

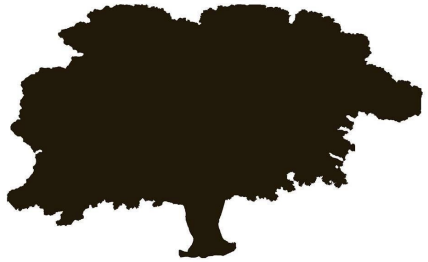
Schuylkill River Research Seminar

Inaugural Meeting Fall 2016

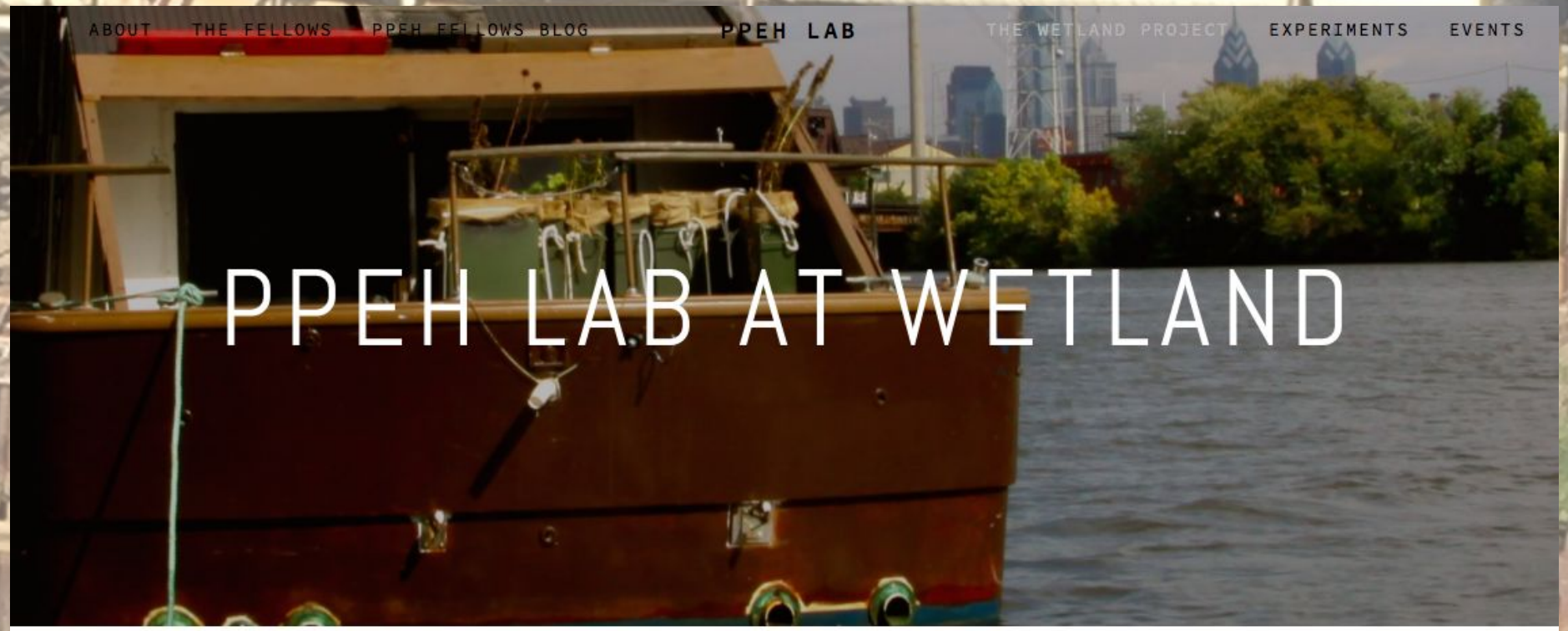
Visioning meeting held
12/16/16

Building WetLand
on the Lower Schuylkill River

<u>Welcome and thanks to</u>:
Bartram's Garden
University of Pennsylvania SAS Dean's Office
Philadelphia Department of Parks & Recreation
Penn's Green Campus Partnership
The Provost's Arts & Culture Initiative
The Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education
Center for Emerging Visual Artists (P.O.S.T.)
The Climate and Urban Systems Partnership of the Franklin Institute
&
You



Penn Program in
Environmental Humanities



AN EXPERIMENT IN SUSTAINABLE LIVING

AT BARTRAM'S GARDEN

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Questions to Consider

- How does this project intersect with your work?
- What is most exciting to you about this project?
- How do you imagine a possible partnership?
- What dimensions might you add to this project?
- What resources could you bring?



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whiting
HUMANITIES

FOUNDATION | WHITING AWARDS | HUMANITIES

PAST PROGRAMS | BROWSE FELLOWS



Bethany Wiggin

German & Environmental Humanities
University of Pennsylvania

WEBSITE

2016-2017 Public Engagement Fellow

***Project**: Making a river's past, present, and future visible from America's oldest botanical garden*

Project Description

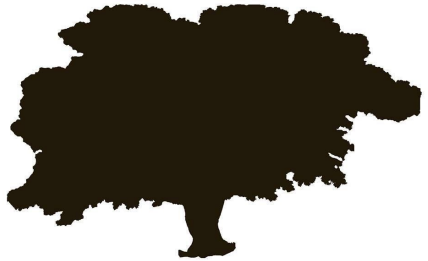
Climate prediction models agree that Philadelphia is becoming hotter and wetter. For Bethany Wiggin, this lends a sense of urgency to learning about the history and context of people's interaction with their environment as we adapt to higher temperatures. She will use her Public Engagement Fellowship to address this need through a collaborative, multi-disciplinary project called *Floating on Warmer Waters* that will explore the complex relationship of people and nature on the Lower Schuykill River, home to both refineries and bird sanctuaries.

Based jointly at Bartram's Garden, the oldest botanical garden in the Americas, and the University of Pennsylvania, *Floating* will engage historians, scientists, and visual artists to create new programming for the public – including the more than 10,000 middle- and high-school students who visit the Garden each year. Events will explore ecologically friendly living by placing it in the historical perspective of Philadelphia's Quaker past; consider the role of utopian ideologies in shaping development and conservation; and invite the public to engage in experiments in sustainability on a floating science lab created by artist Mary Mattingly.

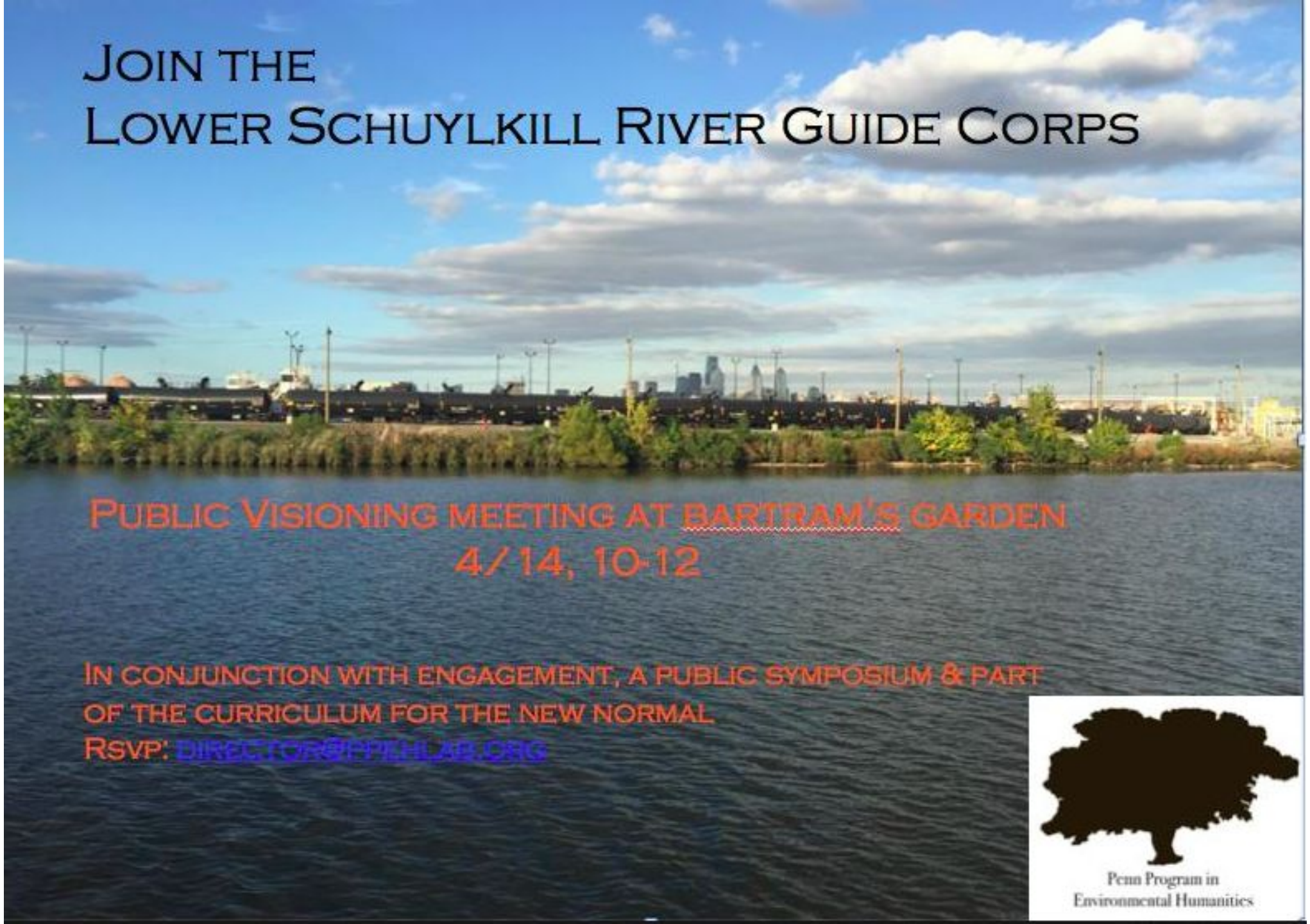
Wiggin, the Founding Director of the Penn Project in Environmental Humanities, came to the field through her







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JOIN THE
LOWER SCHUYLKILL RIVER GUIDE CORPS
PUBLIC VISIONING MEETING AT BARTRAM'S GARDEN
4/14, 10-12
IN CONJUNCTION WITH ENGAGEMENT, A PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM & PART OF THE CURRICULUM FOR THE NEW NORMAL
RSVP: DIRECTOR@PPEHLAB.ORG
Penn Program in Environmental Humanities

Schuylkill River National Heritage Area
enacted in 1999

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS- Congress finds that--

(1) the Schuylkill River Valley made a unique contribution to the cultural, political, and industrial development of the United States;

(2) the Schuylkill River is distinctive as the first spine of modern industrial development in Pennsylvania and 1 of the first in the United States;

(3) the Schuylkill River Valley played a significant role in the struggle for nationhood;

(4) the Schuylkill River Valley developed a prosperous and productive agricultural economy that survives today;

(5) the Schuylkill River Valley developed a charcoal iron industry that made Pennsylvania the center of the iron industry within the North American colonies;

6) the Schuylkill River Valley developed into a significant anthracite mining region that continues to thrive today;

(7) the Schuylkill River Valley developed early transportation systems, including the Schuylkill Canal and the Reading Railroad;

(8) the Schuylkill River Valley developed a significant industrial base, including textile mills and iron works;

(9) there is a longstanding commitment to—

(A) repairing the environmental damage to the river and its surroundings caused by the largely unregulated industrial activity; and

(B) completing the Schuylkill River Trail along the 128-mile corridor of the Schuylkill Valley;

(10) there is a need to provide **assistance for the preservation and promotion of the significance of the Schuylkill River as a system for transportation, agriculture, industry, commerce, and immigration**; and

(11)(A) the Department of the Interior is responsible for protecting the Nation's cultural and historical resources; and

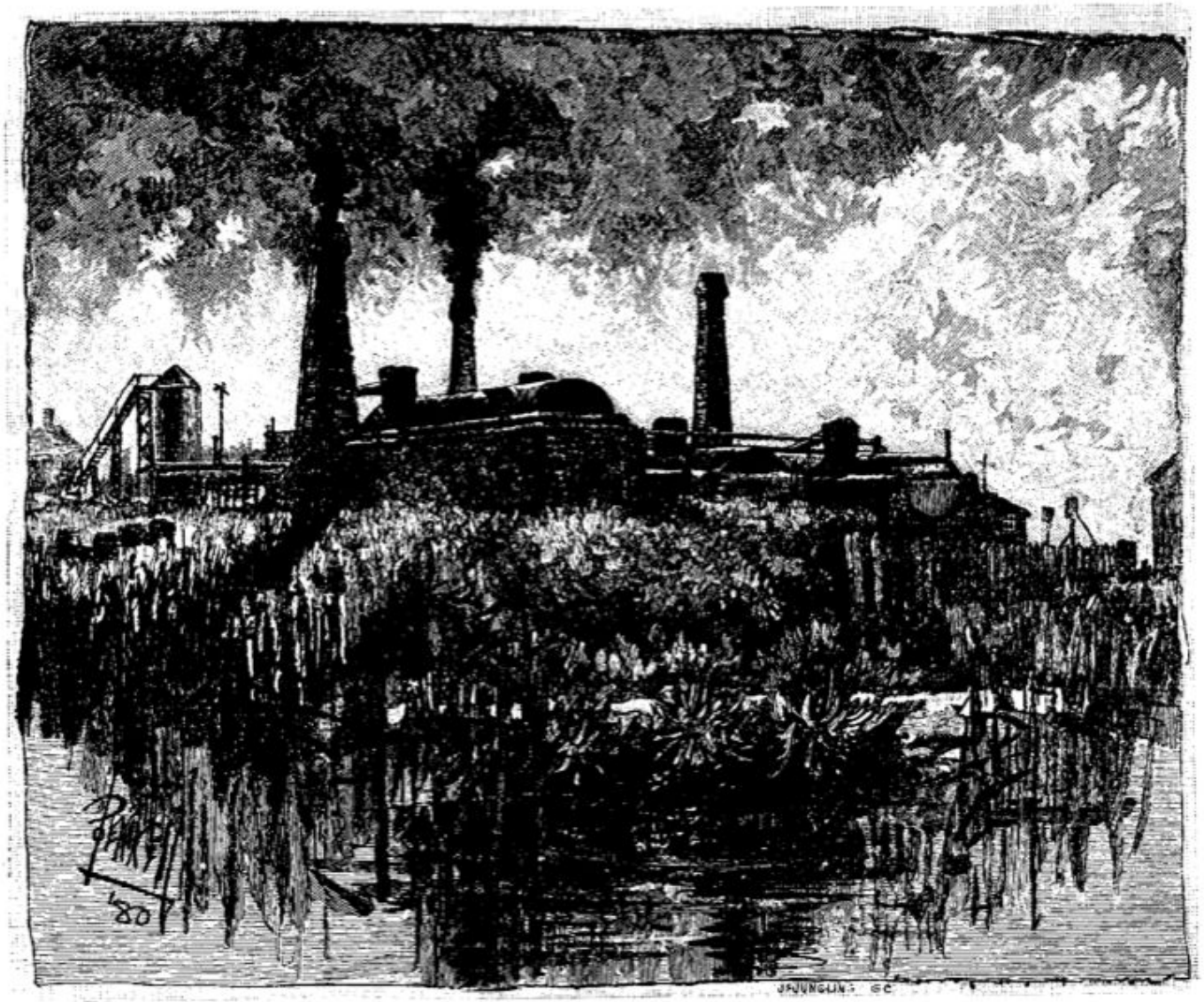
(B) there are sufficient significant examples of such resources within the Schuylkill River Valley to merit the involvement of the Federal Government in the development of programs and projects, in cooperation with the Schuylkill River Greenway Association, the State of Pennsylvania, and other local and governmental bodies, to adequately conserve, protect, and interpret this heritage for future generations, while providing opportunities for education and revitalization.

(b) PURPOSES- The purposes of this Act are--

(1) **to foster a close working relationship with all levels of government, the private sector, and the local communities in the Schuylkill River Valley of southeastern Pennsylvania and enable the communities to conserve their heritage while continuing to pursue economic opportunities**; and

(2) to conserve, interpret, and develop the historical, cultural, natural, and recreational resources related to the industrial and cultural heritage of the Schuylkill River Valley of southeastern Pennsylvania.

Joseph Pennel. From Egan, "A Day in the Ma'sh."
Scribner's Monthly. 22.3 (July 1881)



OIL-REFINERY.

- Share briefly what you're doing, or what you want to do, on or along the (Lower) Schuylkill River (LSR).
- Consider how collaborations with other River Corps members might augment what you're already doing, i.e., how can we as a collective hold up and support your initiatives. Please indicate **what kind of data** (perhaps about the watershed's history, present, or future) you would find useful to build on what you already know about the LSR.
- Envision collaborations with other Corps members (with an eye toward

We consider the scientific and aesthetic impulses of witnessing the LSR, both their purpose and possibilities. What are we accomplishing by measuring and gathering data, by dating and historicizing the LSR, and by envisioning the LSR anew? What kind of possibilities and pleasure might our activities afford?

If an archive gathers heterogenous forms, media, and data, what then provides the linkages between fluvial archival materials measured and sensed along varying timescales? In short, we are asking: How do we archive a river? How does the river function as an archive? Are dates useful? Which kinds of data are useful? How do they become meaningful? What might they mean to you?

With these questions in mind, the installation is organized under four different modalities that serve as archival experiments: Sensing Rivers, Hearing Rivers, Witnessing Rivers, and Digital Rivers. Specifically, we share some of the results of several ongoing PPEH-affiliated projects including 2015-16 artist-in-residence Mary Mattingly's WetLand (Sensing Rivers), the Eastwick Oral History Project (Hearing Rivers), the Lower Schuylkill River Corps and its River Research Seminar (Witnessing Rivers), and our public collaboration to generate an archive for this river that can be so hard to see (Digital Rivers).

We are cautious and conscious of the possible limitations of exploring these expansive questions about the in/commensurability of data around a single geographic location. For instance, must our data and dates be geographically pinned and tagged in order for us to have a common language across media and temporalities? How can we prevent geotagging, or the archiving of a particular, single location, from rendering the multiplicities of the LSR as monolithic? The challenge and goal of the installation is thus to knit these works and projects around the LSR together while emphasizing the diversity and difference of the data/dates that we document, describe, and display.

As you see it here, this mobile installation is open to the public for one week in October 2016 at Van Pelt Library's Kislak Center, part of a bundle of programming and events—a three-day conference, performances, and a semester-long film series—all designed to engage the university and visitors to the campus. Although the installation grew specifically out of the Timescales conference, it is meant to be mobile. In other words, we intend for DATE/UM to be downloaded, transferred, accessed, and displayed to diverse publics. Thus, the majority of the installation is digital so that it can be easily and cost-effectively

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Patricia E. Kim

Curatorial Team
Laurie Allen
Gerardo Cedillo-Servin
Peter DeCarlo
Bethany Wiggin

Design
William Roy Hodgson

Artists and Projects
Mary Mattingly
Philip Flynn
Mason Rosenthal
Eastwick Oral History Project
Lower Schuylkill River Corps

Acknowledgments
Kislak Center
Vitale Digital Media Lab
Van Pelt Library
Penn Museum
Brooke Sietinsons and
the Penn Arts & Culture Initiative
Bartram's Garden
Drexel University ExCITe Center
Eastwick Friends and Neighbors Coalition

DATE / UM

Ecological Timescales of the
Lower Schuylkill River, Philadelphia

October 20th — 26th



Penn Libraries

Penn Program in Environmental Humanities

Kislak Center
Penn Program in Environmental Humanities

Philadelphia's post-industrial landscape serves as backdrop and as actant in the broader conversations around ecological temporalities of Timescales. We see a timescale as intrinsically ecological in that different networks, communities, and types of information shape how we experience, understand, and know a place and its temporalities. Along with the conference's three days of transdisciplinary conversations, films, and performances, this archive-as-mobile installation features collaborations and interventions developed by a growing corps of academics, activists, artists, and communities in and along the Lower Schuylkill River (LSR).

Through the installation, we explore the problem of data, and the date as one kind of datum. A datum functions as a unique measurement of observations, qualities, or trends, while a date performs the task of marking out and defining time through specific, quantifiable means. In the context of the LSR, data/dates are embedded into a watery, industrial landscape and used to describe the various human and nonhuman communities that the river hosts. In what ways, this installation asks, are the timescales of various kinds of river data in/commensurable?

The Delaware River's largest tributary, the Schuylkill River is subject to multiple histories, ecologies, infrastructures, and communities. The LSR and its watershed host an oil port and a refinery complex, as well as a wildlife refuge, tinicum marshlands, and many communities and neighborhoods. Yet the LSR and the communities that inhabit its watershed are not only vibrant; they are also subject to a number of vulnerabilities, some difficult to see. In the past year, the Penn Program in Environmental Humanities (PPEH) and our collaborators have created, collected, and analyzed different kinds of data with the aim of illuminating the LSR's histories, ecologies, and inhabitants.

Various kinds of information, embodied knowledges, and individual as well as collective memories emerge from and are inscribed on and by the LSR. This landscape contains different kinds of data, including many that are hard to see with the human eye and others which span centuries or millennia. To create an archive of the LSR involves the translation of the spatialities and temporalities of the river itself into discrete and specific kinds of data. How might the LSR become more visible if these multiple data sets are brought into dialogue? How might the incommensurable temporalities of biological, material, and social networks find space in a single river archive? The promise and problem of in/commensurability are posed as questions