

**Statement of
Michael DiBerardinis
Secretary
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Before the
Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee
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Chairperson White and distinguished members of the Senate Environmental Resources and Energy Committee, I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide a briefing on the report of DCNR's Carbon Management Advisory Group (CMAG).

I would like to begin by acknowledging the work of this Committee and of the General Assembly in passing Act 70 - the Pennsylvania Climate Change Act of 2008. I applaud Senator Erickson for his leadership, and the members of this Committee for supporting the development of the Commonwealth's policy response to the most urgent environmental challenge of our times. I look forward to being an active member of the Climate Change Advisory Committee established under Act 70.

Since taking office in 2003, I have had the opportunity to see the important role that DCNR's lands, facilities and programs have in the lives of Pennsylvanians. DCNR has a core responsibility to its historic mission, which is to protect and enhance the resources of the Commonwealth – the land, waters, forests, and geologic resources - that are entrusted to us. I believe that we do that exceedingly well.

Our state forest, for example, is one of only a handful of state forests to be independently certified as well-managed in a way that protects its long-term health. And thanks to the leadership of Governor Rendell and the support of the General Assembly in passing Growing Greener II, we have protected more environmentally sensitive land than at any time in decades, substantially upgraded park and forest infrastructure, and

partnered with hundreds of communities across the Commonwealth to invest in conservation and recreation projects.

We also have worked very hard to broaden our mission to help to shape a sustainable Pennsylvania. We are seeing very powerful and encouraging results across the state in connecting communities to their natural resources, and placing conservation at the heart of sustainable community economic development strategies.

The CMAG report represents another extension of our mission – one that attempts to meet one of the most urgent challenges of the 21st Century. Climate change is perhaps the single biggest long-term threat to Pennsylvania's existing natural heritage and the sustainability of our economy. DCNR's stewardship and sustainability mission demands that we rise to the challenges of understanding and addressing this threat within the context of our work in a serious, thoughtful and creative manner.

The Carbon Management Advisory Group (CMAG) is a collaborative project that began in August 2006, in partnership with the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC). A total of 65 stakeholders representing non-governmental conservation organizations, academia, substantial elements of the private sector, and state and federal governments participated in preparing the report.

DCNR commissioned this report in order to get the best information with which to make management and program decisions. We want to elevate the value of open space protection and stewardship of public and private land and, at the same time, give Pennsylvania a competitive advantage in a world that restricts carbon emissions to address climate change.

The CMAG report makes recommendations on policy options that DCNR might pursue, using Pennsylvania's land and geology to address global warming. The recommendations are in four broad categories:

- The potential to store carbon dioxide emissions in underground geologic formations, and alternative pathways to developing that potential;
- The potential to offset carbon dioxide emissions and provide sustainable biomass energy resources through a variety of forest management options;
- The potential to offset carbon dioxide emissions and capture co-benefits - habitat and water quality protection, and improved forest health and productivity, to name a few - through land conservation activities; and finally
- How the design of future federal, regional, or private carbon credit mechanisms and markets could encourage the most effective utilization of the state's natural resources.

Chairperson White and members of the committee, thank you for your interest in our carbon work. I will now ask DCNR Chief of Staff John Quigley to give a more detailed presentation about the CMAG report.