



Chesapeake Bay Foundation – 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 and Governor Wolf February 15, 2022

The partner organizations of the Growing Greener Coalition on behalf of our hundreds of thousands of supporters and hundreds of allied organizations across the Commonwealth commend **Governor Wolf** for his call to inject \$450 million into a Growing Greener III using funding provided to the state by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). This dovetails with Republican initiatives in both the PA Senate and House.

**Senator Gordner's** [SB 525](#) invests \$500 million of ARPA funds into a Growing Greener III. The bill, which enjoys sponsorship by a bipartisan majority of senators (13 Republicans and 14 Democrats), has received second consideration by the chamber. **Representatives Schlegel Culver** and **Quinn** introduced a House version as [HB 2020](#). We commend Senator Gordner and the representatives for their leadership in moving these bills.

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](#). We thank the senator and representatives for their leadership on these initiatives to improve water quality.

These proposals will judiciously invest in capital projects that can be implemented now and deliver huge returns on the investment for decades to come. From nature-based solutions that prevent flooding and stream degradation (including installation of riparian forest buffers, passive AMD treatment, and wetland restoration) to rehabilitation of state and local parks and trails and protection of wildlife habitat 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. Projects involve surveyors, appraisers, legal services, engineers, planners, drafters, environmental remediators, hydrologists, geologists, agricultural consultants, horticulturalists,

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, and equipment rental businesses.

Investing in Pennsylvania's environment makes strong fiscal sense. 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>.)

For more information, please reach out to the people of the Growing Greener Coalition's partner organizations, including but not limited to:

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