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**WATERSHED
INVENTORY REPORT
PHASE 1 OF THE WATERSHED
IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

CITY OF PASSAIC
PASSAIC COUNTY
DECEMBER 19, 2025
Permit # NJG0148083

Stormwater Program Coordinator:
Frederick Corbitt, DPW Superintendent
870 Main Avenue
Passaic, NJ 07055

LYNDHURST

34 Park Avenue
PO Box 426
Lyndhurst, NJ 07071
p. 201.939.8805 f. 201.939.0846

MOUNTAINSIDE

200 Central Avenue
Suite 102
Mountainside, NJ 07092
p. 201.939.8805 f. 732.943.7249

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III. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Passaic’s Watershed Inventory Report has been prepared by Neglia Group.

Neglia Group would like to thank the Mayor and Council of the City of Passaic for their continued work on making the City of Passaic a safe, happy, and healthy place for all of its residents.

Neglia Group also wishes to acknowledge the following resources which were compiled by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) to help with the preparation of this report:

- New Jersey Watershed Evaluation Tool (NJ-WET)
- NJDEP Open Data
- MS4 WIP Guidance Webpage
- TMDL Lookup Tool
- New Jersey’s Integrated Water Quality Assessment Reports – 303 (d) List
- New Jersey Environmental Justice Mapping, Assessment, and Protection Tool (EJMAP)
- New Jersey Hydrologic Modeling Database (H&H Database)

IV. INTRODUCTION

The City of Passaic is located in Passaic County covering 3.24 square miles to the west of the Passaic River and bordered by Garfield and Clifton to the North, Clifton to the South and West, and Rutherford and Wallington to the East. The City has a population of 69,651 (2023 United States Census) and is a majority urban use land with the highest land use being Residential with 39.78% as High Density or Multiple Dwelling, 0.45% as Single Unit, Low Density and 11.37% as Single Unit, Medium Density. Table 1 below depicts the land use breakdown of the City (Land Cover 2020).

The City of Passaic is located within the Passaic R Lower (Saddle R to Dundee Dam) subwatershed and Passaic R Lower (Second R to Saddle R) subwatershed of the Watershed Management Area 4 (Lower Passaic and Saddle), as shown in Figure 1. A portion of the City is located in a Zone AE flood zone as shown in Figure 2.

This watershed improvement report provides a comprehensive understanding of the key defining features of how water flows throughout and into the City of Passaic. This report presents information of the existing conditions and infrastructure within the City of Passaic and aims to serve as a tool for informed decision-making, planning, and implementation of sustainable watershed management strategies to improve the community, watershed, the Passaic River, and the associated ecosystems.

The figures and tables provided in this report were prepared by geographic information systems (GIS) to provide a full graphical understanding of the stormwater infrastructure owned and operated by the City of Passaic. The City's infrastructure was mapped by Neglia Group staff between 2023 – 2025 using survey-grade GPS collection methods and professional GIS drafting methods.

Table 1: Land Use Acreage & Percentage Breakdown		
Type	Acreage	Percentage
Residential	1,069.74	51.60
Agriculture	0.078	0.00
Commercial / Industrial	626.09	30.20
Urban Land	52.40	2.53
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	85.92	4.14
Recreational Land	92.62	4.47
Forest	43.76	2.11
Barren Land	23.68	1.14
Water	76.70	3.70
Wetlands	2.08	0.10
Total	2,073.06	100
Source: Anderson Classification Land Use / Land Cover 2020		

V. ACRONYMS & DEFINITIONS

ACRONYMS

- "BMP" – Best Management Practice
- "DO" – Dissolved Oxygen
- "EPA" – U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- "GIS" – Geographic Information System
- "HUC 14" – Hydrologic Unit Code 14
- "LIDAR" – Light Detection and Ranging
- "MS4" – Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
- "MTD" – Manufactured Treatment Device
- "NJPDDES" – New Jersey Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
- "NJDEP" – New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection
- "NJDOT" – New Jersey Department of Transportation
- "NJ-WET" – New Jersey Watershed Evaluation Tool
- "TDS" – Total Dissolved Solids
- "TMDL" – Total Maximum Daily Load
- "TSS" – Total Suspended Solids
- "WIP" – Watershed Improvement Plan

DEFINITIONS

- "HUC 14" or "hydrologic unit code 14" means an area within which water drains to a particular receiving surface water body, also known as a subwatershed, which is identified by a 14-digit hydrologic unit boundary designation, delineated within New Jersey by the United States Geological Survey. (N.J.A.C. 7:9B)
- "Municipal separate storm sewer" (or MS4 conveyance) means a conveyance or system of conveyances (including roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, catch basins, curbs, gutters, ditches, manmade channels, or storm drains) as defined in more detail at N.J.A.C. 7:14A-1.2.
- "Outfall" means any point source which discharges directly to waters of the United States and does not include open conveyances connecting two municipal separate storm sewers, or pipes, tunnels or other conveyances which connect segments of the same stream or other waters of the United States and are used to convey waters of the United States.
- "Overburdened community" means a block group with at least 35 percent low-income households; or at least 40 percent of the residents identify as minority or as members of a State recognized tribal community; or at least 40 percent of the households have limited English proficiency.
- "Storm drain inlet" means the point of entry into the storm sewer system.
- "Stormwater" means water resulting from precipitation (including rain and snow) that runs off the land's surface, is transmitted to the subsurface, is captured by separate storm sewers or other sewerage or drainage facilities or is conveyed by snow removal equipment.
- "Stormwater facility" means stormwater infrastructure including, but not limited to, catch basins, infiltration basins, detention basins, green infrastructure (GI), filter strips, riparian buffers, infiltration trenches, sand filters, constructed wetlands, wet basins, bioretention systems, low flow bypasses, Manufactured Treatment Devices (MTDs), and stormwater conveyances.
- "Stormwater interconnections" means the location in which water flows from one MS4 system into another MS4 system that is owned by another entity.
- "Stormwater management basin" means a stormwater management basin as defined in N.J.A.C. 7:8.
- "Stormwater management measure" means a stormwater management measure as defined in N.J.A.C. 7:8.
- "Stormwater runoff" means water flow on the surface of the ground or in storm sewers, resulting from precipitation.
- "Total maximum daily load" or "TMDL" means a total maximum daily load formally established pursuant to Section 7 of the Water Quality Planning Act (N.J.S.A. 58:11A-7) and Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. §§12512 et seq. A TMDL is

the sum of individual wasteload allocations for point sources, load allocations for nonpoint sources of pollution, other sources such as tributaries or adjacent segments, and allocations to a reserve or margin of safety for an individual pollutant.

- “Waters of the State” means the ocean and its estuaries, all springs, streams and bodies of surface or ground water, whether natural or artificial, within the boundaries of the State of New Jersey or subject to its jurisdiction” (see N.J.A.C. 7:9B-1.4).
- “Water quality impairments” means that the water body is contaminated by pollutants which prevents the water body from meeting its designated use.

VI. STORMWATER OUTFALLS

The City of Passaic contains one hundred thirty-seven (137) outfalls within the City limits, as shown in Figure 3. The City owns and operates forty-six (46) of these outfalls, the County of Passaic owns and operates thirty-five (35) of the outfalls, the State owns and operates twenty-five (25) of these outfalls, and the remaining thirty-one (31) are of unknown, private, or other ownership. All stormwater within the City is ultimately drained into the Passaic River either directly or via tributaries.

All outfalls owned and operated by the City of Passaic are required to be inspected once every five years per the NJDEP MS4 permit. The City continuously maintains and inspects these outfalls in accordance with the NJDEP MS4 requirements.

RECEIVING SURFACE WATERS

Seventeen (17) of the forty-six (46) Passaic owned outfalls, or (37%), located within the City of Passaic discharge directly into McDonald Brook. Seventeen (17) of the forty-six (46) Passaic owned outfalls, or (37%), located within the City of Passaic discharge directly into Weasel Brook, and the remaining twelve (12) or (26%) of outfalls discharge into the Passaic River, as shown on Figure 4.

WATER QUALITY CLASSIFICATIONS

The City of Passaic contains three classified waterways, which are all ultimately tributaries to the Passaic River. The Passaic River Tributary, Weasel Brook, and McDonald Brook is classified as non-trout freshwater (FW2-NT/SE2), as shown on Figure 5.

VII. STORMWATER INTERCONNECTIONS

The City of Passaic contains MS4 systems owned by Passaic County. Additionally, Passaic's stormwater infrastructure is connected to the adjacent City of Clifton. These interconnection point locations were found using the municipality boundary and right-of-way for county and state roadways utilizing information from the NJ Office of GIS, NJDEP.

The City of Passaic's MS4 infrastructure interconnects into the Passaic County MS4 system at fifty-four (54) locations. The City of Passaic's MS4 infrastructure interconnects into THE Clifton System at one (1) location. The City of Passaic's MS4 infrastructure interconnects into private systems at three (3) locations. The City of Passaic's MS4 infrastructure interconnects into the State of NJ system at eight (8) locations. The City of Passaic's MS4 infrastructure interconnections into the varying systems detailed above are illustrated on Figure 6.

The City of Clifton discharges into the City of Passaic's MS4 infrastructure at two (2) locations. Passaic County's MS4 infrastructure discharges into the City of Passaic's MS4 infrastructure at eight (8) locations. The interconnections of water flowing into the City of Passaic's MS4 system are shown in Figure 7.

VIII. DRAINAGE AREA(S) FOR STORMWATER OUTFALLS AND STORMWATER INTERCONNECTIONS

The report delineates the drainage areas that are flowing to outfalls and upstream connections to other MS4 systems. These delineations can identify the amount of water flowing into the City's system and aid in identifying issues in the stormwater piping network.

STORM DRAIN INLETS AND MANHOLES

The City of Passaic owns and operates seven hundred twenty-eight (728) stormwater inlets and catch basins and two hundred eighty-four (284) manholes that discharge stormwater runoff into the waterways referenced above located within the City. Passaic uses ArcGIS to manage and visualize the MS4 infrastructure. Figure 8 illustrates the stormwater structures owned and operated by the City of Passaic and all stormwater interconnections that convey stormwater runoff into the City's MS4 system.

The stormwater inlets and catch basins owned and operated by the City of Passaic are required to be inspected once every five years per the NJDEP MS4 permit. The City maintains a list of inlets that require cleaning and repair. The City cleans and implements repairs on stormwater infrastructure on a regular basis, in accordance with the MS4 permit.

OUTFALL AND UPSTREAM CONNECTIONS DRAINAGE AREA METHODOLOGY

The procedure used to delineate the drainage area for the outfalls and upstream interconnection points use the outfall, manhole, and inlet points with the pipe network linework inserted into AUTOCAD Civil 3D. The MS4 information was then used in conjunction with one-foot contours provided from LIDAR information and detailed using standard overland and pipe flow analysis. Figure 9 illustrates the delineated drainage areas for the outfalls.

This delineation procedure is not entirely accurate due to insufficient data due to the lack of manholes and inlets owned by other entities within the City that would otherwise, create a full picture of the stormwater infrastructure from the county and state. Future procedures can be refined to improve the delineation process by incorporating the county and state data, upon the completion from both entities.

IX. WATER QUALITY IMPAIRMENTS AND TMDLS

The New Jersey Integrated Water Quality Monitoring and Assessment Report (305(b) and 303(d)) (Integrated List) is required by the federal Clean Water Act to be prepared biennially and is a valuable source of water quality information. This combined report presents the extent to which New Jersey water is attaining water quality standards and identifies waters that are impaired.

Water bodies are classified through the use of Sublists. Sublist 1 and 2 waterbodies are unimpaired. Sublist 3 waterbodies have limited assessment or data availability. Sublist 4 waterbodies are impaired due to pollution rather than pollutants or have had a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) or other enforceable management measure approved by the EPA expected to achieve Water Quality Standards. Sublist 5 of the Integrated List constitutes the list of waters impaired or threatened by pollutants, for which one or more TMDLs are needed.

A TMDL is the amount of a pollutant that can be accepted by a waterbody without causing an exceedance of water quality standards or interfering with the ability to use a water body for one or more of its designated uses. The allowable load is allocated to the various sources of the pollutant, such as stormwater and wastewater discharges, which require an NJPDES permit to discharge, and nonpoint source, which includes stormwater runoff from agricultural areas and residential areas, along with a margin of safety. Provisions may also be made for future sources in the form of reserve capacity. Based on an inquiry to the NJDEP's TMDL Look-Up Tool, provided by the Bureau of Nonpoint Pollution, there are no TMDLs in the City of Passaic, as shown in Figure 10.

The Passaic R Lower (Saddle R to Dundee Dam) subwatershed and Passaic R Lower (Second R to Saddle R) subwatershed has five (5) water quality impairments, as shown in Figure 11. The impairments are Benzo[A]pyrene (PAHS), PH, Total Suspended Solids (TSS), Phosphorus Total, and PCBs in Fish Tissue.

X. OVERBURDENED COMMUNITIES

The City of Passaic contains 88% overburdened communities (NJ-WET), as shown in Figure 12. Municipalities with large numbers of overburdened communities often struggle with limited financial resources to maintain and expand the stormwater infrastructure in that area. Furthermore, these communities are susceptible to disproportionately high environmental and public health stressors, therefore, these areas are more susceptible to health disparities during national disasters such as flooding.

The City of Passaic works tirelessly to ensure that the disparities caused by the high percentage of overburdened communities are mitigated to the highest extent possible. The City regularly does activities to promote the wellness of the residents by hosting community wellness days and wellness programs for adults and seniors. Passaic further has facilities school / youth education activities on the importance of stormwater.

Table 2: Overburdened Communities Percentage		
Type	Acreage	Percentage
Low Income and Minority	1,133.91	54.70%
Low Income, Minority, and Limited English	179.51	8.66%
Minority	456.36	22.01%
Minority and Limited English	54.55	2.63%
Non-Overburdened Community	248.73	12.00%
Total	2,073.06	100.00%
Source: NJDEP Open Data		

XI. IMPERVIOUS COVER

The impervious area occupies approximately seventy-four percent (74%) of the City's footprint. Figure 13 shows the impervious coverage of the City of Passaic.

Class	Acreage	Percentage
Building	20.57	0.99%
Other	1,113.35	53.71%
Road	390.09	18.82%
Total Impervious	1,524.01	73.52%
Non-Impervious	549.05	26.48%
Total	2,073.06	100.00%

Source: NJDEP Open Data

A link has been discovered by researchers between the impervious cover within a watershed and the stream ecosystem impairments (Schueler et al., 2009). Schueler first proposed a model in 2004 using the impervious coverage to diagnose the severity of future stream problems within the urban watersheds. The impervious cover model designates urban streams into four (4) categories; sensitive, impacted, non-supporting, and urban drainage.

A sensitive stream is when the watershed has an impervious cover of less than ten percent (10%) and are able to generally retain the hydrologic function and support good to excellent aquatic diversity. Impacted streams have an impervious coverage of ten percent (10%) to twenty-five (25%) and while showing signs of stream health decline have fair aquatic diversity. Non-supporting streams have an impervious coverage between twenty-five percent (25%) and sixty percent (60%) and no longer support their hydraulic function, channel stability, habitat, water quality of biological diversity. Non-supporting streams often are so degraded that it is difficult for the stream to make a full recovery. Urban drainage streams have an impervious coverage of sixty percent (60%) or higher and have become so degraded that they generally only function as a conduit for flood waters. Urban drainage streams consistently have poor water quality, highly unstable channels and poor habitat and biodiversity scores. Many of these streams are so beyond repair that they disappear altogether by earthworks and / or storm drain enclosures.

The high percentage of impervious cover within the City of Passaic is consistent with observed impairments of urban drainage streams.

XII. CONCLUSION

The Watershed Inventory Report serves as a record for the stormwater infrastructure, water quality data, stream classifications, and additional relevant information for a full understanding of the MS4 information within the City of Passaic. All the data compiled for this report has been compiled by GIS experts as a digital map that can be utilized as a continued reference with a closer look at the information provided in this report. As phase one of the watershed improvement plan, this report will be used in the creation of a Watershed Assessment Report which will identify areas of potential concern and where water quality improvement projects could potentially be implemented.

XIII. REFERENCES

DATA SOURCES

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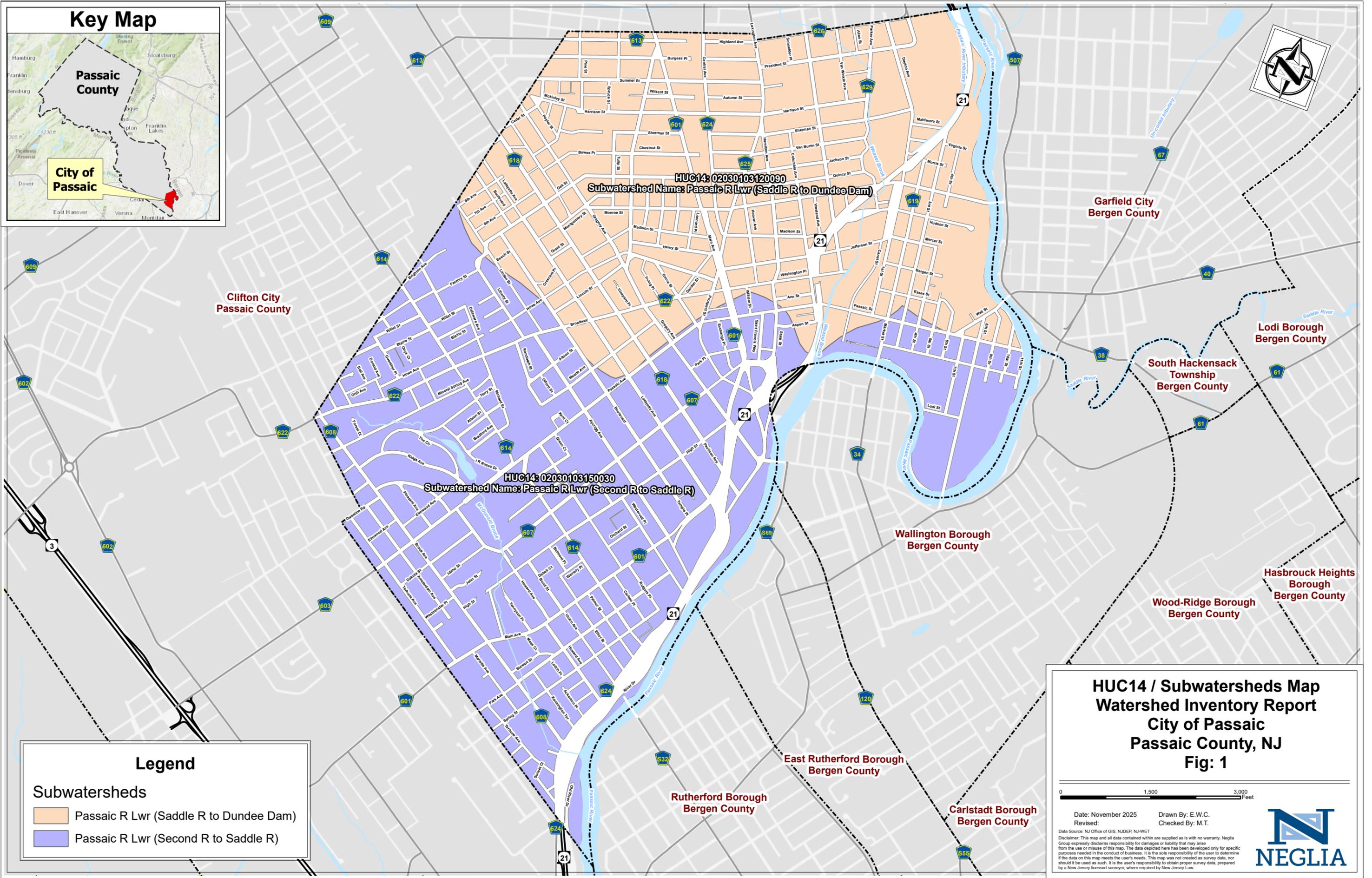
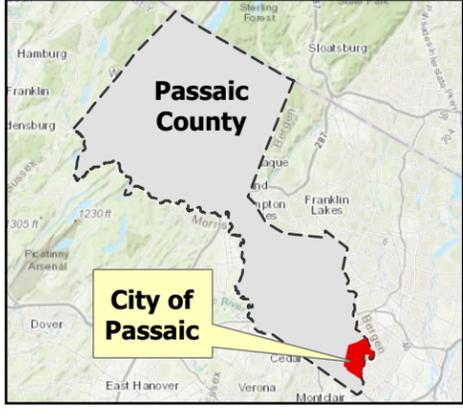
ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Schuler, T.R., Lisa Farley-McNeal, and Karen Capiella. April 2009. Is Impervious Coverage Still Important? Review of Recent Research. Published in the Journal of Hydrologic Engineering.

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What is Environmental Justice? Retrieved on March 2025 from New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection Environmental Justice website: <https://dep.nj.gov/ej/>

Key Map



Legend

Subwatersheds

- Passaic R Lwr (Saddle R to Dundee Dam)
- Passaic R Lwr (Second R to Saddle R)

HUC14 / Subwatersheds Map

Watershed Inventory Report

City of Passaic

Passaic County, NJ

Fig: 1

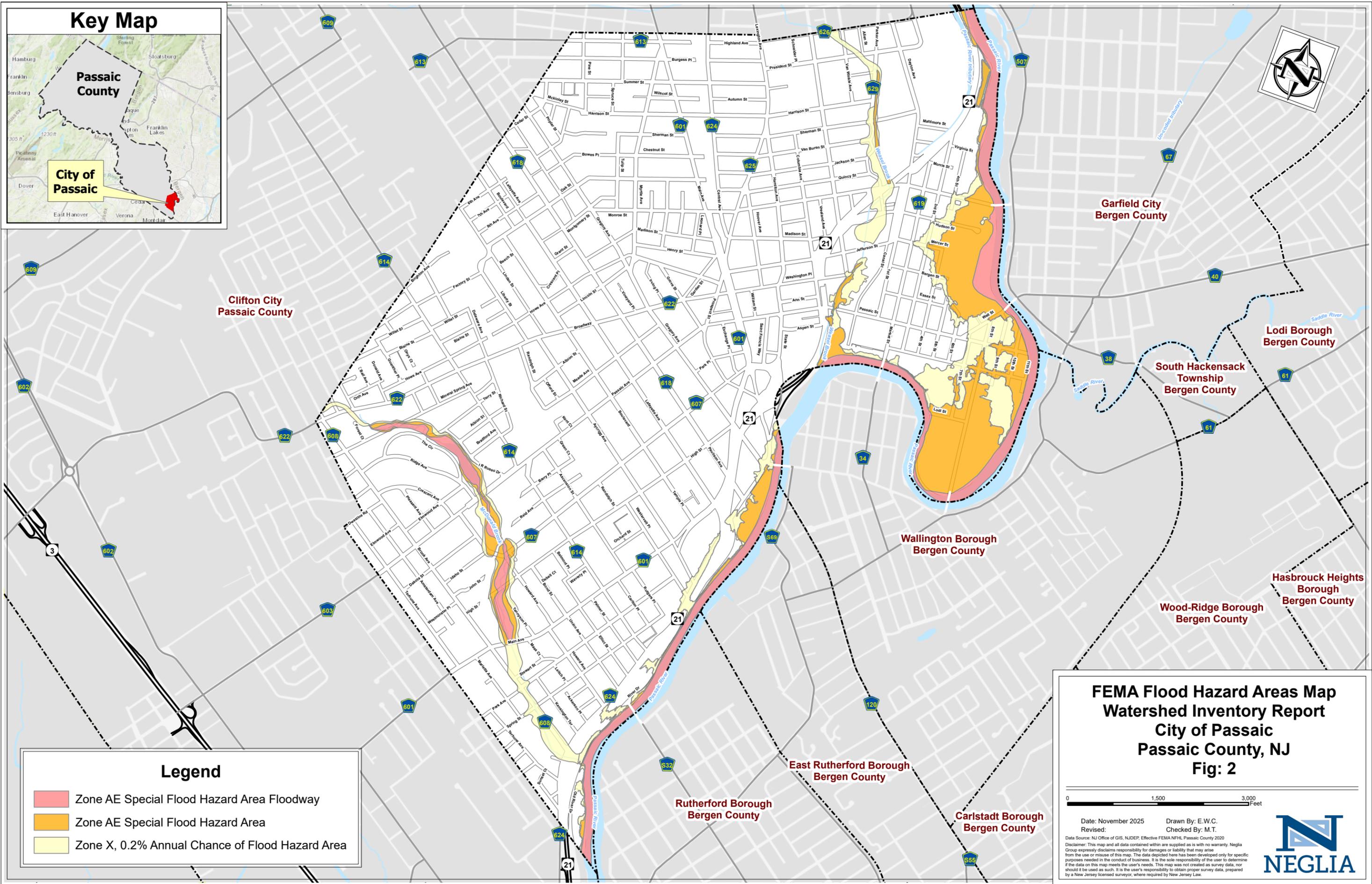
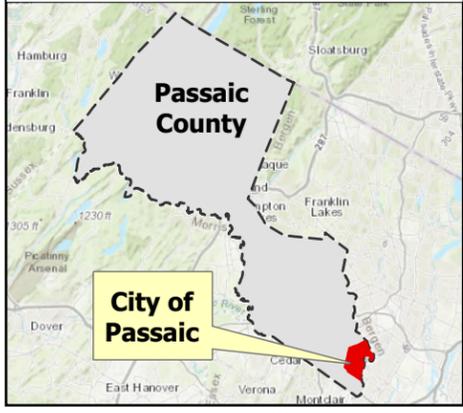
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Date: November 2025 Drawn By: E.W.C.
 Revised: Checked By: M.T.

Data Source: NJ Office of GIS, NJDEP, NJ-WET
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Key Map



Legend

- Zone AE Special Flood Hazard Area Floodway
- Zone AE Special Flood Hazard Area
- Zone X, 0.2% Annual Chance of Flood Hazard Area

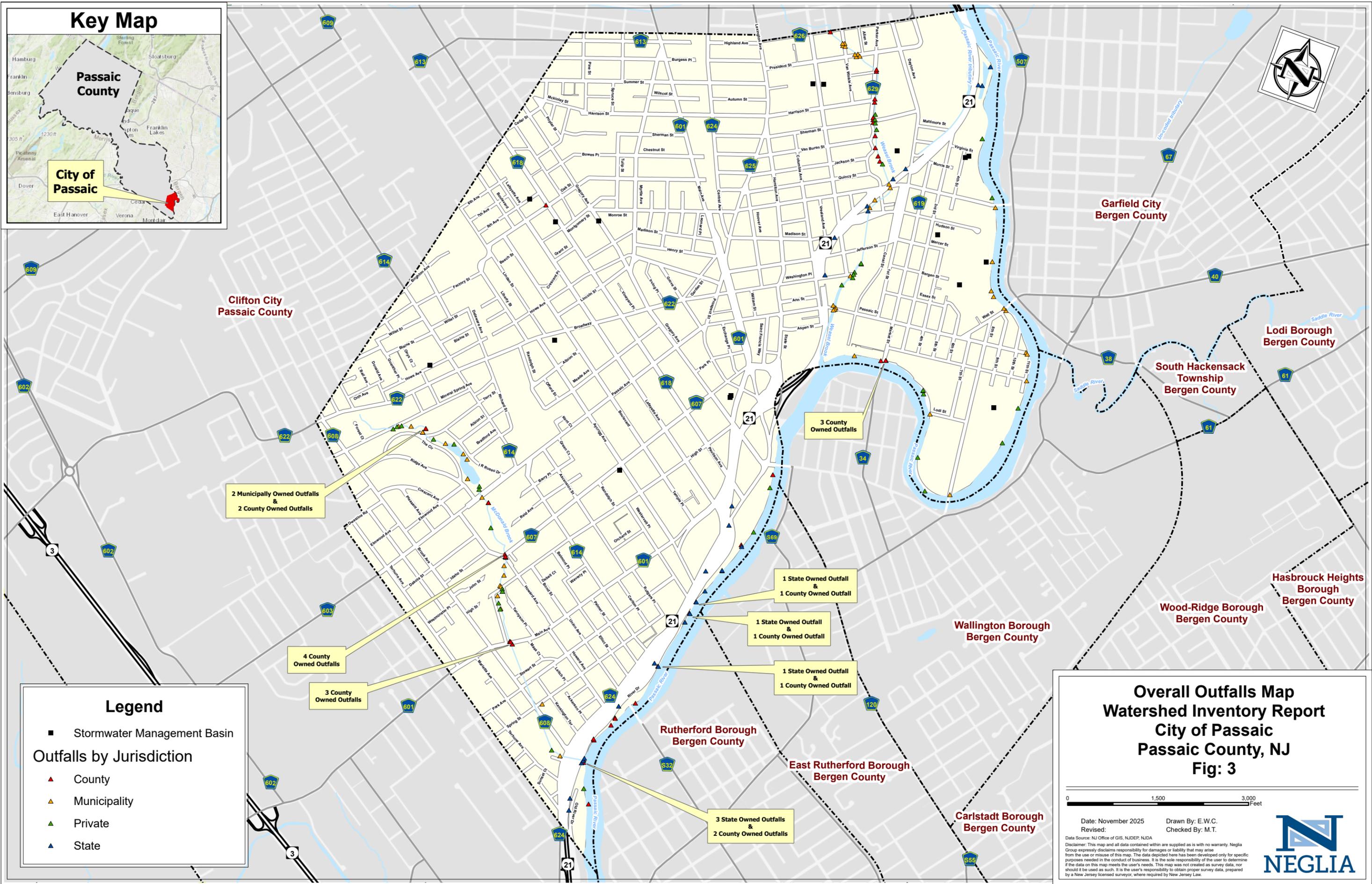
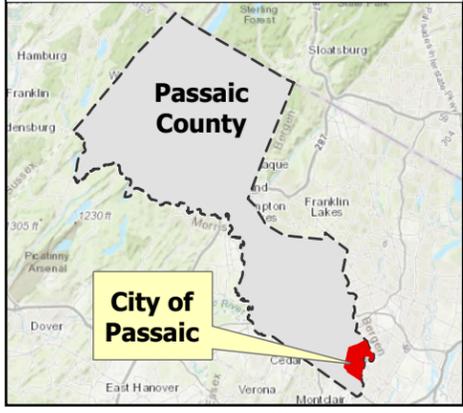
FEMA Flood Hazard Areas Map Watershed Inventory Report City of Passaic Passaic County, NJ Fig: 2

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Key Map



Legend

- Stormwater Management Basin

Outfalls by Jurisdiction

- ▲ County
- ▲ Municipality
- ▲ Private
- ▲ State

Overall Outfalls Map

Watershed Inventory Report

City of Passaic

Passaic County, NJ

Fig: 3

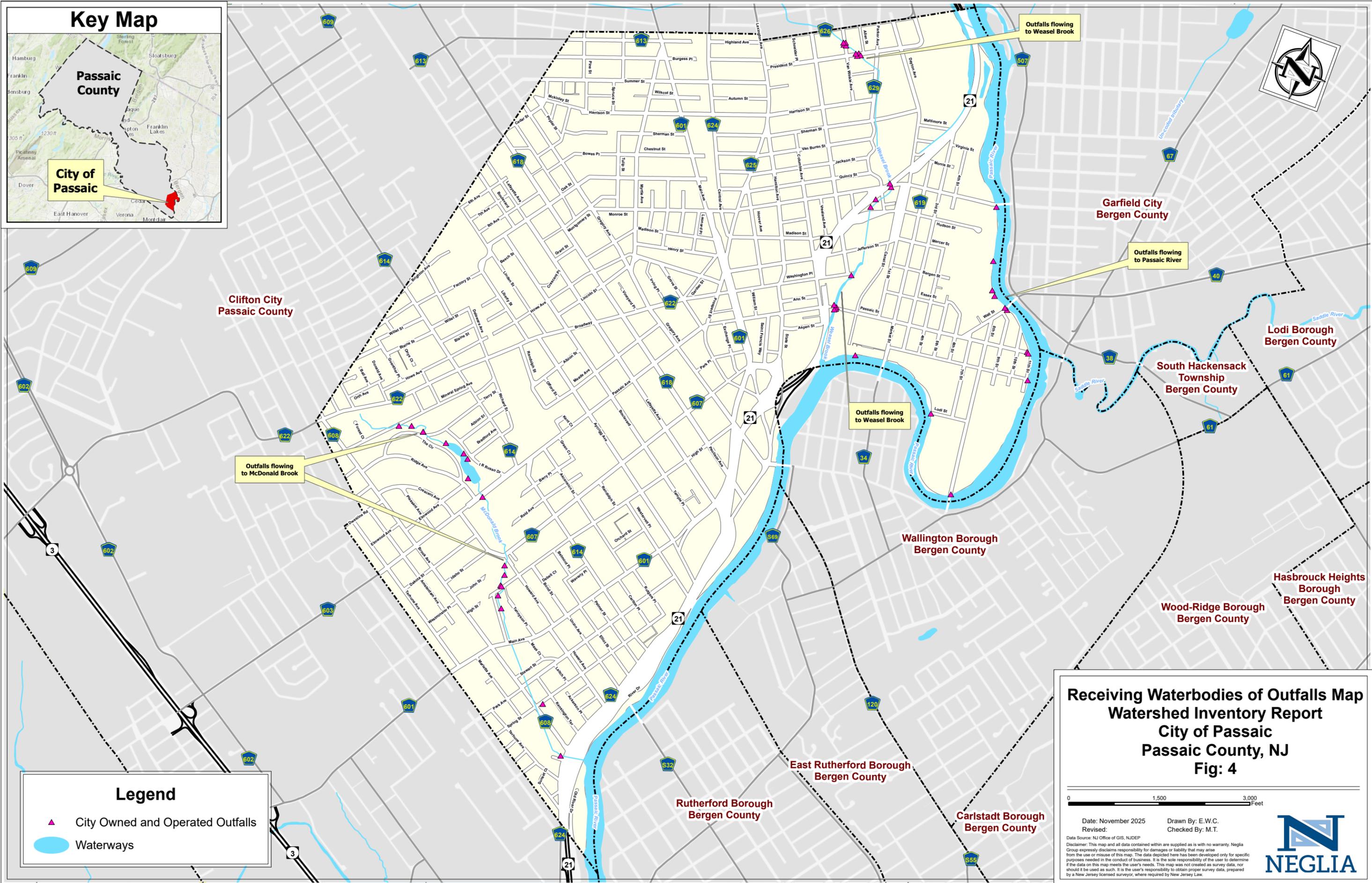
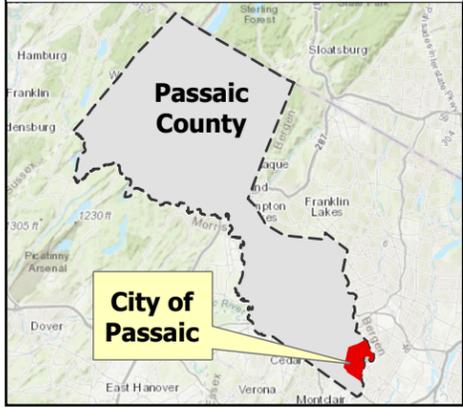
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Key Map



Receiving Waterbodies of Outfalls Map

Watershed Inventory Report

City of Passaic

Passaic County, NJ

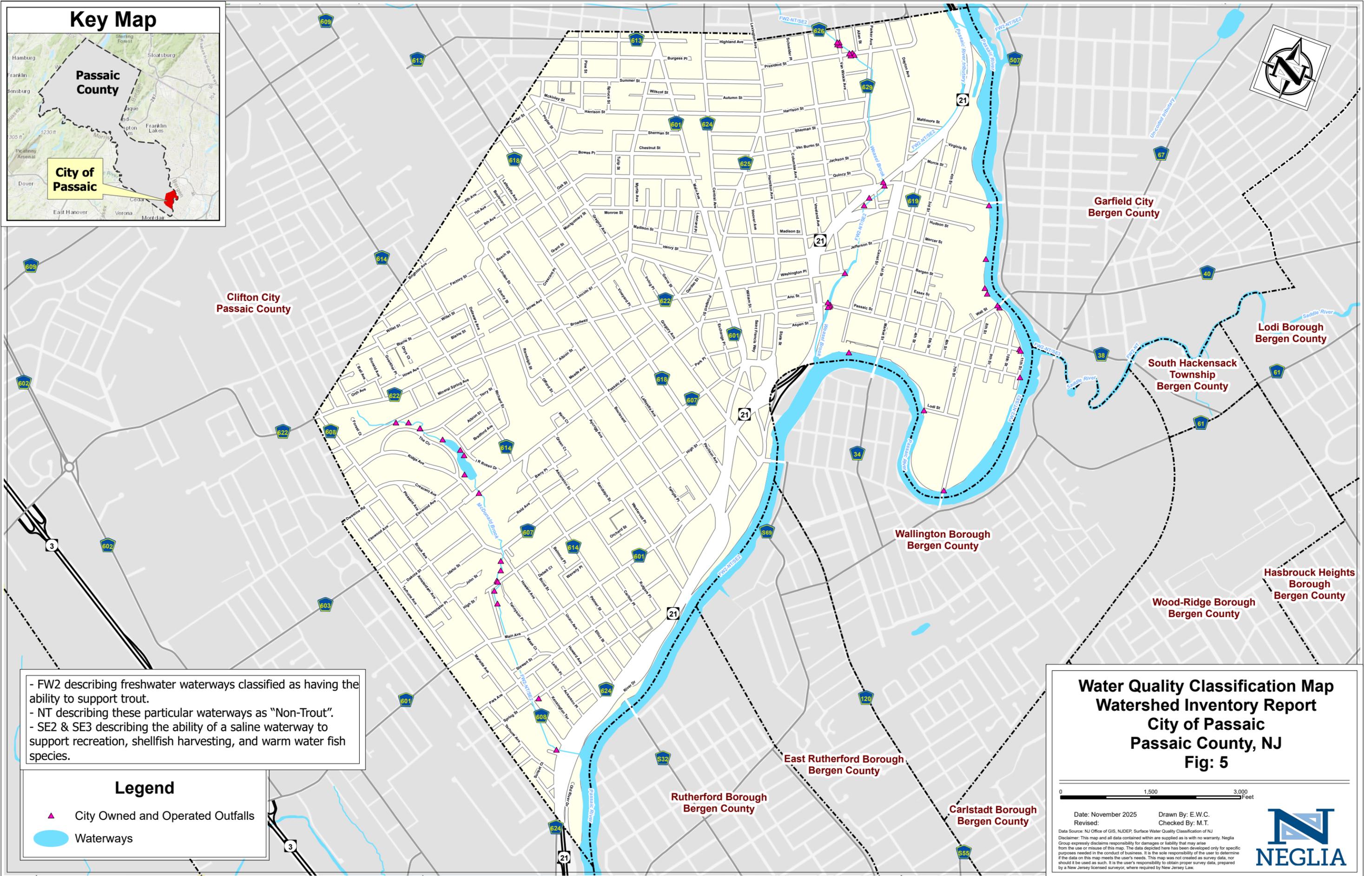
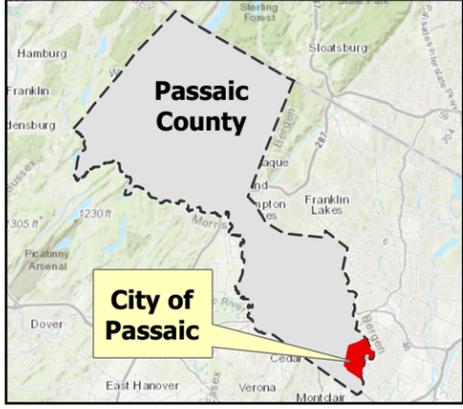
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Key Map



- FW2 describing freshwater waterways classified as having the ability to support trout.
 - NT describing these particular waterways as "Non-Trout".
 - SE2 & SE3 describing the ability of a saline waterway to support recreation, shellfish harvesting, and warm water fish species.

Legend

- ▲ City Owned and Operated Outfalls
- Waterways

Water Quality Classification Map Watershed Inventory Report

City of Passaic Passaic County, NJ

Fig: 5

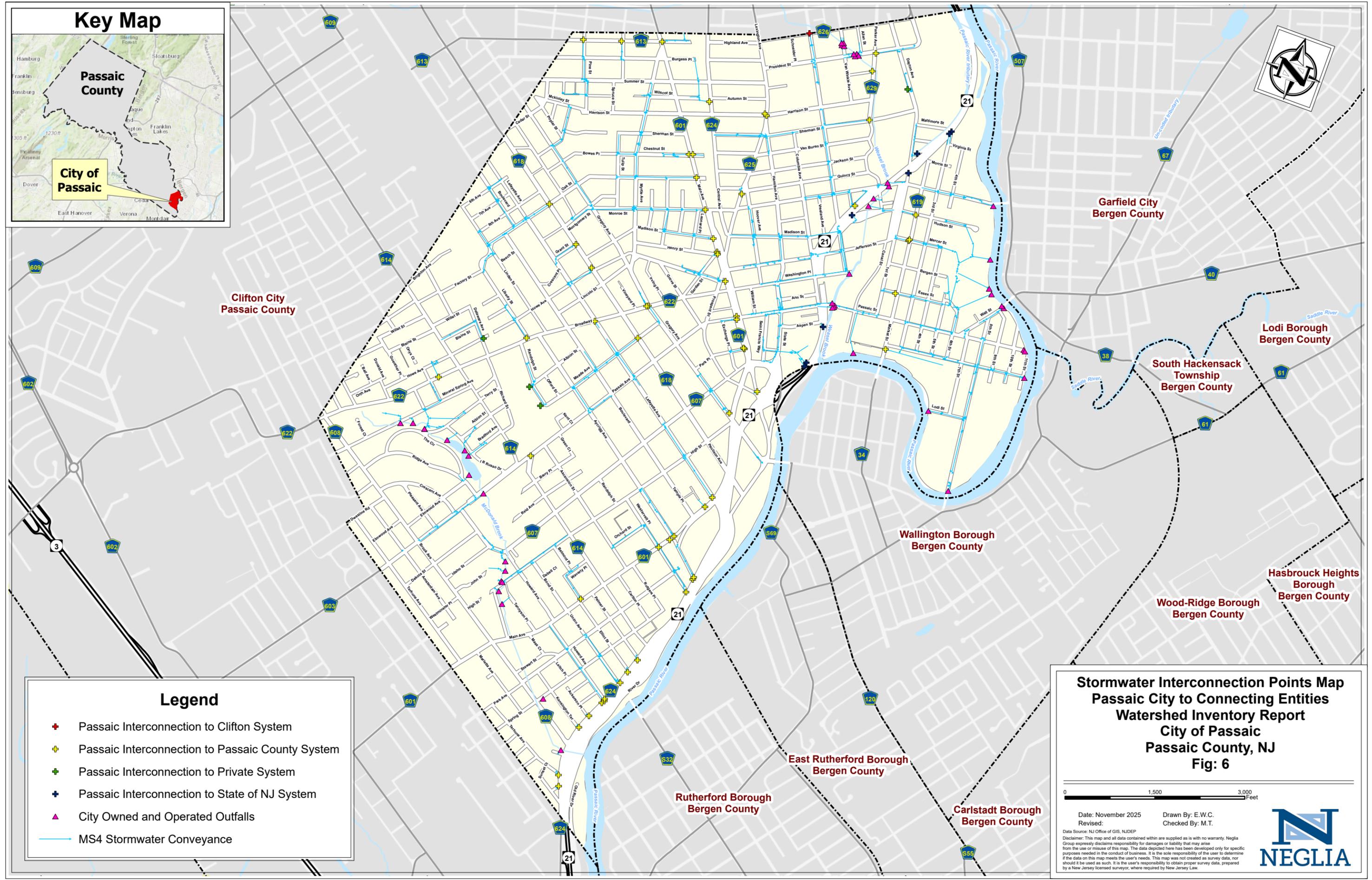
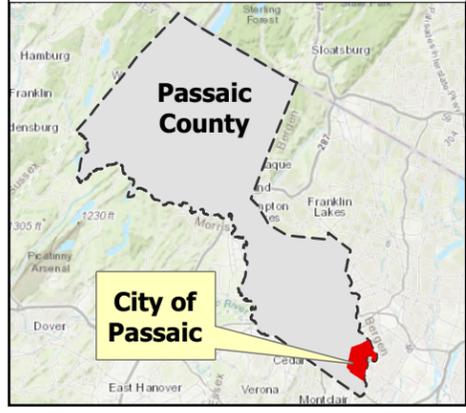
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Date: November 2025 Drawn By: E.W.C.
 Revised: Checked By: M.T.

Data Source: NJ Office of GIS, NJDEP, Surface Water Quality Classification of NJ
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Key Map



Legend

- + Passaic Interconnection to Clifton System
- + Passaic Interconnection to Passaic County System
- + Passaic Interconnection to Private System
- + Passaic Interconnection to State of NJ System
- ▲ City Owned and Operated Outfalls
- MS4 Stormwater Conveyance

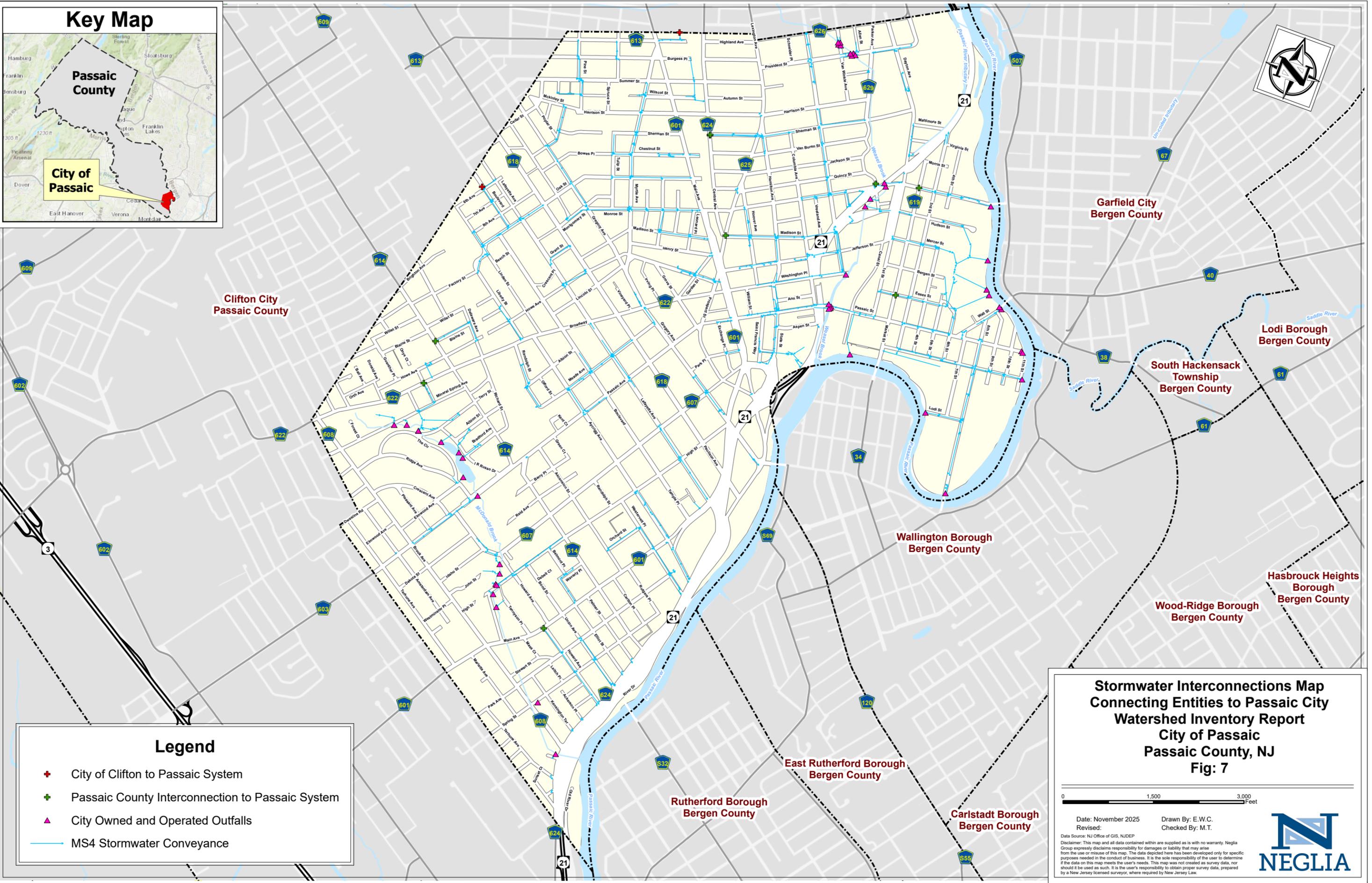
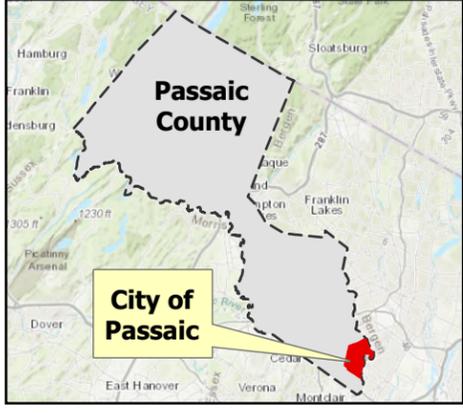
Stormwater Interconnection Points Map Passaic City to Connecting Entities Watershed Inventory Report City of Passaic Passaic County, NJ Fig: 6

0 1,500 3,000 Feet

Date: November 2025 Drawn By: E.W.C.
 Revised: Checked By: M.T.

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Key Map



Clifton City
Passaic County

Garfield City
Bergen County

Lodi Borough
Bergen County

South Hackensack
Township
Bergen County

Wallington Borough
Bergen County

Hasbrouck Heights
Borough
Bergen County

Wood-Ridge Borough
Bergen County

East Rutherford Borough
Bergen County

Rutherford Borough
Bergen County

Carlstadt Borough
Bergen County

Legend

- + City of Clifton to Passaic System
- + Passaic County Interconnection to Passaic System
- ▲ City Owned and Operated Outfalls
- MS4 Stormwater Conveyance

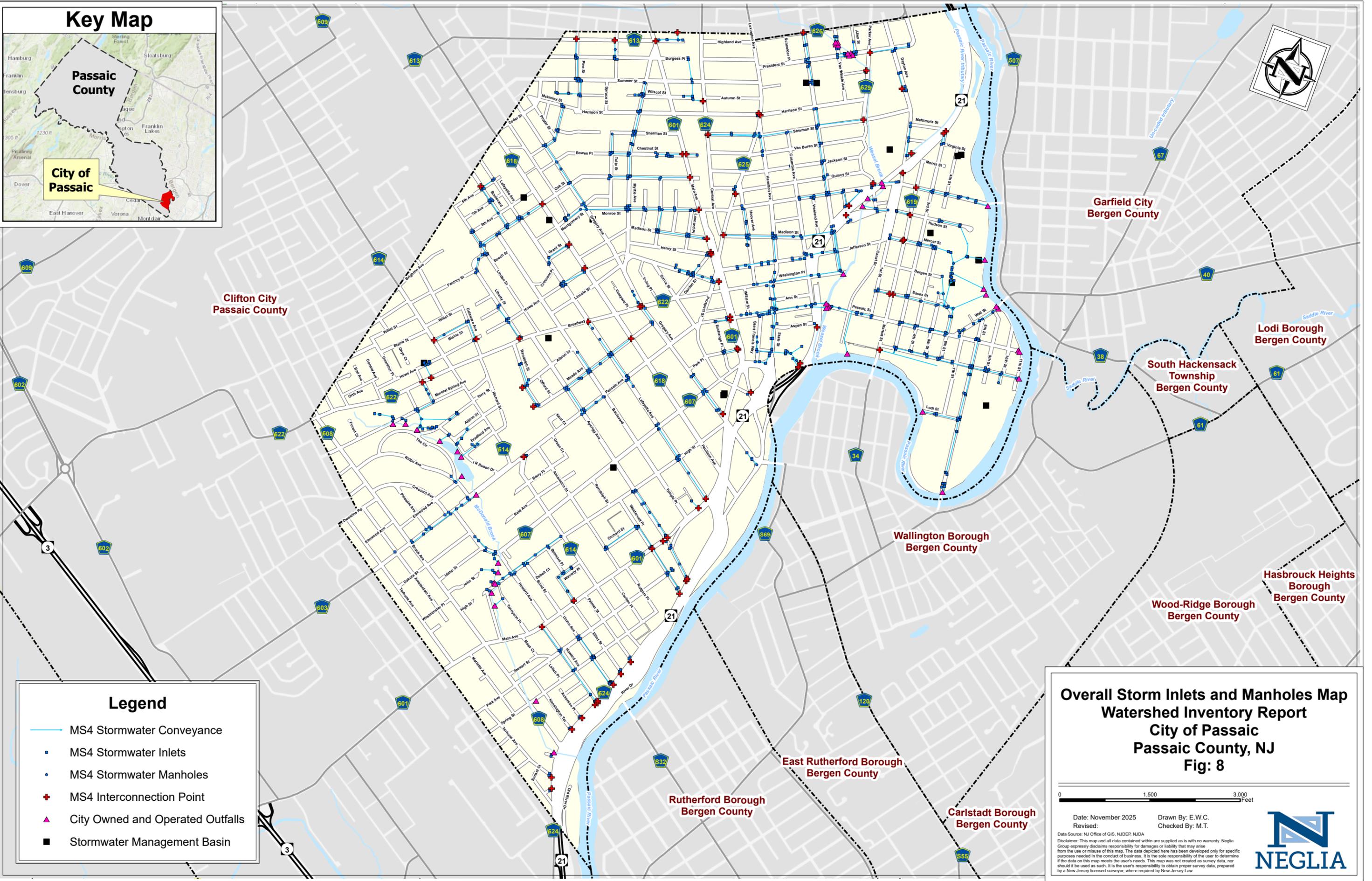
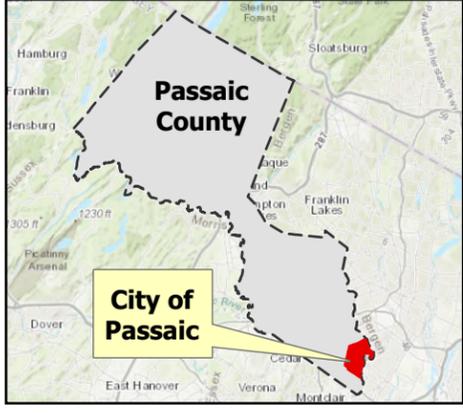
Stormwater Interconnections Map Connecting Entities to Passaic City Watershed Inventory Report City of Passaic Passaic County, NJ Fig: 7

0 1,500 3,000 Feet

Date: November 2025 Drawn By: E.W.C.
Revised: Checked By: M.T.

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Key Map



Legend

- MS4 Stormwater Conveyance
- MS4 Stormwater Inlets
- MS4 Stormwater Manholes
- MS4 Interconnection Point
- City Owned and Operated Outfalls
- Stormwater Management Basin

Overall Storm Inlets and Manholes Map Watershed Inventory Report City of Passaic Passaic County, NJ Fig: 8

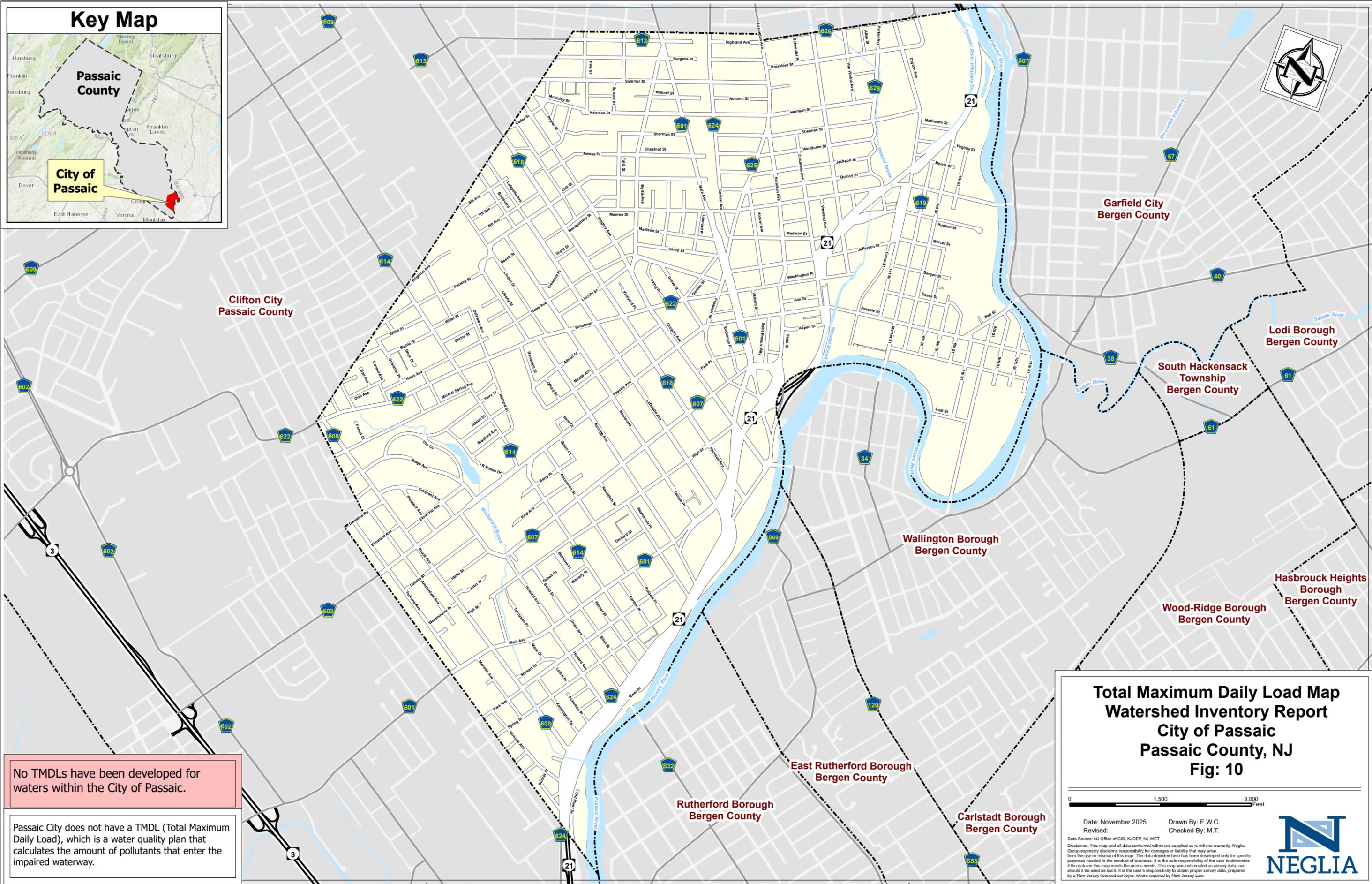
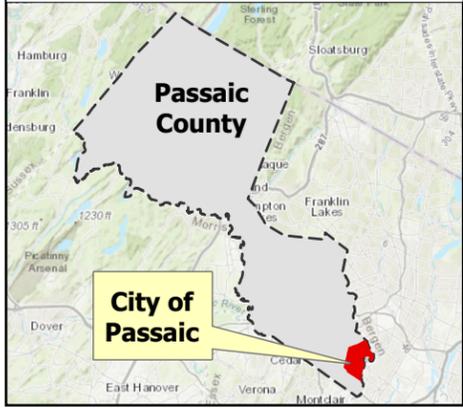
0 1,500 3,000 Feet

Date: November 2025 Drawn By: E.W.C.
Revised: Checked By: M.T.

Data Source: NJ Office of GIS, NJDEP, NJDA
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Key Map



No TMDLs have been developed for waters within the City of Passaic.

Passaic City does not have a TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load), which is a water quality plan that calculates the amount of pollutants that enter the impaired waterway.

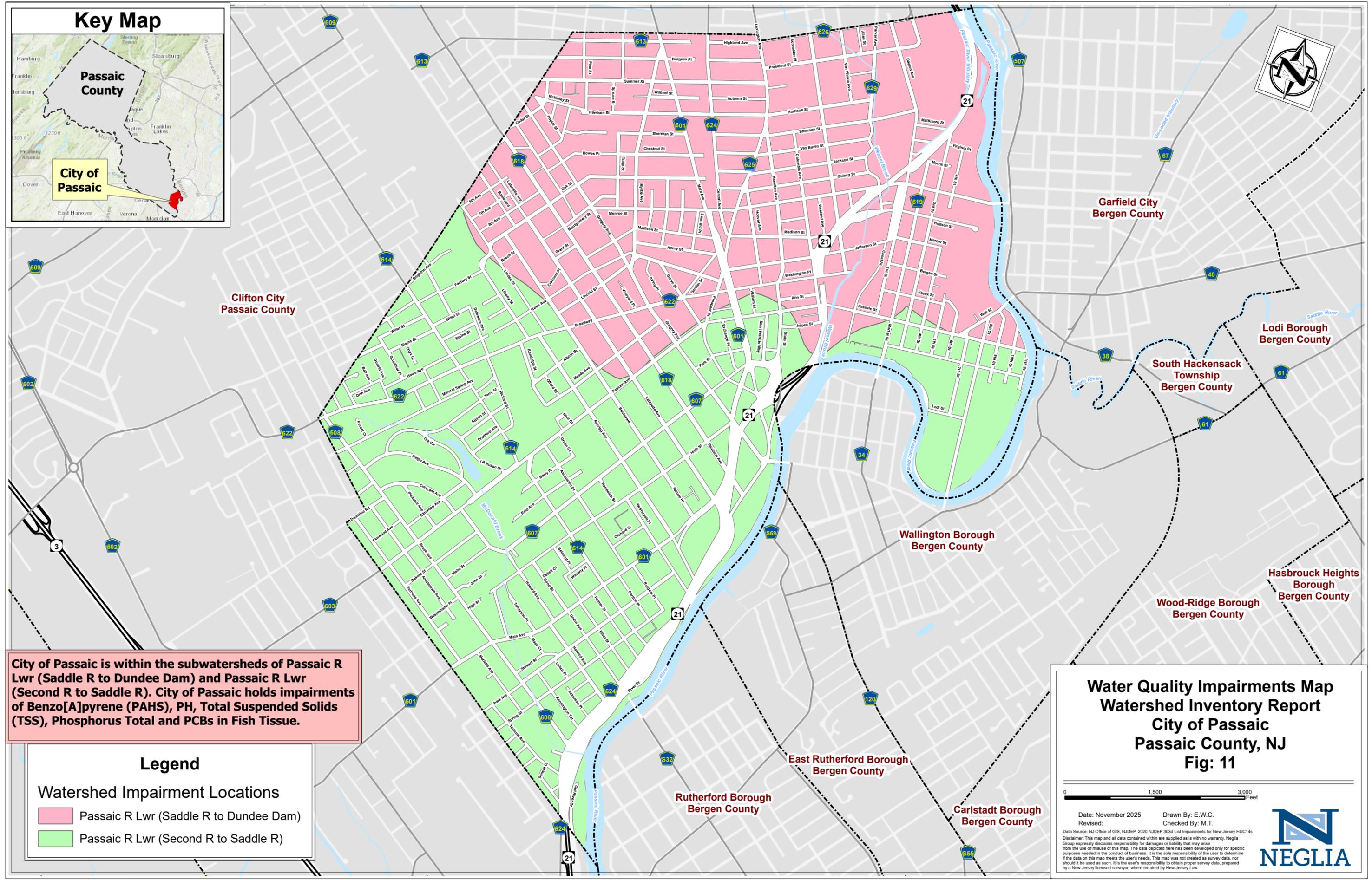
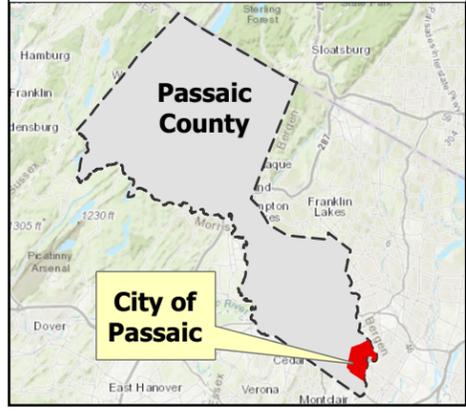
Total Maximum Daily Load Map
Watershed Inventory Report
City of Passaic
Passaic County, NJ
Fig: 10

0 1,500 3,000 Feet

Date: November 2025 Drawn By: E.W.C.
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Key Map



City of Passaic is within the subwatersheds of Passaic R Lwr (Saddle R to Dundee Dam) and Passaic R Lwr (Second R to Saddle R). City of Passaic holds impairments of Benzo[A]pyrene (PAHS), PH, Total Suspended Solids (TSS), Phosphorus Total and PCBs in Fish Tissue.

Legend

- Watershed Impairment Locations**
- Passaic R Lwr (Saddle R to Dundee Dam)
 - Passaic R Lwr (Second R to Saddle R)

**Water Quality Impairments Map
Watershed Inventory Report
City of Passaic
Passaic County, NJ
Fig: 11**

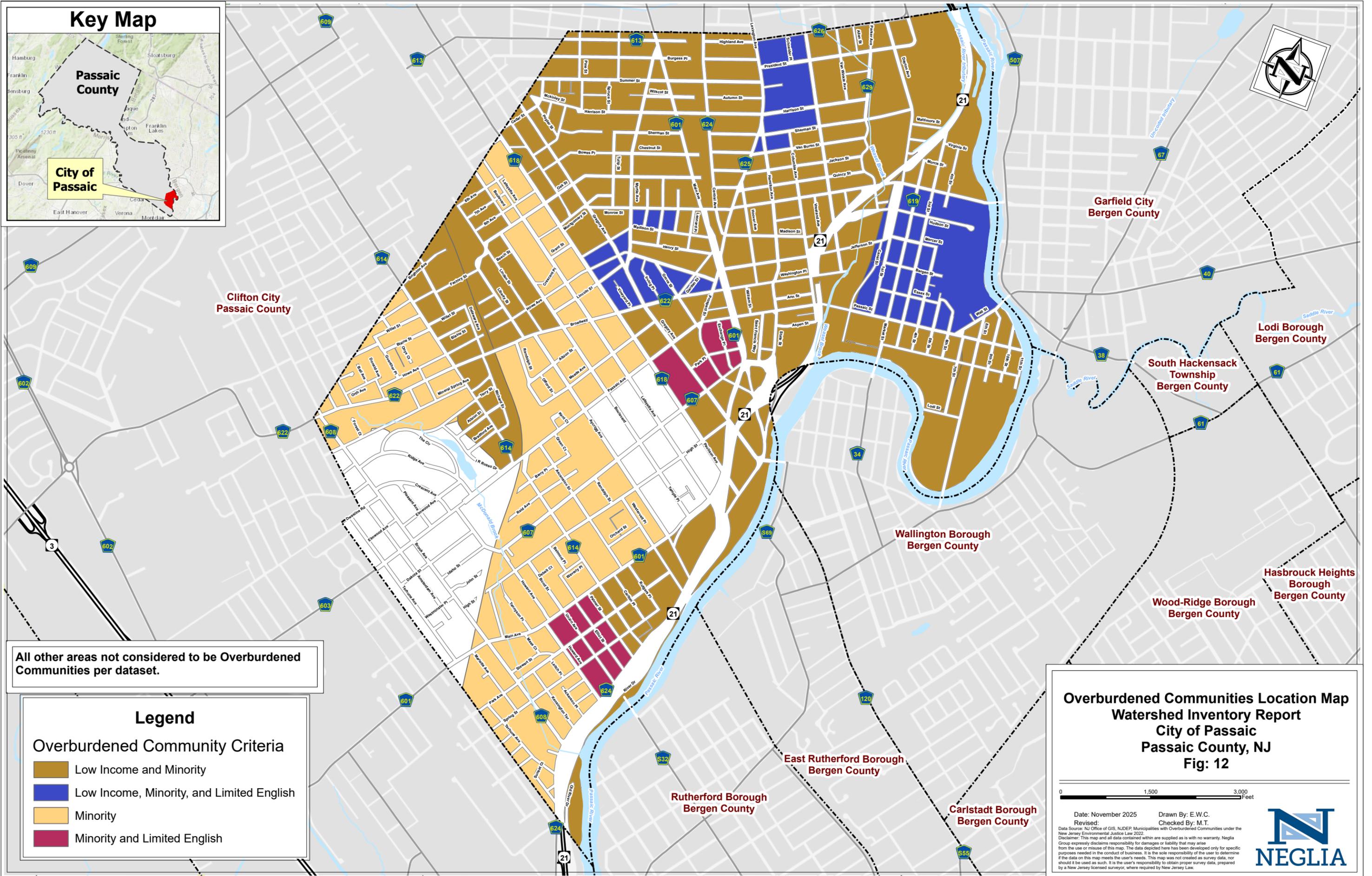
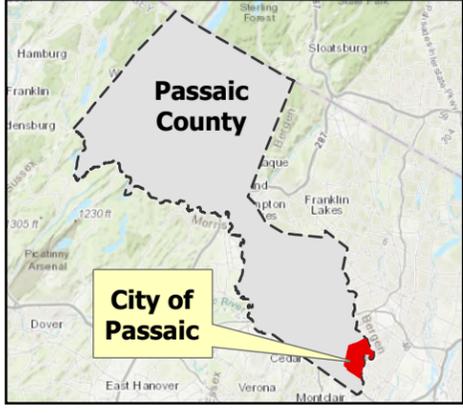
0 1,500 3,000 Feet

Date: November 2025 Drawn By: E.W.C.
 Revised: Checked By: M.T.

Data Source: NJ Office of GIS, NJDEP, 2020 NJDEP 303d List Impairments for New Jersey HUC14s
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Key Map



All other areas not considered to be Overburdened Communities per dataset.

Legend

Overburdened Community Criteria

- Low Income and Minority
- Low Income, Minority, and Limited English
- Minority
- Minority and Limited English

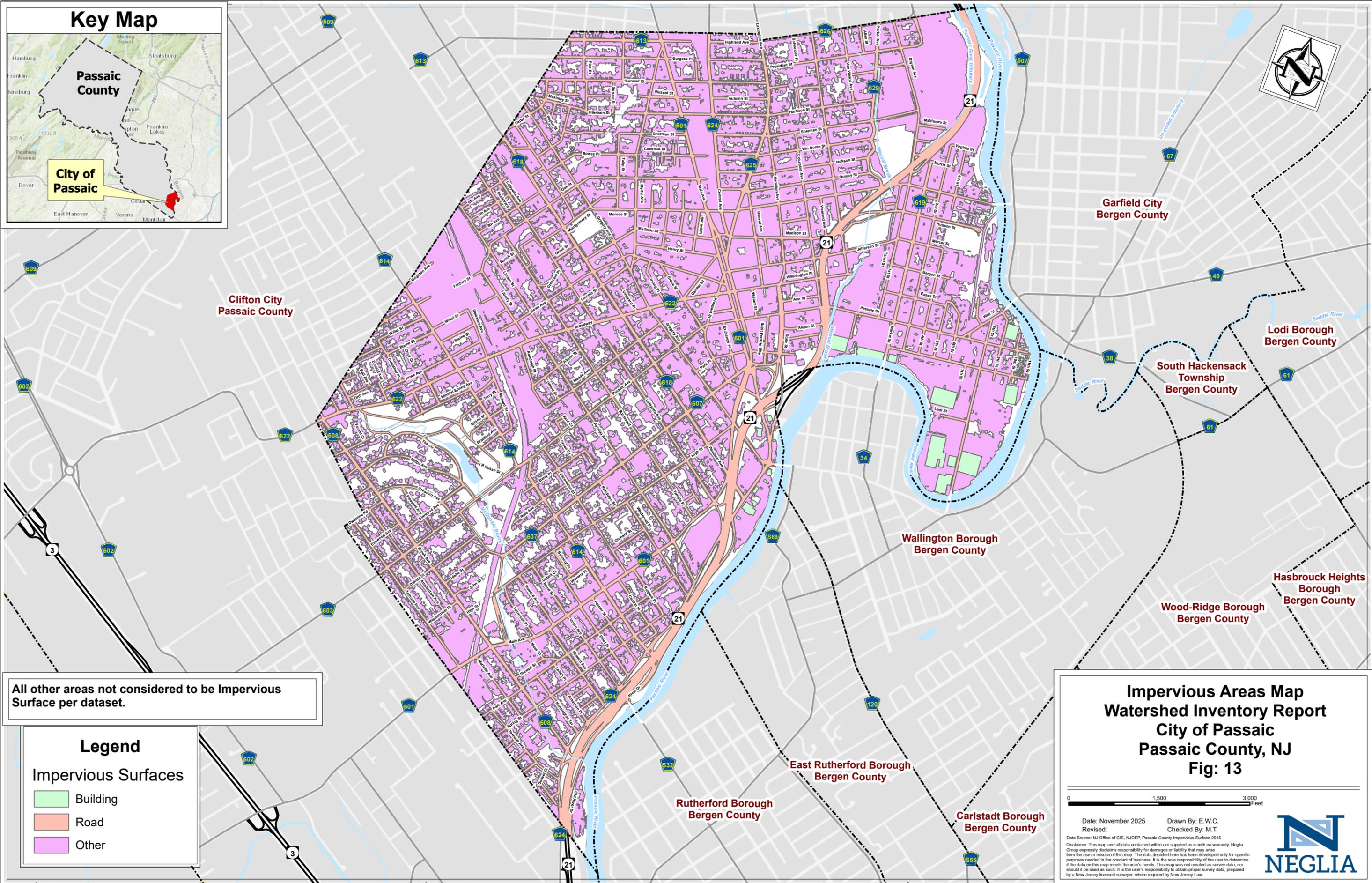
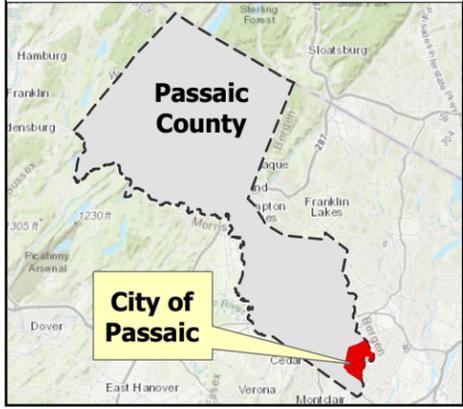
Overburdened Communities Location Map Watershed Inventory Report City of Passaic Passaic County, NJ Fig: 12

0 1,500 3,000 Feet

Date: November 2025 Drawn By: E.W.C.
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Data Source: NJ Office of GIS, NJDEP, Municipalities with Overburdened Communities under the New Jersey Environmental Justice Law 2022.
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Key Map



All other areas not considered to be Impervious Surface per dataset.

Legend

Impervious Surfaces

- Building
- Road
- Other

Impervious Areas Map

Watershed Inventory Report

City of Passaic

Passaic County, NJ

Fig: 13

Date: November 2025 Drawn By: E.W.C.
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 Data Source: NJ Office of GIS, NJDEP, Passaic County Impervious Surface 2015
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