

3.0 Surface Water

Surface water is another of the major components of the water cycle. Surface water is the water that most affects residents' lives because of recreational uses like boating, fishing and swimming. Residents can also be negatively impacted by flooding during extreme weather. Like groundwater, surface water is also a drinking water source. Surface water flows down gradients via creeks, streams, and rivers into larger bodies of water, like the Great Lakes or the Detroit River. Systems of tributaries and the land that contributes water to them are called watersheds (Table 1 & Map 8).

Watersheds can be examined on various scales; for instance, one could look at all the area that drains to Lake Erie, or a subcomponent of that system, like the Huron River. On a local scale, some communities in Washtenaw County have also looked at watersheds at the creek level, such as the two square mile Miller Creek watershed.

Washtenaw County is located in the watersheds of two Great Lakes: Erie and Michigan. Five of the six watersheds in the County drain toward Lake Erie. Only the Grand River Basin, 1% of the County's land area, drains west to Lake Michigan. Ranked by drainage area, the six major basins are: the Huron River, the Raisin River, Stony Creek, the Rouge River, the Grand River, and Swan Creek (Table 1).

There are 1,743 lakes within, or partially within, Washtenaw County that are 5 acres or larger. In addition, there are over 51,000 acres of wetlands remaining in the County, about the size of two townships.

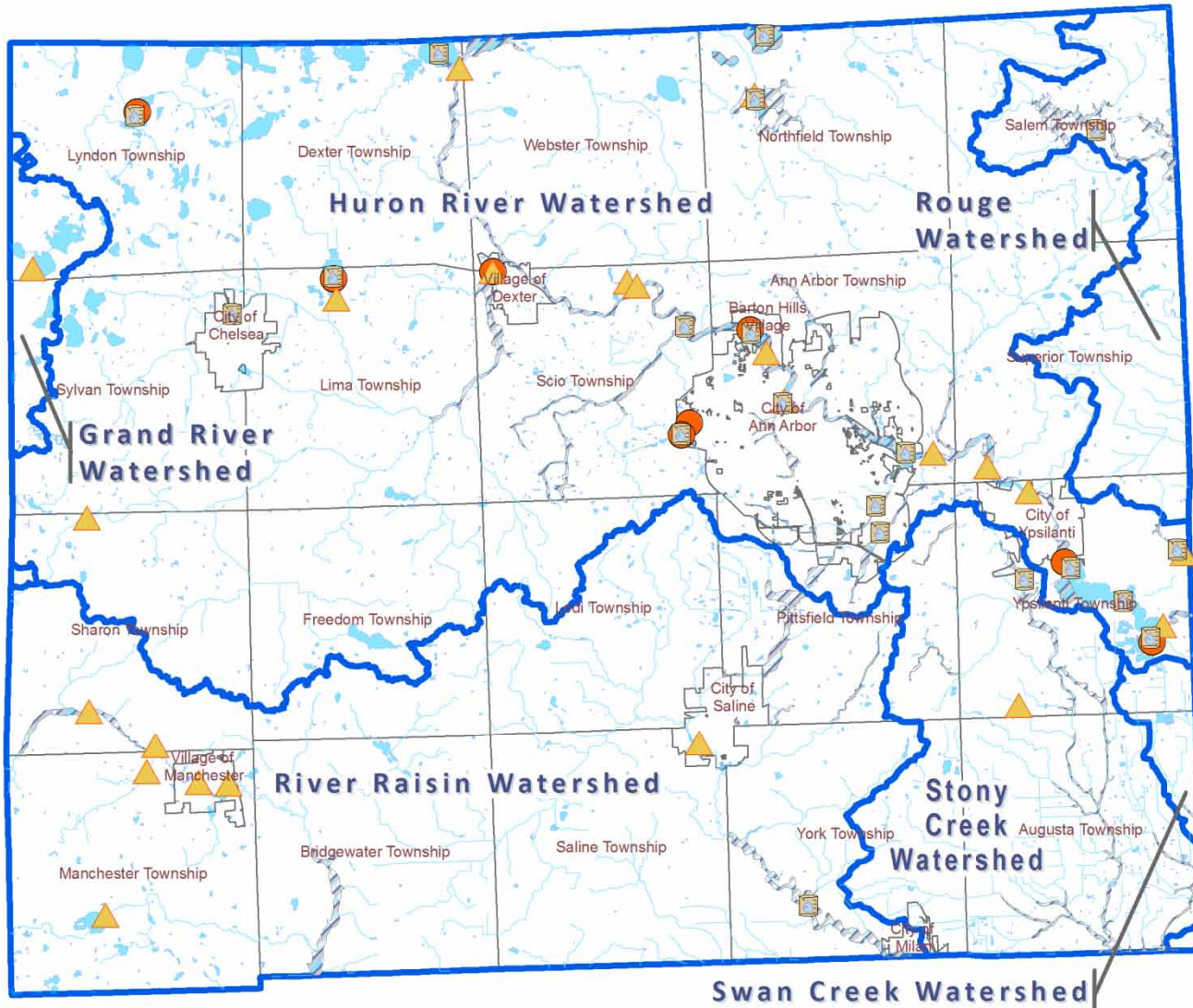
Table 1: Watershed Area

River	Watershed Acreage	% of County	Receiving Water/ Location
Huron	255,998	55	Lake Erie @ Brownstown
Raisin/Saline	132,194	28	Lake Erie @ Monroe
Stony Creek	45,109	10	Lake Erie @ Frenchtown Twp.
Rouge	21,076	5	Detroit River @ Detroit
Grand	6,518	1	Lake Michigan @ Grand Haven
Swan Creek	3,631	1	Lake Erie @ Monroe
Total	464,526		

Map 8: Watersheds and Water Features

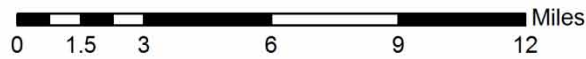


Washtenaw County:



Legend

- TMDL Sites
- Dams
- Fish Advisories
- Watersheds
- Floodplain
- Streams
- Lakes
- Townships



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