

News for Immediate Release

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Commonwealth Attorneys Negotiate Settlement to Ensure Funding for Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

Harrisburg - Commonwealth attorneys have negotiated a settlement in the case of *PEDF v. Commonwealth*, ensuring the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources receives essential funding while preserving the opportunity to present the Commonwealth's case in court.

"Without this settlement, DCNR's capacity to preserve Pennsylvania's natural treasures would have been decimated," Governor Tom Corbett said. "We cannot allow our commitment to protecting Pennsylvania's state parks and forests to be held hostage during the duration of this lawsuit."

"The preliminary relief that PEDF was seeking would have eliminated more than \$120 million in funding appropriated to the department," DCNR Secretary Ellen Ferretti said. "This agreement will allow the critical operations of DCNR to continue, including all state parks remaining open and staff being available during our busiest time of year, and no interruption to the work of our Bureau of Forestry, such as managing the multiple uses of our state forests, monitoring gas development on the forests to protect their natural and recreational values, fighting fires, forest pest management and other operations."

Under the terms of the agreement, the department will continue to work to prepare for leasing of DCNR managed land that does not involve surface disturbance on the newly leased areas, but not take any final action pending the Commonwealth Court's final decision on the underlying case.

"We appreciate the Commonwealth Court taking these significant issues into consideration and we look forward to presenting our case in court," said General Counsel Jim Schultz.

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