

FOJ LAUNCHES '07 PROGRAMS

The Watershed Center was finally approved for occupancy last fall which opened the doors (literally) for us to offer programs to our members and the community. Over the fall and winter we have been pleased to bring you programs on global warming with a showing and discussion of Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth", a slide show "Life along the River" by Larry Maltby of the Friends of the Boyne and hosted a presentation on the Jordan River Preserve Management Plan. On one of the first snowy mornings in January, a small group joined Bruce Barber for a snowshoe hike to identify animals by their tracks in the fresh fallen snow. On another sunny but brisk afternoon, a small but hearty group explored the new Jordan River Nature Preserve and warmed up with chili and conversation afterward at the Watershed Center. In preparation for spring we built more than 20 birdhouses with the help of Steve Middaugh and Tom Sothard. These are posted on the property, awaiting new tenants.

Margaret Moran



Spring River and Highway Cleanup in May 2007



Build-A-Birdhouse Activity in March 2007



Snowshoe Hike on the Jordan River Preserve in February 2007



Bob Sayer in the showing of "An Inconvenient Truth" in January 2007

JORDAN VALLEY VOICES



Rosie Evans

On warm spring days, my Mother's favorite adventure is to grab binoculars and a water bottle and head for the Jordan River with her granddaughter Helen and me to see the Eagle. We set up our chairs on the path between the Friends of the Jordan Watershed Center and Sportman's Park and watch and listen. My daughter photographs bugs and plants. Mom's eyes are keen and she delights in being first to spot a King Fisher or Osprey. Three years ago, we were delighted to see the heads of two young Eagles peering over the top of the platform nest, as the adult Eagle hunted and soared above us.

In the core of our beings, we know that the Eagle and the unbridled Jordan River are sacred and fragile gifts. The clear, cold water and the life it supports depend on choices and activities of human activities in the watershed. If the forests and fields of the watershed are not managed wisely, the river and all life within the watershed will be diminished.

The Natural River designation that protects the Jordan upriver from Rogers Road (south), does not apply to the Jordan River from Rogers Road to the city. Many river and wildlife enthusiasts were concerned that condominiums and other development would fragment this delicate ecosystem. The acquisitions of the 40 acre Jordan

River Nature Preserve (over 3,000 feet of river frontage just upriver from the Eagles nest), and the 85 acre Ashley-Stokes property (a portion of the Rogers family farm with over a mile of frontage on the Jordan River) by Little Traverse Conservancy in cooperation with citizens, industry and other conservation groups, insures that the vast majority of the marsh and river and uplands surrounding them, from Rogers Road to the city limits, will stay wild forever. The river, shoreline marsh, mixed hardwood/conifer swamp, fields, and woods provide habitat for a multitude of birds, waterfowl, deer, rabbit, mink, beaver and Bald Eagles. We are so very grateful to the owners of these properties who cared for the land for generations and who desired to see the land remain wild and free.

The Little Traverse Conservancy in cooperation with neighbors, the East Jordan Garden Club, the DNR, business, industry and conservation groups, is working to create a management plan for the Jordan River Nature Preserve. The primary goal is preservation and protection of the natural integrity of the land. At a meeting held at the Watershed Center, members of the community voiced their ideas on how the Preserve can best serve citizens.

Tad Malpass of the East Jordan Iron Works, a major contributor to the project said, "The East Jordan community has been supportive of our business and we feel honored to be able to participate in such an important preservation project with it's proximity to the downtown area." The opportunity for industry to work cooperatively with environmental interests on this is a special thing and is a win-win for the community and the entire area. East Jordan is our home and we feel proud to be able to be a small part of a project that will have such a positive outcome for so many years to come. East Jordan has done a good job of recognizing the importance of what we refer to as "Nature Based Tourism", which tries to balance both business and nature interests for the enjoyment and benefit of all.

When we stop to listen, we realize that this globally rare River speaks to us in powerful ways. We hear the chorus of life voices and we are awed. The mighty force of the Jordan River brings us together: City and Wild, Industry and Conservation, Recreation and Preservation, Young and Old, Students and Teachers. We come together to celebrate the gift of the Jordan River and its watershed. If we are wise and if we do our work well, our children and our children's children, will come to the Jordan to listen and wonder and watch the flight of the Osprey, and the dance of a baby Eagle jumping up and down on a nest perched over a pure, free flowing River.

Joanne Beemon

JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

What are Friends for?

I'm a sportsman and I've always enjoyed all aspects of the outdoors. Sure I've been around long enough to know who Friends of the Jordan are—they're the folks who do the river clean up, right?

This past November I became a new board member of the FOJ and what an eye opener this experience has been. Knitted into our community is an organization that isn't always visible to the average person who isn't aware of their extensive activities. FOJ impacts more than just the Jordan River that people canoe. Our concerns involve the entire watershed: from Alba to Charlevoix to Boyne City to East Jordan—it's a huge area! There are multiple counties, townships, government agencies, private developers, average citizens and city municipalities that involve themselves with the FOJ. All of these components have an impact on the watershed. FOJ's commitment is "To conserve the natural resources and protect the environmental quality of the Jordan River and its watershed"—a formidable task!

I've now seen first hand the respect the FOJ hold within these organizations. They are respected not only because of their goals; but respected because of their knowledge, dedication, and expertise in the subject area. It is these characteristics of the F.O.J that have allowed them to join with other organizations to continue their work.

Recently FOJ has partnered with Antrim County Soil Conservation Erosion officer Heidi Lang. Lang submitted a Great Lakes Sediment Control Grant for erosion control efforts within the Jordan Valley. It is cooperative efforts such as this that bring out the best of each organization for the common good of the watershed.

Friends of the Jordan has recently partnered with North Country Trails and East Jordan High School's National Honor Society to clean litter and debris from 4 miles of Jordan River hiking trails. The youth involvement of all the surrounding communities is vital to the long term management of this fragile resource.

On a Larger Scale FOJ is working in collaboration with Michigan State University to study the source of the sand bed load in the Jordan River. The sand is the single worst pollutant effecting water quality within the river. Grant writing done by the labors of volunteers has provided a grant from the D.T.E to get this project underway.

The most impressive resource I've seen is the people that are the center of this organization—they are all volunteers. These volunteers all share a passion for protecting our resources. These folks are a treasure chest of talent. They are offering their expertise to our community for the taking.

With the completion of the watershed center, FOJ has high hopes of becoming more "user friendly" by being more accessible to the public. The Education Committee has compiled a monthly schedule of events for people of all ages, offering a variety of activities. The Watershed Center has the

potential of becoming a nucleus of educational opportunity of the natural resources encompassing our communities.

This is a chance to get ourselves involved, get our kids involved. It is obvious to me that the protection and preservation of our natural resources is everyone's responsibility.

Tom Krause



VOLUNTEER STREAM MONITORING PROGRAM

In this month of May is one of the most exciting new projects we have ever done to insure the preservation of the Jordan River. The *volunteer stream monitoring program*, which has been done on other rivers and streams feeding Lake Charlevoix, will now be done on the Jordan River. The stream monitoring program collects all sorts of macro invertebrates (small bugs) in order to determine the biological health of the stream. By looking at all the types of insects and seeing if some are missing, or their numbers are going down, we can spot all sorts of problems long before they could be seen with the naked eye. Problems such as construction or pollution can be identified and solved before any permanent damage occurs.

Monitoring the stream is really very easy and only takes a few hours. Teams, which consist of leaders collectors and pickers, go out twice a year to pre-determined locations to take samples. While leaders take all relevant information on a survey form, collectors use a net to collect samples of all habitats in the stream, emptying the net's contents on trays so the pickers can pick and preserve specimens in alcohol for later identification. Teams must collect approximately 100 insects per location.

Identification of all the collected "critters" takes place a few weeks later. Volunteers sort the macro invertebrates into trays by looking at their appearance and using identification keys. Then experts trained in macro invertebrate identification check for exact identification. Volunteers follow up by recording scientific names, counting specimens, and preserving them in alcohol. All collected data is put into a data base with the Tip Of the Mitt Watershed Council and compared with other streams in Northern Michigan.

Generally each team is assigned two sample sites to collect data from. The whole process takes only a few hours and is done twice a year. If you think you would enjoy exploring our streams' ecosystems, I hope you will get involved. Volunteers work only two half days in the spring and fall and no experience is required.

John Teesdale

JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The following is the FOJ Calendar of Events. We are really excited to partner with the Little Traverse Conservancy (LTC) to offer "Young Friends", a program this summer focused on 7-12 year olds. This will feature a monthly nature hike or outdoor activity lead by a naturalist from LTC helping the kids learn about life in the water, Mammals and Food Chains. Planned dates for these are June 28, July 12 and August 9.

The Education Committee is working hard to provide at least 2 programs per month with a mix of informational and activity focused events. If you would be interested in serving on the committee or assisting in planning and presenting our programs, please contact Margaret Moran at members@friendsofthejordan.org. We would also appreciate your suggestions about topics you would like covered or activities you would like to see us offer, speakers who have impressed you that we should invite in, or if you have a program you would like to offer, please contact us with your recommendations.

June

- Watch for information about the 2007 Photo Contest **The Jordan: Wild and Scenic**
- **June 2, 2007** is National Trails Day. The North Country Trails association invites you to celebrate it with a walk in the Jordan Valley. Meet at Deadman's Hill at 10:00 A.M. Bring a friend who also drives a vehicle so one vehicle can be left at Deadman's Hill and one vehicle can be driven to our starting point. Carpooling is also a possibility. We will travel to Pinney Bridge and leave on that hike about 10:45 A.M. Bring a lunch and water. It is 8 miles back to your vehicle at Deadman's Hill. A shorter hike of about 3 miles can be enjoyed by starting at the 3 culverts on Jordan River Road or by doing the loop trail. Go to <http://www.northcountrytrail.org/tbw/index.htm> for additional information.
- **June 9** Saturday 10 AM Wildflower Walk in conjunction with the Friends of the Grass River. We will meet at Pinney Bridge. Franny Bluhm will guide the tour and help identify the plants we encounter. Bring your cameras, flower identification guides and wear comfortable walking shoes.
- **June 14**, Thursday 7:00 PM Kilimanjaro Presentation by Kerri Finlayson of North Central Michigan College and her partners Susan Martin on their Mt. Kilimanjaro climb discussing the different eco-environments and what it takes to get prepared for this type of adventure. Jordan River Watershed Center
- **June 24** 9:30-11:30 AM Sunday Geocaching 101. Learn about this exciting new hobby which uses Satellite tracking technology to search for hidden "treasures." Special emphasis on being environmentally conscious. Jack and Margaret Moran will show you how to get started and we will search for caches in the area with some prizes awarded. Bring a GPS (and cable) if you have one. Meet at the Watershed Center **Call or e-mail to register.**
- **June 28**, Thursday 10-11:30AM FOJ's "Young Friends" program. Spend time with friends, make new friends and learn to be a Friend of the Jordan. Designed for ages 7-12 Life in Water: Dip into the wonderful world of water and be prepared to get wet feet! Learn about underwater insects and other life living in and around the river. Jordan River Watershed Center. **Call or e-mail to register.**

July

- **July 12**, Thursday 10:00AM-11:30AM FOJ's "Young Friends" program. Designed for students ages 7-12 Today we will learn about Mammals from Alison and Melissa from the Little Traverse Conservancy. These are the animals large and small with whom we share the Jordan Valley. How do they adapt to the conditions, what are their families like and how do we effect them and they effect us. Meet at the Watershed Center. **Call or e-mail to register.**
- **July 12**, Thursday 6:00 PM North Country National Scenic Trail is a premier footpath that stretches for about 4,600 miles across seven northern states. A portion of the trail goes through our own Jordan Valley. Gary Johnson, President of the Titabawassee Chapter of the North Country Trail Association will tell about the National Scenic Trails system, show maps of the trails through 7 states, will explain the role and purpose of the North Country Trail Association. He will have a short DVD with pictures mostly in the Jordan Valley. As time and weather allows we may hike a portion of the trail with Gary starting at Pinney Bridge. Meet at the Watershed Center.

August

- **August 1**, Deadline for submissions to the Photography Contest.
- **August 9**, Thursday 10:00AM-11:30AM FOJ's "Young Friends" program. Designed for students ages 7-12 Today we will learn about Food Chains from Alison and Melissa from the Little Traverse Conservancy. This hike focuses on food chains, animal habitats, and the transfer of the sun's energy to all living things. Students are asked to take on the role of different parts of the food chain and to create a chain using other members of the group. During the hike, they may search for examples of food from the different habitats they visit and discuss the roles of both predator and prey within a chain. **Call or e-mail to register.**

September

- **September 15**, 2007 Saturday 2-4PM Visions of the Valley Photography Exhibit at JRWC.

Be Sure to check our website for these and other events.

JORDAN RIVER WATERSHED FACTS: Thirty-six species of amphibians and reptiles requiring water or wetlands for at least part of their life cycle have been identified as likely to be found in the Jordan River watershed. Of these reptiles, three (wood turtle, Blanding's turtle and eastern massasauga rattlesnake) are listed as special concern by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory.

JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

SAND ACCUMULATION IN THE JORDAN



The last newsletter began a discussion concerning sand accumulation in the river. The effects can be readily seen in the filling of the East Jordan harbor area, converting the old harbor area upstream of the bridge into a marsh and making long stretches of the river substantially shallower that has greatly impacted the fishery. The degree of change to the Jordan over the last century becomes readily apparent by looking at the old photographs or talking to the long time residents. At a recent meeting, one participant said that her husband remembers the previous bridge opening to let schooners pass.

FOJ has been concerned about the sand problem (or sand bedload) for a number of years. After discussions with various sources, a dialogue started with Dr. Wood of Michigan State University's Department of Geological Sciences that resulted in a proposal being received late in 2006. The proposal is a three year project at a cost of about \$175,000. This study will utilize state of the art technology and community assisted scientific methodology to address the following objectives:

1. What did the pre-development river channel look like?
2. How much sediment is in the system and how does it behave?
3. Has the amount of bedload transport been affected by development, climate or hydrology?
4. What are the origins of the sediments?
5. What can these sediments tell us about the past?
6. Did a stable or natural river ever exist?
7. How can this new knowledge improve land use management or reverse aquatic degradation?
8. What new models can be derived from these data to predict changes resulting from future alterations in land use, climate, and hydrology?
9. Can remediation efforts be applied more strategically or efficiently?

The three year project will encompass numerous endeavors. In brief, MSU plans a thorough investigation of the delta material extending out into the South Arm of Lake Charlevoix and erosion potential of the hillsides in the headwaters area. The Jordan will be analyzed from a number of angles including a baseline study of the river's channel, measurement of the velocity structure and channel geometry, samples of the sediment transport and a study of the existing sand traps history. Information will be collected on glacial history, more recent land uses of the land (such as agriculture and timbering), the history of landslides in the watershed as well as air photo and available information on the river. Finally, with the collected data, a model will be used to examine the influence of both land use and climate changes on the river's water flow and ability to carry sediment.

To date, a number of grant requests have been written and FOJ recently received a generous response from DTE for \$75,000. A donation from an organization has also been received and, at this time, several other organizations and individuals are considering contributions. With a total funding objective of \$175,000, we still have a major need. If at all possible, we ask for your support to help us reach our goal.

Because of the amount still needed, grant writing and solicitations for donations will continue until commitments have been received for the needed funds. Because of the time required for this project, we recently asked for assistance from an individual by the name of Ann Baughman, who has the appropriate background, and she will help in the fund raising and managing FOJ's role in the project.

Sand bedload is not unique to the Jordan (a worldwide problem with significant costs annually) but a problem on which little research has focused. When the project is completed in three years' time, we should have important information that will indicate future management actions for the Jordan, a major expansion of available sand bedload knowledge as well as provide data that can be extrapolated for improving other rivers.

Hank Ross



CALLING ALL SHUTTERBUGS



The 2007 Visions of the Valley Photography Contest is gearing up and we hope you have been capturing the scenes as you enjoy the beautiful Jordan Valley. The theme for 2007 is "**The Jordan-Wild and Scenic.**" This is our THIRD year and we expect it to be even bigger and better than last year when we had 94 entries and awarded \$1200 in prize money thanks to the generosity of our corporate sponsors. The Grand Prize award was \$250, with President's Choice, Viewer's Choice and the Youth Award at \$100 each, 10 more photographs which made up the 2007 calendar earned \$50. We expect to maintain or increase this for the current contest. The entry fee for the contest is \$5.00 per photograph and entry forms will be available on the website, at the East Jordan Chamber of Commerce, the Watershed Center and the Jordan Valley Animal Clinic. In order to encourage more youngsters to enter we will be waiving the \$5 entry fee for up to 2 pictures for those under 18. Take this opportunity to get your children out into the river and woods and let them shoot what appeals to them. There is a significant award specified for a Youth entry and we hope more students will take advantage of this opportunity to add to their "college fund." The Photography Contest culminates in a celebration at the Jordan River Watershed Center. Tentatively planned for September 15, 2007 the celebration features the Visions of the Valley Photography exhibit, awards presentation, great food, and entertainment. We hope to see you all there!

Spring is finally here and the Valley is bursting with new life, The opportunities for great photographs are limitless. We hope to see yours in our exhibit in September. We begin promoting the contest in June with a deadline of August 1, 2007. Be sure to watch the website and publications for further information.

Margaret Moran

JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

“OF SHINY-HEADS AND GREY-HAIRS” “WHAT ABOUT OUR KIDS?”

Environmental education, especially of our young people, has been a major goal of FOJ for many years. The completion of the Watershed Center has provided a new venue to pursue this goal with a renewed vigor. We have implemented a series of programs and events to be informative, entertaining and appealing to different age groups. We are still learning and improving and invite your participation and suggestions. While our progress has been promising, one under-represented group has been our youth.

Because FOJ advocates for Watershed-Based Ecosystem Management of our natural resources, we meet and interact with many diverse groups all across the state. Invariably, when I attend these meetings or events and look out at the participants, I am struck by the predominance (like me) of the “shiny-heads and gray-hairs.” Likewise, I am perplexed by how few young people are present or involved.

This observation may not seem significant, as many volunteers are retirees who have the time and expertise to attend and contribute to these meetings. But it is an equally valid observation that our youth today spend less time outdoors, are less physically fit and seem to lack a conservation ethic. To FOJ, this is a critical issue that demands attention, as today’s youth will unquestionably face enormous environmental challenges when they soon will become tomorrow’s leaders.

I am often amazed by how few people, especially the young, realize what an incredible natural treasure we have in the Jordan River Watershed and who the champions of conservation were that worked to keep it that way. Right out our back doors, readily available to all, is the ecological equivalent of a Yellowstone or Yosemite, albeit on a slightly smaller scale. To put it succinctly, what we have here is one of Earth’s last, unspoiled, unfragmented, free-flowing, cold-water, riverine watershed ecosystems with a high degree of biological integrity.

That last wordy sentence was deliberately used to illustrate the point that all those terms have environmental meaning, significance and consequences. If our heirs or we ever hope to retain or sustain this natural resource, or others like it, we need to understand and appreciate all the components that work in harmony to make them tick. We can look back in horror at the abuses of the past and then realize most people were just trying to eke out a living and didn’t know any better. We can also look forward in time and predict the dire consequences if we don’t learn and heed nature’s lessons. It is easy to see the critical need for environmental education. But where are society’s priorities?

A recent editorial by a syndicated columnist spoke disparagingly of the mistakes, pressures and stress generated by the instant speed of information and our obsession with it. There is an incessant and escalating bombardment of images and messages competing for our attention. Our world is being consumed simultaneously by TV, video games, computers, MP3 players, cell phones and instant messaging all the while multi-tasking. How does anyone, let alone a young person, find his or her way amidst this artificial, dizzying maze racing all around you? What are the anchors that keep us safely grounded in this storm of everyday life?

As a doctor I constantly confront the urge and inclination to get swept up in the adrenalin rush of a crisis situation. I must be careful and deliberate and quiet my inner chatter or I will be more likely to make mistakes or miss critical observations. I must systematically filter and process information objectively in order to focus on the reality of the situation. My patient’s future often depends on me being clear and precise.

Nature and the practice of medicine are a lot alike. Nature also requires that we slow down, be careful and deliberate. Nature must be felt, objectively observed and experienced in its own time and way. It cannot be forced or pressured and one must pay close attention to its magnificent detail and balance. Our survival and quality of life depend on it. We cannot learn from or appreciate nature flying by at breakneck speed, distracted and multi-tasking. Its powerful forces demand respect and a yearning to learn its wondrous ways, without which there is no future.

As “shiny-heads and gray-hairs” maybe we have slowed down enough and learned to filter out life’s chatter sufficiently to hear nature’s message. Perhaps too, we understand its importance if we hope to leave this world a better place for our children and grandchildren. Our life’s journey to lead a meaningful and purposeful life will not be complete unless we pass this knowledge on to the next generation. What greater legacy can we leave? History is full of lost civilizations and cultures that did not.

To convey this knowledge to our youth requires we proactively compete with all of life’s modern distractions. We must carefully and deliberately insist on a place at society’s table and serve nature’s values in a fast-food world. It’s not that our young people don’t care or don’t need this sustenance. Perhaps their absence at our programs is because all of their internal operators are currently busy or preoccupied by today’s misplaced priorities. Let’s put our gray and shiny heads together to find ways to nurture our children’s inner place outside of cyber space so our kids can grow a purposeful and sustainable future.

John Richter

JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

NEW OLD NEWS

Sometimes, old news is still news, especially when it involves the Jordan River. Recently, I received my copy of a letter written three years ago to John Richter, President of the Friends of the Jordan. I found it very interesting and useful. The content of the letter fits into one of this year's pertinent issues, pursuing the soil boring program with the goal of providing evidence of the variance of soil-sand deposits in the river due to man-made disturbances, rather than naturally occurring deposits. There are few records but lots of recollections of how it was 90 years ago.

Back to the letter: John Hodge, its author, speaks of those earlier times so I shall quote his words and trust you to see the connection to today's news.

As I mentioned to you at the Watershed Center opening, I had my first experiences on the lower Jordan in 1927 when I was only 9 years old. My mother was the first Malpass child. She had moved to Oklahoma and we had come up from our home there to visit my grandparents here.

Grandpa had a cherry orchard near Mt. Bliss and after picking cherries I sometimes rode logs or walked down the river to East Jordan. My young friends and I usually carried a piece of string and a hook. We would catch a grasshopper or other insect and have very little trouble catching brookies. I also noted that some locals living near the river didn't bother with brookies. They had no trouble spearing large rainbows beneath logs jutting out. I didn't even know it was illegal.

In subsequent summers and in the years that followed, after I moved to East Jordan in 1940, I noted fewer logs jutting into the river, more and more riverside being cleared and huge volumes of soil filling the deeper holes from ill considered farming activities and county road development and it continues to this day. The fishing boats that had tried to preserve the trout habitat were being replaced by noisy, uncaring canoeists. Even the best fishing equipment and methods produced very few brookies.

I bought my grandfathers cherry orchard in the Jordan valley and for the next ten years I was again able to be near the river quite frequently. I then sold the orchard, moved to Harbor Springs and for the next 30 years I worked for Mich. State U. in the extension service. When I became the regional supervisor for the 20 counties of Lower Michigan I gained enough flexibility to look at some situations that were concerning me.

I met with Charlevoix County Extension Director, Ed Rebman and suggested that we get a group of interested people together to look at what was happening to the Jordan and what might be done to improve it. That is how the "Save the Jordan" movement got started. I moderated the first four meetings and was pleased to note the substantial numbers of interested people who attended. One of those at all our meetings was Dave Pray. You are aware of what followed [*the designation of the Jordan River as a Wild and Scenic River under the Natural Rivers Act*] and you have been a very important part of it.

Thank you for the excellent job that you are doing.

John Hodge

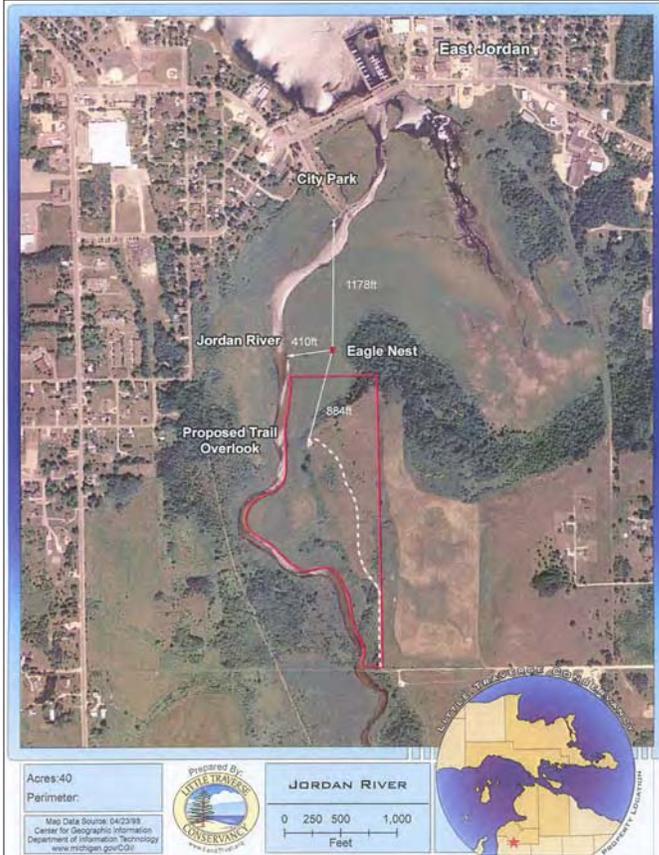
This designation reflects the strong conservation legacy surrounding the Jordan Valley. That legacy continues today in FOJ. There are still so many wonderful recollections waiting to be shared. If you have some of your own river memories or just want to hear more from others, please share it with us.

Peggy Midener

AN OUTSIDE BULLETIN BOARD

Within the next few weeks, another new sign will be installed just off the Watershed Center porch in full view as you drive up to the building. The sign will have an enclosed bulletin board on which general and current information will be posted. The Wood Shop in Boyne City has built this new addition for FOJ as well as the two that were installed a year ago.

JORDAN VALLEY VOICES



The new Jordan River Preserve can be reached by turning west on Fair Road which is off of M-32, south of East Jordan. Park at the end of the road.

Friends of the Jordan River Watershed

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JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

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