

My Story



Sparking a Love

Schuylkill River Trail

By Samantha Walters, Schuylkill Climateers

"As a child, I spent my days on and along the river. Somewhere along the line I fell in love with the trail and river, and all that they have to offer."



My first memory along the Schuylkill River was when I was three years old. I was fishing with my dad, marching and singing the song from *Snow White*, and I saw a goose nest. Little did I know at the age of three, mother geese do not enjoy children trying to pet their babies. While one would think being chased by a mother goose would be a traumatizing experience, my three-year-old self went right back to the river the next week, this time just avoiding the geese.

The Schuylkill River, its trail, and all of the tributaries that feed it have been a part of my everyday life for as long as I can remember. As a child, I spent my days on and along the river with my mother and father. Somewhere along the line of my hiking, biking, fishing, swimming, kayaking, and just about anything



Keystone Fund Investment: \$3.07 million
Local Funds Leveraged: \$17.7 million
Funded: Feasibility studies, trail improvements and rehabilitation

else you can imagine, I fell in love with the trail and river, and all that they have to offer.

The Schuylkill sparked my love for the environment and directed me down a path to try to protect it. I decided early on that I was going to attend college and pursue a degree in

environmental science. Along the way, I found myself in a fellowship position with the Schuylkill River Heritage Area, where I am currently. When this opportunity presented itself, it gave me a path to equip, educate, engage, and enlighten my local community about the river and its trail that I love so much.

Learn more at [KeystoneFund.org](https://www.KeystoneFund.org).

I have started an environmental outreach group with the hopes of helping my community make the same connections with the Schuylkill that I have. Mostly focusing on education and volunteer opportunities, the Schuylkill Climateers group gives community members the opportunity to become educated and engaged with their local environment. Between trail cleanups, invasive species removal, and informational sessions for children, community members are finding the beauty that the Schuylkill offers. And by being engaged with the local environment, I hope to motivate others to also share in my passion to protect it. It has been a joy to introduce my community to something that has been and continues to be so important to me.



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