

## **Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water Annual Report**

**September 2018-August 2019**

The [Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water](#) group 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, to coordinate public education, and to leverage resources on water quality, stormwater management, and green infrastructure implementation.

SEMCOG helps to support ongoing [Phase II compliance activities](#) by summarizing annual information related to SEMCOG's stormwater and water resource management activities, with a specific focus on communication, public education, and outreach efforts. This information helps communities and counties meet the reporting requirements associated with federal Phase II Stormwater Regulation. SEMCOG [congratulates](#) all of its member communities actively working to restore and protect the Great Lakes!

Southeast Michigan Partners for Clean Water meetings were held twice over the 2018-2019 year:

- [October 15, 2018](#)
- [December 19, 2018](#)

### **Information in this report includes SEMCOG's:**

1. Communication, Public Education, and Outreach Activities
2. Municipal Training and Government Outreach
3. Transportation Alternatives Program
4. Other SEMCOG Staff Services
5. Other Regional Training

## 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 our 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 in *Appendix 1*.



The [Protect Our Waterways](#) webpage, which lists actions the public can take to protect our water resources and includes the link to download Tip Card, received 4,695 visits from September 2018-August 2019. The number of times each Tip Card was viewed is listed below.

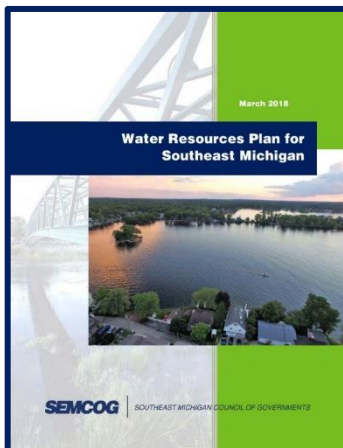
| Webpage                                          | Sept-Dec 2018 | Jan-Aug 2019 | Total Sep 2018-Aug 2016 |
|--------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| <a href="#"><u>To Protect our Waterways</u></a>  | 1,290         | 3,405        | 4,695                   |
| <a href="#"><u>Household Hazardous Waste</u></a> | 26            | 110          | 136                     |
| <a href="#"><u>Storm Drains</u></a>              | 81            | 367          | 448                     |
| <a href="#"><u>Landscaping</u></a>               | 27            | 108          | 135                     |
| <a href="#"><u>Pet Care</u></a>                  | 12            | 99           | 111                     |
| <a href="#"><u>Lawn Care</u></a>                 | 20            | 89           | 109                     |
| <a href="#"><u>Car Care</u></a>                  | 22            | 62           | 84                      |

## SEMCOG's Website Refresh

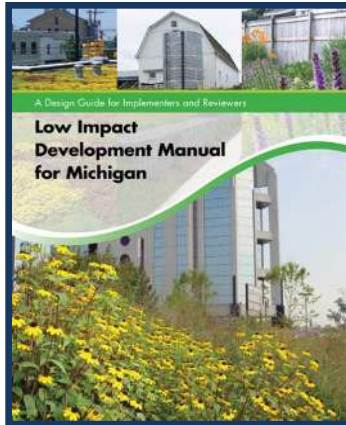
This past summer, SEMCOG updated the Environment portion of its website. Now, you can find more updated information about SEMCOG's latest projects, and access all of your favorite environmental news more easily. Check out the new pages on [Stormwater](#), [Drinking Water](#), [Wastewater](#), and learn about all of SEMCOG's local [partnerships](#). 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. 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

| Webpage                                              | Sept-Dec 2018 | Jan-Aug 2019 | Total Sep 2018-Aug 2019 |
|------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Water</b>                                         | 594           | 1,140        | 1,981                   |
| <a href="#">Regional Policies</a>                    | 86            | 81           | 167                     |
| <b>Watersheds</b>                                    | 1,603         | 2,479        | 4,082                   |
| <a href="#">Watershed Groups</a>                     | 244           | 458          | 702                     |
| <a href="#">Anchor Bay Watershed Group</a>           | 33            | 58           | 91                      |
| <b>Stormwater</b>                                    | 862           | 1,310        | 2,172                   |
| <a href="#">Partners for Clean Water 2016-2017</a>   | 75            | 33           | 108                     |
| <a href="#">Partners for Clean Water 2017-2018</a>   | 78            | 94           | 172                     |
| <a href="#">Phase II Regulations</a>                 | 27            | 34           | 61                      |
| <b>Green Infrastructure</b>                          | 1,149         | 1,373        | 2,522                   |
| <a href="#">Green Infrastructure Vision</a>          | 236           | 298          | 534                     |
| <a href="#">Low Impact Development Manual</a>        | 31            | 39           | 70                      |
| <a href="#">Great Lakes, Green Streets Guidebook</a> | 0             | 4            | 4                       |
| <b>Parks and Recreation</b>                          | 606           | 1,283        | 1,889                   |
| <a href="#">Southeast Michigan Park Finder</a>       | 2,508         | 3,145        | 5,653                   |
| Southeast Michigan Park Finder App                   | 1,150         | 1,455        | 2,605                   |
| <a href="#">Southeast Michigan Trail Explorer</a>    | 11,659        | 8,224        | 19,883                  |
| <b>One Water</b>                                     | 0             | 5,623        | 5,623                   |



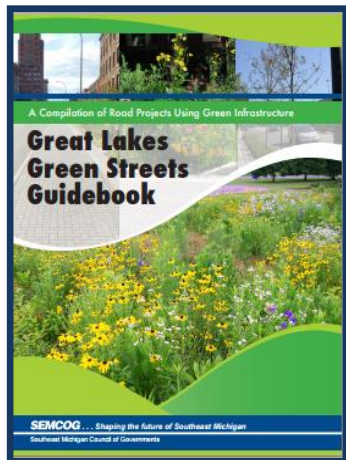
In March 2018, SEMCOG's General Assembly adopted the [Water Resources Plan for Southeast Michigan](#). This plan emphasizes the importance of integrated water resources management across the major areas of advancing the blue economy, natural resources protection and enhancement, and water infrastructure 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 75 times between September 2018 and August 2019 from SEMCOG's website.



The [Low Impact Development Manual for Michigan](#) was accessed 62 times from September 2018-August 2019.



The [Green Infrastructure Vision for Southeast Michigan](#) was accessed 2,310 times from September 2018-August 2019.



The [Great Lakes Green Streets Guidebook](#) was accessed four times from September 2018-August 2019.

## 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 was 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.



Campaign messaging largely focused on the connection between stormwater, drinking water, and wastewater. The goal was to help the public understand the connection between the water system, the vastness of the system, and that public involvement plays a role in maintaining and improving the water system. To view One Water materials and find other helpful information on wastewater, stormwater, and drinking water, visit [mionewater.com](http://mionewater.com). This website contains educational videos, social media posts, tip cards, an interesting blog series on all three topics, and more.

The campaign ran from June 1-9, 2019, and made quite an impression in the region. Outdoor advertising, video and radio ads, and social media were all outlets for disseminating this information. Here are some statistics: 13.7 million impressions were received via outdoor advertising, including billboards and bus ads; 66 communities used One Water videos on their local TV stations; 120 broadcast TV spots were purchased, receiving 1.3 million impressions. On social media, the campaign received 491,000 video views, 2,375 shares and retweets, and 3,453 link clicks. These impressions help show the impact of the One Water campaign. SEMCOG, in partnership with GLWA and Cranbrook, hope to continue the campaign over the next few years, to reinforce to the public the importance of our water system. Stay tuned for 2020!

## Media

SEMCOG has multiple media publications including the *Regional Update* and *Environmental Exchange* newsletters, *Semscope* magazine, blogs, and social media. Media activities conducted by SEMCOG in 2016 are described in the following section.

### ***Regional Update***

SEMCOG continues 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

- [August 19, 2019](#)
- [August 5, 2019](#)
- [July 22, 2019](#)
- [July 8, 2019](#)
- [June 24, 2019](#)
- [June 10, 2019](#)
- [May 27, 2019](#)
- [May 13, 2019](#)
- [April 29, 2019](#)
- [April 15, 2019](#)
- [April 1, 2019](#)
- [March 18, 2019](#)
- [March 4, 2019](#)
- [February 18, 2019](#)
- [February 4, 2019](#)
- [January 21, 2019](#)
- [January 7, 2019](#)
- [December 17, 2019](#)
- [December 3, 2018](#)
- [November 19, 2018](#)
- [November 5, 2018](#)
- [October 15, 2018](#)
- [October 1, 2018](#)
- [September 17, 2018](#)
- [September 3, 2018](#)

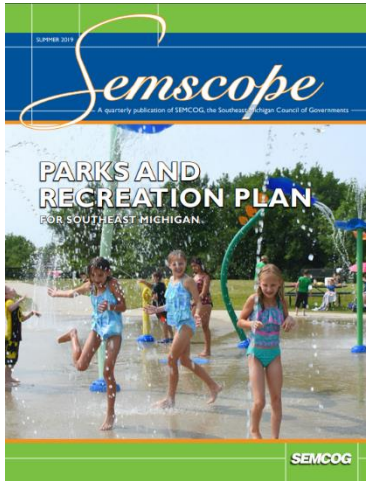
### ***Environmental Exchange***

SEMCOG publishes information on relevant environmental opportunities in Southeast Michigan through the *Environmental Exchange* newsletter. The following *Environmental Exchanges* were published from September 2018 to August 2019.



- [August 2019](#)
- [July 2019](#)
- [May 2019](#)
- [April 2019](#)
- [March 2019](#)
- [February 2019](#)
- [January 2019](#)
- [November 2018](#)
- [September 2018](#)

## Semscope



*Semscope* is a quarterly magazine, published by SEMCOG, highlighting SEMCOG events, best practices, and examples of innovative projects and programs from member communities and institutions. *Semscopes* published from September 2018 to August 2019 are included below.

- [Fall 2018](#)
- [Winter 2019](#)
- [Spring 2019](#)
- [Summer 2019](#)

## 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 and SEMCOG's website. Past blogs are posted on [SEMCOG's blog site](#). Environmental blogs from September 2018 to August 2019 are listed below.

- [Summertime fun in the park!](#)
- [Collaborative Partnership to Lead to Park Improvements](#)
- [One Water, Part 1: Stormwater](#)
- [One Water, Part 2: Wastewater](#)
- [One Water, Part 3: Drinking Water](#)
- [First round of State Water Trails announced](#)
- [Communities Earn Natural Resources Grants to Improve Parks System](#)

## 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 August 2019, SEMCOG had:

- 3,358 followers on [Twitter](#)
- 36,400 impressions on [Twitter](#)
- 15,198 likes on [Facebook](#)

### **Lobby Display**

SEMCOG routinely displays messages from the “What You Can Do...To Protect Our Waterways,” Tip Cards in our lobby, which can be viewed by numerous visitors from local government. SEMCOG also circulates information on upcoming events related to green infrastructure and stormwater management on the lobby display, as well as activities SEMCOG is engaged in related to stormwater management and green infrastructure in Southeast Michigan. In addition to the Lobby Display, SEMCOG recently produced a [promotional video](#) to help share the message about SEMCOG’s role in Southeast Michigan.

## **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. To learn more about SEMCOG’s upcoming and past workshops, visit [SEMCOG’s website](#).

### **Member Requests, Technical Assistance, and Engagement**

SEMCOG offers member communities and institutions technical assistance and resources related to water-resource management. “What You Can Do...To Protect Our Waterways” materials are a great way to publicly disseminate information on the importance of protecting water quality in Southeast Michigan. SEMCOG’s other environmental publications are also a great resource for SEMCOG members. More than 100 organizations and communities from the seven-county region formally requested One Water and other environmental materials from SEMCOG in 2018-2019. These are a few representative examples:

| <b>City/Organization/Agency</b>                    | <b>Material</b>                        |
|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Macomb County Public Works                         | One Water Giveaway Items               |
| City of Eastpointe                                 | One Water Pet Waste Bags               |
| City of Fraser                                     | One Water Giveaway Items               |
| City of South Lyon                                 | One Water Giveaway Items and Tip Cards |
| Oakland County Water Resource Commissioners Office | One Water Giveaway Items               |

|                                                         |                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Washtenaw County Water<br>Resource Commissioners Office | One Water Giveaway Items |
| City of Hazel Park                                      | Stormwater Assistance    |

## 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. This year, SEMCOG's Executive Committee worked to approve the *Parks and Recreation Plan for Southeast Michigan*, as well as SEMCOG's new Green Infrastructure grant program.

### General Assembly

SEMCOG's General Assembly consists of all delegates and alternates from SEMCOG member communities and educational institutions. The October 2018 General Assembly featured an excellent presentation on SEMCOG's Infrastructure Asset Management project, which is working to better understand Southeast Michigan's important water infrastructure assets. More important water infrastructure topics will be presented at the upcoming General Assembly on October 17, 2019.

### 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 produced Early Detection and Response and Threat Ranking maps. SEMCOG also helped provide the Cisma with letters of support for funding opportunities.

### Parks and Recreation Task Force

This group ensures that Southeast Michigan's recreation system meets the quality of life, health, and accessibility needs of its residents and visitors, as well as the economic development and environmental priorities and goals of the region and local communities. This year, the group focused on development of the [\*Parks and Recreation Plan for Southeast Michigan\*](#). Task force meetings were held to understand the recreation needs of the region, and to develop important policies to benefit the region.

## **SEMCOG Current Projects**

### **Infrastructure Asset Management**

The Infrastructure Asset Management Program focuses on underground water infrastructure – drinking water distribution, sanitary sewer, and stormwater collection systems. It involves collecting asset data on these three systems in the region, for the purpose of creating a needs assessment. SEMCOG is working closely with the Michigan Infrastructure Council, the Water Asset Management Council and the Transportation Asset Management Council and, in the future, will provide a summary of information to define the need for investment in our underground infrastructure. This project encourages a culture of regional coordination in the project planning for both road projects and underground infrastructure projects. To learn more about the project, and its associated funding opportunity, visit SEMCOG's [website](#).

### **Climate Resiliency**

SEMCOG and MDOT are conducting a study to understand and manage flood risks to transportation infrastructure in the seven-county SEMCOG region. The study includes a flooding risk assessment for roads, bridges, culverts, and pump stations in the area and integration of the results into day-to-day agency practices, such as asset management and long-range planning. Integration of results into key agency functions will enable SEMCOG and MDOT to proactively manage flooding risks to the transportation system. The study includes development of a standardized framework for analyzing hydrology and hydraulics associated with highway stormwater runoff.

### **SEMCOG Green Infrastructure Grant**

SEMCOG has awarded [\\$265,000 in funding](#), from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), to six Southeast Michigan communities for implementing green infrastructure projects. The goal of this grant program is to reduce nutrient loading into Lake Erie and reduce stormwater runoff through the use of best management practices and green infrastructure. Over the next year, SEMCOG will continue to report on this project, as green infrastructure projects grow throughout the region.