



MICHIGAN RIVER GUIDE  
ASSOCIATION

Antrim County Road Commission  
319 Lincoln Street  
PO Box 308  
Mancelona, MI 49659

To whom it may concern:

We are writing to urge the Antrim County Road Commission, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Chestonia Township, and Star Township, to deny the proposed ORV ordinance and ORV use within the Jordan River valley.

The Jordan River was the first river designated into Michigan's Natural Rivers Program in 1972. At a time when we recognized increased encroachment and environmental impact on our rivers, lakes, lands and forests, we decided that the Jordan River was the first we must protect for future generations. Around the same time, the State of Michigan began regulating the use of ORVs on state lands. The first three objectives of the 1979 ORV Plan were: *(a) Protect natural resources and ecosystems; (b) Separate conflicting uses; and (c) Promote user safety*. These objectives constitute a clear enunciation of the DNR's core mission to conserve, protect and provide for public use and enjoyment of Michigan's natural resources for present and future generations. Fast forward fifty years and our world continues to change. Due to expanded use, we've lost much of the wilderness and natural areas that previous generations have enjoyed. We must remain steadfast in our duty to uphold the conservation efforts of previous generations in order to ensure these areas remain long into the future.

The Jordan River valley is a destination for locals and visitors, alike, especially during the summer and fall seasons. Many seek respite in the quiet of the valley, away from the noise. Anglers fish for brook trout in the headwaters. Sightseers are awestruck. Hikers enjoy the Jordan Valley Pathway. Children explore nature's wonders. Passenger vehicles can still travel Jordan River Road due to the lack of ORV use. The tourism opportunities that the valley provides to non-ORV users is vital to our local economies. The geological features of the valley are not suitable to withstand the environmental impact of increased ORV usage. The sandy soils and historic corduroy road beneath Jordan River Road will quickly deteriorate from the soft suspensions and common use associated with ORVs. Increased erosion will strain the river. As the road crumbles, and the solitude of the valley slips away, so will the tourism brought by non-ORV users, a common trait in areas that have been opened to ORV use in recent years. While ORVs may bring new faces, the majority of the public seeks places to get away from it all and enjoy the natural areas that still remain.

*The Michigan River Guide Association exists to support and defend Michigan river guides in their efforts to provide customers with high-quality services, uphold ethical and responsible business practices, and to safeguard and improve Michigan's river fisheries via advocacy and conservation.* It is for this reason that the MRGA opposes increased ORV use within the Jordan River valley and in close proximity to our state's waterways. We urge the appropriate government agencies to prohibit expanded use of ORVs within these areas.

Sincerely,

**The Michigan River Guide Association**

Ed McCoy, *President*   Tom Werkman, *Vice President*   Brian Pitser, *Secretary*   Steve Fraley, *Treasurer*

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