

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



June 22, 2021

[hand-delivered]

Dear Senator _____:

The nineteen partner organizations of the Growing Greener Coalition and hundreds of allied organizations congratulate Senators Gordner and Mensch on the introduction of **Senate Bill 525** and urge you to join in supporting this bipartisan legislation. The bill provides a long-needed boost to **Growing Greener** (Environmental Stewardship Fund) investments using \$500 million of American Rescue Plan dollars (7% of the state's share).

Growing Greener is an excellent match for the American Rescue Plan:

- Growing Greener makes lasting capital investments. These are not operational expenditures that have to be supported with state general funds after the federal money is gone.
- Many other states—red (Florida, Indiana, etc.) and blue (Michigan, California, etc.)—are using ARP monies for these types of projects, so Pennsylvania will have plenty of company in applying ARP to Growing Greener.
- Tens of millions of dollars in Growing Greener projects are shovel-ready now. Many more can be ready in short order if money is made available.

For many years, the General Assembly has been unable to significantly boost state investments to provide Pennsylvanians swimmable and

fishable streams; unquestionably safe drinking water; well-maintained parks and trails for families and individuals; abundant public spaces for hunting and nature-watching; and preserved farmland to stabilize local farm economies. Factoring in inflation, we have been moving backwards. This year presents an opportunity to break this pattern.

From nature-based solutions that reduce flooding impacts and stream degradation (e.g., riparian forest buffers on farms and wetland restoration), to passive treatment systems for abandoned mine drainage, to rehabilitation of the parks and trails that underpin a large part of the Commonwealth's tourism and outdoor recreation economies, SB 525 will support:

- Myriad small business and good-paying jobs for all this infrastructure project work to be performed now¹; and
- The jobs and economic prosperity of the future as people choose to stay or relocate into a Pennsylvania attentive to their quality-of-life concerns.²

Improvements to our shared environment can drive our economy and communities to new levels of prosperity. Please support SB 525.

On behalf of the Growing Greener Coalition partners,



Andrew M. Loza

Chair, Growing Greener Coalition
Executive Director, WeConservePA

¹ 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.

² See the numerous studies in the [Economic Benefits](https://conservationtools.org) section of <https://conservationtools.org>.