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Dear PennEnvironment member,

The beauty and history nestled within our state's open spaces have the power to inspire and astonish us — from the waterfalls of the Poconos, to the family farms in Amish country, to the historic sites of Valley Forge and Gettysburg.

But our open spaces not only enrich and distinguish our state; they are also an integral part of our daily lives:

Running with your dog along the trails of your neighborhood park.  
Teaching your child or grandchild how to bait a hook at a nearby pond.  
Picnicking with friends atop a mountain at the height of “leafing” season.

Unfortunately, we've seen too many of our beloved landscapes threatened or irreparably lost. Especially over the last few decades, constant, encroaching development in the form of cookie-cutter housing developments and strip malls have been an unstoppable force, **paving over more than 1 million acres** of family farmland, forests and other open spaces.

But one state program has been a powerful tool in placing our most threatened open spaces off limits and under protection — **Growing Greener**.

You're probably familiar with the program. But if not, chances are there's a local park, open space, family farm or restored stream near you that has been preserved because of the program.

Now, we need to save Growing Greener. That's because our state's most successful land and water **conservation program is about to expire**. If we don't act quickly, we will lose this program and, along with it, more of our precious landscapes.

That's why I'm writing to ask you to take action and **make a special contribution to PennEnvironment** of \$35, \$50 or \$100 today.

With your help, we can save Growing Greener and help save more of our natural heritage for our kids and generations to come.

## **Preserving Pennsylvania**

Results from a recent poll of residents throughout the state showed that nearly 75 percent of Pennsylvanians support efforts to preserve our state's forests, parks, family farms and other open spaces.

Visitors across the country travel to Pennsylvania to marvel at our natural beauty and our historical significance. From Gettysburg and Valley Forge to Amish farm country, to our local parks such as Fairmount Park and Frick Park, our open spaces are a gateway to our past, a retreat from the present and a gift for the future.

Our state's history — as well as our future — lies within the forests, ridgelines and working family farmlands of our open spaces. Yet, despite the overwhelming support from residents across the state, our natural heritage still lacks the protection it deserves.

Which open spaces am I most worried about?

The natural areas where our families go for weekend hikes, the historic sites that reveal the story of our state, the local parks where our children play, the wetlands protecting our drinking water, and the 200-year-old working family farms that define our state, provide our local food and many residents' livelihood.

### **Our open spaces and family farms need our help**

When we lose a family farm or other open space, we lose more than a piece of land. We lose a portion of our cultural and historical heritage, even as development-driven pollution and traffic diminish our quality of life.

Yet for too long, development has been relentless:

- In the Philadelphia area, **one acre of open space is razed every 45 minutes** to make room for new sprawling development.
- The Pittsburgh area **lost more than a quarter of the area's working family farms** to overdevelopment between 1969 and 1992.

### **Renew Growing Greener, protect open spaces**

To protect our unspoiled open spaces, gurgling brooks and family farms, Pennsylvania established the conservation program known as Growing Greener in 1999.

In the program's first five years, Growing Greener saved more than 500 miles of rivers and streams, 4,400 acres of wetlands and 360 family farms.

And in 2005, Pennsylvanians like us overwhelmingly voted to renew the Growing Greener program when it appeared on a statewide ballot.

Growing Greener has helped to protect land and improve some of our greatest places in Pennsylvania, such as Schenley and Frick Park in Pittsburgh, and Valley Forge and Fairmount Park in the Philadelphia area.

Against a backdrop of relentless overdevelopment, Growing Greener has been like a shelter in a storm, giving communities the hope and the means to save our favorite local parks, farms, forests and other open spaces.

- Between 2006-2008, Growing Greener **helped preserve more than 25,000 acres of farmland** threatened by development.
- **Nearly \$4 million from Growing Greener has gone to protect and restore Fairmount Park** in Philadelphia.

There's so much more to do. Yet our state's politicians have let Growing Greener run out of money, and if we don't take action soon, the program will expire.

Time and time again, Growing Greener has come through to save the places we care about most. Now it's time for us to save Growing Greener.

That's why PennEnvironment is bringing together residents from all walks of life, such as farmers, hunters, hikers and local officials, to show their support and urge our elected officials to renew Growing Greener.

### **How can you help?**

First, visit [www.PennEnvironment.org](http://www.PennEnvironment.org) and click on "How You Can Help" today to e-mail your state legislators to support the renewal of Growing Greener.

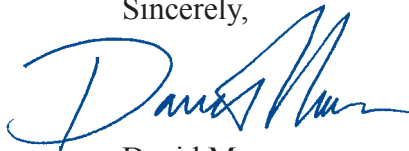
**Next, please make a special contribution of \$35, \$50, \$100 or more to PennEnvironment.**

Of course, your membership is paid and current — we're putting those dollars toward efforts to reduce global warming emissions, promote clean energy and protect our lakes and waterways.

But we need your special support today. If we don't renew Growing Greener, more farmlands will be lost and more parks and open spaces will be paved over.

Together, we can keep Pennsylvania growing greener — and keep the places we love protected and preserved for the future.

Sincerely,



David Masur  
Director

P.S. Here in Pennsylvania, our landscape not only defines our state, but also enriches our daily lives. But we've lost too many precious open spaces to encroaching overdevelopment. That's why we're working to renew the Growing Greener program to protect our natural heritage. Please make a special contribution today.