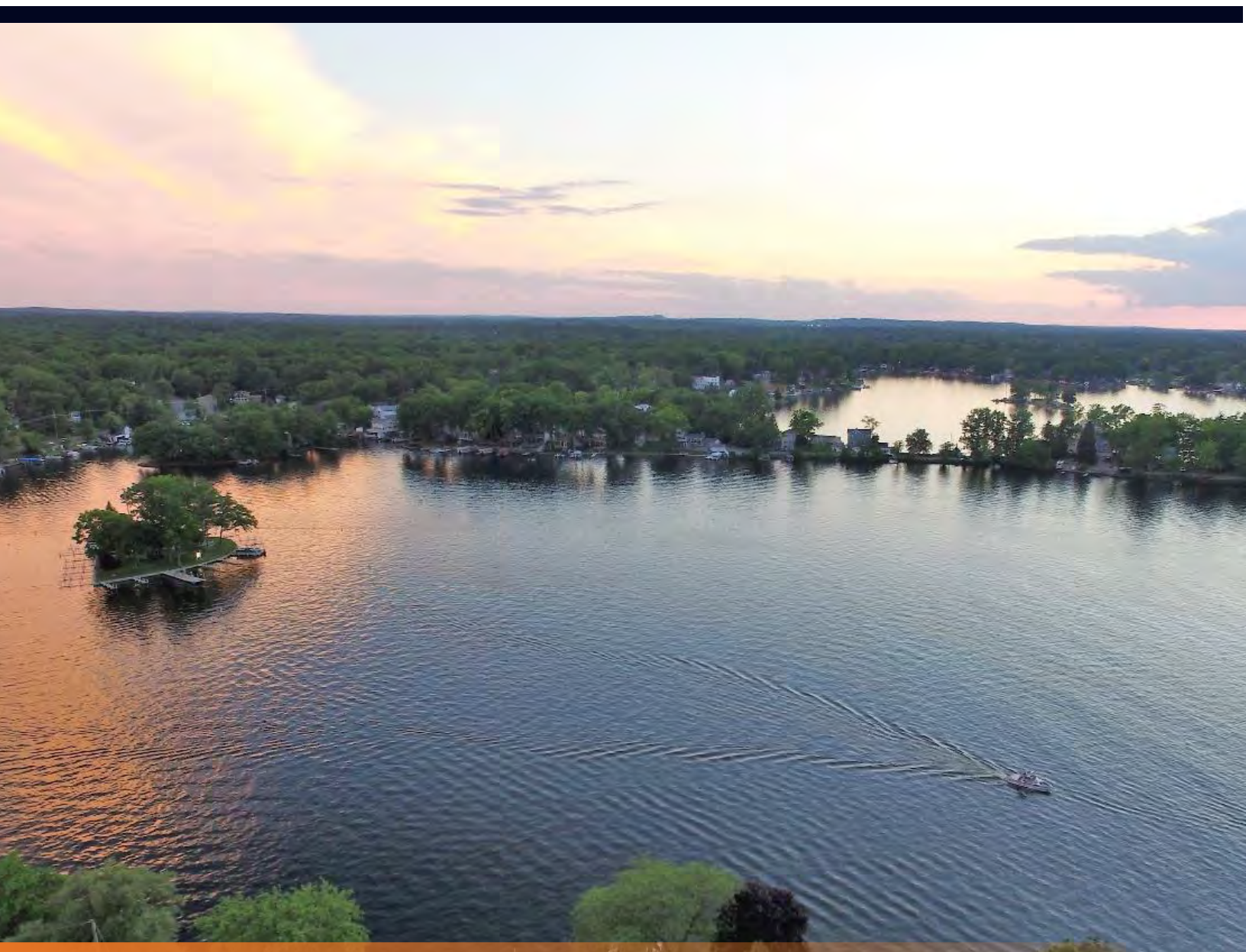


Partners for Clean Water Annual Report, 2023



SEMCOG

SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

SEMCOG . . . *Developing Regional Solutions*

Mission

SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, is the only organization in Southeast Michigan that brings together all governments to develop regional solutions for both now and in the future. SEMCOG:

- Promotes informed decision making to improve Southeast Michigan and its local governments by providing insightful data analysis and direct assistance to member governments;
- Promotes the efficient use of tax dollars for infrastructure investment and governmental effectiveness;
- Develops regional solutions that go beyond the boundaries of individual local governments; and
- Advocates on behalf of Southeast Michigan in Lansing and Washington

Partners for Clean Water Annual Report, 2023

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Abstract

This report details regional water quality activities and projects conducted by SEMCOG over the past year and supports ongoing NPDES Stormwater Phase II compliance activities. Information in this report helps communities and counties meet the reporting requirements associated with federal Phase II Stormwater Regulation. From stormwater and water resource management activities to green infrastructure implementation to climate resilience and flooding risk projects, SEMCOG is actively working with local communities to support water quality improvements throughout the region.

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Partners for Clean Water

- Livingston County & Associated Communities
- Macomb County & Associated Communities
- Monroe County & Associated Communities
- Oakland County & Associated Communities
- St. Clair County & Associated Communities
- Washtenaw County & Associated Communities
- Wayne County & Associated Communities
- Arch Environmental Clean Water group
- Clinton River Watershed Council
- Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc.
- Fred A. & Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation
- Great Lakes Water Authority
- Friends of the Rouge River
- Friends of the St. Clair River
- Healing Our Waters Great Lakes Coalition
- Hubbell, Roth & Clark
- Huron River Watershed Council
- Johnson & Anderson Inc.
- Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy
- Michigan Department of Transportation
- Michigan Sea Grant
- Michigan State University Extension
- Tetra Tech
- The Nature Conservancy of Michigan
- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Environmental Protection Agency

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Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water

With an abundance of water flowing throughout Southeast Michigan, it is important that communities throughout the region work together to actively support water quality management. As the designated water quality management agency for Southeast Michigan, SEMCOG has been actively involved with water resource planning since the 1970s. SEMCOG focuses on an integrative approach to water resource management. This involves advancing stormwater education and projects, the blue economy, natural resource protection and enhancement, and water infrastructure systems. As part of this integrative management approach, SEMCOG formed the Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water to help meet stormwater permitting compliance and to support regional water quality management.

The [Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water](#) is comprised of [SEMCOG members](#), including representatives from local communities and counties, as well as representatives from watershed councils, not-for-profit agencies, and the private sector. The purpose of the group is to facilitate information sharing, coordinate public education, and leverage resources on water quality, stormwater management, and green infrastructure implementation.

There was one Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water meeting held the 2022-2023 fiscal year:

- December 1, 2022

The *Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water Annual Report, 2023* details regional water quality activities and projects conducted by SEMCOG over the past year and supports ongoing Phase II compliance activities. Information in this report helps communities and counties meet the reporting requirements associated with federal Phase II Stormwater Regulation. From stormwater and water resource management activities to green infrastructure implementation to climate resilience and flooding risk projects, SEMCOG is actively working with members and local communities to support water quality improvements throughout the region.

Communication, Public Education, and Outreach

What You Can Do...To Protect Our Waterways

In April 2004, SEMCOG launched “Our Water. Our Future. Ours to Protect” water quality public education campaign to provide Southeast Michigan residents with simple actions they can take to help protect water resources.

In 2015, the public education campaign was revitalized and reintroduced as the [“What You Can Do...To Protect Our Waterways.”](#) campaign. It continues to be used by local communities to educate their residents and send one consistent message on water quality protection throughout Southeast Michigan. Tip cards containing information on “What You Can Do” about Storm Drains, Landscaping, Household Hazardous Waste, Pet Care, Lawn Care, and Car Care, can be found on SEMCOG’s [website](#).



The Protect Our Waterways webpage, which lists actions the public can take to protect water resources and includes the link to download the tip card, received 570 tip card downloads from September 2022 – October 2023. The number of times each tip card was viewed is listed below.

Table 1
Tip Card Web Analytics

Webpage	Total Sept 2022-Oct 2023
<u>To Protect our Waterways</u>	
<u>Household Hazardous Waste</u>	150
<u>Storm Drains</u>	126
<u>Landscaping</u>	134
<u>Pet Care</u>	147
<u>Lawn Care</u>	131
<u>Car Care</u>	139

SEMCOG’s Environment Webpage

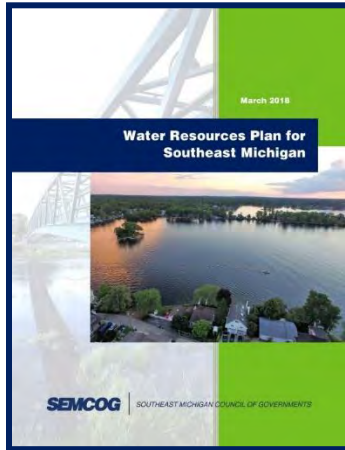
Additional environmental information for Southeast Michigan is available on the [SEMCOG Environment webpage](#). This page contains updated information about SEMCOG’s latest projects and easy access to all environmental news. You can also learn more about water infrastructure by checking out SEMCOG’s [Water Infrastructure](#) page, which contains information about SEMCOG’s latest Infrastructure Asset Management project. SEMCOG also has a [Climate Resilience page](#), which contains information about Southeast Michigan’s current and future expected precipitation and SEMCOG’s Climate Resiliency and Flooding Mitigation Study. SEMCOG recently introduced the [GREEN \(Growing our Resilience, Equity, and Economy with Nature\) Initiative](#), offering a regional framework showcasing local projects’ impact for improved funding and partnerships. This page includes the recently approved Strategic Framework, developed by the GREEN Task Force, as well as the [GREEN Dashboard](#). The initiative aims to ensure resilient, equitable, green infrastructure benefits enhancing Southeast Michigan life. The SEMCOG Executive Committee approved the [Southeast Michigan GREEN: Strategic Framework for Growing Resilience, Equity, and Economy with Nature](#), to guide future efforts. The framework involves regional policies, steering SEMCOG and involving stakeholders for collaborative advancement. The [GREEN Dashboard](#) displays interactive maps tracking tree canopy, recreation access, and green stormwater progress. This tool maximizes data use, aiding communities in enhancing plans and projects.

Lastly, be sure to access the [latest Environmental Exchange newsletter](#) to stay up-to-date with all of SEMCOG’s work. We will continue to regularly update these environmental pages.

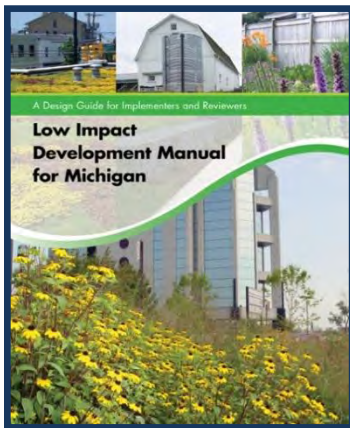
Website Analytics

Table 2
Website Analytics

Webpage	Total Sept 2022-Oct 2023
Water	
Stormwater	770
Wastewater	805
Drinking Water	624
Water Infrastructure	900
Partnerships	260
Climate Resilience	1393
GREEN Initiative	477
Land	
Green Infrastructure Vision	156
Low Impact Development Manual	214
Great Lakes, Green Streets Guidebook	82
Parks and Recreation	
Parks and Recreation Plan for Southeast Michigan	94
Southeast Michigan Park Finder	976
Southeast Michigan Park Finder App	813
Southeast Michigan Trail Explorer	4208



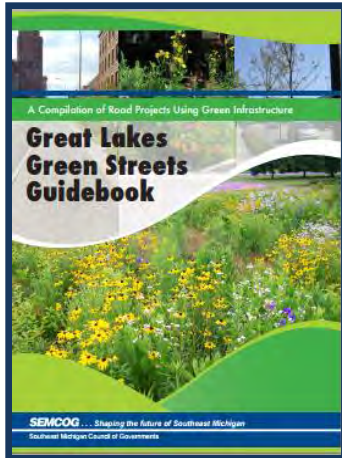
In March 2018, SEMCOG's General Assembly adopted the [Water Resources Plan for Southeast Michigan](#). This plan emphasizes the importance of integrated water resources management across the major areas of advancing the blue economy, natural resources protection and enhancement, and water infrastructure systems. Learn more about the Water Resource Plan by viewing this short video [By the Numbers](#), highlighting our region's water resources. The *Water Resource Plan for Southeast Michigan* was viewed 94 times between September 2022 - August 2023 on SEMCOG's website.



The *Low Impact Development Manual for Michigan (LID)* provides communities, agencies, builders, developers, and the public with guidance on how to apply LID to new, existing, and redeveloped sites. This guide provides community-level to site-level support, and can be helpful to a variety of stakeholder groups. The [Low Impact Development Manual for Michigan](#) was accessed 214 times from September 2022 – August 2023.



The *Green Infrastructure Vision for Southeast Michigan* benchmarks where green infrastructure currently stands in Southeast Michigan and sets a vision for the future of green infrastructure for the region. The [Green Infrastructure Vision for Southeast Michigan](#) was accessed 156 times from September 2022 - August 2023.



The Great Lakes Green Streets Guidebook contains a sampling of road improvement projects within the Great Lakes Watershed that have successfully incorporated green infrastructure techniques to manage stormwater runoff and benefit water resources. The [Great Lakes Green Streets Guidebook](#) was accessed 82 times from September 2022 - August 2023.

One Water Campaign

SEMCOG, in partnership with Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), launched the One Water Campaign for Southeast Michigan in 2019. The goal of this campaign is to attain greater awareness and mutual shared responsibility for water resources and to create public support for investments in water resources and infrastructure asset management.



Keep it fresh. Keep it flowing.

The One Water campaign is coordinated with Great Lakes and Fresh Water Week, a decades-old water quality partnership between SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water, and the State of Michigan. To broaden the reach of the One Water campaign and connect regional and statewide efforts, SEMCOG worked collaboratively with the Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) on the development of key messages for Great Lakes and Fresh Water week 2023. In these development meetings, SEMCOG supported the State of Michigan's proposed theme of "Make a Splash" for this year. SEMCOG worked with the State of Michigan's team throughout the spring of 2023 to develop messaging for the week and coordinate various efforts.

In 2023, the One Water campaign emphasized the critical issues of water workforce and water affordability. Participants from SEMCOG's Water Infrastructure Task Force stressed the importance of these topics and helped to guide messaging for the 2023 campaign. The shortage of skilled water industry personnel is one of the most significant challenges facing the water industry. The water industry is expected to lose approximately 30% of its workforce by the end of this decade. Southeast Michigan's water infrastructure providers will encounter increasing challenges in recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce to manage and maintain water infrastructure systems. Changing precipitation patterns, coupled with aging infrastructure, have driven up the costs of water services. Many residents in the region are facing financial constraints, making it challenging for them to afford essential water services. As a result, ensuring equitable access to clean and safe water for all residents has become a pressing social and economic concern. The campaign sought to raise awareness about this issue, promote affordability resources, and prevent water disconnections for vulnerable populations. Two new videos were developed for the 2023 campaign, promoting careers in water by highlighting members of the water workforce across the region. SEMCOG conducted interviews with members of the water workforce from diverse facilities, including the Marysville Wastewater Treatment Plant, Farmington Hills Public Works, and Milford Public Works.

- [Water Workforce video A](#)
- [Water Workforce video B](#)

On June 5, 2023, SEMCOG staff, in partnership with EGLE and GLWA, held a [webinar](#) titled *Water: Connected for Life*. This webinar kicked off Great Lakes and Fresh Water Week and the start of the One Water campaign. In addition, the significant changing of Southeast Michigan's of water workforce concept was further amplified in an [article titled "Building the Future: Water Infrastructure Careers"](#) by SEMCOG planner Grant Brooks on June 2, 2023. One Water messages and content were broadcast on various media sources throughout Southeast Michigan. The blog has received 43 views to date.

The 2023 campaign was successful, having a high reaching engagement impact across the region. Videos were also promoted on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. Television advertisements were additionally used to advertise the One Water videos on local TV stations FOX 2, WDIV 4, WDIV 4.3 METV, TV20, and CW50. These videos featured representatives and leaders from Southeast

Michigan water service providers and organizations. SEMCOG shared [social media memes](#) on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram throughout the Great Lakes and Fresh Water week. Social media memes helped communicate One Water messages and actions in a fun and engaging way. Total campaign impressions surpassed 16 million in spring and summer of 2023.

More than 90 orders were placed from communities throughout Southeast Michigan. Tip cards contain important facts regarding fats, oils, and greases; flushable wipes; and the importance of water workforce participation. Cards were paired with *One Water* giveaway items to both educate residents as well as give them some of the tools necessary to engage in stewardship actions.

In August, 2023, SEMCOG published the [2023 One Water Implementation Report](#). This document provides an overview of the One Water messages for the 2023 campaign and includes data on overall public engagement throughout the duration of the campaign.

To view One Water materials and find other helpful information on wastewater, stormwater, and drinking water, visit mionewater.com. This website contains educational videos, social media posts, tip cards, an interesting blog series on all three topics, and more.

Media

SEMCOG has multiple publications, including the *Regional Update* and *Environmental Exchange* newsletters, blogs, and social media. Media activities conducted by SEMCOG are described in the following section.

Regional Update

SEMCOG continues to communicate with its members and partners to provide information on its programs, projects, services, and data about Southeast Michigan. To enable information sharing, SEMCOG publishes a bi-weekly [Regional Update](#) newsletter, which often includes information on water quality, green infrastructure, and stormwater management. SEMCOG also circulates information on impending environmental policy that can affect Southeast Michigan and helps publicize important environmental meetings in the region.

SEMCOG | Regional Update

A Biweekly Publication of SEMCOG, the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments

- [August 22, 2023](#)
- [August 9, 2023](#)
- [July 25, 2023](#)
- [July 12, 2023](#)
- [June 20, 2023](#)
- [June 6, 2023](#)
- [May 23, 2023](#)
- [May 9, 2023](#)
- [April 25, 2023](#)
- [April 11, 2023](#)
- [March 28, 2023](#)
- [March 14, 2023](#)
- [February 28, 2023](#)
- [February 14, 2023](#)
- [January 31, 2023](#)
- [January 17, 2023](#)
- [January 3, 2023](#)
- [December 14, 2022](#)
- [November 29, 2022](#)
- [November 15, 2022](#)
- [November 1, 2022](#)
- [October 18, 2022](#)
- [October 4, 2022](#)
- [September 20, 2022](#)
- [September 6, 2022](#)
- [August 23, 2022](#)
- [August 9, 2022](#)
- [July 27, 2022](#)
- [July 12, 2022](#)
- [June 21, 2022](#)
- [June 8, 2022](#)
- [May 24, 2022](#)
- [May 10, 2022](#)
- [April 26, 2022](#)
- [April 12, 2022](#)
- [March 30, 2022](#)
- [March 16, 2022](#)
- [March 1, 2022](#)
- [February 15, 2022](#)
- [February 1, 2022](#)
- [January 19, 2022](#)
- [January 4, 2022](#)

Environmental Exchange



Environmental Exchange is a monthly newsletter highlighting environmental news, grants, and best practices for SEMCOG members to learn about and stay up to date. The newsletter has 411 subscribers, to date. The following issues of Environmental Exchange were published from Fiscal Year 2022-23.

- [June 2023](#)
- [May 2023](#)
- [April 2023](#)
- [March 2023](#)
- [February 2023](#)
- [January 2023](#)
- [November 2022](#)
- [October 2022](#)
- [September 2022](#)
- [August 2022](#)
- [July 2022](#)

Blogs

SEMCOG publishes blogs highlighting regional environmental successes. The following blogs were published during Fiscal Year 2022-23.

- [2022 Regional Showcase project merges environmental, fiscal sustainability](#)
- [SEMCOG launches GREEN Task Force, seeks your input](#)
- [Top 5 Lessons Learned at the Southeast Michigan Regional Trails Summit](#)
- [Materials Management Planning: A Revised Approach to Solid Waste and Recycling Management](#)
- [World Wetlands Day](#)

- [Competitive DNR Grants to Fund Improvements at 13 Southeast Michigan Parks](#)
- [Growing Together – Southeast Michigan Commits to a GREEN Future](#)
- [Building the Future: Water Infrastructure Careers](#)
- [Touring Recreation and Conservation Assets in Monroe and Downriver](#)

Social Media

SEMCOG maintains a presence on social media through both [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#). Social media platforms are ways to spread messages to the public. They are used to circulate blog posts and information from both the *Regional Update* and the *Environmental Exchange*. SEMCOG also uses social media to highlight the Green Infrastructure Education series and bring attention to the “What You Can Do...To Protect Our Waterways,” public education campaign. SEMCOG makes an effort to post weekly messages from the water quality Tip Cards to keep our followers informed on what they can do to help protect water quality. In addition to keeping followers up-to-date on everything SEMCOG is doing, SEMCOG also uses social media to highlight events and projects happening throughout the region and to share best practices for protecting environmental quality.

In August 2023, SEMCOG had:

- 3,727 followers on Twitter
- 18,200 average monthly impressions on Twitter
- 3,229 followers on Facebook

Municipal Training and Government Outreach

SEMCOG Universities

SEMCOG University workshops provide opportunities for SEMCOG member local elected leaders and staff to learn. Environmentally oriented SEMCOG Universities are described in this section. In addition to SEMCOG Universities, SEMCOG also provides technical assistance and hosts multiple committees, which provide additional educational and outreach opportunities.

SEMCOG moved many SEMCOG Universities to a webinar format. This has given us the chance to record these webinars and make them available for everyone. Visit the SEMCOG Membership Services page to view the [On-Demand Webinar Library](#), and be sure to check out the list of upcoming webinars to stay up-to-date on regional environmental news.

Illicit Discharge and Elimination Program (IDEP)

SEMCOG, in partnership with ECT Consulting, held two in-person Illicit Discharge Elimination Program Trainings in 2022. Each training was identical, however, offered twice to accommodate schedules. These trainings included [IDEP Alert Observer Training](#), [IDEP Investigator Training](#), and [Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping Training](#). IDEP Alert Observer and Investigator training sessions were offered both on October 18 and November 10 and had over 200 attendees in total. The Pollution Prevention and Good Housekeeping training session was held on October 19, 2022, and had a total of 95 attendees. These trainings were developed to help support MS4 Phase II Stormwater permit compliance for SEMCOG members and local communities. These trainings help to educate public works staff on how to identify potential pollutants while out in the field, and how to properly report and treat these pollutants. SEMCOG also provides training certificates to participants.

SEMCOG Committees

Executive Committee

SEMCOG's [Executive Committee](#) conducts the main policy work and is the financial control body of the organization, providing final approval of regional studies and plans, as well as taking action on policies and legislative positions.

General Assembly

SEMCOG's [General Assembly](#) consists of delegates and alternates from all SEMCOG member communities and educational institutions. During the October 2022 General Assembly, a session addressed the consequences of postponed investments in water systems recognized by SEMCOG's Water Infrastructure Task Force. It also updated participants on recent federal and state funding options, including support for flooding and stormwater utilities.

SEMCOG Current Projects

National Wetland Inventory Update Project

SEMCOG, in partnership with the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE) and Ducks Unlimited, worked to update the National Wetland Inventory for Southeast Michigan. The 2015 National Wetland Inventory data for the region can be found on SEMCOG's website. Additionally, this data contains the functions and values for wetlands across the region, making it a helpful tool as local communities develop policies and guidelines around wetland regulations and seek restoration opportunities. Be sure to check out the updated data today!

In the 2020-2021 year, SEMCOG continued to work with Ducks Unlimited and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources on the National Wetland Inventory update. SEMCOG had both Ducks Unlimited and EGLE staff present at the December 3 Partners for Clean Water meeting to provide an update on the project and discuss the data that will be available upon project completion. The National Wetland Inventory is being updated and will be delayed due to COVID-19. Currently, the mapping part of the project is complete, and the functions and values are being updated by EGLE.



Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

SEMCOG partnered with the EPA to establish a green infrastructure subaward program, funded by the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI). The program's primary goal is to provide funding to counties, cities, villages, townships, intermediate school districts, and community colleges for constructing green infrastructure techniques that yield environmental benefits, with a primary focus on reducing stormwater runoff volume. The SEMCOG Green Stormwater Infrastructure Program plays a vital role in implementing small-scale green infrastructure techniques, contributing to both regional and local stormwater management goals. Additionally, it aims to build capacity within several disadvantaged communities at the local level.

To date, SEMCOG has allocated GLRI funds to 15 local agencies for green stormwater infrastructure projects. These initiatives are spread across parks, transportation corridors, waterways, neighborhoods, and government facilities, aiming to reduce over 12 million gallons of runoff annually. Recipients include:

- Clinton Township
- Independence Township
- City of Madison Heights
- City of Rochester Hills
- Pittsfield Township
- City of Center Line
- Clinton Township (Second project)
- City of Dearborn
- City of Grosse Pointe Park
- Huron River Watershed Council (with Walled Lake and Wixom)
- City of Northville
- Oakland County Water Resources Commission
- City of River Rouge
- City of Southfield
- City of Trenton

- **Projects that do not require SEMCOG coordination:**
 - [Center Line](#) - \$80,000
 - [Clinton Township](#) - \$95,000
 - [Grosse Pointe Park](#) - \$53,885
 - [Nonprofit Co-Applicant: Huron River Watershed Council & City of Wixom, City of Walled Lake](#)
– \$97,000
 - [Nonprofit Co-Applicant: The Northville Historical Society and City of Northville](#) - \$95,000
 - [Southfield](#) - \$95,000
 - [Oakland County](#) - \$95,000
- **Projects that require SEMCOG assistance:**
 - [River Rouge](#) - \$95,000
 - [Dearborn](#) - \$95,000
 - [Trenton](#) - \$95,000
- **Total award: \$895,885.00**

SEMCOG took proactive steps to support communities that had applied for GLRI grants, offering assistance in coordinating proposed green infrastructure projects. Staff provided guidance in selecting suitable sites and calculating the estimated annual runoff for retrofit purposes. Additionally, SEMCOG ensured effective collaboration with the EPA to align GLRI projects and proposed site locations.

Green Infrastructure and Coastal Resiliency

In 2022, SEMCOG partnered with the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) to secure a Michigan Coastal Management Grant. The joint effort focused on conducting Green Infrastructure Assessments for Coastal Resiliency in Southeast Michigan. The goal of this project was to build coastal resiliency in Southeast Michigan and help to preserve coastlines and mitigate the impact of flooding on coastal communities. Through this grant, the project team identified high-priority, publicly owned properties where green infrastructure implementation would be feasible.

SEMCOG and CWP conducted in-person assessment of the proposed green infrastructure sites throughout the coastal counties. Sites in St. Clair and Macomb Counties were assessed June 13-16, 2022. The Wayne and Monroe County sites will be assessed July 25-29, 2022. These field visits were designed for SEMCOG and CWP to physically evaluate the selected sites for green infrastructure suitability and potential for shoreline restoration. This data was collected digitally using tablets equipped with ArcGIS Field Maps. Data was used to prioritize the 12-15 sites selected for conceptual plans.

Throughout the 2023 fiscal year, SEMCOG provided evidence-based recommendations to enhance coastal resiliency through the [Green Infrastructure Assessments for Coastal Resiliency](#). The report summarized these findings along with the [concept plans](#), underlining the importance of integrating green infrastructure into coastal resiliency planning. These concept plans will be eligible for future funding opportunities. After the concept plans were developed, SEMCOG reached out to the local communities with concept plans to talk about next steps for the projects, identify funding opportunities, and answer questions. SEMCOG presented this project at both the Center for Watershed Protection National Conference and the Ohio Stormwater Conference.

Engagement in Activities that Implement the Water Resources Plan for Southeast Michigan

The Water Resources Plan for Southeast Michigan guides much of SEMCOG's work and is supported and influenced by SEMCOG's members. Recent activities and initiatives that reflect priorities in the plan include the:

- [Water Infrastructure Task Force and Planning Guide](#)
- [One Water public education program](#)
- MDOT Climate Resiliency and Flooding project
- Infrastructure Asset Management program

Additionally, environmental and water resource priorities are integrated into other SEMCOG regional plans and work program activities, including the Regional Transportation Plan, the Economic Development Strategy for Southeast Michigan, and the Parks and Recreation Plan for Southeast Michigan.

Water Infrastructure Planning Guide

SEMCOG continued its Water Infrastructure Task Force into the fiscal year. Comprised by a diverse group of experts, policymakers, and community leaders, the task force's primary mission was to collaboratively address the region's water challenges and develop actionable strategies for enhancing water infrastructure resilience. During the fiscal year, SEMCOG achieved significant milestones in its publication of Southeast Michigan's [Water Infrastructure Planning Guide](#) and [Water Infrastructure Policies and Actions](#), developed with guidance from the Task Force. SEMCOG successfully published the [Water Infrastructure Planning Guide](#) on March 23, 2023, a comprehensive document aimed at providing municipalities and communities with essential guidance for strategic water infrastructure development. The Policies and Actions articulate the timely need for action and specific opportunities to address. Both of these documents act as companion documents to the [Water Resources Plan](#), focusing on infrastructure. This guide offers a wealth of valuable information, including best practices, innovative technologies, and funding opportunities to improve water infrastructure resiliency and efficiency across the region. In response to the growing urgency of water-related issues, SEMCOG facilitated workshops, seminars, and virtual meetings to foster dialogue, gather feedback, and gain valuable insights from various communities, ensuring the guide aligns with their unique needs and challenges.

A SEMCOG University on the DMA program further advanced efforts to strengthen the region's water infrastructure as well as the completion of the [Annual Designated Management Agency Report](#). Additionally, highlights of SEMCOG's activities were presented at the American Water Works Association (AWWA) Water Infrastructure Conference in Portland, Oregon. This conference provided a platform for SEMCOG to showcase water infrastructure work and exchange ideas with industry peers.

During this fiscal year, SEMCOG actively engaged with multiple stakeholders, including Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Great Lakes Water Authority (GLWA), Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD), Army Corps of Civil Engineers (ACEC), and the Michigan Infrastructure Council (MIC), to institutionalize a regional infrastructure coordination process. This involved conducting meetings and background research to ensure effective coordination and integration of climate resiliency planning into the [Regional Transportation Plan](#) (RTP) development processes. SEMCOG also prepared and presented updates on the infrastructure coordination workshop and upcoming regional resiliency plan at the Executive Committee meeting, reflecting their commitment to transparency and collaboration with key decision-makers.

SEMCOG's efforts culminated in hosting the Infrastructure Coordination Workshop in April 2023, collaborating with MDOT and MIC to solicit collaborative work and improve the coordination of infrastructure projects across public and private sectors, showcasing their dedication to efficient resource investment.

Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Tracking Tool for Post-Construction Standards Compliance

SEMCOG, in coordination with Oakland County Water Resources Commissioner (OCWRC), developed a MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System) Post-Construction Tracking Tool to support local agency compliance with NPDES MS4 Phase II Stormwater Permit requirements. Post-construction refers to stormwater standards required for new developments and redevelopments, specifically establishing how stormwater is managed from these projects. This tool is available to all

local agencies within the SEMCOG region who are required to comply with these related post-construction standards within their NPDES stormwater permits.

The tracking tool utilizes ArcGIS Survey 123 to capture required project and stormwater management calculation details. The tool is designed for county, community, and consultant input to collect individual project development post-construction plan review data. SEMCOG summarizes the information for each permittee and provides that information back in a report format to each contributing local agency who then submits to EGLE as part of their compliance reporting. The tool requests local agencies to input basic location information for new and redevelopments, detailed engineering pre-development/post-development site criteria, and quantities of stormwater managed. The tool supports MS4 permit compliance with consistent reporting format and details. This is a vital tool for local agencies to demonstrate the success of alternative approaches to typical permit requirements. As of September 2023, four counties and twenty-six communities have submitted data.

Climate Resilience

SEMCOG is engaged in numerous projects concerning climate resilience within the region. As severe flooding events persist, SEMCOG is working to understand vulnerabilities in the region's transportation and infrastructure networks to determine best practices to address these challenges. Products of a recently completed Climate Resiliency study can now be found on [SEMCOG's Climate Resilience webpage](#) and can help guide communities as the plan for these stressors.

SEMCOG has been proactive in presenting climate resiliency work at conferences and seminars, including the Michigan Transportation Planning Association (MTPA) pre-conference session in Flint and a panel discussion on water infrastructure at the InfraDay conference in Chicago.

Collaboration has been a key aspect of SEMCOG's efforts, as staff worked closely with the NOAA team on integrating equity work into flood risk and planning tools. SEMCOG also engaged with MDOT and other stakeholders to develop a scope of work for Stormwater and Infrastructure coordination. This collaboration culminated in the final meeting of the Water Infrastructure Task Force, where policies and actions for the Water Infrastructure Plan were updated and approved.

SEMCOG also met with various organizations, such as Great Lakes Integrated Sciences and Assessments (GLISA), Volpe, and MSU SeaGrant, to discuss the plan's integration into transportation planning work and Water School initiatives. The ongoing work with NOAA and Fernleaf teams aims to incorporate equity components into the Flood Risk Tool, further enhancing climate resiliency efforts. SEMCOG's commitment to climate resiliency planning extended to hosting workshops, webinars, and meetings. In June, SEMCOG facilitated a webinar highlighting the benefits of CWP membership for their members.

The year also saw SEMCOG's active involvement in several advisory and committee meetings, such as Rouge River Advisory Council, Middle Huron Partners, and Stormwater Hub Quarterly Advisory Group, where they discussed a wide range of topics related to resiliency and water management.

To continue climate resiliency work, SEMCOG released a request for proposals and procured TetraTech with ICF as a subconsultant for a Regional Resiliency Framework project that will build on the GREEN work to develop a pilot area for large-scale nature-based solutions to flooding; develop a data resource of climate, rainfall, and resiliency data sets that can be used for resiliency analyses; and outline a programmatic approach that communities can utilize for resiliency work at the local level. This work will be completed in the next fiscal year.

Environment and Ecosystem Services Tool

As part of the regional transportation planning process, SEMCOG conducts an environmental sensitivity analysis for all transportation projects. To enhance and update this analysis, SEMCOG is working [Highland Economics](#) (HE) to develop an Environmental and Ecosystem Services Tool. This tool will provide an online planning - level service to local agencies, incorporating more recent environmental data and initiatives to inform project selection. Users of the tool will be able to map potential project areas and provide inputs on required site details for a transportation, development, or redevelopment project. The tool will estimate the potential environmental and ecosystem impacts of that project, including stormwater runoff, water quality, recreation, urban heat island, habitat, and air quality. In addition, the tool will offer guidance for potential best management practices and mitigation opportunities, while highlighting estimated returns on investments for reducing impacts related to project development. The online tool is expected to be completed by Summer 2024 and will roll out for public use at that time.

GREEN Initiative

In collaboration with various SEMCOG departments, SEMCOG developed its Southeast Michigan Growing our Resilience, Equity, and Economy with Nature) GREEN Initiative. With a focus on implementation, Southeast Michigan GREEN provides a regional framework that demonstrates the impact of local projects, positioning them for successful funding and partnership opportunities. This initiative is driven by the goal to ensure that public benefits of green infrastructure are resilient, equitable, and improve the quality of life in Southeast Michigan communities.

SEMCOG convened the GREEN Task Force to guide this initiative forward. Led by co-chairs Bryan Barnett, Mayor of Rochester Hills, and Abdullah Hammoud, Mayor of Dearborn, task force members include representatives from local governments, State agencies, land conservancies, and recreation providers, healthcare, utilities, and business.

The task force was charged with increasing the quantity, quality, and connectivity of our green infrastructure network and ensuring that public benefits of green infrastructure are equitable and resilient. Over the course of three meetings, task force members discussed their visions for the region's future and current efforts to implement GREEN strategies. Public input, expert focus groups, and analysis of recently updated land cover data all helped to guide the task force to establish regional metrics and targets for all aspects of the region's green infrastructure network, including green stormwater infrastructure, resilient natural landscapes, and protected public land.

In coordination with the GREEN task force, SEMCOG developed a [GREEN Dashboard](#). This dashboard aims to share SEMCOG's data and resources with its members, while understanding more about project opportunities and needs in the region. Additionally, SEMCOG produced its [GREEN Report](#) as a product of the GREEN Task Force. This report declares the framework's consensus-based and data-driven metrics to enhance the quantity and quality of the region's green infrastructure network, while identifying policies, priority areas, and planning resources to support future implementation.

Parks and Recreation

SEMCOG continues to implement the [Parks and Recreation Plan for Southeast Michigan](#), to ensure that the region's recreation system meets the quality of life, health, and accessibility needs of residents and visitors, along with regional economic development goals and environmental priorities. Data

analysis and maps from the plan have been used to develop the [Access to Parks Analysis Tool](#), which provides an interactive format to understand where people live in relation to outdoor recreation opportunities. The tool models travel times for walking, biking, driving, and transit, and includes geographic, demographic, and park amenity data, and may be used to assist with collaboration across communities and planning improvements that serve more people. SEMCOG also continues to update and promote the [Southeast Michigan ParkFinder®](#) and [Trail Explorer](#) websites. All these resources are regularly utilized to support local communities with funding applications, promote the region's outdoor recreation opportunities, and guide the development of plans, projects, and policies with SEMCOG's members and partners.

In addition, SEMCOG convenes regional recreation stakeholders through a leadership role with the SEMI WILD network and participates in a variety of stakeholder committees at the local, regional, and state level. These efforts engage regional stakeholders in developing coordinated approaches to enhancing and promoting our recreational assets. Other outreach and engagement efforts have included SEMCOG University webinars on data resources and grant opportunities, and hosting events like the Southeast Michigan Regional Trails Summit and Recreation and Conservation Tour with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund.

For more information, please visit <https://www.semcoq.org/stormwater> to learn more.

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