

JORDAN VALLEY VOICES

BIOMASS: Up in Smoke-Burning the Future

The Friends of the Jordan fully support efforts to convert to green, carbon neutral energy sources. Burning trees and tree products in biomass plants, however, is NOT green, NOT carbon neutral and NOT sustainable. Biomass plants harm our environment, public health and the economy. We call on Governor Granholm to follow in Massachusetts' footsteps and call for a moratorium on renewable energy credits for biomass plants. Better alternatives exist.

According to a team of top international scientists, wood-burning biomass plants are considered carbon neutral because of an "accounting error." On line research news Science Daily wrote, "Current carbon accounting, used in the Kyoto Protocol and other climate legislation including the European's cap and trade and the America Clean Energy and Security Act, does not factor CO2 released from tailpipes and smokestacks utilizing bioenergy, nor does it count emissions from land use changes when biomass is harvested or grown." According to a US Department of Energy study, if not corrected, this incentive could "globally lead to the loss of most of the world's forests as carbon caps tighten."

What Does This Mean For Michigan?

*Five wood-burning biomass plants already operate in northern Michigan. New plants are proposed in Mancelona, Traverse City, Rogers City and Frankfort, and in the upper peninsula. Why the sudden rush? Government subsidies (our tax dollars via the American Recovery and Reimbursement Act) are paying up to 30% of the capital costs for building biomass burners. These subsidies will expire in less than 3 years, hence the drive to build as many new plants as possible.

* 13,000 tons of wood chips are required to generate 1 megawatt of power for one year, or 35 tons of wood each day. The proposed Mancelona plant will produce about 36 megawatts of power which would consume over 1,200 tons of wood (approximately 28 acres) EACH DAY. According to Ben Brower, project manager for Mancelona Renewable Resources, partner in the plant, fuel will come from a combination of state, private and federal forest lands. It takes one megawatt to supply 1,000 homes with electricity. How much of our forests are we willing to sacrifice to a furnace for such short term gain?

* Biomass plants are widely used in Europe. Since many of these countries have already cut down the overwhelming majority of their trees, they rely on imported wood from Asia, South America, Canada and the US to stoke their biomass furnaces. Just one Swedish company, imports 400,000 metric tons of trees from Florida every year. Nestles Corporation is already exporting Michigan water. What is to stop international corporations from exporting Michigan forests as well?

Health Risk

* Burning wood releases toxic chemicals into the atmosphere such as sulfur oxides, carbon monoxide, dioxins, and volatile organic compounds. Various irritant gases such as nitrogen oxide cause ground level ozone, or smog, which can scar lungs. Particulate matter releases are as high or higher than for coal. People living near biomass plants are at higher risk for cancer, asthma and other lung related diseases. The American Lung Association oppose biomass plants, stating that their emissions pose unacceptable health risks. *Continued on Page 2*

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Watershed, Inc.*

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Is Biomass Carbon Neutral?

* Tree-burning biomass plants release 50% more CO₂ into the atmosphere than do coal burning plants. To claim biomass burning as carbon neutral and sustainable because new trees can be grown is a hoax. Tree growth cannot keep up with demand. It takes decades for a new tree seedling to replace a larger tree in carbon storage capacity. But it takes only minutes to release that carbon dioxide into the atmosphere through burning. And what happens to the released carbon dioxide? According to the US EPA (April, 2009), "Indeed for a given amount of carbon dioxide release today, about ½ will be taken up by oceans and terrestrial vegetation over the next 30 years, and a further 30% will be removed over a few centuries, and the remaining 20% will only slowly decay over time such that it will take many thousands of years to remove from the atmosphere."



Photo by Wava Dietrich

* Removing dead woody debris from forests leads to soil depletion and compromises future growth. When a tree dies, the stored carbon is released slowly, over decades or longer. Much of the rotting takes place underground, as the tree falls down and is eventually covered with leaves and soil. Underground roots of mushrooms called mycorrhiza, digest the dead wood, thereby keeping the carbon which was stored up by the trees, in the forest soil. Dead trees provide nutrients for new plant growth, food for insects, which in turn feed birds and animals. They are necessary for the cycle of life, necessary for forest biodiversity.

Will Biomass Plants Create Jobs and Affordable Energy?

- * Biomass plants are receiving almost 75% of the renewable energy subsidies, as opposed to wind or solar, according to Rachael Smolker, Global Forest Coalition.
- * The cost of biomass energy without government subsidies would be substantially higher. And biomass plants will be competing with other wood product users. As competition for limited forest land increases, prices of everything from toilet paper to particle board, furniture, housing and construction will increase. Is burning really a wise use of our valuable forest resources?
- * According to the Jobs and Energy for Michigan website, biomass plants tend to be built in economically depressed communities with high unemployment. The number of job opportunities these plants claim to provide, however, is usually overstated, and health care costs to the surrounding communities rise due to large quantities of particulate matter emissions.
- * Northern Michigan is a mecca for snowmobilers, hunters, fishermen, family camping and other outdoor activities. Cutting and burning our forests upon which our tourist economy depends, does not make good economic sense.

Better Alternatives Exist

- * One lone windmill produces 1% of the energy produced by Traverse City Light and Power Co.
- * The Department of Energy named Michigan as one of the states with the highest potential for wind manufacturing jobs in the nation. A recent study by the Land Policy Institute at MSU indicates that over 300,000 megawatts of energy might be available off Michigan shores. This represents the equivalent of hundreds of large (1,000 MW) coal plants.
- * Michigan also has abundant supplies of natural gas. While a fossil fuel, gas emits only half the emissions of coal or biomass, and could be used until other green technology is in place.

Northern Michigan was once blanketed in pine forests, with white pines often reaching over 200 feet tall and over 5 feet in diameter. It took loggers a mere 20 years, between 1870 - 1890, to cut most of those trees down. The population of Michigan at the time? A mere 1.6 million. Our population today is over 10 million, and our energy and land needs have grown exponentially. Burning our forests for fuel is a step back in time. We need to do all we can to protect the resources that make Northern Michigan a unique and beautiful place to live and visit.

By Anne Zukowski

Friends of the Jordan Biodiversity Position Paper

Hunting and fishing in Northern Michigan woods, streams and lakes are highly valued activities by area residents and visiting tourists alike. Membership in Friends of the Jordan River Watershed (FOJ) attracts a large number of people who enjoy out-of-door activities including hunting and fishing. FOJ acknowledges the appropriateness of these activities and supports their pursuit.

Hunting and fishing activities bring substantial revenues to state government through license fees and sales taxes. Local economies are greatly enhanced by people engaging in their favorite recreational activities.

At the state level, wildlife populations open to hunting and fishing receive substantial support from a variety of governmental agencies. At the local level, volunteer organizations such as FOJ work to protect and enhance natural habitat for both game and non-game species.

The wildlife community of Northern Michigan is a vast network of flora and fauna of which the regulated game species constitute a small fraction of the total. Unfortunately, only the game species receive comprehensive monitoring for population enhancement and support at both the state and local levels. Non-game species of animals and non-commercial plant species receive little organized protection.

The Friends of the Jordan strongly encourage efforts to sustain and support the biodiversity of plants and animals living in our region.



Protecting a region's biodiversity has more importance than just ensuring the total number of plant and animal species. From the ranks of these species come a host

of benefits including medicines, the gene pool for our domestic food sources, building materials, raw materials of every kind, the laboratory for our future inventions and the potential cures for the diseases which ravage mankind. Biodiversity is vital to the health of the planet and especially to the continued viability of the human species.

We at FOJ believe the destruction of plant and animal habitats to be at the root of species decline in our area. We particularly hold that woodland destruction in Northern Michigan

through overly aggressive tree harvesting and land clearing is responsible for species decline both in population density and overall variety.

Our woodlands and other natural areas are the homes for many if not most of our area's indigenous species. Efforts to sustain and support the natural, unspoiled regions remaining must be redoubled from this point forward.

A new conservation ethic must be born and spread throughout the region and across this land which celebrates using less and less and eliminates the 'more is better' attitude we presently accept.

We at the Friends of the Jordan believe biodiversity in our region can be significantly protected by reducing the strain on our forest tracts and other natural areas to a more sustainable level. We believe our woodlands must not be classified as 'renewable' and should not be used as an alternative fuel source for electricity production. Forest diversity and natural selection, which form the foundation of biodiversity, would be severely disrupted by clear cutting and subsequent monoculture replanting.

Habitat preservation through the reduction of overly aggressive forestry practices is essential to the sustainability of biodiversity in our area.

We therefore request that the Jordan River Watershed be designated as a 'Biological Stewardship Area' by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment and that biodiversity in the area become a primary goal for this region.

FOJ Forestry Committee: Steve Umlor, Dennis Choate, Tom Sothard, Terry Ryan and Peg Myers.



ALBA WELL OPPOSITION Update

The following is a letter developed by the Regional Stakeholders Group working to develop remedies to the CKD disposal at Bay Harbor. Ray Bier, FOJ Vice President serves on this group and has worked relentlessly to assure that the disposal in the Jordan Valley is not an option. In italics is the sentence in the RSG letter that Ray has worked so hard to have the RSG embrace... "a local solution" with no trucking of the waste. It is what is best for CMS, Bay Harbor, the region and for our beloved river.



4/28/2010

This letter is addressed to

Ralph Dollhopf, OSC US EPA Region 5
Robert Wagner Acting Assistant Division Chief
Remediation & Redevelopment Division
Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment
Gary Kelterborn Project Coordinator CMS Energy
Dan Ralley, City Manager City of Petoskey

Subject:

Treatment and Disposal of Collected CKD Leachate via WWTP and NPDES Permit, Bay Harbor Site

On behalf of the Regional Stakeholders directly involved in developing criteria for remedies of the cement kiln dust (CKD) leachate from the Bay Harbor site, please accept the following concerns, questions, and recommendations as part of the community's statement of acceptance for disposing of the collected leachate in a wastewater treatment facility.

This statement is based on the Mission of the Regional Stakeholders Group (RSG)- to represent the interests of the communities and stakeholders, receive and share information, and to provide advice and input regarding the remediation of the Bay Harbor/Little Traverse Bay Cement Kiln Dust Site.

Over the past several months, the RSG and its Technical Work Group have focused their attention on three options for disposal of collected leachate from East Park and the Development. In that period of time, we have had numerous presentations from various organizations and individuals, including adequate time for Q&A and discussion:

1. DNRE reviewed the NPDES regulatory process, including permitting any new direct discharge points, as well as highlighting general requirements for "antidegradation", requiring variances and ratifications by the U.S. EPA for new direct discharge permits.
2. CMS Land reviewed newly developed technology from their consultants on mercury removal from collected leachate in the Bay Harbor Development site.
3. City of Petoskey representatives provided an overview of their Waste Water Treatment Plant's (WWTP) capabilities for accepting and treating CKD leachate, including an estimate of mercury removal from the leachate. The City also presented a list of prerequisites, including additional WWTP infrastructure and the need for additional aquatic toxicity testing.

The RSG expresses its appreciation to EPA's Research Lab in Grosse Ile for providing an overview of mercury discharged into the Great Lakes, and the various sources of mercury, all of which have helped put in perspective the magnitude of mercury from the Bay Harbor site both captured in CKD leachate, and released into Little Traverse Bay through uncollected leachate venting groundwater.

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Mark your Calendars for these Activities.

In response to the survey published in the past newsletter we are planning fewer but more active events. We also have not planned any Nature Hikes for the summer as these were poorly attended last year and the Wagbo Center is now scheduling weekly hikes. We find also that the Jordan Valley Outfitters is having a monthly Full Moon River Trip during the summer so we will plan just 1 and try for a summer morning and Autumn Afternoon River trip with a gathering at the Watershed Center to follow.

Summer Solstice River Trip

When: Sun, Jun 20 9: AM – 11 AM

What: Come join us to celebrate the longest day of the year and Fathers Day with a beautiful easy paddle down the lower Jordan with views of the Eagles nest. Continental Breakfast at the Watershed Center

Where: Bring your canoes or kayaks to the Rogers Road Access. We will have 1-2 cars at the finish to take people back to pick up their vehicles after taking out downtown.

July Highway Cleanup

When: Sun Jul 11 10: AM – 11:30 AM

Where: Meet at Pinney Bridge Rd and M-66. Bring gloves. We will provide pick up tools, bags and vests.

Moonlit River Trip

When: Sat, Aug 21. 2010 8:00 PM

What: Watch the setting sun and the Full Moon rise as you take a leisurely paddle down the Jordan. We will meet at the Jordan River Watershed Center for a potluck to follow. This was the highlight of our summer last year . BYO and a dish to share.

Where: Bring your canoes or kayaks to the Rogers Road Access. We will have 1-2 cars at the finish to take people back to pick up their vehicles after taking out in town



September Highway/River Cleanup

When: Sun Sept 12 2010 10:00AM– Noon?

Where: Meet at Pinney Bridge Rd and M-66. Bring gloves. We will provide pick up tools, bags and vests.



6th Annual FOJ Celebration

When: Sat, Sept 18. 2:00 PM-4:00 PM

What: **Photography Exhibit and Awards Ceremony**, Great Food, and entertainment.

Where: Jordan River Watershed Center

Stream Monitoring

When: Sun Sept 19, 10AM

Where: Meet at the Watershed Center

What: With the direction of trained personal you will assist with gathering samples from the river for analysis. (see related article)

Autumn Afternoon River Trip

When: Sun, October 10. 2010 2:00 PM (Rain/Snow?? Date 10/17)

What: Take a beautiful Color tour down the lower Jordan. We will take out at the downtown boat launch and meet at the Jordan River Watershed Center for some Chili and fellowship to follow. . BYO and something to share if you like. We'll provide a few variations of Chili.

Where: Bring your canoes or kayaks to the Rogers Road Access. We will have 1-2 cars at the finish to take people back to pick up their vehicles after taking out below the downtown bridge.

NOTE: For all outdoor events, we will post cancellations on the website in the event of inclement weather. Check there if you see a bad weather report.

Young Friends Program July 6-8, 13-15. 2010

The Friends of the Jordan is excited to sponsor the second annual Young Friends Summer Environmental Education Program. The program is geared toward kids in 4th through 8th grades. Activities planned include hiking, exploring the Jordan River, fishing, learning about the plants, animals, birds and geology of the Jordan Valley and will be topped off with a rafting trip down the Jordan, the highlight of the 2009 session. The program will run for 6 sessions July 6-8 and 13-15 from 9:30-2:30PM. Students will be asked to bring a sack lunch. John Thompson, a veteran teacher with over 30 years experience in the sciences returns as our instructor. There is no charge for the program but there is a limit of 20 students with only a few more spaces available at this writing. Registration forms are available on the website and were distributed to local schools.



Rafting the Jordan 2009



Some 2009 Young Friends participants

“Treasures of the Jordan” 2010 Photo Contest Theme

Golden Marsh Marigolds, Copper Maple leaves, Silver scales of a trout jumping, sparkling Diamond river splash, and Sapphire skies are just a few of the treasures found in the Jordan River Watershed. The 2010 Photography Contest will challenge photographers to submit photographs that portray the riches of this environment. A special twist will be that each entry will be asked to identify the approximate location where the picture was taken on the Watershed map. A



Treasure Map will be created which will guide others to explore the Jordan Valley with a real treasure hunt being planned based on the photographs entered. Over \$1200 in prize money will be awarded for 14 photographs which will be printed into a calendar for 2011.

An exhibit of all entries is planned for the 6th annual Celebration on September 18, 2010. Entries will be accepted through Wednesday August 4. Entry forms and additional details are posted on the website or will be available at the Jordan Valley Animal Clinic or by mail.



Photo by Dustin Miller

ALBA WELL OPPOSITION Continued

The proposed options for treating and disposing of collected leachate into Little Traverse Bay are as follows:

1. Onsite treatment and NPDES permitted direct discharge of collected leachate from East Park, using mixing.
2. Onsite treatment and NPDES permitted direct discharge of collected leachate from the Development area, using new ultra-filtration technology.
3. Onsite pre-treatment and subsequent treatment of the combined (from East Park and Development area) leachate in the City of Petoskey's Waste Water Treatment Facility.

Each of these options has its own unique set of technical challenges and regulatory issues, the use of deep injection well disposal of collected leachate has not been reviewed by the RSG at this point in time.

We have requested and expect to receive a comprehensive "apples to apples" material balance comparison of the mercury removed from collected leachate, mercury removed as treatment sludge, ultimate disposal of sludge, and the understanding of mercury loading to Little Traverse Bay from each of these three options, which we feel is important to understand. The RSG encourages the agencies and stakeholders to continue seeking a shared understanding of these issues, including removal of the contaminants of concern, the contaminants in the sludge, the monitoring and oversight of compliance, and forecasts of the duration of time required to implement each disposal option, in an effort find a publicly supportable and fully informed decision.

While the RSG is not yet in a position to recommend a particular leachate disposal option, we do support a long-term local solution that would not require trucking of collected CKD leachate.

We also recognize a sense of urgency for the RSG to provide comments, based upon the timelines that have been provided by EPA and MDNRE. The RSG feels this is an appropriate time to provide comments about the treatment and disposal of collected leachate so we can move on to other important CKD leachate-related issues in the next few months.

CMS Land's applications for the NPDES permits have been designated as "administratively incomplete" by MDNRE due in part to incomplete antidegradation demonstration. MDNRE believes disposal of collected CKD leachate in the City of Petoskey's WWTP is technically feasible. The RSG is concerned about potential delays in resolving the incomplete antidegradation demonstration issue, the regulatory process for obtaining variances for discharging mercury up to 10 nanograms per liter, and the federal ratifications for variances for NPDES direct-discharge permits.

The RSG appreciates the City of Petoskey's willingness to consider accepting collected leachate, and is encouraged by CMS Land and the City of Petoskey's efforts to date in seeking an agreement to treat the leachate. Recognizing there are differences of opinion with regards to technical issues for leachate treatment, the RSG recommends that CMS Land and the City of Petoskey explore the possibility of forming some type of partnership, to include an independent or third party, to help resolve remaining issues and future disputes in a win-win manner. Such a partnership could become the cornerstone of community acceptance.

On behalf of the RSG,
Robert Walker
Chair, RSG Technical Work Group

(Process Note: This letter reflects the consensus agreement of all RSG members present at the April 28, 2010 meeting, with the exception of Steve Lenart, LTTBB Odawa Indians, who abstained. Lyn Johnson, Emmet County, was not present at the 4/28/10 RSG meeting.)



Pavilion Dedication and Ice Cream Social

Sunday, May 23, 2010 turned out to be a beautiful day for the dedication of the new Picnic Pavilion at the Jordan River Watershed Center. The pavilion, constructed with donations from Elizabeth Proulx and family and the Pray family and FOJ. Betty Proulx envisioned a place where children can participate in activities in the summer safe from hot sun or drizzle as she did when she was a child. In addition to picnic facilities, the pavilion houses a display of an authentic Flat-bottomed River Boat that used to guide tourists and fishermen to the upper Jordan. The boat was donated to the Friends of the Jordan by the Pray family in memory of Dr. David Pray. It is a reproduction of the boats used on the river by Pray, Teddy Kotowich and other founders of the Friends of the Jordan. It was built by Andre Poineau as a gift for Dr. Pray from his wife and daughters. He is pictured using the boat at the age of 80. Thora Kotowich and Teddy Kotowich Jr. gave some insight into how the boat was used to transport fishermen up the Jordan for trout fishing from the 1940s through the 1970s. Peggy Midener talked about being a young wife during that time period and the healing power of the river on the men who had survived the horror of WWII. It offered a respite from memories of their service and injuries both physical and emotional that they sustained. An Ice Cream Social with the works topped off the celebration on this hot spring afternoon.

The pavilion and the Watershed Center may be reserved by community groups for events by contacting the Friends of the Jordan.



Thora Kotowicz and Peggy Midener Share their scrapbook and memories of earlier times on the Jordan with Jack Moran and John Richter. Participating but not pictured is Rennie Pray.

What's on the Web?

- * Information on Biomass and FOJ opposition
- * Details about the 2010 Photography Contest
- * Pictures, descriptions and videos of recent events, meetings.
- * Videos of public forums on Alba Well, Biomass, advocacy efforts
- * What's in Bloom, wildflowers identified by bloom period

- * Information on 2010 Young Friends Program
 - * Recognition of FOJ advocacy efforts
 - * FOJ position on Bio-diversity
 - * Information on requesting use of the Jordan River Watershed Center for events.
 - * Activity Calendar
 - * Merchandise
 - * Contact information
- And so much more!!!



Spring Events

Earth Day Celebration on the North Country Trail

On Sunday, April 18th, thirteen students from the East Jordan National Honor Society joined Friends of the Jordan members in cleaning up a four mile stretch of the North Country Trail / Jordan River Pathway from the Landslide Overlook to Pinney Bridge. We broke into two groups, each with two members of FOJ. 'Cleaning up' consisted of moving litter, debris, and fallen trees from the pathway. Some of those trees required group effort and as much laughter as we could muster. Not that there was any shortage of that! The weather was



overcast and balmy- perfect for walking in the woods. The group took full advantage of taking some side nature stops to discuss the natural environment (replete with our own version of "stump the chump" plant and tree identification) and exchanged ideas about stewardship of the valley. We at FOJ hope that events like this will help foster future stewards of the environment. For the students efforts they received community service credit, laughter, education: another typical day in the Jordan!

Participating were EJHS Students: Shelby Elzinga, Sam Gardner, Kelsey Moor, Rachel Mumich, Rachel Neal, Lissa Vincent, and Tess Weerstia Chris Berish Tyler Danner, Renee Evans, Mikaela Graham, and Wesley Ricker Friends of the Jordan members Peg Myers, Steve Ulmor, Adam Ulmor and Terry Ryan .

Stream Monitoring

John Teesdale coordinates the documentation of the findings for the semi-annual stream monitoring. Twice a year samples are collected from 2 sites on the Jordan at Fair Rd and Webster Bridge.

"pickers" look for macro-invertebrates-small bugs, larvae, snails etc. These are preserved in alcohol then 2 weeks later are sorted, analyzed and counted. The findings are compared to previous sessions and are used to determine the health of the river. This is a project done in conjunction with the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council and volunteers on local rivers in Northern Michigan.



We invite you to join us for these monitoring sessions in May and September.

All indications are that the Jordan remains a healthy and viable ecosystem!



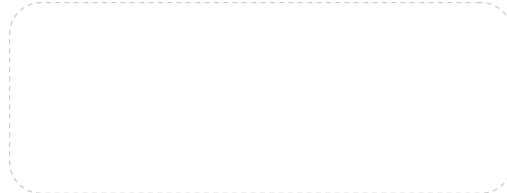
John Richter collects samples from the river while Anne Zukowski and Margaret Moran pick through to find a variety of macro-invertebrates. John Teesdale records the findings.



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WISH LIST

*Lawn Mower
in good working order
Weed Whacker
Telescope with better optics
Microscopes
Field guides:
Tree, Plant, Mushrooms,
Flower, Birds etc.
Bird feeders
Bird food
Bird bath*



Keeping the Jordan Clean

The Jordan River Action Group, a subcommittee of the Friends of the Jordan was established specifically to reduce the trash left in the river and on the banks. With a permit from the DNR, they have installed collection bins at all access sites and distribute mesh bags to contain loose items in boats should they take a spill. On May first they completed the first cleanup of the season with 20 volunteers from age 11-90 traveling from Graves Crossing to Rogers Rd. Theresa Youmans stated “ It was great watching the kids racing to be the first to get a piece of trash, competing to see who could get more and exclaiming about what they found, making a game of it.” She stated there was only one turnover and just as they were climbing back into the canoe a brown trout jumped to give them a show. Everyone watched in awe then called out “Did you see that?” It was a great reward.

As one group was cleaning the river another team was installing the “river houses” at the access sites. The EJ Band boosters have taken responsibility for maintaining the “river houses”, removing the trash, stocking the mesh bags and recycling cans and plastics. They are doing this 4 days per week during the “season” earning community service credits and collecting the return on the recyclables to support the band program. They have collected 3-6 bags of trash per day and this will only increase as the busy summer season approaches. This is a really a community project that benefits everyone who uses the river as well as the environment. We have received no complaints and a number of positive comments about these efforts.

THANK YOU to everyone who does their part to keep the Jordan a beautiful pristine resource including those doing active cleanup and the responsible river users who contain their trash and keep it from ending up in the river or the shore.



River House at Graves Crossing