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For Immediate Release

MANISTEE RESIDENTS HAVE NEW TOOL TO PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES AND RECYCLE

Manistee, Michigan - Just as Mariah Power is manufacturing "Windspire" from its new Manistee base, enabling people to reduce their carbon footprint while meeting their power needs, local governments in Manistee County have yet another new weapon in their arsenal to protect and preserve their land and water resources and reduce energy consumption.

And the cost to use that weapon would be less than \$2.00 per month for residents who reside in Manistee County local governments that choose to participate.

At the recommendation of the Manistee-based Alliance for Economic Success, the Manistee County Board of Commissioners have passed a resolution enabling all local governments in the County to use Michigan Act 69 of the Public Acts of 2005 as a way to pay for recycling, waste composting, hazardous waste disposal and community promotion and education about recycling within their governmental jurisdictions. Participation by local governments under Act 69 is voluntary.

While the county's natural resources and recycling have been consistently identified as high priorities, including survey results of the general population and students completed for Envision Manistee County, recycling volumes in the County are low. The same is surprisingly true for the State of Michigan and the Great Lakes region that rank near the bottom of the list nationally in the percent of material recycled each year. It's estimated that Michigan may recycle about 20 percent of its waste materials while states like Oregon recycle over 40 percent.

Under Act 69, the County can collect up to \$25 per year from households where their local governing body has entered into an agreement with the County to collect funds to support recycling. The household fee is set based upon the estimated costs of the recycling program. The fee is then included in residential tax bills. Act 69 applies only to residential properties.

The Alliance for Economic Success will be contacting all fourteen townships in Manistee County and the City of Manistee to determine interest in the program and to recommend a program budget and potential fee structure to the County. Again, local government participation under Act 69 is voluntary and can only occur if an agreement is in place with the County.

Counties to the north of Manistee, including Benzie and Leelanau Counties, operate successful recycling programs under Act 69. The Benzie County program has grown annually, diverting an increasing amount of materials to recycling each year, thereby reducing landfill volumes. The Benzie program includes household hazardous waste and electronics and a county-administered education program. The total cost of the Benzie County program is \$19 per year for residents.

The Alliance for Economic Success (AES) recommended that Act 69 be used as a voluntary way to support county-wide recycling after more than a year of work to assess recycling programs and options in other Michigan counties and county-wide open meetings to understand community and public objectives for recycling. Support for the project was provided under a grant received by the AES through the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

For more information about Act 69, contact Mary Pitcher at the Alliance for Economic Success at 231-723-4325 or mary@allianceforeconomicsuccess.com.