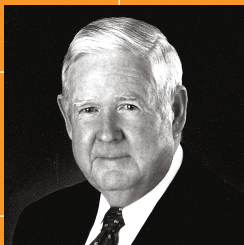




“The region’s historical significance to the nation as the former steel capital of the world demands its story be told. I commend the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area and its continued work to preserve an important part of our heritage and to improve the quality of life in this region of western Pennsylvania.”

—ARLEN SPECTER, U.S. SENATOR



“Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area is reinvesting in southwestern Pennsylvania’s historical communities, not only to preserve historical resources for future generations but also to revitalize economies through community building and heritage tourism.”

—JOHN MURTHA, U.S. CONGRESSMAN



“Southwestern Pennsylvania was the world’s greatest steel producer, and the region’s industrial heritage is an essential part of our national history. It is important that we preserve this story for future generations and support Rivers of Steel’s vision and commitment to honoring the region’s steel making legacy.”

—MIKE DOYLE, U.S. CONGRESSMAN

A document of this type is a necessary form of reporting on accomplishments for Steel Industry Heritage Corporation and our activities within the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area. Its necessity is born in the yearly responsibility of the organization to report to governments, funding entities, partners and the general public on these achievements. Too often, however, annual reports fail to capture the overall scope of the work and its progress.

As our Chairman, Ted Muller, points out in his letter accompanying this report, when the Steel Industry Heritage Corporation was formed in 1991, no one could have imagined the extent to which it exists today. Its designation as the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area in 1996 by the U.S. Congress and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania speaks to its incredible success. While this report focuses on the years 1997 to 2006, the foundation for the success of the Rivers of Steel comes from the exhaustive planning, studies and inventories conducted from 1991 to 1996. Planning is never fun, but the planning conducted for the creation of the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area was critical, and led directly to the accomplishments we are witnessing today.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

While many plans are conducted with the community in mind, few actually involve the community. SIHC established new ground in the early years by breaking the mold of the traditional public planning process. While our plans were conducted with local governments and community organizations, we reached out to the citizenry of the region in all the involved counties. More than 700 town meetings were held, along with Kiwanis, Elks, Rotaries and other group meetings. If people couldn't come to a scheduled planning meeting, we literally took the meeting to them. This outreach saturated the region in our desired goals and mission. It was as unique in its approach as it was tiring, conducted by a very small staff of energetic and dedicated individuals. What we found was that our enthusiasm for conserving our region's rich, nationally-significant industrial heritage was shared by many, and in these people we found ambassadors who helped us carry the message. Ten years later, these same people have become the stewards of the hundreds of projects listed within this report.

Today, the plan that gave rise to Rivers of Steel, once described to me as "an unrealistic dream," has been heralded as visionary. It is a driving force behind many of the region's conservation efforts. While it focuses on steel history, it was the first to embrace the rivers and riverfronts as front doors to our communities instead of the backyards of industry. It challenged a region struggling with its identity to embrace its industrial and cultural heritage. And it resulted in one of the most successful National Heritage Areas in the nation; and an organization that has earned numerous state and national awards. More importantly, it has gained the confidence and support of governments, foundations and the people of southwestern Pennsylvania.

As we conclude these first 10 years, I look back with amazement at what has been achieved. Amazement, but not surprise, for I have witnessed the spirit of the people of this region who want to preserve their industrial and cultural legacy.

Our work is not complete, and we face more challenges—more opportunities—in the next 10 years. We look forward to the continuing evolution of the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area.

Sincerely,



August R. Carlino

PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
RIVERS OF STEEL NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

In 1988, a small number of concerned citizens formed the Steel Industry Heritage Task Force with the goal of preserving some aspect of the steel industry in order to commemorate the region's truly astounding industrial history. In 1996, this volunteer effort grew into a professionally staffed organization that oversaw the planning and ultimate designation of Rivers of Steel as both a national and state heritage area. I am sure none of us envisioned at the outset the breadth of activities and significant impact on the region that would subsequently take place.

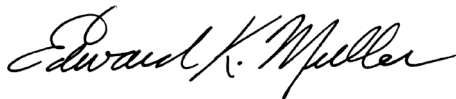
It is with great satisfaction and pride that past and present board members, founding volunteers, staff, and our many partners look back over Rivers of Steel's many accomplishments. The successes are tangible throughout the region in preserved historic structures, archived documents and stored artifacts, new trails, popular exhibits and publications, cultural programming, tours, and educational initiatives. The greatest rewards, however, are seen in the faces of those who have enjoyed our many programs and participated in some manner in the preservation process.

Successful preservation requires extensive planning, broad public participation, enduring partnerships, and long term commitment. These qualities are also essential for community development. As people regain their sense of place and pride in their past, they are also fashioning the bonds, skills, and spirit necessary to envision their future. In this way, Rivers of Steel's work is simultaneously about the region's heritage and an investment in its future.

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN

On behalf of the organization, I wish to express our appreciation for the cooperation and support of our local and governmental partners without whom we could not have compiled our record of achievement. And I can say with certainty that we at Rivers of Steel are proud of our past and excited about our role in the region's future.

Sincerely,



Edward K. Muller
CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF DIRECTORS
RIVERS OF STEEL NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA

MISSION 1

ACCOMPLISHING *THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES*



There is a wealth of resources to tell the story of southwestern Pennsylvania’s industrial heritage. Working steel mills, historic industrial sites, mansions and mill towns, historic neighborhoods, national historic landmarks, ethnic churches and festivals—they are the physical and cultural legacy at the core of the region’s character. Rivers of Steel is helping to preserve these resources throughout its seven counties so southwestern Pennsylvania’s rich past will endure for future generations to come.

“The National Trust has long been a partner of Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area and supports its remarkable efforts to assemble working partnerships on all levels of local and state government, regional and national historical and cultural organizations. Rivers of Steel has an exemplary record of uniting public-private concerns into lasting partnerships that achieve the preservation of southwestern Pennsylvania industrial and cultural resources.”

— Peter Brink, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, PROGRAMS, NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PRESERVING HISTORIC RESOURCES IN OUR REGION

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

W. A. YOUNG & SONS FOUNDRY & MACHINE SHOP, RICES LANDING, PA

In partnership with the Greene County Historical Society, the Greene County Board of Commissioners, Friends of the Foundry, and citizens of Rices Landing, the Foundry is one of Rivers of Steel’s preservation priorities. Dating back to the early 1900s, with machinery dating back to the 1800s, it is in the early stages of preservation planning and restoration. The long term goals are to make this facility safe for public tours, with interpretation and blacksmith artisans working in this rare industrial gem.

“Rivers of Steel has been one of the regional leaders in reconnecting many of our communities with their riverfronts and recreational resources. Through trail construction, creation of amenities, and the outreach to residents, the organization has helped to leverage significant investment in land and water trails. As a result, the quality of life in the southwestern Pennsylvania communities is improving. River landings and trails are stimulating economic development and creating an environment for heritage tourism and community revitalization.”

— Davitt Woodwell, VICE PRESIDENT, WESTERN REGION, PENNSYLVANIA ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL

CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCES IN OUR REGION

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

RIVER KIOSKS AND LANDINGS

Along the rivers of southwestern Pennsylvania, river landings are being planned and constructed to link the story of the region along river trails. At each river landing, kiosks provide visitors, recreational boaters, kayakers and canoeists with the history of the community and information on restaurants, shops and lodging.

MISSION 2

EXPANDING THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

With the decline of the steel industry in the '70s and '80s, mills, mines, and railroad lines were abandoned. Today, throughout the region's river valleys, those abandoned sites are prime examples of reuse and new development.

Rivers of Steel is working with communities throughout the region to rediscover the natural beauty of the river valleys. No longer the backyards of industry, the Ohio, Allegheny, Monongahela, Youghiogheny, Beaver and Kiskiminetas rivers are becoming the front door to communities. Acting as public focal points, they are attracting new development — marinas, picnic areas, and river walks — in old industrial communities.



MISSION 3

SUSTAINING CULTURAL TRADITIONS



Immigrants poured into southwestern Pennsylvania by the tens of thousands to take jobs in the mills. Their hands would produce the icons of the modern age—the Brooklyn Bridge, the Empire State Building, the Panama Canal—and their lives would leave an imprint on the region’s cultural traditions.

Rivers of Steel works with tradition bearers and community organizations to develop programs that focus attention on the conservation of traditional arts and regional customs and encourages public appreciation of the region’s cultural legacy.

“One of the first National Heritage Areas with a cultural conservation division, Rivers of Steel pioneered many of the methods now used by heritage areas across the country to study and conserve folk traditions, to encourage cultural continuity and promote inter-cultural awareness and respect.”

—Peggy A. Bulger, DIRECTOR

AMERICAN FOLKLIFE CENTER AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, WASHINGTON, DC

SUPPORTING CULTURAL TRADITIONS IN OUR REGION

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

BULGARIAN-MACEDONIAN NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL CENTER, WEST HOMESTEAD, PA

Southwestern Pennsylvania is a mosaic of cultures, ethnicities, religions and races. The BMNECC is one of the best preserved cultural institutions in America, working to conserve the traditions and folkways of Bulgarians and Macedonians who settled this region in the 1900s. From food, to dance, to music, to costume, the BMNECC is a living classroom that exhibits the life and customs of this proud ethnic group.

“Heritage tourism, one of the fastest growing segments of the travel economy, provides visitors with unique and authentic regional experiences. Rivers of Steel is one of our most valued partners in developing products and tours, providing the experiences heritage tourists are searching for in southwestern Pennsylvania.”

— Tinsy Lipchak, DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL AND HERITAGE TOURISM, VISITPITTSBURGH

TELLING A STORY OF TRIUMPH

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

BEAVER COUNTY INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM, MIDLAND, PA

As the mills and mines closed, workers sometimes saved hand tools, small signs and other mementos of their lives in the industry. One collection exists in Beaver County and is the property of a former worker who collected hundreds of pieces of steel mill artifacts and documents from the Jones & Laughlin Steel Mill in Aliquippa, PA. With the help of Rivers of Steel, this collection is being conserved and will be displayed in a museum dedicated to the working men and women of the Beaver Valley.

MISSION 4

COMMUNICATING OUR STORY

For more than 100 years, southwestern Pennsylvania was the steel making capital of the world. Lining the valleys and dotting the hills to the horizon, Big Steel’s operations blanketed the skies with smoke, then lit up the night with the orange glow of furnaces, ovens and forges. It is a powerful story.

Capitalizing on the fastest growing segment of the travel market, heritage tourism, Rivers of Steel is meeting the demand for meaningful visitor and student experiences with strong interpretive and educational programming. Partnering with historical and cultural organizations, Rivers of Steel is creating dynamic, contemporary connections to the region’s remarkable industrial history and the living legacy of the people, ensuring the region’s nationally significant story endures for generations.



MISSION 5

STIMULATING *ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*



Uniting the resources of communities, government, business, and preservationists, Rivers of Steel is advancing economic development throughout southwestern Pennsylvania. Building on the historic assets of the region, Rivers of Steel is partnering with public and private sectors to create new opportunities for tourism, recreation and light industry. Each success improves the quality of life, attracts new businesses and creates a vision for southwestern Pennsylvania's future.

“Since the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area was created in 1996, it has played a significant role in Allegheny County's efforts to revitalize riverfront communities and brownfield sites. The restoration and rebirth of the Carrie Furnace site will serve as yet another example of our region's pioneering efforts to reclaim industrial sites and return them to active economic and recreational uses. It will also help to preserve Allegheny County's proud history and profound impact not only on the steel industry but also the world.”

— Dan Onorato, ALLEGHENY COUNTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

ENHANCING *ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN OUR REGION*

PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

THE BOST BUILDING, HOMESTEAD, PA

Once the headquarters for the steelworker's union during the infamous 1892 Homestead Lockout and Strike, this fully restored National Historic Landmark is now the headquarters of the Steel Industry Heritage Corporation and the Rivers of Steel NHA visitor's center. Saved from the wrecking ball, the Bost Building attracts thousands of tourists annually and helps anchor the redevelopment of a National Register Historic District and Main Street project in Homestead.



THE FOLLOWING IS A SELECT LIST OF ALL PROJECTS SERVING THE 5 MISSIONS OUTLINED FOR THE RIVERS OF STEEL NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA.

CULTURAL CONSERVATION

- Folk Arts Outreach Program
- Folk & Arts Traditional Performance Arts
- Cultural Programming 1990–91
- Regional Folklife Center 1999, 2003, 2005–06
- Folk Arts Support 1994, 1998–2002, 2004–05
- Alle-Kiski Folk Music Project 1996–97
- American Folklore Project
- Folk Arts Apprenticeship Phase I
- Folk Arts Apprenticeship Phase II
- Folk Arts Panel Initiative
- Beaver County Folk Arts Program
- Traditional Arts School Residences
- Folk Arts Specialist 1996–99
- Folk Arts Specialist Support 1996–97, 1999
- Folk Masters: Living Treasures
- Folklife Programming
- Traditional Artists in the Classroom Phase I
- Traditional Artists in the Classroom Phase II
- Minority Arts Internship
- Tradition Bearers Mentoring Program 1995, 1999
- San Rocco Festival 1998–99
- Slovenian Cultural Center
- Ukrainian Women’s League
- Steel Workers Oral Histories Phase I
- Steel Workers Oral Histories Phase II

- Tricks of the Trade
- Folklife Education Initiative
- Aliquippa Arts Incubator 1994, 2000
- Folk Arts Operations Support
- Rivers of Steel Journey Action Plan Phase I
- Rivers of Steel Journey Action Plan Phase II
- Rivers of Steel Journey Action Plan Phase III
- P & LE Railroad Oral History Project
- Community Oral History Project
- A Charge to Keep Phase I
- A Charge to Keep Phase II
- Heritage Conservation Assistance Fund

- Pumphouse and Water Tower Phase I
- Master Plan for Carrie Furnaces
- Mid-Monongahela River Valley Access Study
- Heritage Conservation Assistance Fund
- Port of Pittsburgh Pier Project
- Rivers of Steel Retail Site Analysis
- Port of Pittsburgh Commission—Water Shuttle
- *Routes to Roots Driving Guide* Revisions and Updates
- Flatiron Building Expansion
- Coal and Coke Heritage Center Redesign of Public Programming Space

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Carrie Furnace Redevelopment Plan
- Regional Marketing Initiative 2001–03
- Carrie Furnace Assessment Study
- Kennywood’s Steel Heritage
- Capital Support for Steel Industry Task Force
- Armstrong County Study
- Rivers of Steel Visitors Center
- Apollo Borough Riverfront Museum
- Crucible Mine Site Feasibility Study
- Homestead 8th Ave. Façade Program
- Ford City Museum and Industrial Incubator
- Heritage Tourism

EDUCATION

- International Heritage Development Conference
- Tradition Bearers Radio Series Part I
- Tradition Bearers Radio Series Part II
- Educational Tax Credit Program
- Public Outreach Meeting 1992–2004
- Children’s Activity Book
- History to Go Project 2001, 2003
- Heritage Development Institute
- Heritage Development Conference Workshops
- *Pittsburgh’s Big Picture: Omnimax*
- Rivers of Steel Web Site Project 1997, 2004
- Rivers of Steel Tour Program 1998–99

“Rivers of Steel is one of the best heritage areas in the nation and in the Pennsylvania Heritage Areas Program. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is proud to partner with Rivers of Steel on heritage development projects and will continue to support its leadership and staff and their exceptional track record of conserving industrial and cultural resources in southwestern Pennsylvania.”

—Larry Williamson,

DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR CONSERVATION AND
ENGINEERING SERVICE, PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND NATURAL
RESOURCES

- *A Rumor of Blue Skies* Documentary
- Rivers of Steel Public Programming Project
- Rivers of Steel Tour Program Materials
- *Media on Demand*, Website Enhancements
- Mon Valley Art Billboards

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Historical Industrial Drawings 1991–92
- Bost Building Rehabilitation 1995, 1997–98, 2000–01
- St. John’s Cultural Center
- Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program
- Preservation of 48’ Mill Phase I 1990
- Preservation of 48’ Mill Phase II 1990–91
- Lake Erie & Ohio River Canal
- Archival Support for Steel Industry Task Force
- Pumphouse and Water Tower Rehabilitation
- Preservation of Freeport Grist Mill
- Alle-Kiski Valley Heritage Museum Phase II
- Preservation of the Chapman Building
- Aluminum Heritage Museum Feasibility Study
- Armstrong County Special Purpose Study
- B. F. Jones Library Restoration 1997, 2001
- Beaver County Industrial Museum
- Carnegie Library of Braddock Rehabilitation
- Brownsville Riverboat Museum: Authenreith Building
- Bulgarian Cultural Center Rehabilitation 1999, 2002, 2005
- Carnegie Library Restoration
- Casino Theater Restoration
- Coal & Coke Heritage Center Expansion
- Donora Visitor Center and Museum
- Flatiron Building Rehabilitation 1997, 2001
- Ford City Museum
- Homestead Municipal Building Restoration Study
- Redstone Knitting Mill Restoration
- Restoration of Ingot Buggy
- Preservation of St. Nicholas Murals
- State Theater Rehab: Uniontown
- Steel and Ethnic Museum
- West Overton Village Restoration Phase I
- W.A. Young Brothers Machine Shop
- Duquesne Incline Enhancement
- Worker Housing Study
- Monessen Historic Industrial Drawings
- Gibson House Restoration
- West Overton Coke Oven Study
- Carrie Furnace Stabilization
- *Hidden in Plain Sight*, Folk Traditions for Children
- Carnegie Library of Homestead Exterior Signage

- Monessen Heritage Museum Facility Improvements and Restoration
- Ford City Museum Complex

INTERPRETIVE PLANNING AND EXHIBITS

- Adapting Africa Exhibit
- *Recrudescence*-Photography Exhibition
- Josh Gibson Exhibit
- Alle-Kiski Museum Exhibit
- Bost Building Interpretation
- Homestead Grays Historical Marker
- Rivers of Steel Archive Database Development 1997, 1999
- *A Model of History* Exhibit
- Design & Development of Bost Building Exhibit Area
- Archiving Duquesne Works 2000, 2003
- Archiving Duquesne Works Carpenter Shop
- Franko, Schofer & Homestead Collections
- Homestead Works Blacksmith Shop
- Borough of Homewood Historic Signage Project
- Beaver Country Industrial Museum Phase I & II
- Isaac Meason Interpretive Study
- Mattress Factory Archival Support
- Little Steel Exhibit
- Mosaic of Industry Guideway Signage
- Rivers of Steel Signage Design Project
- South Side Works Riverfront Kiosks
- Pumphouse Interpretive Exhibit
- Bost Building Interpretative Kiosk
- Valley Machine Shop Archival Project
- *Born of Fire* Documentary
- Archives and Exhibit Support
- Smock Historical Society
- Preservation of Metzger and H. K. Porter Collections
- Cataloging and Digitizing Ethnographic Studies
- Computer Kiosks
- *Our Story*, a Stage Production
- Working Glass Exhibit

NATURAL RESOURCES AND RECREATION

- Steel Valley Trail Planning 1996, 1999–01
- Mid-Monongahela River Landings
- Steel Valley Trail Construction Phase I
- Steel Valley Trail Construction Phase II 1993, 1997
- Steel Valley Trail Construction Phase III 2000–01
- River Landing: Interpretive Kiosks
- Heritage Trails Implementation Project Grants
- Steel Valley Trail Design and Development Plan
- Steel Valley Master Plan Study
- Allegheny County Trail Alliance
- Monongahela River Conservation Project 1995, 1997
- Three Rivers Heritage Trail Signage 1993, 1995, 2004
- Allegheny River Trail Signage
- Allegheny Rivers Trail Master Plan
- Bridge to Tomorrow
- Brownsville Wharf and River Landing
- Charleroi Riverfront Study
- CMU Robotics Institute River Landing
- Kiski Junction Riverfront Park
- Kittanning Riverfront Landing and Park 1998, 2000
- North Shore Passenger Pier
- Pittsburgh Voyager 1997, 2002
- Pittsburgh Voyager Landing
- Port of Pittsburgh Pier Project
- City of Arnold River Renaissance Project
- Rivers & Trail Technical Assistance
- Rivers & Trail Support
- Rock Furnace Trail
- Canoe & Kayak Access
- Design of Tour Boat Landings
- River Parks Project
- Beaver County River Landing Study
- Temperanceville River Landing Study
- Montour Trail Council
- Friends of the Riverfront, Three Rivers Water Trail Access
- Pump House & Water Tower Trail Head Development

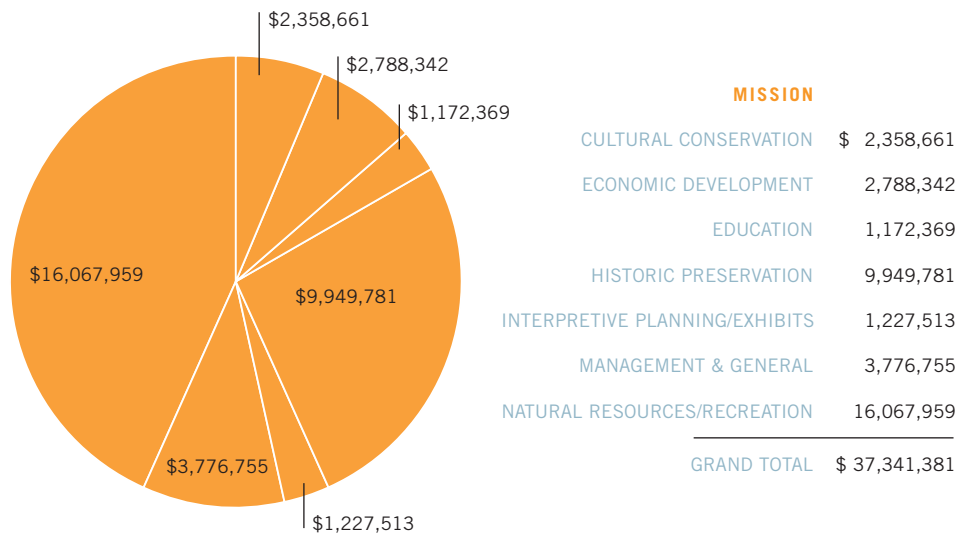
FINANCIAL INFORMATION

FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES

BY MISSION

Rivers of Steel’s investment has funded more than 295 completed and ongoing projects. The projects advance the National Heritage Area’s mission to preserve historic resources,

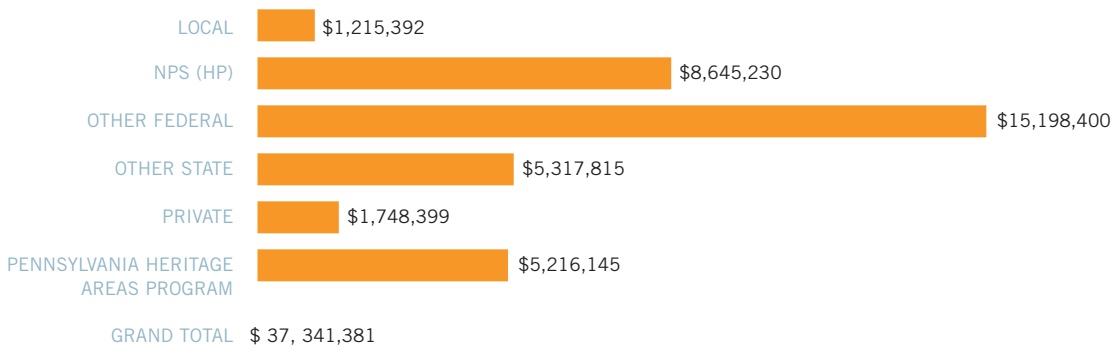
conserve natural resources, support cultural traditions, create educational and interpretive programming, promote tourism and fuel economic development.



FUNDING SOURCES

Since its designation as a National Heritage Area in 1996, Rivers of Steel has invested more than \$37 million in southwestern

Pennsylvania resources. The investment represents federal, state, local, and private sources.



numbers have been rounded to the nearest dollar.

THE RIVERS OF STEEL NATIONAL HERITAGE AREA IDENTIFIES, CONSERVES, INTERPRETS, PROMOTES, AND MANAGES THE HISTORIC, CULTURAL, NATURAL, AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES OF STEEL AND ITS RELATED INDUSTRIES IN SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA. COORDINATED BY THE NON-PROFIT STEEL INDUSTRY HERITAGE CORPORATION, ITS MISSION IS TO USE THESE RESOURCES TO ENCOURAGE COMMUNITY REVITALIZATION THROUGH CULTURAL TOURISM AND RELATED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.



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