

## A blueprint to protect open spaces

PennEnvironment has a commonsense vision to preserve the family farms and open spaces that make Pennsylvania special. We're asking our elected officials to support:

- Giving special designations for some of our most ecologically important open spaces, historic places and family farmlands in order to protect them permanently;
- Giving townships the legal tools to have more control in local land use decisions and closing loopholes that force unwanted development in our communities;
- Implementing policies that promote smart and sustainable development and stopping the practice of letting local taxpayers foot the bill for overdevelopment;
- Guaranteeing sustainable and dedicated funding to open space conservation programs.



*Pennsylvanians want to protect our open spaces and remaining family farms, for now and for future generations. But unless we change the laws to rein in powerful developers, the state will continue to lose these important areas to sprawling overdevelopment.*

## Delivering victories for our open spaces

Even in the face of powerful interests like the developers' lobby, PennEnvironment has a track record of delivering concrete victories to protect Pennsylvania's open spaces.

### Increasing conservation funding

PennEnvironment worked with other conservation organizations to pass the Growing Greener II initiative, which will enhance Pennsylvania's cornerstone environmental programs to permanently save some of the most important places threatened by overdevelopment.

### Protecting state parks and forests

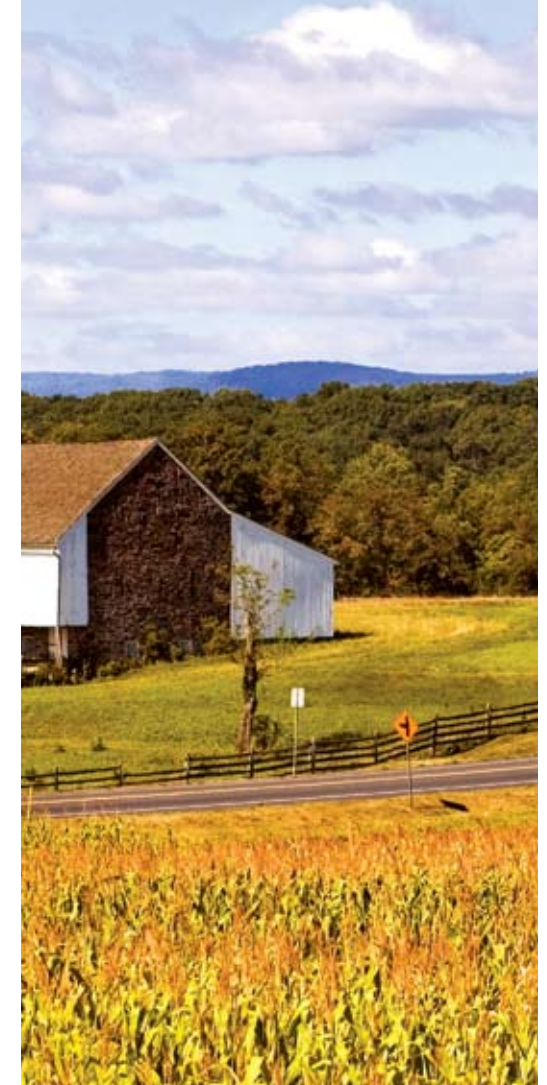
PennEnvironment helped stop the largest oil and gas drilling proposal on public lands in state history, protecting 450,000 acres of state park and forestlands for future generations of Pennsylvanians to enjoy.



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**Protecting  
Family Farms  
and Open Spaces**

## Protecting our natural heritage

The Pennsylvania that we know and love—our state’s working family farms, Amish country, the Poconos and historic sites like Valley Forge and Gettysburg—continues to be threatened by encroaching overdevelopment.

Voters overwhelmingly approved the Growing Greener II ballot initiative in 2005, showing their support for protecting our family farms and open spaces—it should have sent a clear message to our elected officials that we need to be doing everything possible to protect our natural heritage.

Unfortunately, elected officials sometimes have their hands tied and developers like Toll Brothers are able to do an end-run around the laws and policies established to preserve Pennsylvania’s most threatened places.

So PennEnvironment is working to close these loopholes and protect our open spaces—for now, and for future generations.

***“It’s time to put the long-term preservation of Pennsylvania’s open spaces, family farms and natural heritage ahead of short-term profits for developers.”***

***- David Masur  
Director, PennEnvironment***



**A natural heritage worth protecting:** From Amish farmlands and working family farms (1), to the Poconos and other wild places (2), to important historic sites like Valley Forge and Gettysburg battlefield (3), Pennsylvania’s open spaces are threatened by encroaching overdevelopment (4). PennEnvironment is working to protect the important places that define our state from developers.

## We need to save family farms and open spaces

We can’t afford to wait any longer to protect our remaining open spaces. When we destroy these important places we lower our quality of life, lose important habitat for the state’s species, and increase air and water pollution.

- More than 1 million acres of Pennsylvania’s family farmland, forest and open spaces were paved over for development from 1992 to 1997—the second fastest rate of development in the nation, only behind Texas.
- The Pittsburgh area lost more than 25 percent of its working family farmlands to overdevelopment between 1969 and 1992.
- Today, one acre of open space is razed every 45 minutes in the Philadelphia area to make room for new sprawling development.

Together, we’ve taken steps to protect open spaces in the past—so we know it’s possible to do it again. But time is running out so we’ll need to take action soon.

## It’s time to level the playing field

Pennsylvanians want to protect our open spaces and remaining family farms—even though the state continues to lose these important areas to sprawling overdevelopment.

That’s because powerful developers like Toll Brothers find loopholes in our land use laws—or strong arm our local elected officials into paving over the open spaces that we want to protect—in order to force through development projects that local communities oppose.

Whether it’s the fact that developers have the power to override our local land use plans or that they get unlimited lawsuits to force development projects on local communities, clearly we need to level the playing field to protect our open spaces.

As long as our current laws help developers pave over our open spaces it will make the preservation of these threatened places hard, if not impossible.