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For Immediate Release

**MANISTEE COUNTY LAUNCHES
PHASE TWO OF RECYCLING INITIATIVE**

Manistee, Michigan – Phase Two of an effort to provide recycling education and develop a more systematic, cooperative recycling program for Manistee County will begin in January 2009 through the Manistee-based Alliance for Economic Success (AES).

Phase One of the Manistee County Recycling Initiative was completed earlier in 2008 by the AES at the request of Manistee County. It included a series of community forums and meetings with private businesses along with an assessment of other recycling programs in the region and state to define recycling priorities, options and best practices. Findings from Phase One included:

- Recycling is supported and communities want to be involved in devising recycling programs and solutions.
- People do not fully understand their recycling options and education must be a high priority.
- There is support for a county or regional system for recycling, provided that it is economically and physically feasible and does not disproportionately burden governments and businesses.

Phase Two will be funded under a \$30,000 Solid Waste Management Grant, awarded to the AES by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. It will include:

- Working with all interests to develop and disseminate information about recycling programs, options and opportunities to all interests throughout Manistee County.
- Identifying and developing potential solutions for immediate issues involving local recycling programs, including ways to address improper use of recycling programs by individuals who are not paying for those programs.
- Partnering with townships, the City of Manistee, private business and others to develop a more systematic recycling program and an implementation process.
- Developing partnerships with neighboring counties to create economies of scale to support current and future recycling opportunities.

The Phase Two effort will be led by Mary Pitcher under contract with the AES. Pitcher has served as a County Commissioner in Benzie County since 1997. She was formerly director of the Benzie Conservation District and has served in a variety of appointed and volunteer positions, including; addressing funding for Michigan State Parks, coordinating Benzie County's participation in "The Grand Vision" and serving as a board member on the Benzie County Economic Development Corporation. She has substantial prior experience in

developing solid waste and land use plans. Beginning January 1, 2009, Pitcher can be reached by calling 231-499-6290.

“Recycling is simply the right thing to do,” said AES Board member and Manistee County Commissioner Glenn Lottie. “The economic viability of recycling has dramatically increased in the face of the global energy crisis. And recycling is also important to our quality of life. It is important to our families, our communities and our businesses -- now and in the future. Through this phase of the Manistee County Recycling Initiative, we will work with all interests to increase recycling awareness and build a more systematic recycling program.”