

# Partnership Agreement

## Little Manistee River Watershed Management Plan

This document serves as a partnership agreement between various individuals, interest groups, non-profit organizations, private businesses, units of government and others that are interested in the future of the Little Manistee Watershed.

It does not convey any specific responsibilities to those signing this agreement other than a commitment to participate to the best of their efforts in the development of a Little Manistee River Watershed Management Plan.

The undersigned believe that the health of the Little Manistee River Watershed is critical to the well-being and economic health of the area and that a plan should be created to ensure the wise use and management of the watershed – now and for future generations.

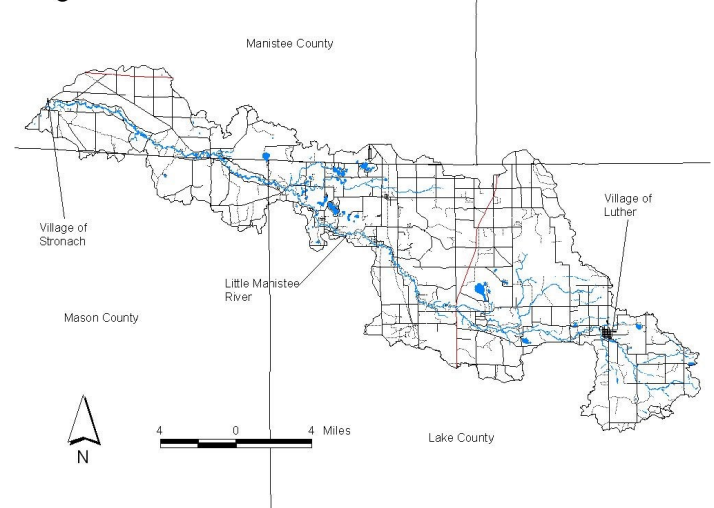
Accordingly, those signing this agreement support the following:

- The development and implementation of a Little Manistee River Watershed Management Plan through an open, inclusive process that includes representation of all interests in the watershed. The Plan should be a living document that is updated and modified as circumstances warrant. The Plan should involve area citizens; year round and seasonal residents and youth; schools, community colleges and universities; riparian owners; landowner associations; businesses and business groups; agriculture; all forms of government; including Tribal government; citizens and civic groups; students of all ages; recreators; conservation organizations and others.
- The Little Manistee River Watershed Plan should aid the community in managing the wise use of the natural, cultural, historical, social and economic resources to sustain a healthy, thriving watershed.
- The Little Manistee River Watershed Plan is not intended to prevent development but to foster locally driven solutions for land protection and developmental challenges.
- The Little Manistee River Watershed Management Plan should include consideration for sustained implementation and implementation funding, including the development of an endowment to support Plan implementation for generations to come.

### Background Information

The Little Manistee River watershed drains 145,280 acres in Lake, Wexford, Mason and Manistee counties. The Little Manistee River originates from several swamps in eastern Lake County and portions

Figure 1. The Little Manistee River watershed.



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of Wexford County about eight miles east of the Village of Luther. Below Luther Dam it flows northwest through most of Lake County, the very northeast tip of Mason County and then southwestern Manistee County. Below the Luther Dam, the Little Manistee River is free-flowing for 55 miles before entering Manistee Lake in the Village of Stronach. Manistee Lake empties into Lake Michigan through a channel in the City of Manistee.

### **Phase 1 - Determination of Community Support**

Includes identification of community stakeholders and review of a preliminary scope of work; decision about moving forward to Phase 2.

### **Phase 2 – Preparing for the Planning Process**

Includes the formation of a Steering Committee consisting of all stakeholder groups. The formation of a technical advisory committee; securing funding to support plan development; and community outreach and education.

### **Phase 3 – Plan development**

Includes development of a plan outline and schedule; development of background data and information; and plan preparation, including an identification of actions that should be taken to protect and wisely manage the watershed.

### **Funds Required for the Plan**

Based upon the cost of other recently completed watershed plans for the Portage Lake and Greater Bear watersheds in Manistee County, we estimate the plan will cost \$60,000 to \$70,000 to be qualified with the support of an expert consultant.

### **Plan Uses**

When completed the plan will be used to: educate all sectors of the watershed; engage youth and adults in watershed management projects; guide water quality monitoring and watershed restoration; develop complementary recreational, business and other initiatives; develop funding tools to sustain implementation of the plan; and secure state, federal or other sources of funding to implement the plan.

### **Proposed Action**

We, the undersigned, concur that the development of the Little Manistee River Watershed Management Plan is in the best long term interest of property owners, individuals, groups, organizations, businesses, schools, students and other interests concerned with the Little Manistee River Watershed – now and in the future. We commit our support to the development of this Plan in accord with the objectives and principles contained in this Partnership Agreement.

# Partnership Agreement

## Little Manistee River Watershed Management Plan

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