

A Brief History of Growing Greener (1999-2010)



GROWING GREENER

www.renewgrowinggreener.org



GROWING GREENER began in 1999 when Governor Tom Ridge and legislative leaders agreed to commit \$650 million over five years for investments in farmland preservation, conservation of open space, restoring and protecting Pennsylvania's streams and rivers, improving and expanding state and local parks, and developing new trails and greenways.

In 2002, Governor Mark Schweiker and the General Assembly created the Environmental Stewardship Fund to help fulfill the original Growing Greener commitment and to establish a permanent funding mechanism to carry the program's success into the future. They provided the Environmental Stewardship Fund with a dedicated revenue source by increasing the fee charged for dumping trash in Pennsylvania landfills.



In 2005, Governor Ed Rendell and the General Assembly, recognizing the need to accelerate the work of Growing Greener, decided to put a \$625 million bond referendum question to the voters. In the primary election, 60% of voters approved the bond and Growing Greener II was established. However, it was subsequently decided that the Growing Greener II debt service would

be paid out of the Environmental Stewardship Fund, thus significantly reducing the impact of that program.

For a decade, legislators, Governors and voters from both parties have recognized the value of investing in Pennsylvania's land,

In the just the past four years, Growing Greener has:

- Helped secure our food supply by preserving more than 33,700 acres of working farms;
- Conserved more than 42,300 acres of threatened natural areas and community treasures;
- Enhanced access to outdoor recreation through 234 community park projects and 132 state park and forest infrastructure projects;
- Reduced flooding and pollution of our waters through 400 watershed protection projects and more than 100 drinking/wastewater improvements;
- Restored more than 1,600 acres of abandoned mine land;
- The County Environmental Initiative Program has provided \$66 million to help counties address their local environmental priorities.



water and communities. The success of the Growing Greener program proves that sustained funding enables our communities to make major improvements in our quality of life, environment and economy.

