

SCHUYLKILL

ACTS & IMPACTS

An Expedition to Inspire Watershed Action

What is Schuylkill Acts & Impacts?

Schuylkill Acts & Impacts is a weeklong watershed expedition along the 120-miles of the Schuylkill River, from its headwaters in the anthracite coal lands of Schuylkill County to its confluence with the Delaware River in Philadelphia. Twelve select students from all 5 counties in the watershed come together to experience first-hand the impact of human development on water quality through guided tours, fieldwork, water sampling and interactive presentations with policy makers and planners.

Target topics will include:

- 1) The impact of legacy coal mining on water quality;
- 2) Agricultural impacts including erosion and manure management;
- 3) The role of land preservation in watershed health; and,
- 4) The impacts of stormwater and impervious surfaces on water resources.

Daily reflection and discussion will challenge participants to think about their own habits and use of water, how they relate to others and provide them with tools to take action in their own communities in the watershed.

When is the expedition?

Schuylkill Acts & Impacts is scheduled from **Saturday, June 16 to Saturday, June 23, 2018**; a **mandatory orientation** for students and parents is **Sunday, May 6, 2018**.

Who can apply for Schuylkill Acts & Impacts?

Schuylkill Acts & Impacts is open to all students in grades 9 through 12 from Schuylkill, Berks, Chester, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties. Students are selected through a competitive application review and phone interview process. Applicants must be enrolled in high school at the time they submit their application, however graduating seniors will be considered.

Where will we stay?

Students will camp in tents at state parks and nature preserves. A sleeping bag is required but all other necessary gear, food, and transportation including tents, kayaks, and life jackets will be provided by *Take It Outdoors Adventures*.

What if I don't have any experience in the outdoors?

No worries! One of the most important components of this program is its focus on environmental education and outdoor recreation. If an applicant is interested in nature and the outdoors, but does not have any prior camping experience, this program offers the perfect opportunity to learn. *Take It Outdoors Adventures'* leaders are highly experienced outdoor guides and will teach participants everything from paddling a kayak to setting up a tent.

Can I stay connected after the expedition?

After participating in the *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* expedition in June, students can be paired with a local mentor, who is an environmental professional, for a follow-up project. If students demonstrate initiative and interest in learning more about environmental issues, they will be given access to a broad network of individuals and resources, such as prospective internship opportunities, contacts with volunteer-based organizations, and other conservation leadership materials. *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* is a great way to learn leadership skills, build a resume for college, and acquire community service hours.

How much does the expedition cost?

Schuylkill Acts and Impacts is supported by the generous contribution of individuals and organizations. There is no cost for student participation.

What organizations are responsible for making the *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* program possible?

Schuylkill Headwaters Association, *Fairmount Water Works*, and *Stroud Water Research Center*

Schuylkill Headwaters Association (SHA) is a small nonprofit organization founded in 1998 with a mission to promote the environmental integrity of the Schuylkill River, its tributaries, and the watershed that lies within the boundaries of Schuylkill County.

Fairmount Water Works (FWW) is the watershed education center of the Philadelphia Water Department. Its mission is to foster stewardship of our shared water resources by encouraging informed decisions about the use of land and water. FWW collaborates with partners to instill an appreciation for the connections between daily life and the natural environment.

Stroud Water Research Center (Stroud) is dedicated to understanding the ecology of streams, rivers, and their watersheds – both pristine and polluted. Stroud's freshwater research, education, and watershed restoration programs enable businesses, policymakers, landowners, and individuals to make informed decisions that affect water quality and availability around the world.

Who will lead the expedition?

Outdoor and environmental educators from SHA, FWW, and Stroud will lead *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* along with expert staff from outfitter *Take It Outdoors Adventures*. All Outreach & Education personnel have undergone rigorous background checks and have extensive experience in group facilitation and leadership development programs. Outfitting guides have CPR certification and Wilderness First Aid certification. The maximum instructor-to-student ratio will be 1:3.

How to submit an application:

1. Applicants should **complete the application form and short answer questions** on the following pages.
2. A parent or guardian **MUST** sign the **attached parental consent form**.
3. A teacher familiar with the applicant must **submit a one-page letter of recommendation** discussing his or her commitment to learning and any interests/involvement in environmental studies or service projects.

All documents should be **signed, scanned, and emailed as PDF files** to Alexa Kramer at outreach@schuylkillheadwaters.org by **4:00 pm on Friday, March 23, 2018**. Please email or call Alexa Kramer at 570-391-3336 with any questions prior to submission.

If electronic submission is not possible, please mail hard copies to be received by March 23rd to:
Schuylkill Headwaters Association
Attention: Schuylkill Acts & Impacts Application
P.O. Box 1385
Pottsville, PA 17901

How are applicants chosen?

Participants will be selected based on the completeness and quality of their application, teacher recommendation and phone interview. Acceptance to *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* is competitive. **Applicants selected for the final round phone interview will be notified by April 6th. Final selection of the *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* participants will be announced on Friday, April 13, 2018.**

Application checklist:

- Students must be currently enrolled in high school (9th-12th grade). Graduating seniors will be considered.
- Students must live or attend school in Schuylkill, Berks, Chester, Montgomery, or Philadelphia counties.
- Upon selection, student participants and their guardian must complete all necessary medical forms, waivers, and consent forms in order to attend.
- Selected students must participate in the *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* orientation on Sunday, May 6, 2018 in order to attend.
- Selected students must participate in the entire week of *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* expedition from Saturday, June 16 to Saturday, June 23, 2018. Documentation of the program's educational value and community service hours are available to school administrators and teachers.
- Selected students must actively engage in environmental service work, team-building activities, and reflection exercises during the orientation and expedition.

Schuylkill Acts & Impacts:

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Official Application

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Pottsville, PA 17901

*A complete application includes: Personal Information, Short Answer Questions, Parent/Guardian Information **and signature** and Teacher Recommendation.*

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Applicant's Personal Information

Name: Click here to enter text.

Email: Click here to enter text.

Phone: Click here to enter text.

Date of Birth: Click here to enter text.

Gender: Click here to enter text.

Permanent Address:

Street: Click here to enter text.

City: Click here to enter text.

State: Pennsylvania

Zip Code: Click here to enter text.

County (Schuylkill, Berks, Chester, Montgomery, Philadelphia): Click here to enter text.

School District: Click here to enter text.

Current Year in School (Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior): Click here to enter text.

Graduation Date (Seniors only): Click here to enter text.

Short Answer Questions

Applicants should answer each question completely and in no more than 3-5 sentences each. Responses must be typed.

1. **Why would you like to participate in the *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* program, and what can you contribute (special skills, knowledge, etc.) to the expedition?**

[Click here to enter text.](#)

2. **Have you ever spent time volunteering or doing service work? Briefly describe your experience and what you learned from it. If you have not done service work, why are you motivated to do so now?**

[Click here to enter text.](#)

3. **We will utilize reflection (i.e. discussions, journaling) throughout the *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* program. What importance do you think reflection has in a program such as this?**

[Click here to enter text.](#)

4. **How did you learn/hear about the *Schuylkill Acts & Impacts* program?**

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Parent/Guardian Information

Name: Click here to enter text.

Email: Click here to enter text.

Cell Phone: Click here to enter text.

Home Phone: Click here to enter text.

Permanent Address:

Street: Click here to enter text.

City: Click here to enter text.

State: Pennsylvania

Zip Code: Click here to enter text.

PARENTAL CONSENT: *Please note that additional information, including more extensive consent forms and waivers, will be required from selected applicants and their guardians.

I (print parent or guardian name) _____ hereby

give my consent for (print student name) _____ to apply

for and participate in the 2018 Schuylkill Acts & Impacts watershed expedition.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Teacher Recommendation

A teacher familiar with the applicant must **submit a one-page letter of recommendation** discussing his or her commitment to learning and any interests/involvement in environmental studies or service projects.

*Recommendation may be submitted directly by teacher via email as separate attachment to outreach@schuylkillheadwaters.org. Please be sure to still include all of the information below.

Name: Click here to enter text.

Email: Click here to enter text.

Work Phone: Click here to enter text.

School District: Click here to enter text.

Subject: Click here to enter text.

Grade Level: Click here to enter text.

Name of Student Applicant Writing Reference for: Click here to enter text.

What is Your Connection to Student Applicant: Click here to enter text.