



AN ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT POWER PRODUCERS IN THE ANTHRACITE AND BITUMINOUS COAL REGIONS OF THE UNITED STATES

April 4, 2019

The Honorable Governor Tom Wolf
Office of the Governor
508 Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

The Appalachian Region Independent Power Producers Association (ARIPPA) is writing to you to express our concerns regarding your budget proposal to transfer funds from the Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund (Keystone) and the Environmental Stewardship Fund (ESF) to support the operating costs of the Pennsylvania Departments of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Though we support the proper funding of these Departments, we are concerned about the impacts of shifting monies from these critical environmental funds.

The Keystone Fund and ESF are the state's primary sources for investing in projects that bring lasting environmental benefits across the Commonwealth. Among their many accomplishments are improved water quality, conservation of lands important to local communities and new outdoor recreational opportunities for visitors and tourists alike. The records of their exemplary work and the needs they address are described at length at www.KeystoneFund.org and www.GrowingGreener.info.

Every dollar in state grants typically leverages at least \$1 in other investments and usually the multiplier is considerably larger. The Keystone Fund alone has leveraged more than \$1 billion that has been used to complete nearly 5,000 projects. In addition, ESF has provided critical "seed money" to conserve more than 80,000 acres of open spaces, restore more than 1,600 acres of abandoned mine lands and fund 400 projects to reduce flooding and improve water quality.

Many watershed and conservancy groups rely on the Keystone Fund and ESF to work towards improving the Commonwealth's environment. Our partners at the Eastern and Western Pennsylvania Coalitions for Abandoned Mine Reclamation, EPCAMR and WPCAMR respectively, represent many organizations that depend on these grants. We support their efforts and share their concerns that shifting funds will have a significant impact on their ability to complete important environmental improvement projects.

ARIPPA requests the Governor reconsider the Administration's plan to use monies from the ESF and Keystone Fund for DEP and DCNR operations. Now is the time to strengthen Pennsylvania's dedicated environmental funds rather than redirect their funds so they can deliver even more, not less, in project investments.

Respectfully submitted,

Cristy Sweeney
Director, Finance & Public Affairs
csweeney@arippa.org