



URGENT

Open Letter to Governor Wolf and Members of the General Assembly, 6/25/2019

The Environmental Stewardship Fund was established to make environmental investments—to fund on-the-ground projects—not to pay for government operations. The need for a robust Environmental Stewardship Fund has never been greater given Pennsylvania's **billions of dollars of project needs**:

- to reduce destructive flooding, restore waterways to productive life, and protect drinking water
- to address the Chesapeake Bay watershed, MS4, and other regulatory requirements that aim to achieve the same; and
- to rehabilitate state park and forest infrastructure and county and local park facilities, support farmland preservation, and more.

Why, given this tremendous need, does the proposed budget **divert roughly \$10 million in potential ESF project investments** to pay for government operations?

This spring, Pennsylvania's watershed implementation plan for the Chesapeake identified a **\$257 million/year shortfall** to restore water quality. This number doesn't include needs in the Delaware, Ohio, and other river basins or non-water environmental infrastructure needs. **Why are you on the verge of cutting \$10 million from environmental projects when annual funding needs to be expanded by \$100s of millions?**

The pending budget expands the Rainy Day Fund. Pennsylvania is having plenty of **rainy days—causing all manner of flooding problems**. At a time when the State is proposing to increase the Rainy Day Fund, why would it cut funding for ESF investments? ESF will deliver on-the-ground results for communities now, and help us avoid future costs from water pollution and property damage.

Governor Wolf and members of the General Assembly, the Growing Greener Coalition requests that you:

- Adjust the final 2019-2020 budget to ensure that there is no loss of new funding for environmental projects.
- Move administrative expenses charged to ESF back into the General Fund.
- Work to address the state's multi-hundred-million-dollar **annual shortfall** in environmental investments—whether through Restore PA, some variation on it, or other funding mechanisms.

For more information, please don't hesitate to reach out to the people and organizations of the Coalition including:

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