



# CITY of NOVI CITY COUNCIL

**Agenda Item M**  
**June 18, 2012**

**SUBJECT:** Approval of payment of annual dues for continued membership in the Alliance of Rouge Communities in the amount of \$15,628.

**SUBMITTING DEPARTMENT:** Department of Public Services, Engineering Division <sup>PH</sup> <sub>BL</sub>

**CITY MANAGER APPROVAL:** 

<b>EXPENDITURE REQUIRED</b>	<b>\$ 15,628</b>
<b>AMOUNT BUDGETED</b>	<b>\$ 17,000</b>
<b>LINE ITEM NUMBER</b>	<b>210-211.00-816.450</b>

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Alliance of Rouge Communities (ARC) is a voluntary public watershed entity currently comprised of 41 municipal governments (i.e., cities, townships, and villages) and three counties (Oakland, Wayne, and Washtenaw). The purpose of the ARC is to provide an institutional mechanism to encourage watershed-wide cooperation and mutual support to meet water quality permit requirements and to restore beneficial uses of the river to area residents. The Mission and Vision Statement of the ARC is to improve the Rouge River, return beneficial public uses, and prevent future problems. The ARC helps to reduce costs to the member communities for meeting storm water permit requirements through cooperative efforts and provide a state and national model for locally driven watershed approaches that minimize the need for State/Federal mandates through the following goals and objectives:

1. Improve water quality
2. Reduce runoff impacts
3. Inform and educate the public
4. Protect, restore and/or enhance natural features
5. Maximize community assets
6. Support institutional relationships
7. Obtain grant funding

In order to tackle this large cooperative effort and objectives, the ARC annually collects dues from each community/county. The amount of dues collected is based on the pro-rated area and population of the community or county within the Rouge River Watershed. These dues have voluntarily contributed nearly \$1.2 million (since 2006) toward cooperative watershed management activities - all of which has been matched with State and Federal funding.

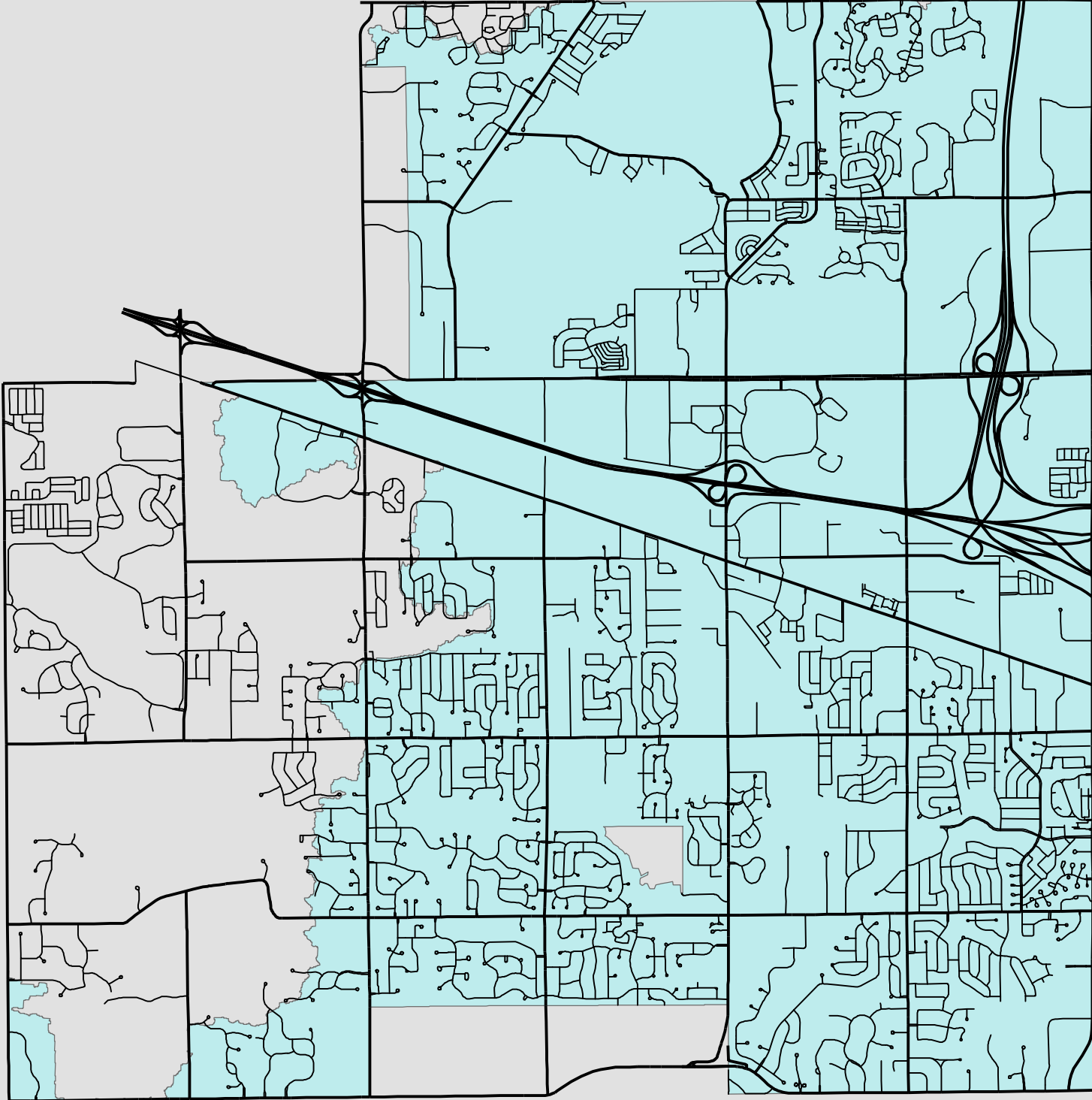
Novi has been a member of the ARC since 2006, and a member of its predecessor, the Rouge River Watershed Local Management Assembly from 2003 to 2006. Novi's annual dues as a member community in the ARC total \$15,628.

**RECOMMENDED ACTION:** Approval of payment of annual dues for continued membership in the Alliance of Rouge Communities in the amount of \$15,628.

	1	2	Y	N
Mayor Gatt				
Mayor Pro Tem Staudt				
Council Member Casey				
Council Member Fischer				

	1	2	Y	N
Council Member Margolis				
Council Member Mutch				
Council Member Wrobel				

# Rouge River Watershed Area in Novi



Map Author: Brian Coburn  
 Date: 6/8/12  
 Project:  
 Version #:

Amended By:  
 Date:  
 Department:

**MAP INTERPRETATION NOTICE**

Map information depicted is not intended to replace or substitute for any official or primary source. This map was intended to meet National Map Accuracy Standards and use the most recent, accurate sources available to the people of the City of Novi. Boundary measurements and area calculations are approximate and should not be construed as survey measurements performed by a licensed Michigan Surveyor as defined in Michigan Public Act 132 of 1970 as amended. Please contact the City GIS Manager to confirm source and accuracy information related to this map.



**Map Legend**

**Watershed Area**

Rouge River



**City of Novi**  
 Engineering Division  
 Department of Public Services  
 26300 Lee BeGole Drive  
 Novi, MI 48375  
[cityofnovi.org](http://cityofnovi.org)



1 inch = 4,251 feet





Watershed  
Management  
Planning

ARC  
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ARC  
Committees

ARC  
Documents

ARC  
Calendar  
and  
Meeting  
Info

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And Events

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Membership In The ARC ~ Contested Case Information ~ What You Can Do To Improve The River



## ARC - History

[Meeting Archive](#)

[Document Archive](#)

The Alliance of Rouge Communities (ARC), a [501\(c\)\(3\) Public Charity](#), is a voluntary public watershed entity currently comprised of 36 municipal governments (i.e., cities, townships, and villages), three counties (Oakland, Wayne, and Washtenaw) and the Wayne County Airport Authority as authorized by Part 312 (Watershed Alliances) of the Michigan Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (MCL 324.101 to 324.90106) as amended by [Act No. 517, Public Acts of 2004](#).

Officially formed in January of 2006, the ARC members represent public agencies with water management responsibilities whose jurisdictional boundaries are totally or in part located within the Rouge River watershed located in southeast Michigan . The state law authorizing the formation of watershed alliances throughout Michigan was modeled after a [Memorandum of Agreement](#) (MOA) adopted by the Rouge River watershed communities and counties in August of 2003, which successfully guided a regional effort over a three year period to address watershed-wide water quality and water quantity issues.

The 2003 MOA was developed by the communities and the three counties to respond to declining federal grant funds to Wayne County for the [Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project](#) that had supported watershed-wide management efforts since 1993. During the three years of operation under the MOA, the Rouge River watershed communities voluntarily contributed nearly \$900,000 to match available federal funding for cooperative watershed management activities. The first year budget for the ARC (2006) is approximately \$600,000 with fifty percent local and fifty percent federal funding.

Under the [ARC bylaws](#) all cities, townships and villages as well as the counties located totally or in part within the Rouge River watershed are eligible for membership. Over 95 percent of the eligible communities and counties have adopted the bylaws through formal action of their respective governing authorities. In addition, the bylaws provide for membership of other public entities in the watershed who under state law are required to have a water discharge permit. Several public agencies are still considering membership.

The Rouge River watershed, located in southeast Michigan , runs through the most densely populated and urbanized land area in the state. The watershed is approximately 438 square miles in size and includes all or part of 48 municipalities in three counties, with a population of over 1.4 million. The industrial growth of the lower Rouge River in the first half of the twentieth century and the rapid residential and commercial growth in the last half of the century in the upper portions of the watershed created serious pollution problems. Despite pollution control efforts as early as the 1940s, when the Detroit wastewater treatment facility was built to serve southeast Michigan including many of the Rouge River watershed communities, pollution problems increased in the river. It has only been in the last decade that significant restoration of water quality has begun to be documented as a result of over one billion dollars of investments by area residents for pollution control. Cooperative efforts at the local level to restore the Rouge River began in early 1980s. At the urging of local citizens and organizations the State of Michigan adopted the Rouge River Basin Strategy in 1985. The following key events have occurred over the last twenty years is the efforts to improve the water quality of the river and restore beneficial uses

- 1987 – The International Joint Commission designated the Rouge River as one of the 43 most polluted areas in the Great Lakes
- 1989 – The first Rouge River Remedial Action Plan (RAP) was completed and endorsed by a majority of the watershed communities that has been updated periodically ([2005 RAP Update](#))
- 1991 – The United States District Court, at the urging of local communities, facilitated a phased process for correcting combined sewer overflows (CSOs) affecting the river
- 1992 – With the bipartisan assistance of the Michigan congressional delegation Wayne County received the first U.S. Environmental Protection Agency grant for the [Rouge River National Wet Weather Demonstration Project](#) (Rouge Project)
- 1994 – The U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan strongly urged the 48 local public agencies within the Rouge River watershed to adopt a more comprehensive approach to control pollution from sources other than CSOs under the authority of the Michigan Drain Code
- 1994 – As an alternative to the Michigan Drain Code Inter-County Drain Authority proposed by the U.S. District Court, and to comply with the pending U.S. EPA storm water regulations, a group of local agencies and communities within the Rouge River watershed proposed a watershed-based approach to the control of pollution sources related to storm water discharges
- 1997 – The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality adopted the unique watershed approach to storm water management developed and proposed by local agencies participating in the Rouge Project that would subsequently become a statewide alternative for meeting Phase II federal storm water discharge requirements
- 2001 – A drafting committee, representing watershed communities and the three counties in the Rouge River watershed developed the

framework for a new watershed organization that would assist the local governments meet the requirements of their watershed-based, storm water NPDES discharge permits

- 2003 – Thirty-eight cities, townships and villages and three counties within the Rouge River watershed formed a partnership to address their storm water permit requirements under the terms of a [Memorandum of Agreement \(MOA\)](#) establishing the Rouge River Watershed Local Management Assembly
- 2005 – The Rouge River Watershed Local Management Assembly supported the passage of state legislation to authorize local governments to form watershed alliances that was subsequently signed into law January 3, 2005 as [Act No. 517, Public Acts of 2004](#).
- 2006 – The Alliance of Rouge Communities was formed under the new state laws and held its first meeting in January
- 2011 - The Alliance of Rouge Communities received [IRS 501\(c\)\(3\) designation](#). (effective April 2009).

The Preamble to the [Alliance of Rouge Communities Bylaws](#) provides a narrative description of the events leading to the formation of the Rouge River Watershed Local Government Assembly and its transition into the ARC.

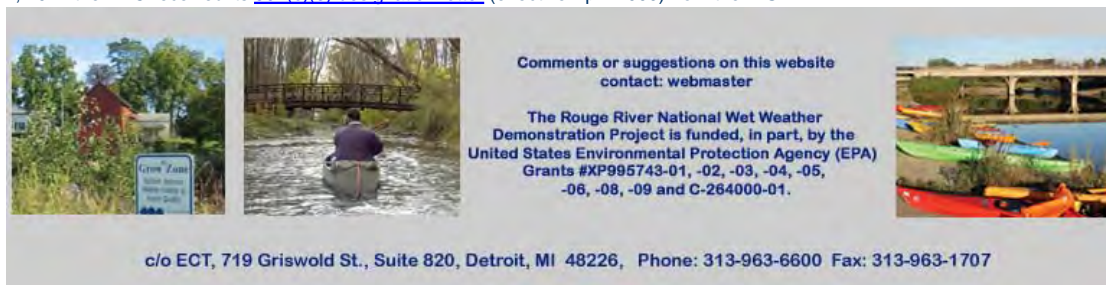
Funding for these activities as well as for the staff support of the ARC and its committees is raised through assessments to members based upon an allocation formula that gives equal weight to the population and land area for community contributions and a similar weighted assessment for non-community, public agency members. Local contributions are used to match grant dollars that currently represent nearly fifty percent of the annual ARC budget.

As of August 2007, 40 communities, three counties and the Wayne County Airport Authority have adopted the ARC bylaws. This web site serves as the primary tool for disseminating information about the ARC. The web site is intended to provide information to all members on the status of activities and actions, and to provide interested citizens and organizations the ability to monitor progress of the ARC and identify meetings they may like to attend.

The Alliance of Rouge Communities and its predecessor organization the Rouge River Watershed Local Management Assembly have accomplished the following over the past five years

- Established a model for cooperative watershed approaches to storm water management that resulted in a new statewide watershed permit option for meeting federal and state storm water discharge requirements
- Funded technical support and facilitation for seven Subwatershed Advisory Groups that developed and implemented individual [subwatershed management plans](#) that have become state and national models for cooperative storm water management
- Prepared and distributed of materials/information/ideas among members that have reduced the cost and increased the effectiveness of pollution control efforts
- Reduced the cost of compliance with storm water permits through the development of templates for required reports, and support of joint activities including the development and distribution of informational and educational materials
- Supported extensive cooperative river monitoring to determine the effectiveness of various pollution control activities (the river monitoring program is the most extensive in the state and perhaps one of the most extensive in the nation)
- Completed three comprehensive surveys of watershed residents to evaluate the effectiveness of public information and education efforts
- Organized and presented workshops for elected and appointed officials
- Provided training for agency employees on required illicit discharge detection and elimination efforts
- Advocated on behalf on members in support of passage of Watershed Alliance legislation and in discussions with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to improve the efficiency of permit requirements and increase the effectiveness of storm water discharge permit requirements.
- Addressed the concerns of the U.S. District Court that has overseen the pollution control efforts in the Rouge River since the early 1970s
- Documented measurable improvements in the Rouge River and restoration of beneficial uses.
- Formed the first Michigan Watershed Alliance under a state law developed and modeled after the cooperative agreement designed by Rouge watershed communities.

On April 12, 2011 the ARC received its [501\(c\)\(3\) designation letter](#) (effective April 2009) from the IRS.



Comments or suggestions on this website  
contact: [webmaster](#)

The Rouge River National Wet Weather  
Demonstration Project is funded, in part, by the  
United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)  
Grants #XP995743-01, -02, -03, -04, -05,  
-06, -08, -09 and C-264000-01.

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