

REGIONAL PLANNING NEWS

A publication of the **Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission**



Honey Lake, Walworth County, WI
Credit: Commission Staff, October 2024

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Commission Receives National Award for FlexRide Milwaukee

The Commission was recently honored by the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) with an Achievement Award in the Major Metros category for FlexRide Milwaukee, the on-demand workforce ridesharing service developed in partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Mobilize. Chris Hiebert, the Commission's Metropolitan Planning Organization Director (center), accepted the award at NARC's annual conference in Seattle, Washington, on June 10, 2025. Presenting the award were NARC President Carol Vinton and President-Elect Justin Kiel.

Learn more about FlexRide Milwaukee at www.flexridemilwaukee.com.



Credit: NARC Staff, June 2025



Pollution Reduction Plan Update

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions aids our health

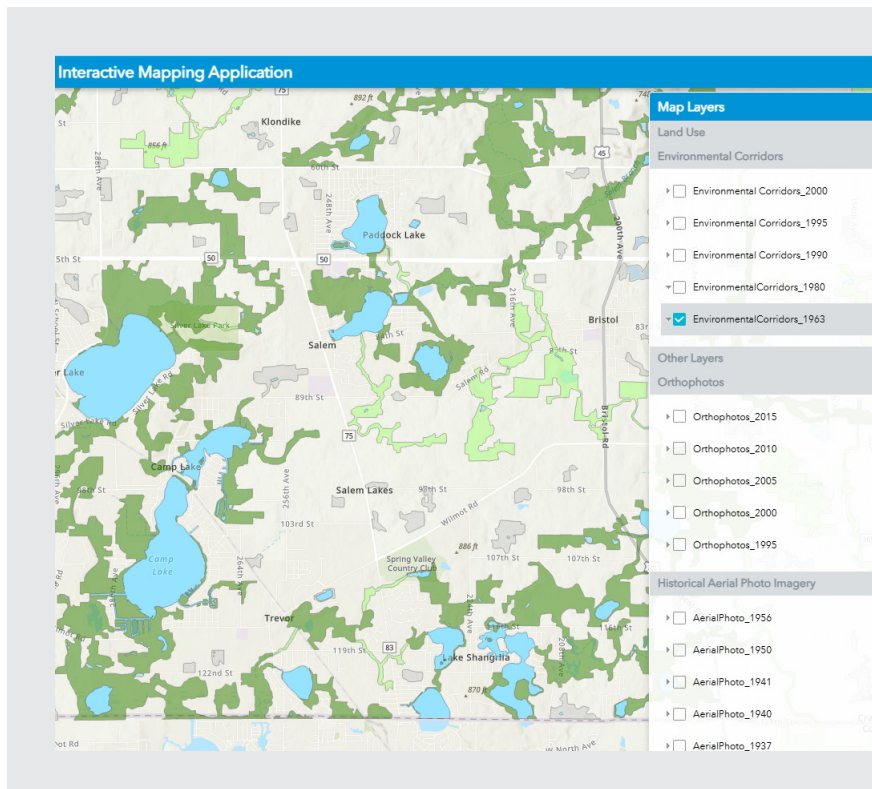
Commission staff are working on the next phase of the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program (www.sewrpc.org/CPRG), a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) initiative to develop and implement plans for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other harmful air pollution. The CPRG will establish the first regional plan of its kind for the Milwaukee Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) that includes Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha Counties.

The Comprehensive Pollution Reduction Plan, due December 2025, follows completion of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Priority Pollution Reduction Action Plan that was submitted to the EPA in February 2024. The comprehensive plan will include a GHG inventory and pollution reduction measures across key economic sectors: electricity, industry, transportation, buildings, land use, and waste. Key elements of the plan will include a benefits and workforce analysis, funding options, steps for putting the plan into action, and GHG reduction targets.



Credit: Commission Staff, August 2024

This summer, the project team will be participating in community events to gather feedback on potential GHG reduction measures and priorities to shape the final plan. If you are interested in sharing your input, please complete this short survey (<https://arcg.is/1rOr411>) with the option to include your contact information for project updates.



Regional Land Use Planning: Did You Know?

The Commission's first regional land use plan was released in 1966 and introduced the concept of environmental corridors—delineated areas that contain the most significant natural resources to be preserved and protected.

Environmental corridors in the Region can be mapped back to the 1960s on our Interactive Mapping Application. Explore the maps at www.sewrpc.org/Mapping-and-Survey-Data.



New Grants Support Natural Areas Program

Have you explored one of the Region's natural areas this year?

Building on our recent release of the preliminary draft Regional Natural Areas Plan (www.sewrpc.org/Natural-Areas), Commission staff secured three grants in 2025 from the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program (WCMP) to assist with natural area and aquatic site inventory, protection, and management plan development.

One of the grants beginning this summer, titled "*Regional Habitat Restoration Planning-Southeastern Wisconsin*," will fund the biological inventories of 75 sites in Kenosha, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, and Racine Counties that will inform the development of ecological restoration and management plans that could lead to future proposals.

As part of this grant, the Commission is partnering with Milwaukee County to conduct surveys of ten lakes in the County over the next two years, most of which have not previously been studied or surveyed. While the lakes are not typical of what many people would initially think of when referring to a lake, they serve their communities as some of the only places that the public can enjoy recreational activities like fishing or paddling in a lake setting. Many of these waterbodies are not naturally occurring and several were created as either stormwater retention ponds or as designated additions to public parks.

Milwaukee County waterbodies to be surveyed include:

- Brown Deer Park Pond
- Dumkes Lake
- Jackson Park Pond
- Koepmier Pond
- McGovern Park Pond
- Monastery Lake
- Mud Lake
- Root River Parkway Pond
- Scout Lake
- Whitnall Park Pond

Staff plan to conduct aquatic plant surveys, water quality monitoring, aquatic invasive species surveys and shoreline surveys on the lakes. Five lakes will be surveyed in 2025 with the remaining lakes surveyed in summer 2026. This survey data and reporting will help establish the ecological status of these waterbodies to assist in management strategies to protect and restore them, so that they continue to serve the Milwaukee County communities for years to come. Look for summary reports near the end of 2025!



Lake Lorraine, Walworth County, WI
Credit: Commission Staff, July 2024



White Water Lily (*Nymphaea odorata*)
Nagawicka Lake, Waukesha County, WI
Credit: Commission Staff, July 2024



**WISCONSIN COASTAL
MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

The grants are funded by the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Office for Coastal Management under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Grant # NA25NOSX473C0065.



Fox River Summit a Success

This year's Fox River Summit (www.southeastfoxriver.org/2025foxriversummit) was a huge success with more than 150 attendees coming together to collaborate around issues facing the Fox River watershed. Staff shared details on the Commission's draft Natural Areas Explorer Webtool.

Check out the Webtool at: www.sewrpc.org/Natural-Areas.

Transportation in Focus Event

Executive Director Stephanie Hacker participated on a panel with local business leaders to inform the audience about VISION 2050 and discuss the future of the I-794 freeway spur at the *Milwaukee Business Journal's* Transportation in Focus event on June 2.

