

We need to fund local protection efforts

We must stem the flood of open space destruction before more pristine places are lost forever. While we must push for stronger zoning laws and growth boundaries, funding for open space protection will give local residents and organizations immediate relief from open space destruction.

While running for office, Gov. Rendell pledged to increase funding for open space protection by at least \$1 billion. This initiative must be implemented as soon as possible in order to protect Pennsylvania's threatened open spaces.



PennEnvironment Director David Masur speaks at a news conference announcing the release of "Our Natural Heritage At Risk," which uncovers threats facing Pennsylvania's most special places.

Preserving Pennsylvania

Providing funding to local programs is just the first step in the fight against irresponsible development. PennEnvironment is also working to:

- **Give citizens more legal tools** to protect open spaces, and halt the threat of litigation from overzealous developers.
- **Redirect development** into Pennsylvania's downtown communities, taking advantage of existing infrastructure to alleviate development pressure from the state's open spaces.

What you can do

Support PennEnvironment. Our members' support allows us to protect our state's important natural heritage.

Send a message to Gov. Rendell. Ask him to move forward with his plan to preserve Pennsylvania's open spaces. Go to www.PennEnvironment.org to send the governor an email on this issue.



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Save Our Open Spaces

We must protect our open spaces now

Valley Forge, French Creek and the state's Amish farmlands are just a few of the places that make Pennsylvania special. You may think that our local parks, wetlands and 100-year-old family farms are protected, but developers like Toll Brothers are bringing in bulldozers and cement trucks to turn farms and forests into cookie-cutter developments and the next Wal-Mart.

Pennsylvanians are digging in their heels, but it's an uphill battle to stand up to deep-pocketed developers who have political influence on state land-use laws. We must ensure that local communities have adequate access to conservation funding in order to protect these places, and stand up to unwanted development.

Once Pennsylvania's special places are developed, the beauty and character of our state will be lost for generations. We need to take immediate steps to support local communities who are fighting to protect these places for our children and grandchildren.

—David Masur,
Director, PennEnvironment

Pennsylvania loses 350 acres of pristine land every day

Instead of preserving family farms and special places, current laws make it easier to convert our open spaces to strip malls, parking lots and new developments. Already, Pennsylvania has the fifth-fastest rate of open space destruction in the nation. Once these places are destroyed, they're lost forever.

Endangering species A recent study by Pennsylvania's 21st Century Environmental Commission declared open space destruction to be the top threat to the state's species and ecosystems. Currently, 20 percent of the state's wildlife species are listed as species of "special concern."

Polluting waterways Open space destruction is one of the leading causes of water pollution in the Commonwealth. Overdevelopment increases runoff pollution tenfold, clogging our waterways with pesticides, fertilizers and other pollutants.

Standing up to developers is an uphill battle

Communities are coming together to try and stop unwanted development, but it's not an easy task. Wealthy developers are able to buy up open spaces before local citizens have an opportunity to protect them.

Increasing land taxes As pressure from development pushes up property values, many family farmers cannot afford to keep the land in agriculture and are forced to sell their property. Partially due to this pressure, Pennsylvania lost over one million acres of farmland between 1982 and 1992.

Developers making the rules In less than four years, development-related PACs contributed over \$2.3 million to political parties and elected officials in the state. This helps increase their influence over the legislative process, making it harder to pass strong open space protections even when supported by the public.



Case Study: Bucks County, PA. Bucks County's natural heritage includes farms like Burgess Lea, along the Delaware River, which dates from the 1700s (1). Special places in this area are being replaced by new developments like this one (2), resulting in a forever-changed landscape (3). Fortunately, Milford Township was able to save the Paxson Farm (4) by purchasing the land before developers could attempt to buy it for further development in the region. (Source: David Hanauer, Tour of Bucks County.)

