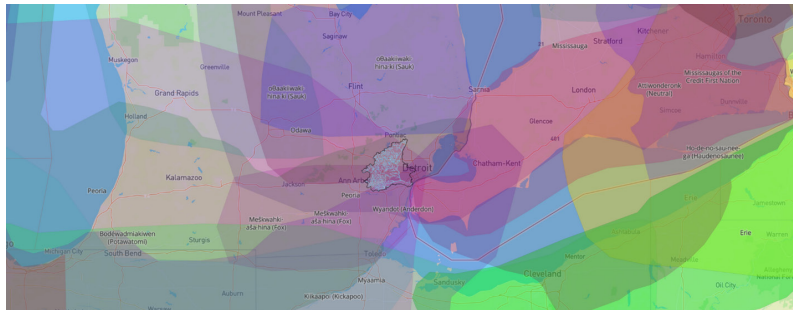


# Hello, and welcome to the Watershed!

A WATERSHED IS AN AREA OF LAND THAT DRAINS INTO A BODY OF WATER. WE ALL HAVE WATERFRONT PROPERTY: ANY ACTION TAKEN ON OUR LAND IMPACTS THE HEALTH OF OUR LOCAL AND REGIONAL WATERWAYS.

## Land Acknowledgment

To demonstrate respect, raise awareness, and affirm the ongoing relationships between indigenous people and the land, we acknowledge the ancestral, traditional, and contemporary lands on which our watershed exists.



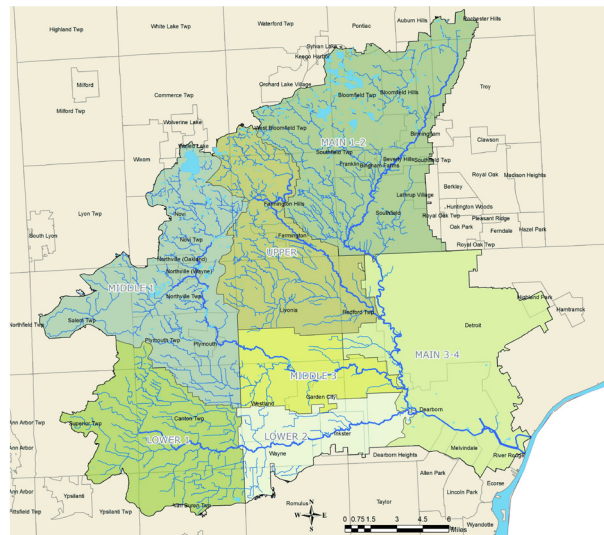
- ▶ Meškwaḡki-aša-hina (Fox)
- ▶ Peoria
- ▶ Anishinabewaki
- ▶ Bodéwadmiakiwen (Potawatomi)
- ▶ Myaamia
- ▶ Mississauga

## The Rouge River watershed, in Southeast Michigan:

- ▶ Drains 467 square miles
- ▶ Has four major branches (Main, Upper, Middle, and Lower), 127 river miles, and numerous tributaries
- ▶ Is home to more than 400 lakes, impoundments, and ponds
- ▶ Spans three counties (Oakland, Washtenaw, and Wayne) and 47 municipalities:

Allen Park  
 Auburn Hills  
 Beverly Hills  
 Bingham Farms  
 Birmingham  
 Bloomfield Hills  
 Bloomfield Township  
 Canton Township  
 Commerce Township  
 Dearborn  
 Dearborn Heights  
 Detroit  
 Farmington  
 Farmington Hills  
 Franklin

Garden City  
 Highland Park  
 Inkster  
 Lathrup Village  
 Livonia  
 Lyon Township  
 Melvindale  
 Northville  
 Northville Township  
 Novi  
 Novi Township  
 Oak Park  
 Orchard Lake Village  
 Plymouth  
 Plymouth Township



Pontiac  
 Redford Township  
 River Rouge  
 Rochester Hills  
 Romulus  
 Salem Township  
 Southfield  
 Southfield Township  
 Superior Township

Troy  
 Van Buren Township  
 Walled Lake  
 Wayne  
 West Bloomfield Township  
 Westland  
 Wixom  
 Ypsilanti Township

## *The Challenges:*

**URBANIZATION:** Humans are reshaping the land to make their homes

**SEWAGE IN THE RIVER:** Aging infrastructure + big rain events allow raw sewage to enter the river

**POLLUTANTS:** What people do on land directly impacts the health of our waterways

**INVASIVE SPECIES:** Aggressive plants, animals, and insects are moving into our watershed, damaging key habitat and pushing out the diverse community of organisms that keep our ecosystem healthy

**EMERGING CONTAMINANTS:** Keep an eye out for these new threats to human and animal health

**CLIMATE CHANGE:** Think global, act local. Our changing climate is already impacting the Rouge River with more frequent high rain falls (six of the highest rainfall years have happened since 2006) and increasing temperatures.



**Friends  
of  
the ROUGE**

## *Who we are—*

Friends of the Rouge is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose mission is to restore, protect, and enhance the Rouge River watershed through stewardship, education, and collaboration.

What does this mean? We are your one-stop-shop for all things Rouge. We have our finger on the pulse of major environmental issues in your community. If we don't have the answer, we likely know who does. Let's talk! Please reach out to us anytime. We have open office hours Monday–Thursday from 10am–4pm. Visit us online anytime at [therouge.org](http://therouge.org).

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**Keep reading throughout this guidebook to learn more about each issue and what YOU can do to help!**