

REGIONAL PLANNING NEWS

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Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission

Share Your Input: Natural Areas Plan Update

Why are Natural Areas important? They are irreplaceable biodiverse remnants of the pre-European landscape that are vital to maintaining endangered, threatened, and rare plant and animal species in the Region.

Learn more about our Natural Areas Plan Update and provide comments through January 10 by visiting the website.

www.sewrpc.org/Natural-Areas

Latest Update to VISION 2050 Published!

The Commission has published the federally required 2024 Review and Update of VISION 2050, Southeastern Wisconsin’s long-range regional land use and transportation plan. The report documents the 2024 Update process, analyses, and changes that Commission staff will be incorporating into the Third Edition of the VISION 2050 plan report to be published in 2025. The updated plan will provide a regional land use and transportation plan to guide implementation efforts.

Directly following in 2026, the Commission will initiate a major update to the long-range land use and transportation plan for the Region. This effort will again be guided by the Commission’s Advisory Committees on Regional Land Use (www.sewrpc.org/RLUPAC) and Regional Transportation Planning (www.sewrpc.org/RTPAC), like the 2024 Update.

www.vision2050sewis.org

2024 REVIEW & UPDATE OF VISION 2050



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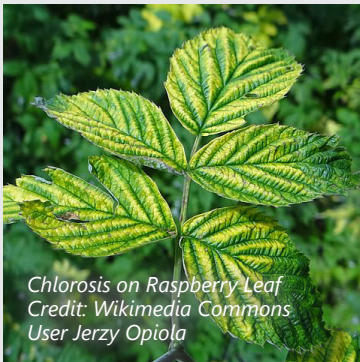
Regional Chloride Impact Study Update

The Regional Chloride Impact Study is analyzing the environmental impacts of chloride (salt) on the Region's surface water and groundwater resources. In 2024, Commission staff and partners completed three important technical reports for the study.

Technical Report No. 62, *Impacts of Chloride on the Natural and Built Environment*

This report presents a review of the relevant technical literature regarding the impacts of chloride and chloride salts on the natural and built environments. It summarizes the potential consequences of increasing concentrations of chloride in surface waters and groundwater on the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of ecosystems and the structural integrity of infrastructure in the Region.

Examples of Plant Damage from Chloride Salts in Soil



Did You Know?

It only takes one teaspoon of salt to pollute five gallons of water to a level that is toxic for freshwater ecosystems.



Food for Thought: How might this type of plant damage impact our food sources?

Technical Report No. 64, *Regression Analysis of Specific Conductance and Chloride Concentrations*

This report presents regression models that were developed to estimate chloride concentrations in surface water from measurements of specific conductance (the ability of water to conduct an electric current). These models were applied to develop estimates of chloride concentrations that were used in analyses in other stages of the study.

Technical Report No. 67, *Legal and Policy Considerations for the Management of Chloride*

Building on the framework of the Chloride Impact Study, this report led by the Marquette University Water Law and Policy Initiative examines a variety of responsive legal and policy options available to decision-makers in the Region to control chloride pollution to surface waters and groundwater.

What will we work on next year regarding chloride?

Commission staff are continuing work on three additional technical reports:

- Summary of chloride conditions and trends in the Region
- Analysis of mass balance of chloride sources affecting the environment of the Region
- Literature review of state-of-the-art practices and technologies for managing chloride

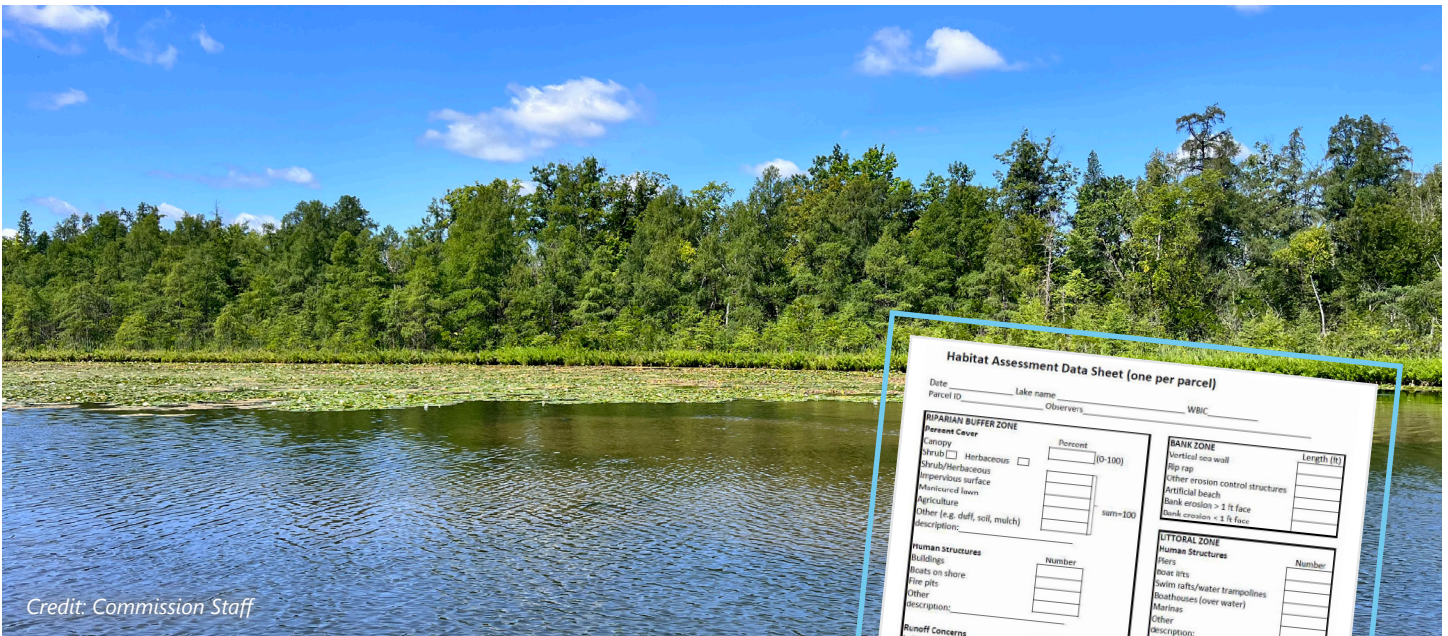
In addition, a planning report will draw all the technical report topics together and provide recommendations to reduce chloride impacts on water resources in our Region.

All technical reports and more information on the Regional Chloride Impact Study can be found at: www.sewrpc.org/Chloride-Study.



Big Cedar Lake Shoreline Survey

In Summer 2024, Commission staff worked with the Big Cedar Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District to thoroughly examine the shoreline of Big Cedar Lake in Washington County as part of an updated lake comprehensive plan. For this survey, we utilized a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources survey protocol published in 2020 for a more rigorous assessment of each parcel along the entire waterfront and its current shoreline conditions. This was the first time we used the protocol on a lake in Southeastern Wisconsin—and **the survey was among the first in the State for such a developed shoreline.**



Credit: Commission Staff

In total, the survey (example shown to the right) assessed 550 riparian tax parcels, ranking each on its littoral, bank, and riparian zones for factors that could impact the lake’s water quality and overall health. These factors include the number of human structures (i.e., piers, boats, boat lifts), potential runoff sources, presence of aquatic vegetation, and the type of shoreline protection.

Following data collection, we tabulated scores to assess each parcel and the entire lake. Commission staff counted 1,449 boats (included kayaks, canoes, etc.), with an average of 1.2 piers and 2.6 boats per parcel, indicating a highly developed shoreline. Many parcels have potential runoff concerns, with lawns sloping directly to the lake as the most common concern (78 percent of parcels). Stakeholders of Big Cedar Lake can use these data to identify areas of highest concern and work together to make improvements.

The complete survey results will be available in the coming months on the WDNR Shoreline Habitat Disturbance Viewer: www.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/e60c681037ff491389dd9199d6427d73.



Partnership Wins Award for FlexRide

We were recognized for an “Innovative Approach to Problem Solving!” The Commission and partners UW-Milwaukee and Mobilise received a Wisconsin Policy Forum Salute to Local Government Award for the FlexRide Milwaukee program at an awards event on November 13.

FlexRide was created to fill the need for on-demand workforce transportation connecting Milwaukee residents with suburban job centers beyond the reach of transit. As of November 2024, FlexRide completed its 100,000th ride since launching in 2022.

Learn more at flexridemke.com.

Annual Report Released

Our 2023 Annual Report highlights the outstanding work of our team and partners on a range of plans, projects, and studies that are protecting our Region’s future.

Read the full report at:
www.sewrpc.org/2023AnnualReport

