



**House Appropriations Budget Hearing Testimony
Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
February 27, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chairman Harris, Chairman Struzzi, and members of the House Appropriations Committee. Thank you for this opportunity to discuss Governor Shapiro's 2025-2026 proposed budget for the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). I want to personally thank Governor Shapiro and members of the General Assembly for their commitment to ensuring DCNR can continue to conserve and sustain our natural resources for years to come.

It's important that we continue to improve Pennsylvania's public lands by protecting and improving the infrastructure in our state park and forests. The Governor's proposed budget supports this by proposing needed investments that will make Pennsylvania a premier destination for exceptional trail experiences, benefiting the economic competitiveness of communities, tourism, and public health.

Pennsylvania's outdoor recreation industry saw significant growth over the last year. Building on previous strategic investments to elevate outdoor recreation, the Governor's proposed budget for the 2025-26 Fiscal Year from all sources includes \$664 million for DCNR, with \$5 million in new funding to expand state parks and trails in Pennsylvania.

With this funding, DCNR can improve Pennsylvania's state park system by expanding Lehigh Gorge State Park by 450 acres. This will reopen the popular and historic Glen Onoko Falls trail, which has been closed since 2019. This funding will also allow DCNR to add Pennsylvania's 125th state park, and first subterranean state park with the inclusion of the stunning Laurel Caverns in Fayette County.

With these new additions, DCNR will further promote Pennsylvania as the Great American Getaway and build on Pennsylvania's growing \$18.9 billion outdoor recreation industry. Governor Shapiro frequently talks about his support for our mission and is a regular visitor to our parks and forests with his family. It's clear that this budget proposal is a positive reflection of the important work we do for the people of Pennsylvania.

Again, I want to thank you for helping secure much needed funding that will strengthen and protect our natural resources while benefiting Pennsylvania's

communities, businesses, and residents. We look forward to partnering with you in the coming year to further our mission and ensure that people, businesses, and communities across our Commonwealth continue to thrive.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cindy Adams Dunn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Cindy Adams Dunn
Secretary