

610 N 3<sup>rd</sup> St #301  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

717-230-8560  
info@WeConservePA.org



**Voting Member Organizations**

Allegheny Land Trust  
Armstrong Trails  
Allegheny Valley Trails Association  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
Armstrong County Conservancy  
Berks Nature  
Brandywine Conservancy  
Brandywine Red Clay Alliance  
The Buck Hill Conservation Foundation  
Central Pennsylvania Conservancy  
Centre County Farmland Trust  
Chesapeake Conservancy  
Chestnut Hill Conservancy  
ClearWater Conservancy  
The Conservation Fund, Pennsylvania Office  
Countryside 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  
Lake Erie Region Conservancy  
Lancaster Conservancy  
Lancaster Farmland Trust  
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

April 11, 2022

**Re. Growing Greener III**  
**Never a Better Time for a Boost to Conservation Investments**

Dear Pennsylvania Senators, Representatives, and Governor Wolf:

On behalf of the 70 member organizations of WeConservePA, I write to express our appreciation for the leadership of the senators and representatives who are working to increase state investments in Growing Greener-type projects. We ask all members of the General Assembly and the Governor's office to work to ensure that this spring's legislative efforts include a much needed boost to state conservation investments. These are capital investments, not operational expenditures that have to be repeated (and supported out of the general fund) after the federal money is gone.

Senator Gordner's SB 525 invests \$500 million of ARPA funds into a "Growing Greener III." The bill enjoys sponsorship by a bipartisan majority of 28 senators and has received second consideration by the Senate. Representative Culver's counterpart, HB 2020, is presently collecting sponsors (24 Republicans and 13 Democrats so far).

Complementing these bills is the creation of a Clean Streams Fund and Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program as provided in Senator Yaw's SB 832 (which has also received second consideration) and Representative Hershey's House version, HB 1901.

Additionally, earlier this year Governor Wolf called for a \$450 million boost in state conservation investments.

These proposals will judiciously invest in capital projects that can be implemented now and deliver huge returns for decades to come. From nature-based solutions that prevent flooding and stream degradation to rehabilitation of state and local parks and trails that underpin a large part of the commonwealth's tourism and outdoor recreation economies, ARPA dollars can make a tremendous difference in the lives of Pennsylvanians.



Our various natural infrastructure needs are immense, but the economic payoff in addressing them is huge. ARPA dollars applied to natural infrastructure would support myriad small businesses and good-paying jobs. It is well established that state environmental investments provide tremendous rates of return—whether the measure is job creation and economic activity, avoided costs (such as public health and flooding), net tax revenues, or the wellbeing of people and communities. (See the numerous studies documenting the benefits in the Economic Benefits section of <https://conservationtools.org>.)

Past Growing Greener investments have accomplished tremendous good, supporting projects to restore polluted waterways, protect water supplies, and conserve productive farmland and open space important to communities. The investments have also improved community parks, trails, State Parks and Forests, and more.

A Growing Greener III is crucial to restoring the thousands of miles of Pennsylvania streams still unsafe for drinking, fishing, or swimming; using natural infrastructure to reduce flooding; addressing the tremendous infrastructure needs in our parks and other public lands; and delivering other environmental benefits. It is also needed to leverage hundreds of millions in federal dollars available to address abandoned mine drainage and other environmental concerns.

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