Mr. Paul Zeph, Chief, Planning Section
DCNR Bureau of State Parks
P.O. Box 8551
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8551

Re: Penn’s Parks for All – Pennsylvania State Parks Strategic Plan Update
Stakeholder and Partner Input

Dear Mr. Zeph:

The Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) staff and Environment Committee have responded to a request from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of State Parks, for input from stakeholder and partner groups regarding the update to the strategic plan.

The LVPC has served as the official regional planning organization for Lehigh and Northampton counties since 1961. The LVPC maintains a comprehensive plan for the two counties titled Comprehensive Plan The Lehigh Valley...2030 (Comprehensive Plan) that provides a regional framework for protecting natural and agricultural resources, guiding the location and intensity of development, and matching land development with appropriate infrastructure. Within the past three years, the LVPC and Counties have also updated the park, recreation and open space plans for the two counties. The strategic plan update’s public survey questions and the preliminary questions were reviewed, and within the context of the regional and county documents mentioned above, we provide the following comments:

State Parks should:

- continue to primarily focus on providing nature-based outdoor recreation opportunities, offering developed facilities to meet identified needs in the context of recreation opportunities provided by county and local entities.
- provide access to adjacent residential areas when possible.
- protect natural resource conservation priority areas by limiting use and managing the resource as needed.
- protect rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, floodplains and wetlands by preserving or restoring riparian buffers where appropriate using a variety of native, climate-adaptive vegetation.
- consider local demographics and current recreation activity trends when planning facilities and programs.
- expand state park acreage if the need for more nature-based, passive outdoor recreation in the county is evident from a resident survey.
- provide activities for all ages and abilities.
- pursue commonwealth and other funding to rehabilitate and improve state park facilities.
- notify and allow comment from municipalities and counties when instituting facility, program or policy changes.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide input to the Penn’s Parks for All – Pennsylvania State Parks Strategic Plan Update.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Becky A. Bradley, AICP
Executive Director

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