

# MRWA Strategic Plan

As of 03/31/04

Mission: To preserve, protect and enhance the natural, historic and cultural resources of the Muskegon River Watershed through educational and scientific initiatives, while supporting positive economic, agricultural and quality of life initiatives of organizations working within the watershed.

**GOALS:**

1. To disseminate information about the Muskegon River watershed
2. To provide a forum for the discussion of watershed issues
3. To initiate actions which will provide for sustainability of a healthy Muskegon River
4. To compile and correlate data and sources of data:
  - As a reference resource
  - To assist in implementing watershed projects
5. To actively promote collaboration and coordination to achieve these objectives

**OBJECTIVES:** In the next one to three years, the following activities will be implemented to meet the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly's goals.

**Legend**

\* = Activities conveyed in 2001-2003 Work Program attached to GLFT agreement

**Legend**

Year 1 = 4/01-3/02  
 Year 2 = 4/02-3/03  
 Year 3 = 4/03-3/04

% Completed

**Legend**

C=Continuous  
 P=Partial  
 S=Started  
 NA=Not Applicable

**Objective 1. Strengthen the organizational structure and capacity of the MRWA**  
 (relates to Goals 1, 2, and 3)

*	Work Accomplishment Benchmarks	Responsibility/ Partners	Year			Performance Measure(s)	Yr 3 % Com
			1	2	3		
*	Task A. Evaluate committee structure and establish additional committees where needed						
*	Sub-task 1. Delineate existing committees, chairs and members	Staff	X			Committee lists	
*	Sub-task 2. Appoint chairs for all existing committees	Chair	X			Chair acceptance	
*	Sub-task 3. Recommend areas where new committees might be established as needed	Staff, Exec Bd	X	X	X	Watershed/project specific	C
*	Sub-task 4. Appoint new committees and chairs as needed	Chair, Exec Bd	X	X	X	Committee lists	C

*	Task B. Recruit and retain stakeholder members						
*	Sub-task 1. Reenter existing member data in Access database program for ease of use	Staff, Volunteer	X			Updated database	
	Sub-task 2. Categorize members	Exec Bd & Staff	X	X	X	Prioritization & maintenance	100%
	Sub-task 3. List contacts in categories (for ex., counties)	Support Staff	X			Contact list, & maintenance	
*	Sub-task 4. Phone or meet in person with prioritized contacts	Staff, Exec Bd MRWA whole	X	X	X	Document contacts	C
*	Sub-task 5. Send out annual renewal notices	Staff	X	X	X	During/before June annually	100%
*	Sub-task 6. Continue to contact potential members through mailings, publicity, events, etc.	Staff	X	X	X	Minimum 2 attempts annually	C
*	Task C. Create a network for groups and individuals within watershed						
*	Sub-task 1. Find out e-mail addresses of members	Staff	X	X	X	Written documentation	C
*	Sub-task 2. Create and maintain a list-serve	Consultant/Partners		X	X	Established list serve	100%
*	Sub-task 3. Publish a directory of members, agencies, etc., in the watershed, with focus on (and description of) committees and partners	Staff		X		Published directory or available on website	
*	Task D. Recruit and retain base of volunteers						
	Sub-task 1. Create list of tasks needing volunteer commitment	Staff, Exec Bd Committees		X	X	Task lists	C
	Sub-task 2. Publicize volunteer needs	Staff		X	X	Communication records	100%
	Sub-task 3. Enter volunteers into database	Staff		X	X	Database of volunteers	C
	Task E. Employ adequate staff to carry out goals and objectives						
	Sub-task 1. Create infrastructure needs document	Finance, Exec Bd	X			Written document	
	Sub-task 2. Develop job description(s), hiring criteria, performance criteria, and work agreement	Exec Bd	X			Written document	
	Sub-task 3. Advertise for positions	Staff	X	X		Communication records	
	Sub-task 4. Hire appropriate staff	Exec Bd Hiring Com	X	X		Staff in place	
	Sub-task 5. Evaluate need for additional staff or contractor	Exec Bd Hiring Com		X	X	Project specified	100%
	Task F. Establish permanent office at a location within the watershed						
	Sub-task 1. Create infrastructure needs document	Finance Com Exec Bd	X			Written document	
	Sub-task 2. Investigate possible locations	Staff	X			Correspondence	
	Sub-task 3. Lease office or co-location, depending on funds	Exec Bd	X			Signed License Agreement	

*	Task G. Develop and publicize procedural and policy guidelines						
*	Sub-task 1. Establish procedure for evaluating projects in the watershed and incorporating project outcomes	Resource Com, Exec Bd	X	X	X	Written procedure(s)	C
	Sub-task 2. Establish procedure for hiring	Exec Bd	X			Written procedure(s)	
	Sub-task 3. Establish procedure for conflict resolution	Ad Hoc Com, Partners		X		Written procedure(s)	
	Sub-task 4. Establish policy regarding funding requests	Exec Bd	X	X		Written policy	
	Sub-task 5. Publicize these guidelines as needed	Staff, MRWA as a whole	X	X	X	Communication/records policy guidelines on file	C
	Task H. Publicize activities of MRWA						
	Sub-task 1. Present Executive Director's report at MRWA member meetings	Executive Director	X	X	X	Meeting minutes	C
	Sub-task 2. Provide annual report to MRWA supporters and stakeholders	Exec. Bd, Staff	X	X	X	Published Annual Report	C

**Objective 2. Incorporate subwatershed and local group activities into the MRWA**

(relates to Goals 2, 3 & 5)

Work Accomplishment Benchmarks		Responsibility/ Partners	Year			Performance Measure(s)	Yr 3 % Com
			1	2	3		
	Task A. Obtain map with subwatersheds indicated	319 proj. & NRCS(Staff)	X			Map(s) on file	
*	Task B. Determine practical subwatershed & local groups	Ed Com (in conj with 319 Proj)	X	X	X	Proposed subwatershed groupings	C
*	Task C. Facilitate local subwatershed groups or encourage their creation where none (i.e. 319 proj. subwatershed committees)	Staff, MRWA whole, 319 Proj	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
*	Task D. Find out about other locally led initiatives and support them	Staff, MRWA whole, 319 Proj	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
	Sub-task 1. Investigate partnering options	Staff, MRWA whole, 319 Proj	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
*	Task E. Establish liaisons between MRWA and groups	MRWA whole	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records & written list of contacts	C

**Objective 3. Position MRWA as the recognized forum to address watershed issues**

(relates to Goals 1 & 2)

Work Accomplishment Benchmarks		Responsibility/ Partners	Year			Performance Measure(s)	Yr 3 % Com
			1	2	3		
*	Task A. Establish liaisons with all media in watershed	Staff, Exec Bd MRWA whole	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
*	Task B. Create, maintain and publicize MRWA website						
	Sub-task 1. Investigate partnering options	Staff, MRWA Chair	X	X		Correspondence & meeting records	
*	Sub-task 2. Develop site		X	X		Operating website	
	Sub-task 3. Develop work plan for more advanced site in future	Exec Bd, Staff, Educ Com PR Com		X	X	Documented work plan	C
	Task C. Publish newsletter (at least 3X a year)	Exec Board, staff	X	X	X	Publish minimum 3x a year	167%
	Sub-task 1. Update & maintain mailing list	Staff	X	X	X	Mailing List	C
*	Task D. Develop & implement advertising campaign possibly in conjunction with "Bridging the Gap"	PR Com		X	X	Campaign records/receipts maybe in conjunction w/ other grant proposals	C
	Task E. Develop a calendar of events within the watershed, both regular and special	PR Com, Staff		X	X	Publish calendar(s) of events	100%
*	Task F. Hold events, forums throughout watershed	Staff, Partners Exec Bd	X	X	X	Event, meeting, forum records	9 event
	Sub-task 1. Hold a minimum of quarterly meetings with alternate locations		X	X	X	Event, meeting records	100%
	Sub-task 2. Facilitate two state-wide watershed gatherings annually		X	X	X	Event, meeting records	65%
	Task G. Develop posters and flyers for MRWA-sponsored events, meetings, general programs	PR Com, Staff	X	X	X	Printed posters & flyers	C
	Task H. Survey member groups for types of activities which would serve them best	Exec Bd, Staff 319 proj.	X	X	X	Survey records at least once annually	100%

**Objective 4. Conduct outreach and education programs throughout the watershed and connect with regional and national watershed organizations** (relates to Goals 1, 2 & 5)

Work Accomplishment Benchmarks		Responsibility/ Partners	Year			Performance Measure(s)	Yr 3
			1	2	3		% Com
	Task A. Maintain a regular general meeting schedule	Staff	X	X	X	Hold general meetings at least 3x annually	133%
	Sub-task 1. Alternate locations throughout watershed	Exec Bd	X	X	X	Meeting records & minutes	100%
	Sub-task 2. Provide topical and business agendas	Exec Bd, Staff	X	X	X	Meeting agendas & minutes	100%
	Task B. Develop work plan for public info. program	Ed Com, Staff, Partners, 319	X	X	X	Written work plan Executing Strategic Plan	C
	Sub-task 1: Coordinate with regional and national watershed organizations utilizing our website	Ed Com, Staff, Partners, 319		X	X	Website & correspondence	C
*	Task C. Develop educational/promotional materials & programs						
*	Sub-task 1: Create fact sheets about the watershed	Ed Com  319 proj.	X	X	X	2 printed 1st year & 2 more 2nd year 2 more 3rd year	150%
*	Sub-task 2: Hold workshops, events, meetings, seminar speaker series	MRWA whole	X	X	X	At least 1 annually	500%
	Sub-task 3: Investigate creating a CD or video	Ed Com	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	100%
*	Sub-task 4. Assist existing programs in putting on workshops (CTIC, research proj., etc)	Staff, Chair	X	X	X	At least 1 annually	100%
*	Task D. Develop coordinated resource education programs & curriculum						
	Sub-task 1. Work with local educational institutions to develop resource/science curricula relating to the Muskegon River watershed	Ed Com, Staff Partners		X	X	Developed science curricula on MRW	P
*	Sub-task 2. Foster education programs for resource protection by working with existing agencies and programs, such as:	Ed Com Staff, Partners	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
	a) Groundwater Stewardship Program						
	b) USDA/NRCS						
	c) Project WET coordinators (festival last year)						
	d) MACD						
	e) "Water! in the Curriculum"						
	f) Others						
	Sub-task 3. Develop educational infrastructure in cooperation with Intermediate School Districts (teacher training)	Ed Com Staff, Partners		X	X	Developed infrastructure/ curricula on MRW	P

	a) Develop education information distribution system	Ed Com Staff, Partners			X	Developed mechanism for disseminating information	P
	Sub-task 4. Initiate Adopt-A-Stream programs throughout the watershed	Ed Com Staff, Partners		X	X	Established program with partners	P
	a) Identify key areas						
	b) Identify potential nearby teams						
	c) Find vehicle to maintain over the long term						
	Sub-task 5. Place watershed information kiosks for public access	MRWA whole Staff, Partners			X	Developed kiosks at public sites	S
	Task E. Hold an annual Muskegon River event						
	Sub-task 1. Explore with other watersheds what events have been successful	Ad Hoc Com	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
	Sub-task 2. Develop a proposal for different activities: cleanup, canoe trip, banquet, children's activities, historic event, etc.	Ad Hoc Com	X			List of activities	
	Sub-task 3. Set date and publicize	Staff, Exec Bd	X	X	X	At least once annually	200%
	Sub-task 4. Establish at least one aspect of event as fundraiser	Finance Com		X	X	Event records & fundraising receipts	200%

**Objective 5. Establish and maintain repository and databases for MRWA and public use**

(relates to Goals 3 & 4)

Work Accomplishment Benchmarks		Responsibility/ Partners	Year			Performance Measure(s)	Yr 3 % Com
			1	2	3		
	Task A. Establish & promote repository of studies and research & make available to the public	Data Rep Com	X			Repository records/materials	
	Task B. Create database for this repository	Staff, Data Rep Com & Chair		X	X	Established database	100%
	Task C. Create publication listing items in this repository; also mount on website if available	Contracted Entity or Staff		X	X	Published/printed listing of items	100%
	Task D. Establish and maintain the following databases: (e.g. resource, historical, educational, project, funding, and GIS)	Staff, All Com, MRWA Whole		X	X	Established databases & updated	100%
*	Task E. Assess databases for gaps	Data Rep/Ed/Resource Com			X	Gap analysis records and correspondence	C
	Task F. Set low-cost fee schedule for outside use of database information where determined applicable	Exec Bd		X	X	Published/printed fee schedule	P
	Task G. Conduct Internet search for data, including U.S.G.S., EPA, DEQ/DNR, universities, etc.	Staff, Data Rep Com, 319 proj	X	X	X	Search records/date	C
	Task H. Determine what monitoring is currently being done	Data Rep Com, Partners	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C

**Objective 6. Identify and fill gaps in research and inventories**

(relates to Goal 4)

Work Accomplishment Benchmarks		Responsibility/ Partners	Year			Performance Measure(s)	Yr 3
			1	2	3		% Com
*	Task A. Search through databases (Objective 5) and assess where more research, monitoring and inventorying are needed	Data Rep/Ed/ Resource Com Research partners		X	X	Assessment	C
*	Task B. Identify needs in conj. with proposed projects	Resource Com	X	X	X	Project analysis records	C
*	Task C. Determine what partner or committee is best able to fill research and inventory needs identified	As determined	X	X	X	Project & database analysis records	C
	Task D. Work with that committee or partner to do inventories or conduct research	As determined	X	X	X	Committee records & partner correspondence	C
*	Task E. Complete & publish road/stream crossing inventory information for entire watershed	Staff	X	X	X	Published inventory (working document)	C
	Task F. Develop work plans to address each of the following areas if gaps are determined to exist: complete, detailed habitat assessment (watershed-wide), natural features/environmentally sensitive areas, road/stream crossings throughout watershed, location and condition of dams, agricultural activity, land use and cover, groundwater and hydrology studies, impervious surface (quantified), erodible land, water quality sampling points, sediment sampling points	Data Rep/ Resource Com, Staff Partners		X	X	Developed work plans by subject or geographic area	C

## Objective 7. Develop resource remediation and protection programs

(relates to Goals 1 & 3)

Work Accomplishment Benchmarks		Responsibility/ Partners	Year			Performance Measure(s)	Yr 3 % Com
			1	2	3		
*	Task A. Identify remediation needs in the entire watershed						
*	Sub-task 1. Work closely with GVSU Annis Water Resources Institute on 319 grant watershed management plan	Exec Bd, MRWA whole	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	100%
	Sub-task 2. Continue to utilize MDNR Fisheries Assessment (1997) & Management plan (2003) to guide fish habitat restoration/protection projects	Resource Com	X	X	X	Annual review of 1997 or latest assessment	C
*	Task B. Identify and assess current projects throughout the watershed	Resource Com, Exec Bd	X	X	X	Project review records	C
*	Task C. Identify proposed projects and projects desired by partners and others in the watershed	MRWA whole	X	X	X	Project review & correspondence/mtg records	C
*	Task D. Prioritize projects	MRWA whole Resource Com. Exec Bd, Staff	X	X	X	Prioritized list of projects & MRWA Strategic Work Plan	C
*	Task E. Coordinate with and investigate current programs and projects						
*	Sub-task 1. Assist in CTIC Core 4 Program	Staff, Chair	X	X	X	Periodic meetings & articles	C
*	Sub-task 2. Work with projects of Great Lakes Community Foundation Environmental Collaborative	MRWA whole	X			Correspondence & meeting records	
*	Sub-task 3. Work with Timberland Resource Conservation & Development and other potential partners on fish habitat, streambank erosion control (hydrology) and other projects	Resource Com, MRWA whole	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
*	Sub-task 4. Liaison with Big Rapids dam removal project	Newsltr Subcom	X			Correspondence & meeting records	
*	Sub-task 5. Monitor and facilitate Marion Millpond & Middle Branch River Restoration Project	Resource Com Staff	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
	Sub-task 6. Monitor & facilitate Hersey River Restoration/Dam Removal Project	Resource Com Staff	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
	Sub-task 7. Coordinate with NRCS & Conservation Districts to identify means for agricultural runoff/adverse impacts prevention	Partners, RC&D, Resource Com	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
	Sub-task 8. Coordinate with Drain Commissioners, state & local governments to identify means for stormwater runoff adverse impacts prevention	Resource Com RC&D, Partners		X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	P

**Objective 8. Establish at least one land conservancy program**

(relates to Goals 3 & 5)

Work Accomplishment Benchmarks		Responsibility/ Partners	Year			Performance Measure(s)	Yr 3
			1	2	3		% Com
	Task A. Investigate opportunities to develop watershed-wide natural features inventory at detailed level	Ad Hoc Com, Partners, Land Use Com, Wege prop. Natural Features Inven.		X	X	Internal review & correspondence records	S
	Sub-task 1. Define level of detail which best serves needs	Ad Hoc Com		X	X	Internal review & correspondence records	0%
	Task B. Partner & coordinate with land conservancies	Exec Bd	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
	Task C. Publicize guidelines on appropriate setbacks, vegetative cover, buffers, contiguous wetlands, etc.	Exec Bd Resource Com		X	X	Documented guidelines & communication records & website information	P

**Objective 9. Work with municipalities on land stewardship and land use planning**

(relates to Goals 3 & 5)

Work Accomplishment Benchmarks		Responsibility/ Partners	Year			Performance Measure(s)	Yr 3 % Com
			1	2	3		
	Task A. Work with existing land use initiatives in Muskegon and Newaygo counties on specific water resource programs for planning commissions or countywide planning efforts	Land Use Com Partners, 319 proj.	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
*	Task B. Liaison with or start land stewardship initiatives with other watershed local municipalities	Land Use Com Partners, 319 proj.		X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	C
	Task C. Publicize successful land use planning efforts	MRWA whole, staff	X	X	X	Communication & meeting records	C
*	Task D. Disseminate information about legislation	Staff, Exec Bd	X	X	X	Communication & meeting records	C

**Objective 10. Seek funding to support the above goals and objectives**

(relates to all goals)

Work Accomplishment Benchmarks		Responsibility/ Partners	Year			Performance Measure(s)	Yr 3 % Com
			1	2	3		
*	Task A. Increase membership - have membership drive	Staff, Finance Com	X	X	X	Annual campaign/ membership increase of at least 10% annually	100%
*	Task B. Seek donations from individuals, corporations and organizations						
*	Sub-task 1. Establish annual operational fund drives	Finance Com Staff	X	X	X	Annual campaign/grow contributions by \$15,000 (yr 1) \$30,000 (yr 2) \$30,000 (yr 3)	7%
*	Task C. Host fundraising events and projects						
*	Sub-task 1. Develop an annual plan of fundraisers	Finance Com, Staff		X	X	Updated annual fundraising plan of events/at least 2 events outside annual membership & annual endowment campaigns	100%
*	Task D. Submit successful grant applications						
*	Sub-task 1. Identify potential grant funding sources	Staff, Exec Bd, MRWA whole	X	X	X	Maintained & updated file on grant sources	C
*	Sub-task 2. Prioritize applications to meet problems/ issues/concerns identified	Exec Bd Resource Com	X	X	X	Internal review of applications relative to strategic work plan	C
*	Sub-task 3. Apply for funds or encourage application by partner groups	Exec Bd, Staff	X	X	X	Submitted applications & correspondence records	C
*	Task E. Build MRWA endowment						
	Sub-task 1. Appoint honorary and working campaign cabinets	Exec Bd	X	X	X	Correspondence & meeting records	S
	Sub-task 2. Establish donor categories	Finance Com.	X	X		Campaign development records	
*	Sub-task 3. Conduct campaign	Finance Com., Staff	X	X	X	Grow endowment fund by \$25,000 (yr 1) \$50,000 (yr 2) \$10,000 (yr 3)	47%

	Sub-task 4. Involve all members and partners in donor identification through person-to-person contact or individual phone calls	MRWA whole	X	X	X	Campaign development & implementation records	C
	Task F. Hold funding information seminars or meetings for MRWA members & partners	Staff		X	X	Meeting/seminar records/ at least once annually	P
	Task G. Develop & implement annual MRWA budget	Exec Bd, Staff Finance Com	X	X	X	Prepared budget	100%