



MEMORANDUM

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

Date: January 5, 2026
To: CLFLWD Board of Managers
From: Mike Kinney, District Administrator
Subject: Bone Lake South Property: Short-Term Management



Background/Discussion:

The CLFLWD acquired the Bone Lake South Property using Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Fund (LSOHF) and Conservation Partners Legacy (CPL) grant funds on December 9th, 2025. These grants exist to promote wildlife habitat and allow public access to natural landscapes.

The Bone Lake South acquisition was 4+ years in the making and consisted of the purchase of 238 acres of the greater 319-acre Larson Farm. The acquired property consists of 126 acres of wetland and 112 acres of surrounding upland. The acquisition required the division of several parcels on the property that were primarily used for grazing and hay production. As such, there is currently no physical barrier (e.g., fence) separating the CLFLWD's acquired property from the remaining Larson farmstead. In addition, parking is limited/nonexistent to the CLFLWD's acquired area, as it was historically accessed from the connected western farmstead. Furthermore, parking along 228th Street North is not advised due to narrow and steep road shoulders, limited distance of sight on the hilly road, and winter road maintenance.

Remaining funds from the LSOHF acquisition grant will be used to install a property border fence in the spring of 2026 that will separate the Bone Lake South property and Larson farmstead – thus preventing trespassing onto the adjoining private property, including the Larson farmstead itself, and/or unauthorized access to the District property from the west.

The District is tentatively slated to receive another LSOHF grant in July 2026. These funds will be used to restore wetlands, establish native prairies, develop a 3+ mile maintenance trail system, and enhance mixed hardwood habitat on the property. These restoration actions require the construction of a project staging area. Upon completion of several of the main restoration actions (2027/2028), the staging area would be converted into a public access parking lot / trailhead. Staff will update the Board after this grant has been awarded with additional details on property restoration plans and management.

Staff are also currently exploring the use of grazing as a land management tool for the establishment and maintenance of the upland components of the property. An interested party (local rancher) has been identified, and staff are currently evaluating the logistics,



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benefits, and risks of this management tool – especially regarding ongoing restoration efforts and in the context of public access. Additional assessment and planning would be needed before proceeding with any grazing management efforts at The Bone Lake South Nature Area.

It is the recommendation of staff that access to the Bone Lake South Property be limited to authorized personnel until such time that a fence is installed separating the Bone Lake South Property from the remaining Larson land and farmstead, and a parking and access area is established off of 228th St N at a location directly across from Mallard Ave (a location requested by the City of Scandia due to safety concerns). Staff advise installing "No Access" signs along the property in the interim to address liability concerns. During the acquisition phase of these parcels, staff inspected the property and did not identify any condition of the property hazardous to safety. It is advised that staff conduct monthly inspections of the property for signs of unauthorized entry. The "No Access" sign would conform to statutory requirements. Please see the attached sign concept.

Before completion of the short-term management recommendations and restoration efforts indicated in this memorandum, the Board will determine the framework for ongoing property management and use of the Bone Lake South property. Staff would expect to recommend that the property be fully open to the public for non-motorized recreation and hunting/fishing opportunities – as generally is required by the grants used to acquire the property.

Recommended Motion

Proposed Motion: Manager _____ moves to authorize the District Administrator, on advice of counsel, to limit access to the Bone Lake South Property until such time that property fencing is installed and restoration work is complete, and otherwise to adopt the Administrator's recommendation for interim property management. Seconded by Manager _____.

Attachment – Property Sign Concept



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BONE LAKE SOUTH NATURE AREA

PLEASE KEEP OUT

Wildlife Habitat Restoration Underway

No Unauthorized Access Until Further Notice

Property owned and managed by the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District.

651.395.5850

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