As a result, areas below dams had lesser declines in their water table during dry periods. "This study," says lead author Cherie J. Westbrook of Colorado State University, "broadens the view of the importance of beavers in the valley bottoms."  
-Smithsonian, August 2006

Share Your Schuylkill Story!

Have you spent some time on, in or by the Schuylkill River? [Click here to share your story!](#)

## Schuylkill Stories

A continuing series from [www.SchuylkillWaters.org](http://www.SchuylkillWaters.org)

Reading Area Community College students enrolled in the Source Water Protection seminar during the Spring of 2009 had a challenge. How could they effectively communicate the benefits of maintaining a clean source of drinking water to a diverse audience? Natural Science Professor Drew Lapinski guided the class in their efforts. The result is a succinct and entertaining one-minute public service announcement about storm water run-off entitled "Keep It Clean." Writes Professor Lapinski, "The message is simple - you dump it you drink it. There are both English and Spanish versions of the video."

The innovative project earned the college the 2009 SAN Educational Sector Source Water Protection Award in the college/university category (pictured below). The students' video is available online:

English Version: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y\\_jqBf6Mj4k](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y_jqBf6Mj4k)

Spanish Version: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXbXTA8ugcQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RXbXTA8ugcQ)



*Celebrating Schuylkill Waters is a special section of the SAN website where the public is invited to share personal stories, photos and videos about the river or one of its tributaries. Have you spent some time on, in or by the Schuylkill River? Share your story at [www.schuylkillwaters.org/schuylkill\\_celebrate.cfm](http://www.schuylkillwaters.org/schuylkill_celebrate.cfm) or visit the site to read how other people share a for passion the river.*