

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape SUCCESS STORY

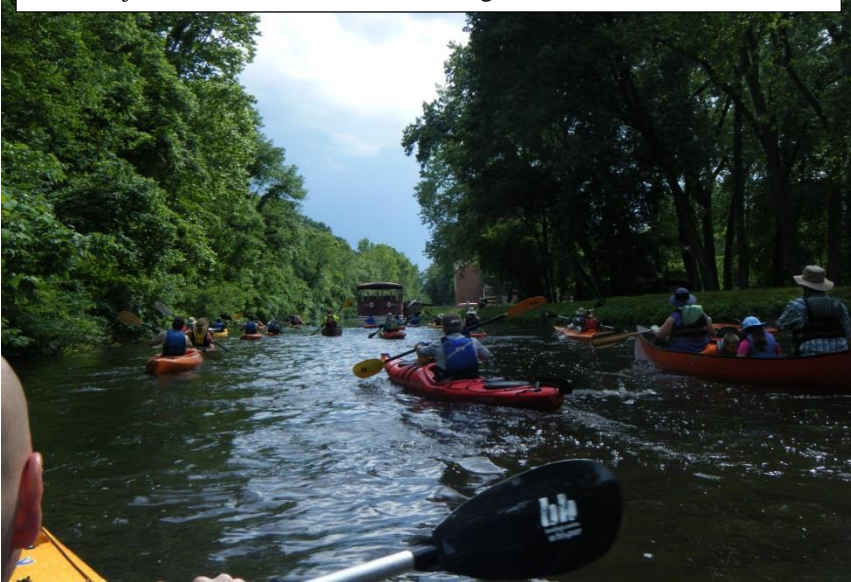
By: Upper Delaware
Preservation Coalition for the
Delaware River Sojourn
www.riversojourn.com

2017 Delaware River Sojourn - Youth Scholarships

SUMMARY

In 2017, the Delaware River Sojourn increased its focus on engaging youth organizations in the Lehigh Valley by expanding our scholarships, which offset the program expense of the Sojourn. The Delaware River Sojourn hosted 7 days of paddling in 2017, welcoming more participants on the river than in any other previous year. Included were a record number of youth from schools, churches, camps, and non-profit organizations made possible thanks to the funding provided by the Lehigh Valley Greenways program. Introducing well over 100 youth to the Delaware River in 2017 is an accomplishment to be proud of and to seek to build on in 2018.

2017 Sojourners on the D&L Canal at Hugh Moore Park in Easton, PA



CHALLENGE

Engaging the next generation of paddlers, river enthusiasts, and conservationists in the Lehigh Valley is the challenge that the Sojourn sought to address. For the past two years, the sojourn has offered scholarships to youth participants and their leader(s) but had not been able to target that outreach specifically in the Lehigh Valley geography. The assistance of the Lehigh Valley Greenways mini-grant has allowed the Delaware River Sojourn to focus outreach efforts in the Lehigh Valley and to engage a broader audience of youth groups and participants. Though our outreach efforts in the Lehigh Valley were not as successful as hoped in recruiting youth participants specifically from this geography, in 2017 the Sojourn gained three new youth leader contacts in the Lehigh Valley that are all extremely excited to coordinate with the program in 2018. Additionally, the Sojourn grew new partnerships with PA DCNR's environmental education arm; Lehigh Gap Nature Center; and with the Watershed Coalition of the Lehigh Valley, all of whom can help grow our youth program in 2018 and beyond.

FUNDING

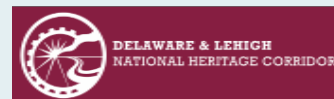
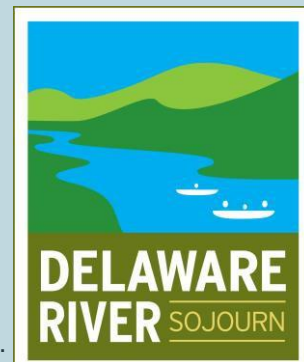
Grant Award:
\$3,000.00

Match:
\$26,967.98

Total Project Cost:
\$29,967.98

PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

Delaware River Greenway Partnership; National Park Service; PA DCNR, State Parks; D&L National Heritage Corridor; Brodhead Watershed Association; Delaware Highlands Conservancy; Martins-Jacoby Watershed Association; Delaware River Basin Commission; Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed; Friends of the Delaware Water Gap NRA



SOLUTION

The Delaware River Sojourn hosted seven days of programming in 2017, offering youth scholarships not to exceed twelve youth group participants each day. The opportunity to provide scholarships to these twelve youth and their chaperones has allowed the Delaware River Sojourn to meaningfully engage our next generation of river paddlers and conservation minded community members.

In 2018, the Sojourn will continue to build on its youth scholarship program and is already coordinating closely with partners across the Lehigh Valley and beyond.

RESULTS

Our 2017 participant survey included a question about youth participants on the river, responses included:

- “Love to see young people out in nature.”
- “I think it is good to have youth there and participating.”
- “I like showing new people the river.”
- “Think it’s wonderful. Hoping to bring my Boy Scout troop!”
- “I think increased youth participation is critical in growing the program. Having a 12 year old on the safety team is inspiring and a positive example to youth participants. Especially one with SUCH SPIRIT !!!”

In 2017, school/youth groups included five youth and two chaperones from the Philadelphia Wooden Boat Factory, four youth and two chaperones from a local 4H group, six students and two chaperones from Sullivan West Central School District, and six students and three chaperones from East Stroudsburg. This is a record number of youth group participation on the Sojourn, and each student had a great time.

Our average daily number of participants overall was 97 paddlers!

Contact



www.LVgreenways.org

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