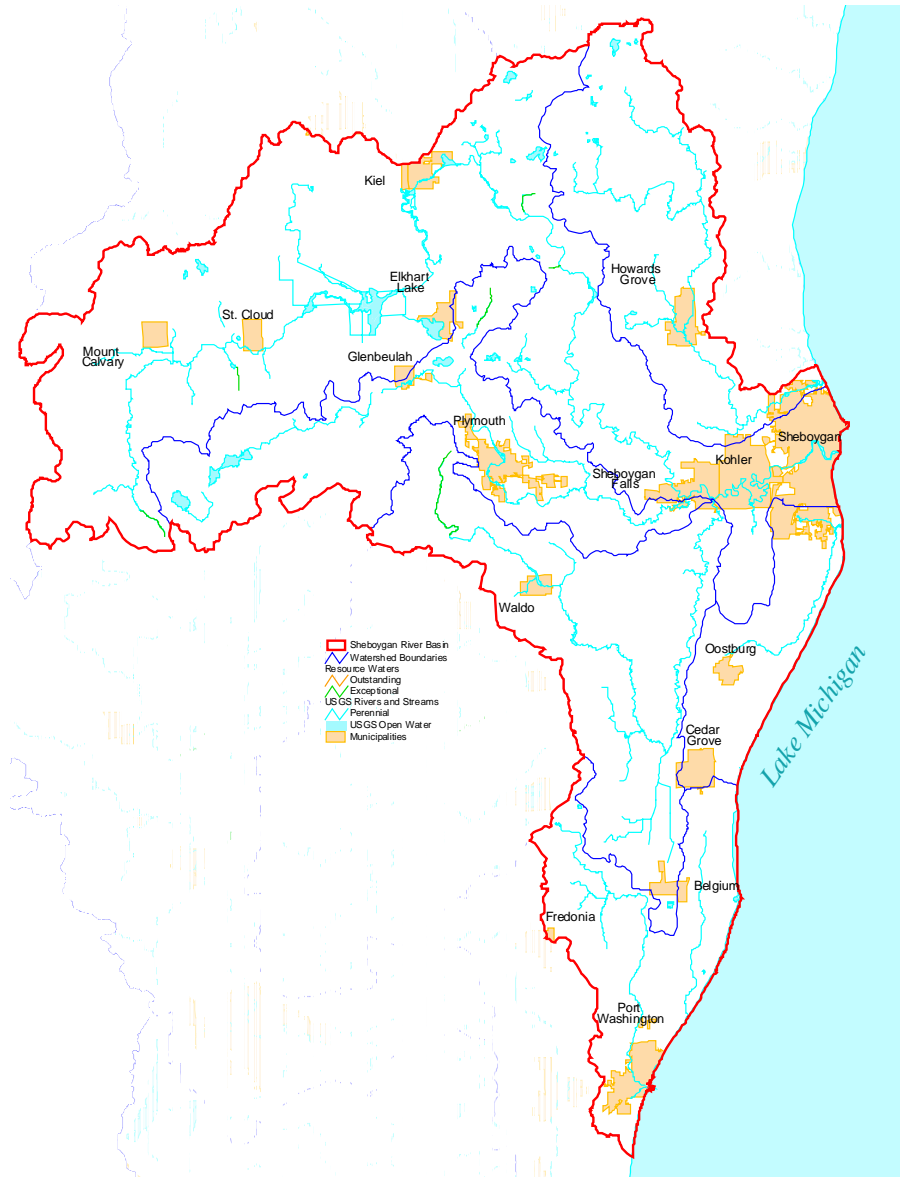


The Sheboygan River Basin



- ✦ The Sheboygan River Basin encompasses approximately 620 square miles of land in portions of Calumet, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, Ozaukee, and Sheboygan counties.
- ✦ The population of Calumet, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, Ozaukee, and Sheboygan counties in 2001 was almost 416,000 people. About 130,000 of those people reside within the Basin. Most urban development is in the cities of Sheboygan and Sheboygan Falls, and the Village of Kohler.
- ✦ The Basin includes 6 watersheds, named after the major rivers found in the watershed boundary. The main rivers in the Basin are the Mullet and Onion Rivers, which meet the Sheboygan River in Sheboygan Falls, before the Sheboygan River enters Lake Michigan. The Pigeon and Black Rivers, and Sauk and Sucker Creeks which drain directly to Lake Michigan.
- ✦ The Basin has 21 named lakes and 5 river impoundments greater than 10 acres in size.
- ✦ Predominant land uses are agricultural or rural and include pasture land, cropland and vacant fields. Natural Areas, including open water, woodlands, wetlands, parklands and undisturbed non-agricultural lands are the second most abundant land use.
- ✦ The Natural Heritage Inventory (WDNR, 2000) has documented 10 endangered, 20 threatened and 37 special concern plant and animal species, and 24 rare aquatic and terrestrial communities within the Basin.
- ✦ Runoff from specific and diffuse sources, contaminated sediment, habitat modifications (such as channelization and dams) have degraded water quality throughout the Basin.
- ✦ Recreational highlights include wildlife watching, hiking, fishing, birding, bicycling, golf, horseback riding, snowmobiling, skiing, camping, picnicking and water sports.
- ✦ State facilities such as the Kettle Moraine State Forest, Kohler-Andrae State Parks, Harrington Beach State Park, various state wildlife areas, and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail provide both satisfying and unique recreational experiences.

Sheboygan River Basin

Basin Ecology

- The Basin includes the Southeast Glacial Plains and Northern Lake Michigan Ecological Landscapes.
- Some streams have the ability to support some trout populations. Others have spring and fall runs of stocked steelhead and salmon. Fishing opportunities also exist in the rivers and harbors for northern pike, small mouth bass, and yellow perch.
- Groundwater is in widespread use throughout the Basin. Eleven municipalities and thousands of rural residents, businesses and industries rely upon groundwater as their primary water source. The others along the coastline rely on water drawn from Lake Michigan.
- Wildlife include white-tailed deer, ring-necked pheasant, waterfowl, geese, gray and flying squirrels, raccoons, woodcock, a variety of hawks, songbirds, and shorebirds.
- Grasslands and barrens are promoted through prescribed burns and mowing.
- About 12% of the Basin is considered forested, mainly under private ownership, with the largest tracts confined to the northwest reaches of the basin. Maple-Basswood is the most common forest type and the tree species with the greatest volume is hard maple.

Environmental Concerns

- Water quality problems are from in-place pollutants, runoff in urban areas, floodplain development, and agricultural practices.
- Preservation of biodiversity and protection of endangered and threatened species, this is done by preserving their habitat.
- A comprehensive approach to the protection and restoration of wetlands is needed.
- Educate people to help prevent the spread of exotic nuisance species, which can wreak havoc on ecosystem balance.
- Monitoring of wildlife populations, water quality, and ecosystem function are needed to understand the status and trends of resources in the basin.

Partnership Priorities

- Promote sound land use by helping communities identify prime agricultural lands, environmental corridors and natural areas. Encourage re-development of brownfields and abandoned properties. Work with local communities in developing “smart growth” plans & promoting wise land use and zoning. Promote measures to improve air quality.
- Conserve and restore riparian areas, by conserving wetlands, enhancing environmentally sensitive habitat areas in lakes, and removing dams where feasible.
- Acquire sufficient public lands to manage for multiple uses. Complete the Sheboygan Marsh Master Plan. Promote public land acquisitions that protect natural areas and provide recreational opportunities.
- Improve water quality by encouraging best management practices in agricultural areas and promoting storm water management measures.
- Enhance educational activities for forestry, air quality, water quality, wildlife management and healthy ecosystems.



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[Above photo: Kohler-Andrae State Park, Sheboygan Co., 10/00, E.J. Judziewicz, WDNR Bur. End. Resources]
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