

**Kalamazoo River Watershed Forum
October 7, 2005**

SUMMARY DISCUSSION AND ACTION PLAN

Summary of brainstorming sessions – most often mentioned responses to question 1
“What actions can be taken to create a more positive identity for the Kalamazoo River?”

- Enhance public recreation facilities
 - Dam removals, public access, portages, campgrounds, parking
- Canoe/Heritage water trail guide and signs
- Greenways and trailways
- Education of youth
- Multi-jurisdictional collaborative
- Public relations
 - Media series, past and present
 - Photo and literature contest
- Connect communities via activities
 - Get people on the river
 - Watershed festivals
 - Involve media and key officials

Audience clarification of summary results

- Give GIS and computer reference access points to public access sites (and other recreation facilities) as they are developed and mapped
- Clean up PCB's, Superfund sites and remove dams

Vote on Question # 2 – How should we organize on a watershed basis to move swiftly and surely towards achieving the identified priority actions?

votes	organizational structure
1	Loose knit communications NETWORK
8	structured ALLIANCE
26	Watershed ASSEMBLY
52	New umbrella ORGANIZATION
2	Combination of ASSEMBLY and ORGANIZATION

Audience comments on vote and possible organizational structures:

- Need to include area municipalities and existing organizations
- Individual, smaller organizations still need to get credit
- Don't let small organizations get subsumed by a big one

- Keep in touch with grass roots – avoid bureaucracy
- One of the first steps is to develop a partnership agreement
- Fee structure likely to include dues for member organizations. That's OK, but there should be a provision to pay dues through volunteer hours (soft match)
- There's some overlap among many organizations – existing organizations should provide delegates to an alliance with special goals
- There's "501C3 burnout" – instead, let's go for an alliance which may eventually grow into an association
- Start with an assembly, and then grow from there
- Trailway/greenway groups did not wait, but jumped right in with both feet – now they lead the Nation

ACTION PLAN

Develop vision and mission statements for new organization

Explore 501C3 and other organizational models

List cooperating organizations as resource guide

Develop partnership agreement of involved organizations

Develop business plan to sustain organizational efforts

Discuss ideas with current watershed organizations

Obtain commitment of member organizations

Create a strong business case – economics effects/impacts of all activities on the watershed

Delineate a list of goals and current efforts to protect and enhance watershed (rain gardens, BMP's)

Is there a current organization that can take a leadership role in the new organization?

Look at Muskegon River Assembly as an example

Enhance public recreation facilities – Heritage Trail

Develop and implement a communications plan with all organizations