



Audubon Mid-Atlantic – Chesapeake Bay Foundation – Chesapeake Conservancy – Conservation Voters of PA – Ducks Unlimited – Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds – Lancaster Farmland Trust – Natural Lands – PennFuture – Pennsylvania Environmental Council – Pennsylvania Parks and Forests Foundation – Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society – Rails-to-Trails Conservancy – Sierra Club PA Chapter – The Conservation Fund – The Nature Conservancy PA/DE Chapter – The Trust for Public Land – Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership – Trout Unlimited – WeConservePA – Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Open Letter to Members of the General Assembly Re. Funding Healthy Outdoors for All Program 6/12/2024

The partner organizations of the Growing Greener Coalition, on behalf of our hundreds of thousands of supporters and together with hundreds of allied organizations across the Commonwealth, urge you to **ask your leadership** to include a **one-time injection of \$80 – 100 million** into a **Healthy Outdoors for All Program** for the 2024-2025 budget year.

Specifically, the Growing Greener Coalition seeks a focused boost in state investment in **local capital projects** to achieve the **rehabilitation, upgrade, and strategic expansion of local park, trail, and other outdoor spaces**. These projects will **attract and leverage substantial local philanthropic dollars and volunteer energy**. Such projects, which are well-proven to deliver substantial and long-term benefits to communities, for the most part have not had access to the robust federal funding available for so many other efforts.

Investment results will include:

- Rehabilitation, restoration, and upgrading of infrastructure heavily impacted by increased public use of parks, preserves, trails, greenways, neighborhood gardens, and other public open spaces during both the pandemic and post-pandemic era.
- Strategic expansions of facilities to relieve overuse of facilities strained by the increased demand and expand benefits delivered to the public.
- Greater outdoor recreational opportunities for disadvantaged communities, whether urban or rural.
- Closure of gaps in volunteer and local government owned and managed trails and trail networks.
- More Pennsylvanians getting the health benefits of recreating in safe and friendly spaces.
- Expansion and improvement of quality wildlife habitat.
- Reductions in flood damage and improved water quality.

The investment will be made via state grants to **local governments and nonprofits** that are vetted through DCNR's well-established, objective, accountable system.

For more information, please reach out to the people of the Growing Greener Coalition's partner organizations, including the following contacts:

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