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News Release

For Immediate Release

West Meadows project uncovers historical Fulbright Spring



During cleanup and excavation in the West Meadows, crews discovered what is most likely the historical Fulbright Spring.

In 1830, a large spring on Jordan Creek attracted Tennessee's Fulbright family, who were friends of Springfield founder John Polk Campbell. The spring came to be known as Fulbright Spring (not to be confused with the spring of the same name north of town), and discharged along Jordan Creek very near where Fort Street and College Avenue intersect today.

The spring served as a water source for nearby homesteads, and local congregations often used it for baptisms.

Fulbright Spring had considerable prominence in Springfield's early days. During the Civil War, Union troops built a fort on the South side of College with a covered walkway to Fulbright Spring.

Long thought obliterated by Burlington Northern Santa Fe rail yard construction around the turn of the 19th century, what City planners think is Fulbright Spring resurfaced last October during remediation of the old rail yard through a partnership between Ozark Greenways and the City of Springfield.

"The City received the West Meadows property, a former rail yard, in 2008 via donation from BNSF, and has been engaged in environmental remediation utilizing Environmental Protection Agency Brownfields Program grants," Hough says. "During the cleanup and excavation, on the western portion near Fort, we encountered the spring."

The City's contractor for the project is Webster County Excavating. Terracon Consultants is the environmental engineering consultant.

Historical records and maps of the area indicate that the spring the workers uncovered, which discharges approximately 100 gallons of water per minute, is most likely the historical Fulbright Spring.

A booklet titled 'Jordan Creek: History of an Urban Stream,' (available at the Watershed Committee of the Ozarks office at the Watershed Center in Valley Water Mill Park) by retired Executive Director Loring Bullard includes historical records and map of the Fulbright Spring area.

Fulbright Spring discharged near Fort Avenue on the north side of Jordan Creek, which is the location of the recently uncovered spring.



Plans for the spring include serving as a water feature in the West Meadows green space portion of the multi-year *Renew Jordan Creek* initiative.

"This is quite a find," Hough says. "The City is thrilled to be able to incorporate one of Springfield's original springs into our plans for Jordan Valley."

The City reminds residents and media that the West Meadows area is an active construction and environmental remediation site and that entry to the site is prohibited at this time. However, access can be granted through coordination with the City. Please call Hough at 864-1092.

Download a [map of the Fullbright Spring location](#).

Media Sources:

- **Olivia Hough, City of Springfield Senior Planner: 864-1092**
- Todd Wagner, Principal Stormwater Engineer: 864-1932 (for additional details on Renew Jordan Creek initiative)
- Loring Bullard, retired Executive Director of Watershed Committee of the Ozarks
- John Sellars, Executive Director of The History Museum on the Square;
jsellars@springfieldmo.gov
- The City's Cleanup Contractor for the environmental cleanup is Webster County Excavating
Environmental Consultant: Terracon
- Engineer for Stream Design: Olsen and Associates