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**Voting Member Organizations**

Allegheny Land Trust  
Armstrong Trails  
Allegheny Valley Trails Association  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
Armstrong County Conservancy  
Berks Nature  
Brandywine Conservancy  
The Buck Hill Conservation Foundation  
Central Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Centre County Farmland Trust  
Chesapeake Conservancy  
Chestnut Hill Conservancy  
ClearWater Conservancy  
The Conservation Fund, Pennsylvania Office  
Countyside Conservancy  
Delaware Highlands Conservancy  
Earth Conservancy  
Edward L. Rose Conservancy  
Evergreen Conservancy  
Farm and Natural Land Trust of York County  
Foundation for Sustainable Forests  
Fox Chapel Area Land Trust  
French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust  
French Creek Valley Conservancy  
Glade Run Lake Conservancy  
Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association  
Heritage Conservancy  
Hollow Oak Land Trust  
Independence Conservancy  
Lackawanna Valley Conservancy  
Lancaster Conservancy  
Lancaster Farmland Trust  
The Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County  
Land Conservancy of Adams County  
Land Trust of Bucks County  
Lebanon Valley Conservancy  
London Britain Land Trust  
Manada Conservancy  
Merrill Linn Land & Waterways Conservancy  
Mid-Atlantic Karst Conservancy  
Mokoma Conservancy  
Montour Trail Council  
Natural Lands  
Neighborhood Gardens Trust  
North American Land Trust  
North Branch Land Trust  
Northcentral Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Open Land Conservancy of Chester County  
Pennsbury Land Trust  
Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society  
Pennypack Ecological Restoration Trust  
Pine Creek Land Conservation Trust  
Pine Creek Valley Watershed Association  
Pocono Heritage Land Trust  
The Radnor Conservancy  
Regional Trail Corporation  
Schuylkill County Conservancy  
Schuylkill River Greenways  
Somerset County Conservancy  
The Nature Conservancy  
The Trust for Public Land  
The Wallace Trust  
Tinicum Conservancy  
Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Westmoreland Conservancy  
Westmoreland Land Trust  
Wild Waterways Conservancy Inc.  
Wildlands Conservancy  
Willistown Conservation Trust  
Wissahickon Trails

November 17, 2020 [transmitted via email]

Re. State Commitments That Deliver Economic Stimulus: Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund and Environmental Stewardship Fund

Dear Pennsylvania Senators, Representatives, and Governor Wolf:

I write on behalf of the 70 member organizations of WeConservePA (formerly the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association) and the more than one hundred thousand Pennsylvanians they count as members and supporters.

WeConservePA has reviewed state commitments against balances in state accounts for the *Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund* and *Environmental Stewardship Fund* associated with DCNR. Going through an itemization of projects, we found that nearly every dollar in state accounts is obligated—sums ranging from \$1,000 to \$1 million. **You cannot tap these state accounts without de-committing money from real projects**—renegeing on any number of the 1,037 grant-funded projects underway in Pennsylvania's communities or stripping money from 281 State Park or Forest projects in process.

You also cannot divert pending Keystone or ESF revenues without doing substantial economic damage to Pennsylvania. The ongoing flow of conservation investments by these funds supports small businesses and employment across the Commonwealth, as well as leverages, creates, and maintains green infrastructure that provides financial and environmental returns to Pennsylvania.

The Keystone and Environmental Stewardship Funds **support myriad small businesses and jobs** with them. Projects involve surveyors, appraisers, legal services, engineers, planners, drafters, environmental remediators, hydrologists, geologists, agricultural consultants, nurseries, architects, landscape architects, landscapers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, heavy equipment operators, painters, roofing contractors, fencing installers, paving contractors, material delivery, sign makers, archaeologists, and arborists. Supplies and equipment are needed from nurseries, lumber yards, quarries, building material suppliers, hardware stores, equipment manufacturers (playground, recreation, pool,..), and equipment rental businesses.

During and after projects are completed, you also have long-term employment for private concessionaires, outdoor retailers, adventure services, campgrounds and cabin rentals and other tourism and hospitality related enterprises. There is also the employment of foresters, maintenance workers, recreation professionals, environmental



educators, and resource, facility, and security managers. The variety and numbers of jobs are enormous.

At a time when state government needs to support jobs and provide economic stimulus, it is more important than ever to keep Keystone and ESF investments flowing and **give businesses assurance that the continuing pipeline of projects will not be disturbed** as the businesses are making personnel and business investment decisions.

Going beyond those job-related impacts, completed projects continue giving to communities year-after-year, decade-after-decade. For example, the Keystone Fund delivers **\$7 in flood control and prevention, water treatment, and other natural services for every dollar invested.**

The Keystone Fund and Environmental Stewardship Fund play crucial parts in making Pennsylvania a great place to live, work, and play. With pandemic-driven fundamental shifts underway in the world economy and **businesses and skilled workers looking more than ever at quality of life** in making location decisions, the General Assembly should be considering how it might increase investments through these time-tested funds, not whether the funds can be squeezed.

The Keystone and Environmental Stewardship Funds are proven, highly acclaimed vehicles for keeping Pennsylvania communities strong. Good for the environment and good for the economy, there are few state programs that can provide such lasting public benefits.

WeConservePA is a signatory to the Growing Greener Coalition's broader review of Keystone Fund and Environmental Stewardship Fund benefits delivered to you yesterday. Rather than retread that ground, we urge you to review that communication as well.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy".

Andrew M. Loza  
Executive Director

cc: member organizations