

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 6, 2012

Media Contacts: Dan Boss
Program Publicity Specialist
(231) 929-5047
danboss@nwm.cog.mi.us

Michelle Foster
Regional Planner
(231) 929-5039
michellefoster@nwm.cog.mi.us

Regional Data Updated in Benchmarks Northwest

NORTHWEST MI—The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG) has updated a citizen and policy makers' guide to assess and monitor issues in the region. Benchmarks Northwest provides easy access to nearly four hundred indicators related to quality of life in northwest lower Michigan.

“Data are an important part of decision-making. They provide individuals, non-profits, businesses, and local units of government indicators relevant to their operations or interests,” said Matt McCauley, director of regional planning and community development at NWMCOG.

The Benchmarks Northwest indicators are compiled from more than 30 different data sources and are broken down in to eight areas of interest: Culture and Recreation, Economy and Employment, Education, Government, Health, Infrastructure, Natural Resources and Environment, and Population Dynamics. Each interest area has a regional report comprised of various indicators geared toward that issue.

“Any one individual or organization would have to invest a large amount of time and effort to compile the information they'll find in one location with Benchmarks Northwest,” said McCauley.

(MORE)

Benchmarks Northwest only uses data that are reported annually. The updated indicators are "benchmarked" to the year 2000 and are also compared to the year prior to the reporting year. The benchmark year will be updated to 2010 in coming editions as data permits.

“Regional data available on an annual basis are important to businesses and organizations when they're working on grant applications, annual reports, or business strategies,” said McCauley.

You can access Benchmarks Northwest on the NWMCOG website at nwm.org/benchmarks.

For more information, please contact Michelle Foster at the NWMCOG at 929-5039 or michellefoster@nwm.cog.mi.us.

#

NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by e-mailing Tom White at tomwhite@nwm.cog.mi.us and stating preferences for resolution (300 dpi?), file format (.tif? .jpg?) and file size (1MB or less?). Or, phone (231) 929-5044. Check our online Media Room at: nwm.org/media

Founded in 1974, the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG) facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10 county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, YouthBuild, Small Business & Technology Development Center, Procurement Technical Assistance Center, various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business and community services NWMCOG offers if you visit our web site, nwm.org

NWMCOG's member counties are: Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.