

Lisa P. Jackson, Commissioner DEP
401 East State Street
P.O. Box 402
Trenton, NJ 08625-0402
April 2008

Dear Commissioner Jackson:

PLEASE SAVE KITTATINNY VALLEY STATE PARK! It contains New Jersey's two finest rail-trails, the **Paulinskill Valley Trail** and the **Sussex Branch Trail**. They are both multi-use cinder based trails suitable for all activities except the use of motorized vehicles. The Paulinskill Valley Trail contains **endangered plant species**. Under the proposed closure, Kittatinny Valley State Park would have no park police or maintenance crew of its own. There would probably not be enough personnel from Swartswood State Park to sufficiently patrol and maintain the 47 miles of rail-trail. Kittatinny Valley State Park needs to remain open so all its trails are adequately maintained as they are now under the current superintendent.

Further, the proposed consolidation of Kittatinny Valley State Park in Andover Township would result in the closing of the park office and the visitor center. Approximately **\$630,000 was spent to renovate an historical farmhouse** to provide this building, which also serves as a meeting room for the educational programs offered to the public by the park naturalist. A wildflower garden created by the park naturalist was awarded first place in the 2007 contest run by the Master Gardeners of Sussex County. Members of the North American Butterfly Association visit this garden in season to count butterflies for the local New Jersey chapter. If vacated, this building and others on the park grounds would deteriorate, educational programs and walks would be eliminated and the wildflower garden would become overgrown. The losers would be the residents of New Jersey!

Please find more appropriate places to cut the budget than to take away our state park and forest facilities which are used by two million people each year! **PLEASE SAVE KITTATINNY VALLEY STATE PARK! Thank you!**

Sincerely yours,