



Floatables Skimming Vessels

phillywatersheds.org

Reductions in floatables (water-borne litter and debris) improve both the water quality and beauty of Philadelphia's rivers & streams.

Launched in 2006, the Philadelphia Water Department's (PWD) floatables skimming program uses specially designed boats to collect and remove water-borne trash and debris from the banks of the Delaware & Schuylkill Rivers. PWD currently operates two of these ships.

R.E. Roy

Launched in 2005, this 39-foot skimmer boat features a front loader system to collect trash and debris. This design uses a grated bucket to lift floatables from the water's surface into an on-board hold. The R.E. Roy does this in two ways. The first method is to drive the boat through a mat of litter and debris. As the ship moves, the debris enters the bucket and is held by grates as water passes through. Alternatively, the R.E. Roy is designed to create a strong current that draws water through the grated bucket, pulling floatables onboard.

- In FY 2013, the R.E. Roy operated from March until November, removing a total of 22.61 tons (275 cubic yards) of debris and floatables from the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers.

Pontoon Skimming Vessel

PWD also utilizes a smaller pontoon vessel to remove floatables from our waterways. Because of its smaller size, this boat can be utilized in tight spaces like marinas and piers as well as shallower areas closer to shore.

- In FY 2013, the pontoon boat collected 4.1 cubic yards of recyclable material (bottles, plastics and paper) as well as an additional 3 cubic yards of mixed trash.

To learn more about the floatables skimming program and the Water Department's efforts to keep our waterways clean visit: www.phillywaterways.org/what_were_doing

