

**For More Information Contact:** Tim Ervin  
231-723-4325

**For Immediate Release**

**BRAND MANISTEE COUNTY PROJECT SEEKS INPUT**

**MANISTEE, Michigan** - Ideas from the hearts and minds of residents, youth, businesses, organizations and others are being sought for a project destined to bring businesses, jobs, tourists, families and investments to Manistee County.

A "Brand Manistee County" leadership team, in partnership with the firm North Star Destination Strategies, is developing a brand and brand marketing program and needs input through a survey to help define the County's strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities. Until October 4, 2009, surveys can be completed by:

- Going online to [www.brandmanisteecounty.com](http://www.brandmanisteecounty.com)

**or**

- Filling out a paper survey and sending it to: Alliance for Economic Success, 1361 US 31 South, Manistee, MI 49660 or telefaxed to: 723-3717. Surveys may also be dropped off at the Manistee County Convention and Visitor's Bureau.

Survey forms are available at:

- Manistee City Hall
- Manistee County Building at 415 3<sup>rd</sup> Street, Clerks Office
- Township offices
- Manistee County Convention and Visitor's Bureau
- Manistee Area Chamber of Commerce
- Other select Manistee County locations

"We have worked with over 100 other communities to develop brands and brand marketing programs and I can't over-emphasize the importance of insights provided by community residents," said Don McEachern of North Star Destination Strategies. "To learn what makes a county special, you have to go to the people who spend their lives there."

McEachern says that they expect to have the first stage of the branding project completed by February 2010 including brand options and a recommended brand along with a plan for rolling out the brand to support economic and community development and tourism promotion goals.

Members of the Brand Manistee County Leadership Team are: Judy Ball, Executive Director, Manistee County Convention and Visitor's Bureau; Amy Berry, Communications Manager, Mariah Power; Jim Drazo, Chair, Kaleva Planning Commission; Cathy Fairbanks, Executive Assistant, Alliance for Economic Success; Cyndy Fuller, Mayor, City of Manistee; Laura Heintzeman, Executive Director, Manistee County Community Foundation; Ray Schmidt, owner/operator of Schmidt Outfitters in Wellston; and Amy Wojciechowski, Business Division Director, West Shore Community College. Tim Ervin, Alliance for Economic Success, is facilitating the project.