

# Muskegon River Watershed Assembly (MRWA)

## Strategic Plan

### (2014 - 2017)

#### **Mission:**

The Muskegon River Watershed Assembly is dedicated to the preservation, protection, restoration and sustainable use of the Muskegon River, the land it drains, and the life it supports, through educational, scientific and conservation initiatives.

#### **Vision:**

The MRWA envisions a future where:

- All those who live, work, and play in the watershed understand how their actions affect the river and those downstream;
- All watershed residents participate or support projects and programs that promote the natural flow of water and improve water quality; and
- Public policies, private practices, and committed partnerships are in place to preserve the river for future generations.

#### **Position:**

The MRWA deliberately positions itself as the leader, caretaker, and advocate for the Muskegon River Watershed.

#### **Guiding Principles:**

The MRWA embodies a set of guiding principles that inform how it is structured, measures success, and works with its members, partners, and constituents.

- **Science-Based Stewardship Culture** – the MRWA puts scientific information into action in service to the resource and uses that information to educate its constituents and infuse a stewardship culture throughout the watershed.
- **On the Ground, Watershed-Wide** – the MRWA is committed to creating real, tangible improvements at the local level, within the context of a watershed-wide perspective.
- **Proactive** – the MRWA is dedicated to remaining vigilant and works proactively to ensure that the resource gains in health and sustainability.
- **Partnership** – the MRWA understands that it cannot meet its goals working in isolation and actively engages volunteers and appropriate partners at local, regional, state, and federal levels.
- **Sense of Place and Connection to the Resource** – the MRWA was founded by individuals who felt a personal connection to the resource; it seeks to foster this personal connection among others so that they become more inclined to make decisions that benefit the resource.

#### **Goals:**

1. Disseminate information about the Muskegon River watershed;
2. Provide a forum for the discussion of watershed issues;
3. Initiate actions which will provide for the sustainability of a healthy Muskegon River;
4. Compile and correlate data and sources of data:
  - as a reference resource;
  - to assist in implementing watershed projects;
5. Actively promote collaboration and coordination (among partners) to achieve stated objectives.
6. Build and sustain MRWA programs and organizational capacity to achieve stated objectives

**Strategic Focus Areas for 2014-2017** (to increase impact in achieving goals and objectives):

1. Increase awareness and appreciation of the resource – communicate the uniqueness of the resource, how choices impact it, and how to be good stewards. (relates to Goals 1,2,3,6)
2. Improve decision-making in the watershed – individuals and local units of government make resource-friendly decisions that contribute to maintaining and improving the health of the resource. (relates to MRWA Goals 1,2,3,4,5,6)
3. Restore the watershed – preserve and restore the resource directly with on the ground projects. (relates to MRWA Goals 3,5,6)

**Objectives:**

1. Strengthen the organizational structure and capacity of the MRWA;
2. Incorporate sub-watershed, regional and local group activities into the MRWA;
3. Position the MRWA as the recognized forum to address watershed issues;
4. Conduct outreach and education programs throughout the watershed and connect with regional and national watershed organizations;
5. Enlarge and maintain repository and databases for MRWA and public use;
6. Identify and fill gaps in research and inventories;
7. Develop, implement and facilitate resource remediation and protection programs;
8. Seek funding to support the above goals and objectives.

For each objective above, the MRWA has developed several specific tasks and sub-tasks forming our “work plan”. For each task/sub-task, the MRWA has:

- identified and assigned responsible parties and/or partners;
- indicated which year(s) work will take place to accomplish that benchmark; and
- established performance measure(s).

**Program Areas: (click on each area for more information)**

- Education / Outreach / Assistance (add hyperlink here)
- Habitat Improvements (add hyperlink here)
- Restoration (add hyperlink here)
- Scientific Research / Monitoring / Evaluation (add hyperlink here)
- Program Support Services (add hyperlink here)