JO DAVIESS COUNTY
GREENWAYS & TRAILS PLAN

Adopted by the Jo Daviess County Board
As an Amendment to the
Jo Daviess County Comprehensive Plan

March 10, 2009

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction…….. 1

Public Input……. 2

Jo Daviess County Natural Resources……. 5

Jo Daviess County Cultural Resources…… 6

Greenways…… 8

Greenway Recommendations…….. 14

Trails…… 16

Trail Recommendations…….. 20

Funding & Implementation……. 21

Attachments
Attachment A: IDNR Grant Application…… 24
Attachment B: Meeting Minutes…… 30
Attachment C: Public Input…… 70
Attachment D: Community Trails…….. 115
Attachment E: List of Stakeholders…… 130
Attachment F: Natural Resources……... 133
Attachment G: Cultural Resources……. 140
Attachment H: Buffer Strips……... 153
Attachment I: Liability Issues……. 154
Attachment J: Historic Trails…….. 156
Attachment K: Funding & Implementation…… 163
Attachment L: Letters of Support……... 171

Maps and Illustrations
Existing Conditions……. 4
Archaeological Sites…… 7
Waterways……... 12
Navigable Waterways…….. 13
Regional Trail…….. 19
Greenways and Trails Plan……. 23
Route Potential…… 116
Road Surface Guide…… 117
Community Maps……... 118
1854 Illinois Map…… 159
Galena Trails…….. 160
Frink & Walker Stage Line Schedule…… 161
Frink & Walker Ad……. 162

INTRODUCTION

The Greenways and Trails planning grant provided to Jo Daviess County by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources allows for an assessment of existing greenway areas and trails in the county and the identification of opportunities to improve greenway areas and trail systems in the future. As in all good planning, a thorough examination of the available data and meaningful citizen input are imperative. The following narrative summarizes the Jo Daviess County Greenways & Trails planning process, the information provided by residents, the research conducted, and the resulting recommendations. This plan is designed for incorporation into the Jo Daviess County Comprehensive Plan to be used as a reference tool as the county develops.

Planning Process

Jo Daviess County applied for and was awarded a $20,000 Greenways and Trails Planning Assistance Program grant through the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The County Board appointed a Greenways and Trails Planning Committee to complete the Plan. Committee members included Beth Baranski (Chairperson), Julie Bruser, Chris Larson, Ron Lawfer, Rich Mattas, Steve McIntyre, Denise Sheehan, John Schultz, and Daryl Watson. The Greenway and Trails Planning Committee meetings were open to the public, and the committee's work was readily available to the public on the County's website. Upon receipt of grant funding, proposals were solicited, interviews conducted, and the firm of Fehr-Graham & Associates selected to work with the committee, with Bridgette Stocks serving as the primary consultant.

Public input was obtained through meetings with governing bodies, a survey, and public work sessions. Synthesizing the existing conditions, research data and public input, a draft Greenways and Trails Plan was created. Municipalities, townships and resort communities were asked to review and comment on the plan. The Jo Daviess County Board adopted the plan as an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan at their March 10, 2009 meeting.

Once adopted, the plan will be made available to the public, and can be used in many ways. The plan is a reference tool for communities and entities interested in greenway and/or trail development and maintenance. Reference to the plan in pertinent grant applications generally increases the likelihood of project funding. The Planning Commission/Zoning Board of Appeals can use the plan as a reference tool when considering development proposals. The plan provides a starting point for regional planning. The other five counties in the Blackhawk Hills RC&D area (Stephenson, Ogle, Lee, Carroll and Whiteside) have completed greenways and trails plan, and it is likely that a 6-county regional plan will be developed once Jo Daviess County's plan is adopted. The plan provides residents with educational information about the resources in the county and contact information for land stewardship guidance. The plan brings information together in a usable format to enhance our understanding of the county's many resources and the greenway and trail opportunities that exist here. The information and recommendations in the plan should be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

The complete report, maps and attachments are available at www.jodaviess.org/greenwaysandtrails

For more information see the following:
Attachment A (pp. 24 - 29) - IDNR grant application
Attachment B (pp. 30 - 69) - Jo Daviess County Greenways and Trails Planning Committee meeting minutes (from August, 2007 through February, 2009).

PUBLIC INPUT

Governing Bodies

The Committee conducted research to create a map of existing greenways and trails. From February through May 2008, committee members met with each of the 10 municipalities, 2 resort communities and 23 township boards to present them with the map and to explain the planning process. Mayors, Village Presidents, City Managers, City Administrators, Township Supervisors and Association Managers were sent direct invitations to the public work sessions. A draft plan was sent to each governing body for review and comment in January of 2009, prior to submittal to the Jo Daviess County Board.

Survey

A 25-question survey was mailed to a random sample of 1,000 Jo Daviess County residents in June 2008. Surveys were also available to fill out and submit online at the planning project's web page, and provided at each public work session.

The planning survey asked questions pertaining to greenways, conservation and preservation, walking and biking habits, trail usage, and the funding and implementation of greenways and trails projects. Survey respondents were provided with an open-ended comment opportunity at the end of the survey. There was an overall response rate of 31% (an unusually high survey response rate, suggesting that there is significant interest in this subject).

There were several questions that elicited strong statements from respondents:

- 91% said the rural character and lifestyle of Jo Daviess County should be maintained
- 79% agreed or strongly agreed that greenways and trails are important for Jo Daviess County
- 90% said scenic areas in Jo Daviess County should be identified and preserved.
- 80% said the county should identify areas of high ecological sensitivity, for instance, land along waterways or high ridge tops, that should be designated as "greenways" and preserved.
- 81% said scenic areas should be protected by designating certain areas as "greenways" and guiding development so it doesn't block the views
- 73% agreed or strongly agreed that developers should be required to set aside land in their developments for greenways.

In the comments portion of the survey, there were a large number of responses concerned with maintenance of existing facilities, adding more connecting trails and natural areas, improving awareness of existing natural areas and trails available to the public, and re-opening the scenic tower on U.S. Route 20 west of Elizabeth.

Work Sessions

The Jo Daviess County Greenways & Trails Committee held five (5) Public Work Sessions in June of 2008. Personal invitations were sent out to a list including 152 stakeholders, advertisements were placed in local newspapers, and the schedule was posted online.

At the Work Sessions, attendees were given a full background of the Greenways & Trails Plan. The attendees were then presented with very broad goals for the Plan developed by the Committee. The attendees were asked to make any additions to the list of goals. The next component of the Work Session was to have the attendees identify specific projects ideas. The projects could be either County-wide or community specific. Once all projects were identified, the final component of the Work Session was to have the attendees prioritize each of the broad goals and specific project ideas. The top three goals identified for greenways and trails are listed below:

Greenways

- Identify significant natural and scenic areas, as well as sensitive environmental corridors, that should be protected from inappropriate development.
- Identify high-quality examples of habitat communities (e.g. streams, forests, prairie, wetlands, floodplains, riparian areas) and promote restoration & management of these habitats.
- Develop ways to educate the public and private landowners about the presence, value and management of these areas.

Trails

- Identify a network of pathway corridors connecting natural, historic, and recreational areas with communities.
- Support development of the Grand Illinois Trail and the Mississippi River Trail
- Identify and map scenic routes through the county.

Specific potential projects for the communities were identified for incorporation into the final plan.

For more information see the following:
Attachment C (pp. 70 - 113) – public input summary, complete survey and worksession results
Attachment D (pp. 115 - 129) - a narrative description of proposed multi-purpose trails and trail opportunities for communities and a map of each community
Attachment E (pp. 130 - 132) - list of stakeholders

JO DAVIESS COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCES

The varied characteristics of Jo Daviess County combine to create an area that is rare in beauty and rich in natural resources. The primary features of importance are the unique geology, the Mississippi River with local tributaries, rare environments and ecologies, the presence of many native plants and animals (including several state and federally endangered species), and the dark night sky.

The unique geology of the area is the basis for the enduring ecosystems, agricultural economy and scenic beauty found in the county. Much of the county lies within the Driftless Area that largely escaped the glaciers of recent ice ages, resulting in some of the most interesting and rugged topography in Illinois. The bedrock in the area consists of sedimentary rocks of the Ordovician and Silurian ages that were deposited 400-500 million years ago. They are made up primarily of dolomite, a rock composed of calcium and magnesium carbonates. Nowhere else in Illinois is the bedrock elevation so high (Jo Daviess County contains the highest geographical point in Illinois - Charles Mound), nor is the bedrock so close to the surface. Erosion over time has exposed the bedrock on steep slopes as rock outcroppings. The landscape is characterized by high ridges and deep valleys created by millions of years of erosion. The soils are composed mostly of wind-blown loess (silt), disintegrated rock, and flood deposited soil (alluvium). Over 60% of the county is considered "Prime" or "Important" farmland because of its rich soils.

Waterways play a critical ecological role in the county. The Mississippi River, one of the largest drainage basins in the world, forms the entire western border of Jo Daviess County. The Mississippi watershed is broken down into smaller areas defined by the waterways feeding into it. The majority of the county is located in the Apple-Plum hydrologic river basin, which includes property in nine counties in Illinois, Iowa and Wisconsin. The Jo Daviess County portion of this watershed area contains 2,282 river and stream miles of which 1,085 are perennial or continuously flowing. The unit is divided into eight watershed areas that are further broken down into smaller sub-watershed areas. The county's myriad of streams and rivers are located in v-shaped valleys. Because of the generally steep slopes and thin soils, the water moves off the land quickly. This results in a landscape with no natural lakes (Lake Galena and Apple Canyon Lake are private man-made resort lakes; IDNR's Hanover Lake located near Hanover is open to the public), a low percentage of wetland areas (about 3% of the land cover), and flash flood and soil erosion issues. The water that does not evaporate or find its way to a river or stream percolates through faults in the bedrock to the underlying aquifers.

The area has a typical continental climate with cold winters, hot summers, and abundant rainfall. The climate and soils combine to produce habitat types that support a diversity of plants and animals. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources has identified nearly 30 natural communities known to occur in the Wisconsin Driftless Natural Division (of which Jo Daviess County is a part). This includes 8 forest communities, 3 savanna communities, 11 prairie communities, 3 primary (exposed limestone) communities, and 4 wetland communities. These natural communities represent 42% of the native flora, 42% of the reptiles, 78% of the mammals, and 90% of the birds found in the State of Illinois. The State of Illinois also maintains a list of high quality natural areas that exemplify the way the State of Illinois looked prior to European settlement.

Because of the rural nature of the county, light pollution levels are relatively low, and the area has been recognized as having some of the darkest night skies in the state. Apple River Canyon State Park has become a popular location for astronomers to visit.

Attachment F (pp. 133 - 139) contains additional narrative and a list of references for further study.

JO DAVIESS COUNTY CULTURAL RESOURCES

Jo Daviess County is richly endowed with a great wealth and diversity of cultural resources. Located on the southern end of the upper Midwest's Driftless (or unglaciated) Region, the area has been a crossroads for original Native Americans, early miners and settlers, and now tourists. Examples of the rich and varied resources waiting to be explored include many Native American Indian sites. These began with the Paleo-Indian culture from 10,000-8,000 B.C., continued with the Archaic culture from 8,000-1,000 B.C. The Woodland Culture from 1,000 B.C. to A.D. 1,000 created ancient burial mounds such as those at Gramercy Park in East Dubuque, Casper Bluff Land & Water Reserve and Keough Effigy Mounds Land & Water Reserve near Galena. This culture also created effigy mounds in the shape of animals. Jo Daviess County includes the only known intact bird and bear effigies in the State of Illinois. From A.D. 900-1500 the Mississippian culture intermixed with the Woodland culture as evidenced by the archeological sites in the Wapello Land and Water Reserve south of Hanover and the lower Apple River. From 1500-1800 the Oneota culture gave rise to the present day Native American tribes found in the upper Midwest.

In the 1600's, fur trade and lead mining began in the region with the French explorers. Lead mines and smelter sites became a fundamental part of the county's history; it was the commerce brought about by lead mining and the steamboat trade that settled Galena (Latin for lead sulfide), the hub of the lead mine district and site of the first major mineral rush in U. S. history. The area became a mecca for easterners, southerners, Germans, Irish, English and others, many of their descendents still residing here. Galena also became home to Ulysses S. Grant, eighteenth president of the United States. Mining peaked in 1845 but agriculture flourished as settlement increased. Much of the character of the Jo Daviess county countryside today is the result of this rich agricultural heritage. Agriculture remains a leading industry for Jo Daviess County. In fact, the county consistently ranks in the top three in Illinois in beef, dairy, oats and hay production. The historic and current importance of agriculture in the county is evidenced by centennial farms and iconic barns, tangible reminders of more recent peoples and their occupation and interaction with the land. This rich cultural and historical heritage extends not only to historic farms and outbuildings, but also to bridges, rural schoolhouses, creameries, cheese factories, stagecoach stops and mill sites.

Today there are over 700 archaeological and historical sites on file with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) for Jo Daviess County. There are three historic districts (Galena, Scales Mound and Warren) and numerous individual buildings and sites that are all part of the National Register of Historic Places. Information on these sites and assistance with preservation, education, or research can be accessed through the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, University of Illinois, and the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation. Recently the IHPA, University of Illinois and JDCF entered into a cooperative agreement to share Illinois archaeological and historical site file information for preservation and research purposes. These priceless resources are to be found in every corner of the county, often connected by historic roads and trails traversing the rugged terrain. All represent valuable assets that provide Jo Daviess County with an incredible sense of place for both visitor and resident alike.

Attachment G (pp. 140 - 152) contains additional narrative and a list of references for further study.

GREENWAYS

Defining Greenways

Greenways are corridors of open space designated for conservation and recreation purposes. Greenways often follow natural land or water features. They usually link together natural areas, parks, historic sites, and cultural features such as farmland. Greenways are usually a combination of privately and publicly owned land. They may or may not entail public access. Some greenways include trails, while others do not. Some appeal to people, while others attract wildlife, and some appeal to both.

Greenways:

- Help protect the quantity and quality of water-a natural resource vital to people, plants and animals.
- Make communities a better place to live by preserving open spaces and beautiful scenery.
- Help protect environmentally, culturally and historically valuable areas.

- Strengthen local economies:
  - Many studies demonstrate that parks, greenways and trails increase nearby property values, which, in turn, increases local tax revenues.
  - Greenways help improve the overall appeal of a community to tourists and prospective new residents, which in turn generates expenditures on lodging, food, retail operations, and new home construction.
  - The conservation of rivers, trails and greenways can help local governments and other public agencies reduce costs resulting from flooding and other natural hazards.
  - Greenways often provide business opportunities, locations, and resources for commercial activities such as recreation equipment rentals and sales, lessons, and other related businesses.

*What greenways are **not**:*

- *Greenways are NOT all owned by the government.*
- *Greenways do NOT need to be fenced.*
- *Greenways do NOT take land away from people.*
- *Greenways do NOT require public access on all land.*

Proposed Greenway Areas

How should greenway areas be identified in Jo Daviess County? 80% of survey respondents felt that "areas of high ecological sensitivity, for instance, land along waterways or high ridge tops," should be designated as greenways and preserved. This result supports the County Comprehensive Plan's recommendation to preserve environmental corridors along streambeds and to conserve elevated ridges, knobs and mounds in the county. For the purposes of this plan, three ecologically sensitive area types were identified for inclusion in the proposed plan: quality habitat, waterways and elevated areas. Quality habitat can be found along waterways and in elevated areas, so there is some overlap of these areas geographically, but each has distinct characteristics that warrant special care and some degree of protection. Private and public land require different management approaches.

Waterways

Jo Daviess County's variable topography is associated with an impressive network of rivers and streams. Waterways and their banks are inherently continuous natural areas and as such are primary greenway areas.

Stormwater flooding and erosion control, due to the water velocity on steep slopes, cause bank erosion, nutrient loading and sedimentation issues in the waterways. Streambank stabilization and meaningful riparian buffers are effective ways to improve water quality. Riparian buffers are strips of grass, trees or shrubs established along streams, ditches, wetlands or other water bodies. Riperian buffers trap sediment, filter nutrients, and provide habitat and corridors for fish and wildlife. There are financial incentives for riparian buffers through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). Attachment H (p. 153) contains expanded narrative about buffer strips.

In the 17 Illinois Administrative Code, the state has identified navigable waterways in Jo Daviess County to be the Mississippi River, and the lower portions of the Apple, Galena, and Sinsinawa Rivers. These waterways are available for public use. Resident knowledge suggests that there are additional waterway areas that may be navigable. However these are not public waters, and use of these areas without permission is considered criminal trespass. The Administrative Code provides a process for petitioning to add public waters to the state list (Section 3704.40) that involves, in part, establishing both navigability and the intent of riparian property owners to dedicate the water to public use.

Quality Habitat

Because of the relatively rare natural resources of the driftless area, the county has been the subject of various state studies that have sought to quantify and analyze the resources present. Data from the state's Critical Trends Assesment Program, recommendations from the *Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan & Strategy*, and quality habitat areas identified in the *Driftless Area Strategic Sub-Watershed Identification Process: Maximizing Benefits of Ecosystem Management* were used as primary references for the Jo Daviess County Greenways and Trail Plan.

The Critical Trends Assessment Program (CTAP) is an ongoing process. The Department of Natural Resources issued a report in 1994 documenting the state of the Illinois environment, and a landcover atlas in 1995. Since then, ongoing assessments of the state's forests, wetlands, grasslands and streams have been conducted by staff from the Illinois Department of Natural Resource's Office of Realty and Environmental Planning, the Illinois Natural History Survey, State Geological Survey, State Water Survey, Illinois State Museum, and Illinois Waste Management and Research Center. The goal of the program is to provide reliable reference information on ecosystems. More information about the CTAP program can be found at http://dnr.state.il.us/orep/ctap/

In 2005 the State of Illinois produced a State Wildlife Action Plan designed to identify habitat and to make recommendations for managing habitat for threatened and endangered wildlife species as well as wildlife Species in Greatest Need of Conservation. There are 32 Endangered and 25 Threatened species listed with the State of Illinois that are found in the Wisconsin Driftless Natural Division, which includes Jo Daviess County. These species are included along with 96 additional species for a total of 153 Species in Greatest Need of Conservation. In the Wisconsin Driftless Natural Division, areas with high concentrations of habitats supporting these species where active conservation work is currently occurring were identified as Conservation Opportunity Areas. There are 4 Conservation Opportunity Areas identified within the State Wildlife Action Plan in Jo Daviess County. For more information on the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan & Strategy go to http://wildlifeactionplans.org/illinois.html

The *Driftless Area Strategic Sub-Watershed Identification Process: Maximizing Benefits of Ecosystem Management*, or SSIP, is a report that was created through the state's C2000 grant program to provide guidance for watershed protection and restoration efforts. Recognizing that it is easier and more cost-effective to protect and maintain healthy ecosystems than it is to try to recreate them, the report identifies areas that currently contain the highest quality habitat areas as a way of focusing conservation resources and efforts. Consideration was given to the percentage of forest land, wetlands, grassland, natural areas, soils showing potential wetlands characteristics, 100 year floodplain acres, amount of publicly-managed land, occurrences of threatened and endangered species, and biologically significant streams in each sub-watershed. The sub-watersheds were scored using a point system. The full report can be viewed online at http://dnr.state.il.us/OREP/pfc/ssip/reports/DAP/ssipfinalreport.pdf

The highest quality habitat sub-watersheds identified in the SSIP report (which correlated well with the four Conservation Areas in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan) were selected for inclusion in the plan's greenway area. Greenway buffers are shown along each of the waterways depicted on the "Jo Daviess County Greenways and Trails Plan". To simplify the plan graphically, not all the waterways of the county are shown, but the intent is to show that riparian buffers are important greenways along all waterways in the county. These areas are shown on the "Jo Daviess County Greenways and Trails Plan" as "Quality Habitat and Riparian Buffers."

Elevated Areas

In the Paleozoic Era (570 to 245 million years ago) shallow seas covered the area that is now Jo Daviess County. Materials deposited on the sea floor (shells, sand, silts and mud) became the sedimentary layers of limestone, dolomite, shale and sandstone we now see throughout the county. The current top layer, located on the tops of high ridges and mounds, is dolomite, a very hard rock that has resisted erosion and protected the softer layers below it. The shallow soils and access issues related to the elevated areas have made them less appealing for agricultural uses or residential development, and they have remained, by default, as natural areas. In addition to being important habitat areas, the ridges and mounds of the county have attracted humans for centuries resulting in the fact that many of the county's pre-historic sites and treasured scenic areas are located in elevated areas. The Elevated Areas identified on the *The Land Use Plan* for Jo Daviess County were selected for inclusion in the plan's greenway area, and are shown on the "Jo Daviess County Greenways and Trails Plan" as "Elevated Areas."

Public vs. Private Land

Public Land

The relative age and integrity of the established natural areas have made Jo Daviess County a focal point for entities concerned with studying and/or preserving natural areas and the species they support. Thousands of acres have been acquired and are being restored or maintained as public natural areas by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation, and the municipalities. The majority of this acreage is available for public use.

The Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation is working on an eco-tourism project, "Rivers to Ridges." As part of the project, sites available for public recreation were examined to evaluate their attractiveness and to determine their readiness for visitors. A survey conducted of visitors to the area documented their current level of use, and the strong potential for increased use, of existing facilities. Projects will be prioritized to enhance the sites for visitors, and a marketing effort will be undertaken as part of this project. Respondents to the Greenways and Trails survey expressed a need to know more about the location and amenities of the existing parks and preserves in the county, and the Rivers to Ridges marketing effort would help address this need. Follow the progress of the Rivers to Ridges project at www.riverstoridges.info

Attachment I (pp. 154 - 155) contains a summary of the liability issues related to public activities on public and private land.

Private Land

Private landowners have the primary responsibility for land stewardship as they are the largest landowners in the county. Private landowners have many opportunities to restore, manage and conserve the natural resources of their property, such as participation in stewardship programs, adoption of land management plans and placement of conservation easements. If landowners are interested in allowing public access on their property for recreation or conservation, it is important to know that state statute (ILCS 745/65 Recreational Use of Land and Water Areas Act) limits the liability of property owners who allow people to enter their property for recreational or conservation purposes.

Conservation easements are restrictions landowners voluntarily place on their property that legally bind the actions of present and future owners. Conservation easements allow property owners to ensure that the natural resources on their land are protected. The first conservation easement in the county, on land forming a portion of Horseshoe Mound, was recorded in 1998. In addition to easements held on property owned by the state and not-for-profit entities focused on land conservation, there are currently 21 easements on private land totaling over 2,500 acres. Of these, 5 easements, representing nearly 75% of the acreage under easements, protects land for agricultural use. Conservation easements recorded in the county at this time are held by the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation, the Natural Land Institute, the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission and the Prairie Enthusiasts. Each entity prescribes its own criteria and terms for accepting easements within the bounds of the Real Property Conservation Rights Act (765 ILCS 120), with the exception of the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission which falls under the Illinois Nature Preserves Commission Act.

GREENWAY RECOMMENDATIONS

Everyone who owns land or visits the area enjoys the benefits of this beautiful natural environment and shares in the responsibility to maintain, manage and restore healthy ecosystems in the county.

The issues related to various types of greenways differ. For the purpose of plan recommendations, 2 primary area types were identified: Waterways and Land (quality habitat and agricultural). Each of these areas are comprised of both privately and publicly held property.

Best management practices are encouraged in all greenway areas. Assistance in applying best management practices is available through the local offices of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service or the Jo Daviess County Soil and Water Conservation District (815/858-3418); the local offices of the Illinois Department of Natural Resources Division of Forest Resources (815/273-2737) and Division of Wildlife Resources (815/273-2771); the Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation (815/858-9100); and the University of Illinois Extension (815/858-2273).

Recommendations for Waterway Areas:

- Promote restoration of native vegetation along streams to shade streams, stabilize banks, and filter sediment and chemicals from runoff before they reach the streams

- Undertake upland soil conservation measures to decrease negative impacts of drainage waters (energy, sediment loads, temperature, pollutants).

- Restore cool-water streams, particularly in the Apple River watershed.

- Manage grazing on buffer areas

- Repair and reseed rills or small channels that may develop in eroded areas

- Manage weeds and brush in grass buffers.

- Coordinate stream and watershed conservation actions with other agencies, organizations and upstream and downstream jurisdictions.

- Increase water quality education efforts

Recommendations for Land Areas:

Quality Habitat Areas

- Develop ways to educate public and private landowners about the value and management of habitat areas (forests, savannas, prairies, wetlands, etc.) and promote the restoration and management of those habitats

- Encourage sound management practices to promote healthy habitats (forests, savannas, prairies, wetlands, etc.) through landowner education/assistance, prescribed burning, timber stand improvements, and exotics control (mechanical, chemical, or fire).

- Reduce fragmentation of forests 500 acres and larger and create broader transition areas from grassland, shrubs/successional, savanna/open woodland, to closed forest.

- When development occurs, encourage the use of greenways as a tool to buffer distinctly different land uses.

- Promote the coordination of maintenance efforts for public lands to establish a sufficient and sustainable program.

- Explore potential use of ordinances for protection, enhancement and recreational purposes

- Explore and promote incentive programs (e.g. conservation easements, Purchase of Development Rights) to preserve critical and sensitive land (e.g. natural, historical or scenic areas).

- Delay mowing grass areas until after July 15 to protect nesting birds

Agricultural Land Areas

- Follow best management practices for land in production (conservation plans for highly erodible land, no till, rotational grazing, etc.)

- Support sustainable agricultural practices such as conservation buffers (filter strips, field borders, grassed waterways, field windbreaks/shelterbelts, contour grass strips, riparian buffers).

- Explore and promote incentive programs (e.g. CRP, Forestry Management, Purchase of Development Rights) to preserve critical and sensitive land (e.g. natural/scenic areas).

Public Access Areas (privately or publicly owned)

- Promote awareness and use of public access areas as county and community assets
    - Include reference to these areas in county marketing materials
    - Support the “Rivers to Ridges” marketing effort

- Promote the coordination of maintenance efforts for public lands to establish a sufficient and sustainable program

- Identify and evaluate potential ongoing funding mechanisms to support development and maintenance of public greenways and trails program

TRAILS

Trails are linear pathways for people. They can connect natural and cultural assets and provide necessary transportation routes. Trails can be designed for hiking and biking, for snowmobiling, for horseback riding, for ATVs, or for any combination of the above. Trail development has become a national pastime and connectivity is the ultimate goal. Identifying and mapping ways to connect both within the county and with trail systems developing outside the county provides a logical basis for project development as circumstances permit. The following narrative summarizes the status of various trail types in the county.

Historic Trails

Jo Daviess County is located along a key historical corridor that has served Native Americans, miners, farmers, settlers and now tourists. The earliest trails were created by Indians following herds of game. Later these routes served to connect trading networks. The French followed the same paths, as did the British and then Americans. The lead mines of the county became the focus for several of these ancient trails, perhaps the earliest running from Peoria to Galena. Southerners coming north to mine lead and returning south during the winter led to the formal laying out of Kellogg's Trail in 1825. Multiple variations of this trail were surveyed over the next 20 years as the mines matured and Illinois settlement advanced, first from the south and then from the east. The General Assembly authorized a "State Road" to be surveyed from Chicago to Galena in 1833 (forerunner of our current Stagecoach Trail). As settlements grew the U. S. Post Office granted mail contracts to various carriers, who often altered their routes to accommodate the mails. The Frink and Walker Stage Line, headquartered in Chicago, quickly became the largest and most influential line in the Midwest. They provided regular mail and coach service to Galena and other towns in the county beginning in 1839. One could travel from Galena to Chicago, Peoria, Dubuque or Mineral Point for $5.00 to $10.00 per passenger. Today, most of these trails have been incorporated into various sections of local and state roads. Some are simply ruts in an old pasture. But all are a testament to the incredible history that has shaped the cultural landscape we see today. Attachment J (pp. 156 - 158) contains an expanded narrative on Historic Trails.

Hiking/Biking Trails

Survey respondents said that the most important reason they use trails is "To enjoy nature," followed by "Recreational Use" and "Health Benefits." Respondents felt the county should have more hiking/biking, Nature, and Wildlife observation trails, above other types of trails.

A major state hiking/biking trail route, the Grand Illinois Trail GIT), and a major national hiking/biking trail route, the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) run through the county. Both of these routes use a patchwork of on-road routes and off-road multi-use trails, and efforts to increase the off-road portions are ongoing.

Grand Illinois and Mississippi River Trails

The GIT was proposed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and continues to receive state support in the form of planning, land acquisition, and project development funding. The almost 500-mile trail extends from Lake Michigan to the banks of the Mississippi and then back again. The GIT runs through Jo Daviess County on over 50 miles of existing roadways. The 3.5 mile Galena River Trail extending south from Galena is an off-road trail spur of the GIT. For more information and maps of the Grand Illinois Trail, visit www.openlands.org/git

The MRT runs 3,000 miles alongside of the Mississippi River from the headwaters at Lake Itasca, Minnesota to the Delta at the Gulf of Mexico in Louisiana. Mississippi River Trail, Inc., is working in

partnership with federal, state and local agencies and organizations to complete the trail, which runs through ten states. The MRT runs through Jo Daviess County on about 37 miles of existing roadways. The MRT route from Galena to the southern border of the county shares the same route as the GIT. For more information about the Mississippi River Trail, visit www.mississipirivertrail.org/

Galena River Trail

The Galena River Trail is currently about 5 miles long, extending from Recreation Park on the north side of the city through town and south along an abandoned rail route to the Galena Junction. The trail, a combination of paved and crushed rock surfaces is available for hiking, biking and cross-country skiing. Plans are underway to extend the trail south for an additional 2 miles to Aiken where it will connect to Pilot Knob Road. Once connected, this route will replace a portion of the state's Grand Illinois Trail that currently runs on Blackjack Road.

This trail is a good example of one way to fund trail development. The Galena trail from Recreation Park to the Depot Parking lot was paid for through a $400,000 federal earmark. Land for the trail from the parking lot to the Galena Junction was purchased using $68,909 of City funds and an Illinois Bicycle Path Grant Program grant of $26,821. The trail was developed using $203,883 of City funds and an Illinois Bicycle Path Grant Program grant of $184,700. The state of Illinois is currently attempting to acquire land for an extension down to Aiken/Pilot Knob Road with plans to give it to the City of Galena for trail development.

Chestnut Mountain Biking Trail

Chestnut Mountain Resort offers mountain bike rentals for use on two trails totaling about 5 miles in length. (http://www.chestnutmtn.com)

Snowmobile Trails

The county has an extensive network of snowmobile trails. State grant-assisted snowmobile trails on private lands in Jo Daviess County are open to the public. The state snowmobile grant program is funded entirely by snowmobile riders through registration fees. Snowmobile clubs obtain landowners' permission for trail locations, mark and groom the trails, provide trail maps and offer safety instruction. Most snowmobile clubs in Illinois are members of the Illinois Association of Snowmobile Clubs (IASC). Jo Daviess County is part of Region 6, which covers several counties. There are three snowmobile clubs in Jo Daviess County: East Dubuque-Menominee Snowmobile Club, Mississippi Ridge Runners, and the Warren Winter Warriors. Specific Club contact information can be found at http://www.ilsnowmobile.com/clubs.html

Water Trails

When asked what kind of trails the county should have more of, survey respondents chose Water Trails 83 times (out of a total of 754 selections, or 11%). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife has plans to mark canoe trails in the backwaters of the Mississippi River, but there are currently no marked water trails in the county. However, the navigable waterways are used by the public for recreational purposes on a regular basis. Fever River Outfitters offers canoe and kayak rentals on the Galena River. (http://www.feverriveroutfitters.com/boats.htm)

ATV Trails

When asked what kind of trails the county should have more of, survey respondents chose ATV Trails 39 times (out of a total of 754 selections, or 5%). No ATV parks or dedicated ATV trails exist in the county at this time, however ATVs are very popular and used extensively on private land.

Horseback Riding Trails

When asked what kind of trails the county should have more of, survey respondents chose Equestrian Trails 38 times (out of a total of 754 selections, or 5%). There is an active equestrian community in Jo Daviess County due to the unmatched beauty of the landscape. While most riding is done on rural country roads or on private lands, there are privately owned facilities that can be accessed by the public for a fee.

There are 40 miles of private, manicured trails within the Galena Territory that may be accessed through the Shenandoah Riding Center. Riders may participate in trail rides or trailer in their own horses and pay a trail fee in order to traverse the stunning landscape of rugged hills, deep ravines, and panoramic ridge tops through meadows and woodlands abundant with wildlife. For more information, visit www.shenandoahridingcenter.com.

HayWire Farms, located outside of the Galena Territory has 250 private acres available for trail riding for a fee. (http://www.haywirefarmsllc.com/home.html)

TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

At the public work sessions the top two goals relative to trails were to "Identify a network of pathway corridors connecting natural, historic, and recreational areas with communities" and to "Support development of Grand Illinois Trail and Mississippi River Trail." This combined with the desire expressed in the survey for more hiking/biking, Nature, and Wildlife observation trails led to the development of a proposed trail system utilizing existing roadways to connect communities to the Grand Illinois and Mississippi River Trails, which in turn provide north-south and east-west routes through the county.

Using roadways creates an immediate county-wide trail system, but whenever feasible, off-road trails are preferred. This plan offers communities and entities wishing to develop off-road trails information about opportunities and resources available for trail development.

Roadways (including the entire right-of-way) are multi-purpose trails, providing existing connections for those driving, walking, cycling or horseback riding. Depending upon the roadway conditions (road surface, shoulder width, topography, traffic flow, etc.) some roads are more appealing for multipurpose use than others. The "Jo Daviess County, IL Road Surface Guide" map produced by the Galena/Jo Daviess County Convention and Visitors Bureau, the "Illinois Official Bicycle Map: Northwestern Illinois Map 2" which rates roadways for "bicycle suitability", *Bicycling Around Galena: A Guide to the Backroads* by Nick Murray, and input from the local cycling club, G.O.A.T.S. were referenced to identify potential multi-purpose on-road trails.

The proposed "Grand Illinois Trail" and "Mississippi River Trail" along with "Proposed Multi-purpose Trails" are shown on the "Jo Daviess County Greenways and Trails Plan"

- Focus efforts on the acquisition, development and maintenance of the Grand Illinois Trail and Mississippi River Trail Routes
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    - Improve shoulder widths along roadway portions of routes, including dedicated bike lanes in right-of-way when feasible
    - Improve surfaces of roadway portions of routes
        - East Canyon Road from 78 east to county line
        - River Road
        - West Blanding Road
    - Work towards rerouting Mississippi River Trail as close to the river as feasible through its entire route through the county

- Support efforts by communities or other entities to acquire, develop and maintain off-road trails within and around their community and/or that connect to the Grand Illinois Trail and/or the Mississippi River Trail.

- Create bike lanes on appropriate roadways within communities

- Support the identification and promotion of water trails on public waters

FUNDING & IMPLEMENTATION

With the Jo Daviess County Greenways & Trails Plan completed, the planning process enters the crucial phase of implementation. The Plan serves as an advisory guide for public and private actions regarding greenway preservation and development within the County. To fulfill the Plan's purpose as an extension of the County Comprehensive Plan and as a tool to help guide decisions regarding development and growth, this section provides a summary of the available methods and responsibilities for the Plan's implementation.

A number of methods and strategies are available to aid in the implementation of the proposed greenways and trails, including the use of regulatory ordinances and a variety of acquisition, ownership, and financial strategies.

Regulatory Ordinances

Regulatory ordinances can include zoning, subdivision regulations, and Jo Daviess County's Comprehensive Plan. Regulatory ordinances can be used by local governments to guide development and to provide guidelines for greenway creation and preservation. Regulatory ordinances provide a legal framework for the implementation of proposed greenways and trails. Zoning controls the use of land so the zoning ordinance is a very effective tool for implementing the Jo Daviess County Greenways & Trails Plan. Subdivision ordinances are also effective tools for implementing greenway requirements. Subdivision regulations can greatly affect the overall patterns and quality of development by setting standards for the design of streets, sidewalks, utilities, and community facilities. Subdivision regulations can also require dedications of land for parks, open space, or trails in new developments. They may also require dedications for storm water detention basins designed to also serve as recreational facilities.

Acquisition and Ownership

Acquisition and ownership strategies are often the most difficult aspects of implementing a greenways and trails plan. A wide variety of acquisition options are available. Some options are widely accepted and used with much success, while others are less common, innovative options and may be effective only in certain situations.

Ownership is another important issue that must be addressed. There are three (3) types of ownership: private, public, or mixed ownership. These different types of ownership can be used in various ways. For instance, a greenway or trail that will be used for a recreational purpose or as a mode of transportation will likely be owned by a local government entity. However, if a greenway serves an environmental purpose, such as wetlands protection, wildlife habitat protection, or stream preservation, a private entity may be a more appropriate owner due to their ability to more successfully manage the property for the greatest impact. There will also be instances where multiple or joint ownership of a greenway or trail will occur, particularly when implementation and management costs are too much of a burden for one entity. Potential acquisition and ownership strategies have been identified by the Conservation Fund, a national nonprofit land and water conservation organization that protects land through partnerships. These strategies are identified more specifically in the Attachment K (pp. 163 - 170) of this document.

Financial Strategies

The most well conceived plans for the acquisition, implementation, and management of greenways and trails will undoubtedly fail if financial resources are not available. Please see Attachment K (pp. 163 - 170) for information that describes the fundamental types of greenway and trail funding sources – for both the public sector and the private sector. The information found in Attachment K also includes a resource list of federal and state funds and programs focusing on recreation, greenways, and trails. That information is by no means all-inclusive and will require updating.

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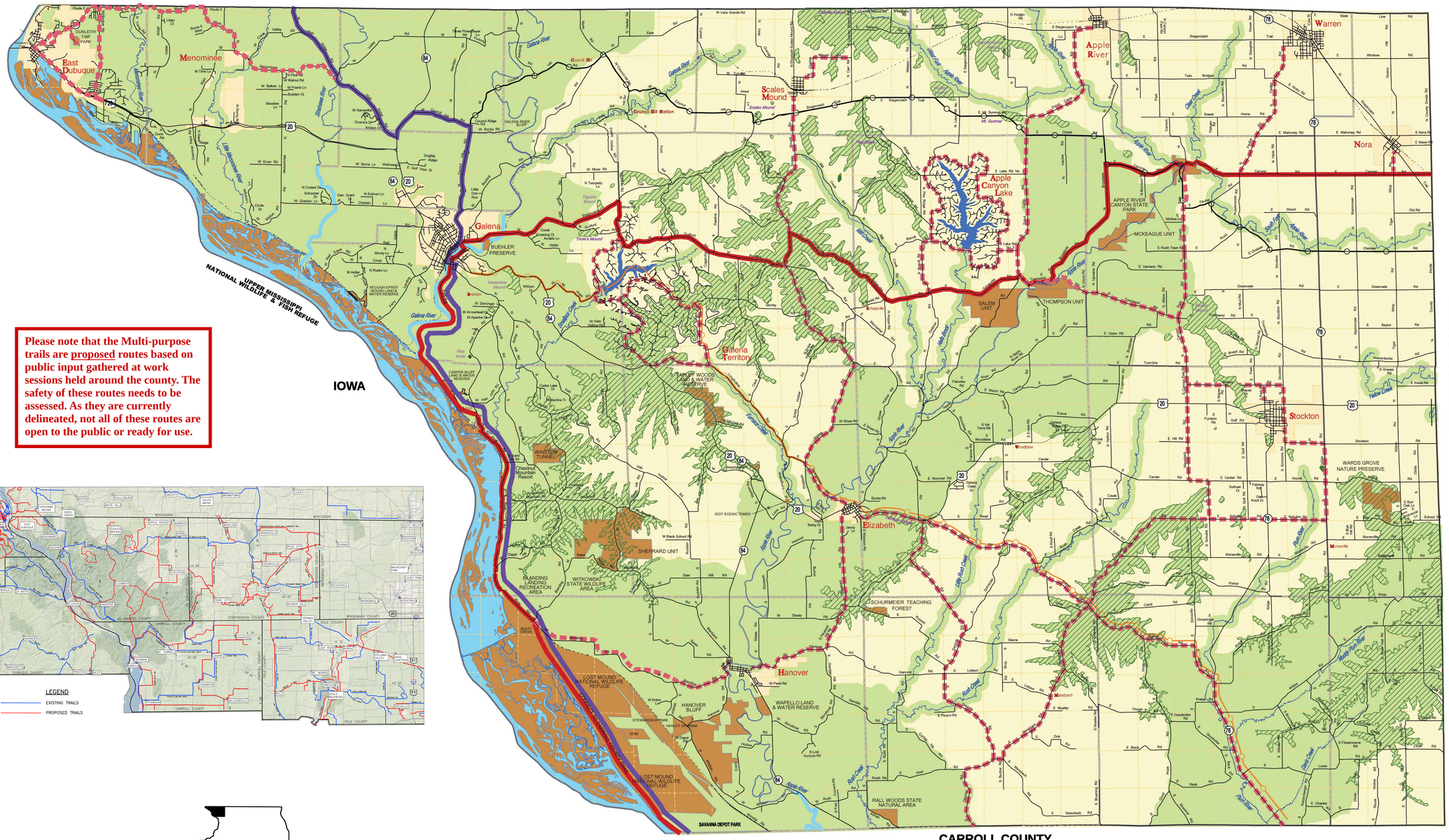
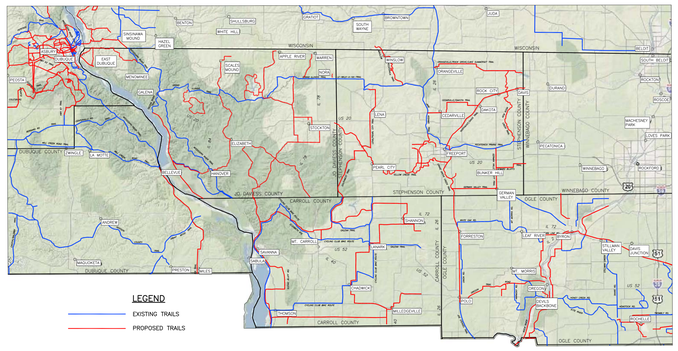




Introduction

Jo Daviess County applied for and was awarded a $20,000 Greenways and Trails Planning Assistance Program grant though the Illinois Department of Natural Resources. The grant allowed for the Jo Daviess County Greenways & Trails Planning Committee to conduct an assessment of existing greenway areas and trails in the County as well as identify opportunities to improve greenway areas and trail systems in the future.

Public input was obtained through meetings with governing bodies, a survey, and public work sessions. Synthesizing the existing conditions, research data and public input, a draft Greenways and Trails Plan was created. Municipalities, townships and resort communities were asked to review and comment on the plan. Taking into account any proposed changes, the plan was presented to the Development & Planning Committee to recommend adoption of the plan. The Jo Daviess County Board adopted the Jo Daviess County Greenways & Trails Plan at their March 10, 2009 meeting.

The complete report, maps and attachments can be viewed at:
www.jodaviess.org/greenwaysandtrails

Legend

Greenways

- QUALITY HABITAT & RIPARIAN AREAS
- ELEVATED AREAS
- WATERWAYS
- PARKS & PRESERVES

Trails

- PROPOSED MULTI-PURPOSE TRAIL
- GRAND ILLINOIS TRAIL
- MISSISSIPPI RIVER TRAIL
- PEORIA - GALENA TRAIL
- 1840's STAGECOACH TRAIL
- NAVIGABLE WATERWAYS

N W E S

SCALE: 1" = 7500'

7500 0 7500 15,000 22,500 FEET

Defining Greenways & Trails

Greenways are corridors of open space designated for conservation and recreation purposes. Greenways often follow natural land or water features. They usually link together natural areas, parks, historic sites, and cultural features such as farmland. Greenways are usually a combination of privately and publicly owned land. They may or may not entail public access. Some greenways include trails, while others do not. Some appeal to people, while others attract wildlife, and some appeal to both.

Trails are linear pathways for people. They can connect natural and cultural assets and provide necessary transportation routes. Trails can be designed for hiking and biking, for snowmobiling, for horseback riding, for ATVs, or for any combination of the above. Trail development has become a national pastime and connectivity is the ultimate goal. Identifying and mapping ways to connect both within the county and with trail systems developing outside the county provides a logical basis for project development as circumstances permit.

Contributing Agencies

- Illinois Department of Natural Resources
- Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation
- Jo Daviess County
- Village of Elizabeth
- Kodak Foundation

FEHR-GRAHAM & ASSOCIATES, LLC
ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE CONSULTANTS
FREEPORT, IL ROCKFORD, IL ROCHELLE, IL SPRINGFIELD, IL MONROE, WI
ILLINOIS DESIGN FIRM NO. 184-003825

2009

Jo Daviess County Greenways & Trails Plan

For more information visit www.jodaviess.org/greenwaysandtrails

Greenway Recommendations

Everyone who owns land or visits the area enjoys the benefits of this beautiful natural environment and shares in the responsibility to maintain, manage and restore healthy ecosystems in the county.

The issues related to various types of greenways differ. For the purpose of plan recommendations, 2 primary area types were identified: Waterways and Land (quality habitat and agricultural). Each of these areas are comprised of both privately and publicly held property.

Recommendations for Waterway Areas

- Promote restoration of native vegetation along streams to shade streams, stabilize banks, and filter sediment and chemicals from runoff before they reach the streams
- Undertake upland soil conservation measures to decrease negative impacts of drainage waters (energy, sediment loads, temperature, pollutants).
- Restore cool-water streams, particularly in the Apple River watershed.
- Manage grazing on buffer areas
- Repair and reseed rills or small channels that may develop in eroded areas
- Manage weeds and brush in grass buffers.
- Coordinate stream and watershed conservation actions with other agencies, organizations and upstream and downstream jurisdictions.
- Increase water quality education efforts

Recommendations for Land Areas

Quality Habitat Areas

- Develop ways to educate public and private landowners about the value and management of habitat areas (forests, savannas, prairies, wetlands, etc.) and promote the restoration and management of those habitats
- Encourage sound management practices to promote healthy habitats (forests, savannas, prairies, wetlands, etc.) through landowner education/assistance, prescribed burning, timber stand improvements, and exotics control (mechanical, chemical, or fire).
- Reduce fragmentation of forests 500 acres and larger and create broader transition areas from grassland, shrubs/successional, savanna/open woodland, to closed forest.
- When development occurs, encourage the use of greenways as a tool to buffer distinctly different land uses.
- Promote the coordination of maintenance efforts for public lands to establish a sufficient and sustainable program.
- Explore potential use of ordinances for protection, enhancement and recreational purposes
- Explore and promote incentive programs (e.g. conservation easements, Purchase of Development Rights) to preserve critical and sensitive land (e.g. natural, historical or scenic areas).
- Delay mowing grass areas until after July 15 to protect nesting birds

Agricultural Land Areas

- Follow best management practices for land in production (conservation plans for highly erodible land, no till, rotational grazing, etc.)
- Support sustainable agricultural practices such as conservation buffers (filter strips, field borders, grassed waterways, field windbreaks/shelterbelts, contour grass strips, riparian buffers).
- Explore and promote incentive programs (e.g. CRP, Forestry Management, Purchase of Development Rights) to preserve critical and sensitive land (e.g. natural/scenic areas).

Public Access Areas (privately or publicly owned)

- Promote awareness and use of public access areas as county and community assets
  - Include reference to these areas in county marketing materials
  - Support the "Rivers to Ridges" marketing effort
- Promote the coordination of maintenance efforts for public lands to establish a sufficient and sustainable program
- Identify and evaluate potential ongoing funding mechanisms to support development and maintenance of public greenways and trails program

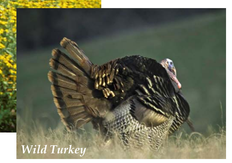
Best Management practices are encouraged in all greenway areas. Assistance in applying best management practices is available through the following offices:

OFFICE	ADDRESS	PHONE
Natural Resources Conservation Service/Jo Daviess County Soil and Water Conservation District	227 North Main Elizabeth IL 61028	815/858-3418
Illinois Department of Natural Resources Division of Forest Resources	16327 IL RTE 84 N Savanna IL 61074	815/273-2737
Illinois Department of Natural Resources Division of Wildlife Resources	16327 IL RTE 84 N Savanna IL 61074	815/273-2771
Jo Daviess Conservation Foundation	126 North Main Elizabeth IL 61028	815/858-9100
University of Illinois Extension	204 Vine P.O. Box 600 Elizabeth IL 61028	815/858-2273

Restored Prairie

Red Trillium

Brome Grass



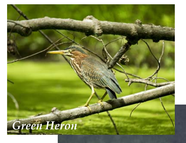
Wild Turkey

Natural Resources

The high ridges and deep valleys of Jo Daviess County make it one of the most beautiful parts of the state of Illinois, an area rich in natural resources with many unique features. Most of the county was spared by the major glaciations of the last two million years that leveled the rest of the state, resulting in rugged topography. Nowhere else in Illinois is the bedrock elevation so high (Jo Daviess County contains the highest geographical point in the state-Charles Mound) or so close to the surface. The soils are composed mostly of wind-blown loess (silt), disintegrated rock and flood deposited soil. Over 60% of the county is considered prime or important farmland because of its rich soils.

The Mississippi River forms the western border of the state, and there are many tributaries, with a total of 2,282 river and stream miles, but no natural lakes. The area has a typical continental climate with cold winters, hot summers and abundant rainfall. It has a combination of habitats types that includes forest, savanna, prairie, exposed limestone, and wetland. This supports a wide diversity of plants and animals-representing 42% of the native flora, 42% of the reptiles, 78% of the mammals, and 90% of the birds found in the entire state. Because of the rural nature of the county, light pollution levels are low and the area has some of the darkest skies in the state.

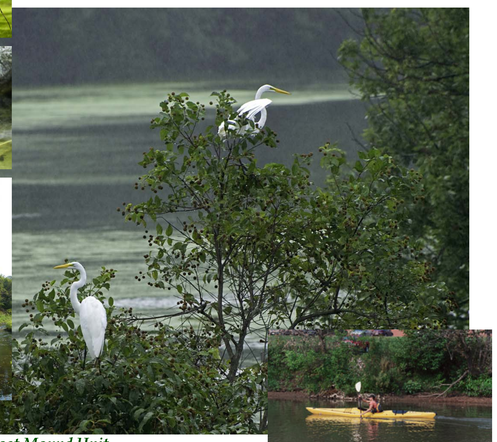
Lotus



Green Heron

Green Frog

Apple River Canyon State Park



Great Egrets-Lost Mound Unit
Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge

Kayaking

Bobcat

View from Guilford Road

Rural Landscape

Cultural Resources

Jo Daviess County has a great wealth and diversity of cultural resources. Today there are over 700 archaeological and historical sites on file with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) for Jo Daviess County. Of the many Native American Indian sites, the most noticeable are the many burial mounds, including the only known intact bird and bear effigy mounds in the state. Fur trade and lead mining starting in the 1600s brought population growth to the area, and Galena became a thriving commercial and cultural center, attracting easterners, southerners, Germans, Irish, English and others. Galena also became home to Ulysses S. Grant, eighteenth president of the United States.

Mining peaked in 1845 but agriculture continued to flourish as settlement increased. Much of the character of the countryside today is the result of this rich agricultural heritage. The historic and current importance of agriculture in the county is evidenced by centennial farms and iconic barns. This rich heritage extends not only to historic farms and outbuildings, but also to bridges, rural schoolhouses, creameries, cheese factories, stagecoach stops and mill sites. These priceless resources are to be found in every corner of the county, often connected by historic roads and trails traversing the rugged terrain. All represent valuable assets that provide Jo Daviess County with an incredible sense of place for both visitor and resident alike.

Burton's Mill

Casper Bluff Land & Water Reserve
On Pilot Knob Road, South of Galena

Gramercy Park
East Dubuque

Apple River Fort
Elizabeth

Trail Recommendations

At the public work sessions the top two goals relative to trails were to "Identify a network of pathway corridors connecting natural, historic, and recreational areas with communities" and to "Support development of Grand Illinois Trail and Mississippi River Trail." This combined with the desire expressed in the survey for more hiking/biking, Nature, and Wildlife observation trails led to the development of a proposed trail system utilizing existing roadways to connect communities to the Grand Illinois and Mississippi River Trails, which in turn provide north-south and east-west routes through the county.

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- Create bike lanes on appropriate roadways within communities
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Galena River Trail

Grand Illinois & Mississippi River Trails

The Grand Illinois Trail (GIT) was proposed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and continues to receive state support in the form of planning, land acquisition, and project development funding. The almost 500-mile trail extends from Lake Michigan to the banks of the Mississippi and then back again. The GIT runs through Jo Daviess County on over 50 miles of existing roadways. The 3.5 mile Galena River Trail extending south from Galena is an off-road trail spur of the GIT. For more information and maps of the Grand Illinois Trail, visit www.openlands.org/git

The Mississippi River Trail (MRT) runs 3,000 miles alongside of the Mississippi River from the headwaters at Lake Itasca, Minnesota to the Delta at the Gulf of Mexico in Louisiana. Mississippi River Trail, Inc., is working in partnership with federal, state and local agencies and organizations to complete the trail, which runs through ten states. The MRT runs through Jo Daviess County on about 37 miles of existing roadways. The MRT route from Galena to the southern border of the county shares the same route as the GIT. For more information about the Mississippi River Trail, visit www.mississipirivertrail.org/

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