

**November 2021**

# **Partners for Clean Water Annual Report, 2021**



**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, 2020

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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 members and local communities to support water quality improvements throughout the region.

Preparation of this document is financed in part through grants from and in cooperation with the Michigan Department of Transportation with the assistance of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration; and other federal and state funding agencies as well as local membership contributions and designated management agency fees.

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## Acknowledgements

This report is developed in coordination with the Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water. SEMCOG acknowledges the work of this partnership and the many communities that participate in this group.

### **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
- Cranbrook Institute of Science
- Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc.
- Fred A. & Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation
- 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
- Spicer group
- Stantec
- 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's 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, including advancing 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, in addition to representatives from watershed councils, not-for-profit agencies, the private sector, and water resource professionals. 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.

Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water meetings were held once over 2020-2021 year:

- December 3, 2020

The *Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water Annual Report, 2020* 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 the “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 2020 – October 2021. The number of times each tip card was viewed is listed below.

Table 1

#### Tip Card Web Analytics

| Webpage                                          | Total Sep 2020-Oct 2021 |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <a href="#"><u>To Protect our Waterways</u></a>  |                         |
| <a href="#"><u>Household Hazardous Waste</u></a> | 115                     |
| <a href="#"><u>Storm Drains</u></a>              | 84                      |
| <a href="#"><u>Landscaping</u></a>               | 102                     |
| <a href="#"><u>Pet Care</u></a>                  | 96                      |
| <a href="#"><u>Lawn Care</u></a>                 | 79                      |
| <a href="#"><u>Car Care</u></a>                  | 94                      |

## SEMCOG's Environment Webpage

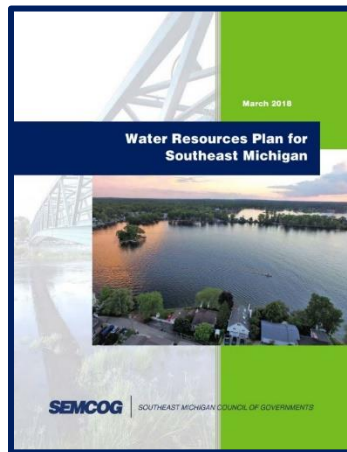
If you're looking for additional environmental information for Southeast Michigan, be sure to check out the [SEMCOG Environment Webpage](#). This page contains updated information about SEMCOG's latest projects, and easy access to all environmental news. You can also learn more about water infrastructure 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 current and future precipitation and SEMCOG's Climate Resiliency and Flooding Mitigation Study. 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

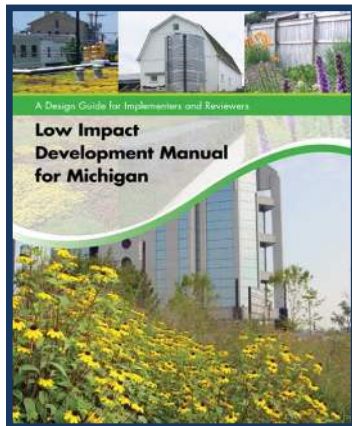
Table 2

### Website Analytics

| Webpage                                                          | Total<br>Sep 2020-Oct 2021 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <b><a href="#">Water</a></b>                                     |                            |
| <a href="#">Stormwater</a>                                       | 1,163                      |
| <a href="#">Wastewater</a>                                       | 1,420                      |
| <a href="#">Drinking Water</a>                                   | 581                        |
| <a href="#">Partnerships</a>                                     | 375                        |
| <b><a href="#">Land</a></b>                                      |                            |
| <a href="#">Green Infrastructure Vision</a>                      | 50                         |
| <a href="#">Low Impact Development Manual</a>                    | 330                        |
| <a href="#">Great Lakes, Green Streets Guidebook</a>             | 89                         |
| <b><a href="#">Parks and Recreation</a></b>                      |                            |
| <a href="#">Parks and Recreation Plan for Southeast Michigan</a> | 70                         |
| <a href="#">Southeast Michigan Park Finder</a>                   | 6,046                      |
| Southeast Michigan Park Finder App                               | 3,021                      |
| <a href="#">Southeast Michigan Trail Explorer</a>                | 11,156                     |



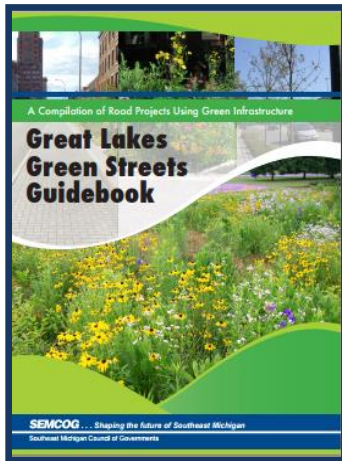
In March 2018, SEMCOG's General Assembly adopted the [Water Resources Plan for Southeast Michigan](#). This plan emphasizes the importance of integrated water resources management across the major areas of advancing the blue economy, natural resources protection and enhancement, and water infrastructure 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 172 times between September 2020 - October 2021 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 330 times from September 2020 - October 2021.



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 50 times from September 2020 - October 2021.



The [Great Lakes Green Streets Guidebook](#) was accessed 89 times from September 2020 - October 2021.

## One Water Campaign

SEMCOG has always been involved in public education related to water resources. In 2019, SEMCOG, in partnership with Great Lakes Water Authority and the Cranbrook Institute of Science, launched the One Water Campaign for Southeast Michigan. The goal of this campaign is to attain a greater awareness and mutual shared responsibility for water resources and to create public support for investments in water resources and infrastructure asset management.



The One Water Campaign is a unique style of public education campaign, running as a one-week media blitz, in conjunction with Michigan's Great Lakes and Fresh Water Week. Campaign messaging largely focuses on the connection between stormwater, drinking water, and wastewater. For 2021 the campaign focused on the story of Southeast Michigan's water resources, and the importance of partnerships in protecting and restoring water quality.

[Great Lakes and Fresh Water Week](#) and the One Water Campaign ran from June 5-13, 2021. SEMCOG staff held a webinar on June 7 in partnership with EGLE and GLWA to talk about water investments, water recreation, and water infrastructure in Southeast Michigan.

The 2021 One Water Campaign was led by 10 new regional videos that highlight several watershed organizations and local partners and the work that they do in restoring and protecting water quality. Four shortened videos were developed this year for TV advertisement. In addition to the development of new video content, SEMCOG developed new social media content, that used memes to highlight important water quality actions. Two blogs were written this year, [Our Water History Part 1](#) and [Our Water History Part 2](#), that capture regional water history stories and discuss the success regional partners have made in restoring water quality over the past 50 years. Television advertisement using our One Water videos reached nearly 3.5 million people.

To view One Water materials and find other helpful information on wastewater, stormwater, and drinking water, visit [mionewater.com](https://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, *Semscope* magazine, 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 also helps publicize important environmental meetings in the region.

## SEMCOG | Regional Update

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

- [September 21, 2020](#)
- [September 7, 2020](#)
- [August 24, 2020](#)
- [August 10, 2020](#)
- [July 20, 2020](#)
- [July 6, 2020](#)
- [June 22, 2020](#)
- [June 8, 2020](#)
- [May 25, 2020](#)
- [May 11, 2020](#)
- [April 27, 2020](#)
- [April 13, 2020](#)
- [March 30, 2020](#)
- [March 16, 2020](#)
- [March 2, 2020](#)
- [February 17, 2020](#)
- [February 3, 2020](#)
- [January 20, 2020](#)
- [January 6, 2020](#)
- [December 16, 2019](#)
- [December 2, 2019](#)
- [November 18, 2019](#)
- [November 4, 2019](#)
- [October 21, 2019](#)
- [October 7, 2019](#)
- [September 23, 2019](#)
- [September 9, 2019](#)

## Environmental Exchange



SEMCOG publishes information on relevant environmental opportunities in Southeast Michigan through the *Environmental Exchange* newsletter. The following *Environmental Exchanges* were published from September 2020 to October 2021.

- [September 2020](#)
- [October 2020](#)
- [November 2020](#)
- [December 2020](#)
- [January 2021](#)
- [February 2021](#)
- [March 2021](#)
- [April 2021](#)
- [May 2021](#)
- [July 2021](#)
- [August 2021](#)
- [September 2021](#)
- [October 2021](#)

## Blogs

SEMCOG released multiple blogs during the year on environmental topics related to water resources, green infrastructure, and parks and recreation. Blog posts are often featured in the biweekly *Regional Update* and monthly *Environmental Exchange* newsletters, and are posted on social media, SEMCOG's website, and [blog site](#). Environmental blogs from September 2020 to October 2021 are listed below.

- [Our Water's History: Part 1](#)
- [Our Water's History: Part 2](#)
- [Creating a Circular Economy for Recycling in the Great Lakes Region](#)
- [Invasive Species in Southeast Michigan](#)
- [Water Infrastructure Update](#)
- [Explore Lake St. Clair restoration through SEMCOG's latest story map](#)
- [Rain Garden 101: Tips and Tricks for Your First Rain Garden](#)
- [Why you should care about rain](#)

## Podcasts

In 2019, SEMCOG began a podcast – Region Ahead – to discuss a range of topics important to Southeast Michigan. This new form of media is helping to engage a wider audience with current issues and topics in Southeast Michigan. Podcasts are posted on SEMCOG's website as well as on Apple Podcasts, Google Podcast, Stitcher, Spotify, and Castbox. Check out the [podcast](#) today.

## 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 September/October 2021, SEMCOG had:

- 3,674 followers on Twitter
- 37,600 average monthly impressions on Twitter
- 2,900 followers on Facebook

## Municipal Training and Government Outreach

### **SEMCOG Universities**

SEMCOG Universities are series of workshops for SEMCOG member local elected leaders and staff. 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.

This year, due to COVID-19, 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)**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, SEMCOG and the IDEP Advisory group made the decision not to hold the full in-person Illicit Discharge program in 2020. Rather, SEMCOG, in partnership with ECT Consulting, held two [Illicit Discharge Alert Observer](#) and [Pollution Prevention](#) webinar trainings in November of 2021. These trainings were developed to help support MS4 Phase II Stormwater permit compliance for SEMCOG members and local communities. These trainings are shortened versions of SEMCOG's typical training, but they help public works staff understand how to identify and report sources of pollution. 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 all delegates and alternates from SEMCOG member communities and educational institutions. During the 2021 October General Assembly, several educational breakout sessions were held, including sessions on Water Infrastructure Investment Needs.

### Lake St. Clair CISMA

The CISMA is a partnership-based management structure comprised of representatives of local, regional, state and federal agencies, nongovernmental organizations, property owners, and the public. The goal of the CISMA is to stop the spread of invasive species and build a resilient landscape through habitat restoration. SEMCOG led development of the Lake St. Clair CISMA along with its 33 local government members and stakeholders. This past year, SEMCOG helped provide assistance to the Lake St. Clair CISMA through mapping and technical data. SEMCOG also helped provide the CISMA with letters of support for funding opportunities.

### Lake St. Clair Partnership

Efforts to protect and restore Lake St. Clair are led by the Lake St. Clair Partnership, a group made up of local, county, regional, state and federal agencies, non-profit organizations and universities that are working to implement the priorities of the St. Clair River and Lake St. Clair Comprehensive Management Plan.

SEMCOG facilitates meetings of the partnership of the partnership assisting members in identifying and implementing the priorities of the management plan. SEMCOG works for alignment of priorities among the members and state and federal agencies. The partnership operates within the Lake St. Clair watershed, within the counties of Macomb, Oakland, and St. Clair.

In June 2020, SEMCOG, in conjunction with the Lake St. Clair Partnership released the [\*Lake St. Clair Watershed Implementation Priorities Plan\*](#) (WIPP). The WIPP is a strategy that includes 60 active projects with approximately \$70 million in investments. The report describes ecological and environmental benefits in both the coastal and watershed areas of Lake St. Clair that can be realized through implementation of the projects. WIPP projects address ecological restoration through implementation of stormwater management, green infrastructure, nonpoint source pollution and fish passage improvements.

In addition to the development of the WIPP, SEMCOG released the [\*Lake St. Clair Restoration Story Map\*](#). This visually tells the story of Lake St. Clair, the development of the partnership, and features a map of the completed projects in the Lake St. Clair Watershed. Take a look at the map to find out more about the amazing restoration projects happening in and around Lake St. Clair.

## 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, is working to update the National Wetland Inventory for Southeast Michigan. This data update will be used to develop the Environmental Sensitivity Analysis, which helps support transportation planning. This data from the sensitivity analysis will be available for local partners in their respective planning, engineering, and water resource activities.

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 continuing to be 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. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2021.

### **Great Lakes Restoration Initiative**



In fall of 2018, SEMCOG received a EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant, to implement a Green Infrastructure mini-grant program. SEMCOG funded six projects in total, and project planning for the individual communities began in fall 2019. The implementation of these green infrastructure projects will result in an estimated runoff reduction of four million gallons per year.

In 2020, SEMCOG staff asked for an extension for this project due to the pandemic, which was granted. The project deadline is now in the winter of 2021. Nearly all projects have been completed to this date and will be highlighted in an interactive map upon completion.

### **Coastal Sustainability Assessment**

SEMCOG, in partnership with the Land Information Access Association (LIAA), is working to complete a Coastal Sustainability Assessment for all coastal communities in the SEMCOG region. The work is funded through Michigan's Coastal Zone Management Program. The project includes producing both heat vulnerability and future flooding scenarios for each coastal community. SEMCOG will replicate the process for each county beyond the coastal zone areas. LIAA staff will also work with the communities to complete a Community Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool to understand local planning challenges and initiatives. This work was already completed in St. Clair County under a separate grant, but with this funding, we can expand the project in the region.

## **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 Huron to Erie Corridor Drinking Water Monitoring grant and program, the One Water public education program, the MDOT Climate Resiliency and Flooding project, and the 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.

## **Climate Resilience**

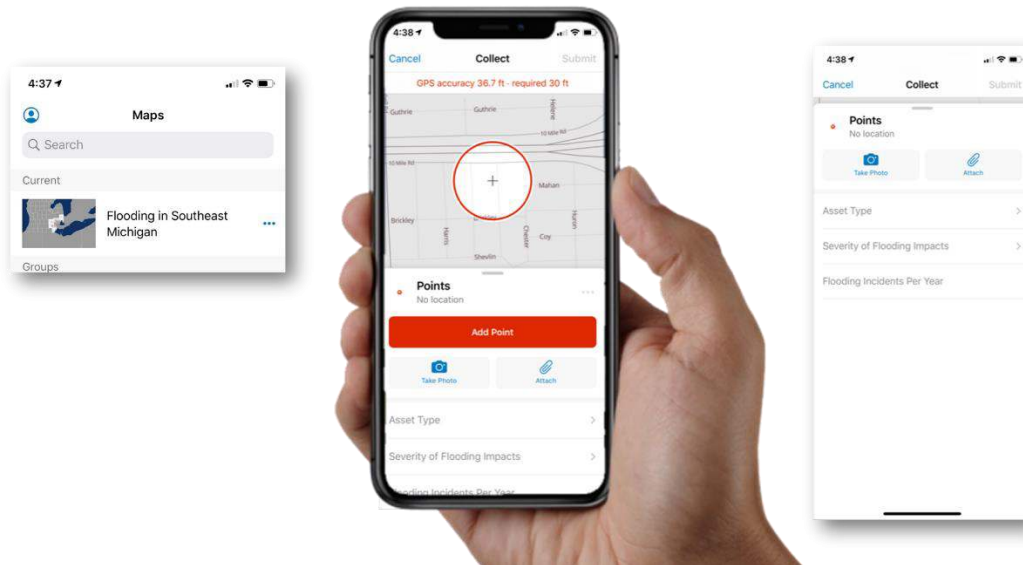
SEMCOG recently completed a significant Climate Resiliency project for the region that includes a new Flooding Risk Tool for transportation assets and a detailed report on Current and Future Precipitation for Southeast Michigan. As severe flooding events persist, SEMCOG is working to understand vulnerabilities in the region's transportation and infrastructure networks and 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.

The first product of the resiliency work is the [Flood Risk Tool](#). The tool assigns a flood risk score to transportation assets in the region including bridges, culverts, pump stations, and roads. An interactive dashboard is now live on the SEMCOG website. Communities are able to view flood risk scores for transportation assets in their jurisdiction. Ideally, this information can be used in transportation and stormwater planning to identify potential stormwater challenges during the project selection process. It can also be used to inform design of transportation projects by encouraging forethought of stormwater management.

The next product of the resiliency work is the [Southeast Michigan Current and Future Precipitation Report](#). This report analyzes changes to precipitation frequency estimates to update current precipitation estimates for use in stormwater design and management. The report also uses widely recognized climate models to estimate trends for mid- and end-of-century rainfall patterns. The results of this analysis predict that rain events will become more intense and more frequent in the future, which will cause our level of service to go down.

A new tool developed to enhance the Flood Risk Tool database is the [Southeast Michigan Flooding App](#). The app allows asset owners to record frequently flooded locations in their communities. The app uses GPS to record the location; it asks for a photo from the user of the flooding; and it requests a ranking of severity

of flooding. Below are two screenshots of the app interface. This application is available for tablet or smartphone, and is available for download now. The results of the app will allow communities to build up their own frequently flooded location databases, which will allow for faster response times during heavy rain events. For example, if a community knows that a certain intersection always floods, they will be able to quickly install road blockades or sand bags. SEMCOG will use these collected data points to refine the flood risk tool analysis and scoring.



## Water Infrastructure Condition and Investments

In 2019, SEMCOG convened a working group of experts, the Southeast Michigan Asset Management Work Team and secured a consulting team to help develop this new regional program. SEMCOG represents the region on the Michigan Infrastructure Council and by attending both the Transportation and Water Asset Management Council meetings. SEMCOG also provided input and comments on the development of the state asset management template documents. Goals of this program included:

- Understanding the overall condition of infrastructure assets
- Strengthening coordination on infrastructure projects to improve cost efficiencies and reduce inconvenience to the public
- Sharing best practices for asset management programs
- Developing a clearinghouse to summarize regional infrastructure needs
- Communicating region-wide priorities at the state level

SEMCOG compiled the asset data, performed a quality control review of the data, and provided it to the consulting team. The consulting team analyzed the data to quantify condition of the assets and forecasted the findings out to areas in the SEMCOG region that did not provide data. The consultants expanded the condition forecast to the entire region to determine the investment need for drinking water, sanitary sewer, and stormwater systems. The findings were that approximately 30% of our systems are in poor condition.

In order to address the poor pipes and prevent pipes in good or fair condition from deteriorating into poor condition, the investment need is approximately \$3.5 billion annually through 2045 for water infrastructure.

This investment need does not include upsizing or right sizing to address stormwater capacity issues, nor does it account for treatment plant investment needs. This data will all be made available on the interactive Regional Infrastructure Plan HUB, which is in progress.

Currently, the team is working to develop a Regional Water Infrastructure Plan, which will discuss the current condition and investment need of our underground water infrastructure and our transportation infrastructure. Additionally the Plan will cover the topic of broadband, coordination with private utilities, and future infrastructure needs as they relate to current needs. This plan will be developed over the course of the next fiscal year with input from an Infrastructure Task Force comprised of volunteers from local communities and agencies in the region. [The Infrastructure web page](#) was created featuring transportation, water, and broadband infrastructure. This page will be expanded to include regional actions and policies related to these topics as part of the Regional Infrastructure Plan.

## The New Future of Water Infrastructure

Following on the heels of recent flooding events in 2021, SEMCOG hosted a Community Conversation in August of 2021. The discussion centered on short-term and long-term priorities regarding stormwater management and addressing flooding in the region. Participants in this Community Conversation discussed the investment gap in our water infrastructure and critical future needs for the systems.

As a result of the discussion, four regional priorities emerged:

- Funding
- Coordination
- Climate Resilience
- Education

SEMCOG's New Future of Southeast Michigan: Water Infrastructure StoryMap highlights the importance of investing in Michigan's water infrastructure systems and identifies regional priorities to address in the future. Moving forward, SEMCOG will coordinate with local partners to develop initiatives and policies surrounding these regional priorities.



## 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.

In addition, SEMCOG has maintained an active role in leading the Outdoor Recreation Committee of SEMI WILD (formerly the Metro Detroit Nature Network), and the Mapping and Planning Committee of the Southeast Michigan Trails Action Team. Both of these efforts engage regional stakeholders in developing coordinated approaches to enhancing and promoting our recreational assets. Other outreach and engagement have included a partnership with mParks to provide training sessions for elected officials at their annual conference, and SEMCOG University workshops and webinars on data resources, grant opportunities, and best practices for adapting programs and operations in response to COVID-19.

**SEMCOG Officers  
2020-2021**

**Donald Hubler**  
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*Macomb Intermediate*  
*School District*

**Brenda Jones**  
First Vice Chair  
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Vice Chairperson  
*Supervisor,*  
*Orion Township*

**Mandy Grewal**  
Vice Chairperson  
*Supervisor,*  
*Pittsfield Township*

**Pauline Repp**  
Vice Chairperson  
*Mayor,*  
*Port Huron*

**Eric Sabree**  
Vice Chairperson  
*Treasurer,*  
*Wayne County*

**Phil Weipert**  
Immediate Past Chair  
*Commissioner,*  
*Oakland County*

**Amy O'Leary**  
Executive Director