

## **GROWING GREENER PLUS PROGRAM**

Pennsylvania's [Growing Greener Plus Program](#), administered by DEP's Bureau Watershed Restoration and Nonpoint Source Management (BWRNSM), is part of DEP's Grant and Loan Program, which provides grants to assist individuals, groups, and businesses in addressing a host of environmental issues. The Growing Greener Plus Program remains the largest single investment of state funds in Pennsylvania's history to address Pennsylvania's critical environmental concerns of the 21st century. The program encourages partnerships between counties, municipalities, county conservation districts, watershed organizations, and other groups to restore and protect the environment. The three programs covered under DEP's Growing Greener Plus Grants Program include Growing Greener Watershed Restoration and Protection, Abandoned Mine Drainage (AMD) [Set-Aside](#), and Surface Mining Conservation and Reclamation (SMCRA) Bond Forfeiture grants. More information on these programs is provided in their respective sections in this Integrated Report.

The Growing Greener Plus Program is supported by the Environmental Stewardship Fund, which receives funding from landfill tipping fees. Since 1999, the Growing Greener Plus Program has awarded more than \$1 billion in state funds for farmland-preservation projects statewide; open space protection; maintenance in state parks; clean-up of abandoned mines and restoration of watersheds; recreational trails and local parks; new and upgraded water and sewer systems; and installation of best management practices to reduce nonpoint source water pollution. The funds are distributed among four state agencies: the Department of Environmental Protection; the Department of Agriculture to administer farmland preservation projects; the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for state park renovations and improvements; and the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Investment Authority for water and sewer system upgrades.

In August 2022, the Office of Attorney General announced that Energy Transfer was convicted of criminal charges related to their conduct during the construction of two major pipelines – the Mariner East 2 Pipeline, which crosses 17 counties across southern Pennsylvania, and the Revolution Pipeline, a 42.5-mile pipeline that starts in Butler County, and is routed through Beaver County and Allegheny County, connecting to a gas processing plant in Washington County. As part of the settlement agreement, Energy Transfer is paying \$10 million towards dedicated projects that improve the quality of watersheds and streams along the two pipeline corridors (Table 2). DEP is authorized to allocate these funds in grants for watershed restoration and protection, abandoned mine reclamation, and abandoned oil and gas well plugging projects. In 2021 and 2022, a combined 151 projects were approved totaling \$40,173,683 (Table 1 and Table 2) under the DEP's Growing Greener Plus Grants Program.

**Table 1.** 2021 Growing Greener, AMD, and SMCRA Projects

<b>Program</b>	<b>Projects Approved</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Growing Greener	65	\$18,222,967
AMD	5	\$ 1,639,596
SMCRA	1	\$ 368,539
Totals	71	\$20,231,102

**Table 2.** 2022 Growing Greener Projects, SMCRA and Mariner East 2/Revolution Pipeline Corridor Settlement Projects

<b>Program</b>	<b>Projects Approved</b>	<b>Amount Awarded</b>
Growing Greener	72	\$17,824,000
SMCRA	1	\$ 273,046
Mariner East 2/Revolution Pipeline Corridor Settlement	7	\$ 1,845,535
Totals	80	\$19,942,581

Since 2016, there has been an added emphasis on agriculture and stormwater projects that are in Pennsylvania's portion of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, to reduce nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment in Pennsylvania's local waters leading to the Chesapeake Bay. A current list of projects for the protection and enhancement of Pennsylvania's water resources is available for 2021 and 2022 at DEP.