



MEMORANDUM
Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

Date: March 06, 2026
To: CLFLWD Board of Managers
From: Mike Kinney, District Administrator
Subject: 2026 Monitoring Plan



Background/Discussion:

This memo details the tasks and costs for the District’s monitoring plan in 2026. The Board approved a total 2026 budget of \$102,000 for Program 3-003 Monitoring & Data Assessment. This funding is designed to cover both staff management/coordination and all monitoring related efforts. *The 2025 monitoring budget is included here for reference.*

CLFLWD 2026 Adopted Monitoring Budget

Account Number	Budget Item	2025 Budget	2026 Expense Budget
3-003-4100	Staff Management/Coord.	\$99,405	\$77,000
3-003-A	Ongoing Initiatives	\$27,000	\$9,000
3-003-B	Stream & Diagnostic Monitoring	\$80,000	\$7,000
3-003-C	Lake Monitoring	\$13,500	\$9,000
		\$219,905	\$102,000

Proposed Monitoring Plan Narrative

The 2026 district-wide monitoring program will be streamlined down to core monitoring efforts to reduce the overall CLFLWD budget while maintaining core data acquisition efforts required for informed project identification and decision making. Monitoring in 2026 will be implemented by CLFLWD staff with oversight from the District Engineer at Emmons and Olivier Resources (EOR).

Monitoring Overview

The 2026 Lake Monitoring Program will again utilize the Metropolitan Council Community Assisted Monitoring Program (CAMP) Program. However, the plan calls for narrowing its focus on “core lakes” with public access, recent Alum treatments (being evaluated for effectiveness), or ongoing water quality projects. This is a reduction from 12 lakes in 2025 to 9 lakes in 2026. Collected water samples will be analyzed for total phosphorus, total Kjeldahl nitrogen, and chlorophyll-a (as usual). Additionally, measurements will be taken of the surface water temperature and water transparency (Secchi depth).



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- CAMP Volunteers will complete surface water quality monitoring on Bone, Moody, Comfort, and the 1st basin of Forest Lake.
- District Staff will collect CAMP data and additional data on several other lakes throughout the District including: Forest 2nd & 3rd basins, Shields, Little Comfort, and Keewahtin lakes.
- District staff will also collect: Dissolved oxygen (DO)/temperature profiles and collect bottom water (hypolimnion) samples on Forest 2nd, Little Comfort, Shields, and Moody lakes.

The 2026 Citizen Assisted Tributary (CAT) and Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Diagnostic monitoring programs will again be entirely led by CLFLWD staff. The overall effort will be reduced from previous years, and the focus of these programs in 2026 will be on areas, or micro-drainages, identified in previous monitoring years as being potential sources of loading. The CAT program will investigate two micro-drainages in the Forest Lake sub-watershed, and the DIY program will investigate the southwestern tributary to Shields Lake. Staff will monitor multiple locations along the length of these flow paths to identify the underlying source of the excess nutrient.

Monitoring Reporting

EOR will handle monitoring reporting for the District in 2026 like previous years. This will include the end of year monitoring report writing, data management, and planning assistance. District staff will assist as needed.

Noted Reductions and Savings in 2026:

The 2026 monitoring program has been reduced to reflect practical District data priorities combined with budgetary restrictions. Staff have worked to prioritize the monitoring effort to reduce the overall budget yet ensure that an appropriate level of data is being collected to maintain long-term datasets and provide information for future management decisions. We estimate a ~\$110,000 reduction from previously planned efforts. Details of these cost savings are listed below.

- Three fewer lakes will be monitored through CAMP this year. *~\$5,000 savings*
 - No bottom water chloride grab samples will be collected in 2026.
 - Fewer lakes will have water profiles and bottom water monitoring.
- No diagnostic monitoring will be conducted in 2026. *~\$40,000 savings*
- No stream monitoring will be conducted in 2026. *~\$30,000 savings*
- No lake sediment cores will be taken in 2026 – as originally planned. *~\$15,000 savings*



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- Project effectiveness monitoring will be limited to bottom water orthophosphate samples collected on Forest Lake #2, Shields Lake, and Moody Lake. Three lakes with recent Alum treatments. ~\$5,000 savings
- Reduction in the reporting effort needed due to a reduced monitoring scope - such as no Stream, Effectiveness, or Diagnostic monitoring and subsequently no need for this data analysis and reporting ~\$15,000 savings

A summary of the proposed 2026 CLFLWD Monitoring Plan and associated program costs are provided in the following tables. This effort would be funded from line items 3-003-A, B & C and 3-003-4100. These budget line items total \$102,000 and are sufficient to cover the proposed 2026 monitoring costs of \$100,590.

Monitoring Element	Proposed Cost	Description
Stream monitoring	\$2,000	
C.A.T. & DIY	n/a	<i>All staff time accounted for under staff management and coordination.</i>
Additional lab costs	\$2,000	Lab costs to verify DIY results
Lake monitoring	\$10,100	
CAMP program	\$3,100	- Surface water quality 4 lakes - Volunteer lakes
District staff "Pro CAMP"	\$3,500	- Surface water quality 5 lakes - Staff implement monitoring - DO/temp profiles and bottom water on 4 lakes. All staff time accounted for under staff management and coordination.
Additional lab costs	\$3,500	- Lab costs for bottom water analysis
Reporting	\$9,990	EOR Task: 2026 Monitoring Report
SUBTOTAL	\$22,090	

Program Element	Proposed Cost	Description
District Staff Time	\$77,000	DIY & CAT – Volunteer outreach, coordination, and oversight. Sample collection, analysis, data management, reporting, mileage Lake Monitoring – Volunteer coordination and oversight on 4 lakes. WQ sample collection, data



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		management on 5 lakes, and lake level monitoring. Sample delivery to labs. Report review. Equipment maintenance – Depth finder, boat, Sonde multimeter, lake level staff gages and sensors, various sampling equipment – as needed.
Equipment/Supplies	\$1,500	CAT & DIY supplies, Sonde multimeter sensor replacement, general maintenance
SUBTOTAL	\$78,500	
GRAND TOTAL	\$100,590	

Recommended Action:

Proposed Motion #1: Manager _____ moves to approve the 2026 Monitoring plan as presented in this memo. Seconded by Manager_____.

Proposed Motion #2: Manager _____ moves to authorize the administrator, on advice of counsel, to enter into an agreement with EOR to complete the 2026 Monitoring Report, as in accordance with the 2-27-2026 scope of work and in an amount not to exceed \$9,990. Seconded by Manager_____.

Attached:

EOR's 2026 Monitoring Scope of Work.

Project Name	(3-003-A) District Monitoring Program	Date	2-27-2026
To / Contact info	CLFLWD Board of Managers		
Cc / Contact info	Mike Kinney, District Administrator		
From / Contact info	Anne Wilkinson, PhD, PE		
Regarding	2026 Water Monitoring Report		

The following is a proposed scope and budget for the District’s 2026 water monitoring report.

Task 1. 2026 Water Monitoring Report

EOR will develop a summary report as an annual update on lake water quality trends, progress towards goals, and recommendations for future monitoring. This report will also include one-page lake factsheets for major District lakes highlighting lake characteristics, current conditions, long-term trends, and progress towards District goals. As part of this task, EOR will also organize the data and deliver a database to be used by staff for general information on lake water quality for the District website.

Expense	Unit Description	Units	Cost
Labor Total	Final report (+QA/QC & PM)	53 hours	\$9,990

Recommended Motion

We recommend the Board approve this 2026 scope of work for EOR to complete the 2026 water quality monitoring report for a total cost of \$9,990.