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### **Renew Growing Greener Coalition Expresses Support for Environmental Funding in Marcellus Shale Proposal**

**(HARRISBURG, PA)** The Renew Growing Greener Coalition, the largest coalition of conservation, recreation and environmental organizations in the Commonwealth, today issued the following statement from Executive Director Andrew Heath, expressing support for the environmental funding outlined in the current Marcellus Shale impact fee proposal:

"At first glance, this proposal appears to be a good first step toward restoring funding for the Environmental Stewardship Fund and supporting Growing Greener programs and projects that protect our drinking water, conserve our open space, enhance recreational opportunities and stimulate economic recovery across the Commonwealth.

"We commend the General Assembly and the Governor for recognizing the importance of Growing Greener, which has transformed Pennsylvania by empowering communities to preserve working farms and conserve special places, clean up rivers and streams, improve parks and trails, maintain our heritage areas, and revitalize cities and towns.

"Growing Greener and the state's other environmental, conservation and recreation investments are critical to the long-term well being of our Commonwealth. The Coalition will remain vigilant to ensure that Pennsylvania continues to make these vital investments in its future."

Growing Greener is a bipartisan program established in 1999 under Governor Tom Ridge and later expanded by Governors Schweiker and Rendell. Since its establishment, Growing Greener has created a legacy of success, preserving more than 107,000 acres of Pennsylvania's family farmland, conserving more than 42,300 acres of threatened open space, adding 26,000 acres to state parks and forests, and restoring over 16,000 acres of abandoned mine lands.

Moreover, Growing Greener has contributed and leveraged billions of dollars to the Pennsylvania economy by helping to boost tourism, create jobs and generate revenue.

Yet despite the program's accomplishments, funding for Growing Greener projects and grants fell from an average of approximately \$150 million per year for the last six years to \$27.3 million in the current state budget, over an 80 percent reduction.

About the Renew Growing Greener Coalition The Renew Growing Greener Coalition is the largest coalition of conservation, recreation and environmental organizations in the Commonwealth, representing nearly 350 organizations and government entities from across the state. More than 140 government entities, including 32 counties, representing more than seven million Pennsylvanians, have passed resolutions calling for a dedicated source of funding for the Growing Greener Environmental Stewardship Fund. For more information on the Coalition, visit [www.RenewGrowingGreener.org](http://www.RenewGrowingGreener.org).

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