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Subject: Spring Creek overlay
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To the Supervisors:

Although a resident of Spring Township, I live within a mile or so of Benner Township and two miles of Spring Creek. I have been a resident for 40 years.

I have fished Spring Creek for years and recently enjoyed hiking, fishing and biking in the cooperative management zone.

Having lived here during the despoiling of spring creek by PCPs and chemical run-off, I know how fragile this wild area is. Decades later recovery is incomplete.

We all know what a unique environment exists here: rare wild plants, fox squirrels, superb trout and a mixed forest.

As the region undergoes further development the stream and canyon will face increasing challenge. To quote the USDA bulletin on riparian areas

The character of a riparian area is dependent upon the condition of its watershed. Most important is the relationship of watershed hydrology to the riparian area. In general, the amounts and type of vegetative ground cover, the area of the watershed, and the slope of the terrain are directly related to the percentage of water that will enter the drainage system as surface flow or as percolated water. Riparian plant composition, habitat structure, and productivity are determined by the timing, duration, and extent of flooding. Land use changes, paved-over areas, or the removal of vegetation cause water to flow quickly from a watershed and through a riparian zone. Soil moisture storage and productivity are reduced. This can lead to prolonged periods of no flow or low flow and increase frequency and duration of flooding, resulting in a drastic decline in productivity.

I assume you know this, and therefore I am at a loss as to why you would make zoning changes which have the potential to seriously threaten this area.

Agricultural runoff and certainly runoff from the airport represent only a part of the risk. Thus to further isolate the canyon will only serve to further increase the challenges faced by the area.

If we keep whittling away natural environment for the sake of developers, we do the whole ecosystem of the centre region harm.

Benner Township is large enough that surely other areas can be safely developed.

This concern goes way beyond a "green agenda". The concern is for the basic quality of life in the centre region. Somewhere, sometime we have to sit back and say stop; enough is enough.

Let's preserve something. This is the area to preserve.

I suspect that maybe the University is behind at least some of this. Constantly putting pressure on areas contiguous to university property, they have been involved in litigation elsewhere. The PSU track record is clear on this topic.

I hope you as supervisors will consider the the impact on a larger scale and the impact on the larger percent of the population of the region.

Thanks for reading this.

Richard Dixon