



## Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

Bone Lake South Wetland Acquisition & Restoration

ML 2023 Request for Funding

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### General Information

**Date:** 06/16/2022

**Proposal Title:** Bone Lake South Wetland Acquisition & Restoration

**Funds Requested:** \$4,475,000

### Manager Information

**Manager's Name:** Mike Kinney

**Title:** District Administrator

**Organization:** Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

**Address:** 44 Lake Street South Suite A

**City:** Forest Lake, MN 55025

**Email:** michael.kinney@clflwd.org

**Office Number:** 6513955855

**Mobile Number:**

**Fax Number:**

**Website:** www.clflwd.org

### Location Information

**County Location(s):** Washington.

**Eco regions in which work will take place:**

- Northern Forest

**Activity types:**

- Protect in Fee
- Enhance
- Restore

**Priority resources addressed by activity:**

- Wetlands
- Habitat
- Prairie

## Narrative

### Abstract

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District will acquire in fee, implement a targeted habitat enhancement plan, and perpetually protect a 305-acre property containing high priority wetland and upland habitat south of Bone Lake in northern metro Washington County. This proposal will enhance habitat for the Blanding's turtle and other native species, keep water on the landscape, improve water quality, and protect groundwater. These multiple potential water resource benefits make this site a high priority in the District's 10-Year Watershed Management Plan. The landowner intends to sell to the District, if the District can close immediately once grant is available.

### Design and Scope of Work

This project will perpetually protect 305 acres of land and enhance 100+ acres of upland habitat and 119 acres of wetland habitat in the high priority Bone Lake South Wetland area, as identified in the District's Watershed Management Plan. The District identified this area for protection/enhancement due to the site's presence of the threatened Blanding's turtle, Rusty-patched bumblebee and other native species; native plant communities, including wet meadow/shrub carr and forested wetland; wetland habitat; water storage potential; potential for upland habitat restoration; water quality impact on Bone Lake, which is impaired for eutrophication; and high pollution sensitivity of near-surface materials.

The District will purchase the property from the current owner, a private resident who has indicated their willingness to sell to the District and signed a letter of support for this application. Due to the growing development demand in the 7-county Twin Cities Metro Area, and past developer offers on this property, there is a high degree of urgency to acquire and protect this site before it is parceled off and developed for housing.

The 317-acre site is split into seven parcels, one of which contains a residential house and accessory structures; all of which are in good condition. Prior to closing on the property, the District will work with the landowner, county, and city to re-delineate parcel boundaries in order to separate the homestead from the rest of the property. OHF will only be used to acquire the estimated 305-acre portion of the property that contains the cropland to be converted to native upland habitat and the wetland. The District will acquire the homestead portion of the site using locally leveraged funds and eventually sell that property. The undeveloped portion of the site, to be acquired using OHF, will be enhanced and will remain under Watershed District ownership in perpetuity. Proposed enhancement/restoration actions include wetland enhancement and native upland habitat restoration (prairie or oak savanna).

Protection and enhancement of this land will be part of the District's greenway corridor initiative which seeks to increase habitat quality and connectivity and protect key water resources surrounding the District's nine priority lakes (including Bone Lake). Earlier in 2022 the District received a Conservation Partners Legacy grant in the amount of \$400,000 for the purchase/protection of a property adjacent to Forest Lake, just 3 miles east of the proposed Bone Lake South Wetland property. The District closed on the property, completed grant reporting, and received full grant reimbursement within 3 weeks of grant agreement execution. In 2022 the District will complete a District-wide Natural Resource Inventory and Assessment in order to further target and gather information on sites like this.

The District will coordinate with the City of Scandia, Washington County, MN Land Trust, and Pheasants Forever. It will engage local stakeholders primarily through the Bone Lake Association.

### **How does the proposal address habitats that have significant value for wildlife species of greatest conservation need, and/or threatened or endangered species, and list targeted species?**

The project will permanently protect and enhance a variety of upland and wetland plant community types including an area of southern tamarack swamp (FPs63) which is rare in the State (S2/S3). The existing matrix of

wetland and upland plant communities contained within the project area are known to support Blanding's turtles which are listed as threatened in Minnesota. Once the property is acquired, the District will begin work to enhance plant communities within its boundary. This work will include a thorough ecological assessment and inventory of the property followed by the preparation of targeted and rigorous restoration and management plan. The District will then execute the management plan with an overarching goal of restoring high quality and diverse native species dominated plant communities. This work will maximize the potential for biodiversity within the site and provided greater opportunity to support SGCN.

About 1/3 of the site is mapped as MCBS of biodiversity significance polygons (tamarack swamp, rich fen, shrub swamp) with a ranking of "below". This indicates presence of native plant communities and habitats with high potential and great need for restoration and management.

The District believes that additional SGCN or additional state-listed species may be detected within the area as a result of planned protection and restoration activities. Based on similar restoration projects within similar habitats in and around Washington County, the area has the potential to support additional rare or unique species which depend on biodiverse, native plant communities. The following species could occur: *Rubus fulleri* (threatened), *Rubus semisetosus* (threatened), *Rubus stipulatus* (endangered), *Gaylussacia baccata* (threatened), *Viola lanceolata* (threatened), Red shouldered hawk (special concern). These species are reappearing within similar habitats that are being restored in eastern Anoka and northern Washington Counties. A record of *Epidemia epixanthe michiganensis*, Bog Copper is associated with a nearby southern tamarack swamp; this butterfly species is Tracked in the MN heritage database and is included as a species of greatest conservation need in Tomorrow's Habitat for the Wild and Rare.

Once restoration activities are complete, the District is committed to managing the site in perpetuity to ensure results are maintained.

### **What is the degree of timing/opportunistic urgency and why it is necessary to spend public money for this work as soon as possible?**

Time is of the essence. The opportunity to acquire this property for conservation purposes is short-lived. This project is located within the 7-county Twin Cities Metro Area (property values are reaching an all-time high). The District has observed significant development expansion and conversion of agricultural land to residential subdivision within its boundaries recently. This project has momentum behind it due to recent conversations with the willing landowner. The landowner has been approached by developers in the past. If the District isn't able to purchase the property by mid-2023, the property owner will find another buyer who would likely convert the property to a land use that would adversely affect the habitat and water quality benefits that could be achieved through the presence of a healthy wetland complex. This property represents one of the last areas with 200+ acres of contiguous habitat with a largely intact wetland habitat.

### **Describe how the proposal uses science-based targeting that leverages or expands corridors and complexes, reduces fragmentation or protects areas identified in the MN County Biological Survey:**

The parcels proposed for acquisition/enhancement constitute a major portion of a Regionally Significant Ecological Area (RSEA) corridor and area with highest priority ranking (3). This RSEA connects Bone Lake to the larger Hardwood Creek Corridor to the southwest and Big Marine Lake Corridor to the south. The MCBS polygons proposed for acquisition constitute the center of this highest priority RSEA area.

This property represents one of the last areas, especially within the Metro, with 200+ acres of contiguous habitat with a largely intact wetland habitat. The wetland resides almost entirely within the property and thus offers an excellent opportunity to enhance hydrology and impound additional water without affecting multiple adjacent landowners.

The District engaged in both desktop review and on-site data collection in order to target this priority site. Data

layers include MCBS, NWI, Native Plant Communities Connected with Groundwater, and Pollution Sensitivity of Near-Surface Materials. NHIS identified the presence of the threatened Blanding's turtle in the area. The District conducted a diagnostic study in 2015, collecting flow and water quality samples at the outflow of this wetland complex. Monitoring indicates this tributary contributes 75 lb/yr of phosphorus to Bone Lake. The District took wetland sediment cores, identifying areas with elevated phosphorus concentrations, likely due to historic cattle operations adjacent to the wetland.

Wetland restoration will likely entail excavation of phosphorus-laden legacy sediments, water impoundment, and targeted habitat restoration. ~122 acres of cropland exist on the property, which would be restored to either prairie or oak savannah, both of which are an underrepresented habitat type for the Metro area. The primary outcome of restoration activities will be habitat enhancement, particularly for the threatened Blanding's turtle. Secondary benefits include added water storage and water quality improvement.

Protection, restoration, and enhancement of the uplands directly affects the quality of the MCBS-mapped rich fens and minerotrophic tamarack swamps with regard to water quality, water temperature, and timing/frequency of water entering the wetland system via surface water runoff (rapidly) or groundwater infiltration (slowly over long durations). This has direct implications on these groundwater-dependent wetland plant communities and habitat quality.

### **Which two sections of the Minnesota Statewide Conservation and Preservation Plan are most applicable to this project?**

- H5 Restore land, wetlands and wetland-associated watersheds
- H7 Keep water on the landscape

### **Which two other plans are addressed in this proposal?**

- Other : Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District 2022-2031 Watershed Management Plan, and Lower St. Croix 1W1P 2021-2030 Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan
- Outdoor Heritage Fund: A 25 Year Framework

### **Describe how your program will advance the indicators identified in the plans selected:**

This proposal will advance indicators in the Outdoor Heritage Fund 25-Year Framework by protecting and restoring prairie/oak savanna, wetland habitat and a rare type of forest habitat (southern rich tamarack swamp, FPs63).

This proposal will advance indicators in the CLFLWD 2022-2031 Watershed Management Plan by protecting 119 acres of wetland in the Bone Lake South Wetland priority area, enhancing this wetland complex, and restoring an estimated 100+ acres of upland habitat.

This proposal will advance indicators in the Lower St. Croix One Watershed One Plan 20221-2030 Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan by restoring a degraded wetland with high restoration potential. Wetland restoration/creation is one of the Lower St. Croix's priority implementation actions using Watershed Based Implementation Funds.

Additionally, this proposal will protect southern rich tamarack/conifer swamp (FPs63) and northern rich fen (OPn92) from long term endangerment from invasive species (glossy buckthorn, reed canary grass, phragmites, etc.).

### **Which LSOHC section priorities are addressed in this proposal?**

#### **Northern Forest**

- Restore and enhance habitat on existing protected properties, with preference to habitat for rare, endangered, or threatened species identified by the Minnesota County Biological Survey

**Describe how your program will produce and demonstrate a significant and permanent conservation legacy and/or outcomes for fish, game, and wildlife as indicated in the LSOHC priorities:**

This proposal addresses priority actions and outcomes of the above-described ecological sections, and it will produce and demonstrate significant and permanent conservation legacy and habitat outcomes for game and wildlife.

The habitat enhanced and restored for game and other wildlife through this project will be protected through public ownership by the Comfort Lake–Forest Lake Watershed District, creating a significant and permanent conservation legacy. Restoration activities will include native prairie/oak savanna habitat restoration and wetland habitat enhancement, providing benefits for the threatened Blanding's turtle and other native species. This project includes a rare type of forested wetland system: southern rich conifer swamp (FPs63), conservation rank S2/S3, which is imperiled/vulnerable to extirpation and on the southern edge of its range in Minnesota. This proposal will protect FPs63 from long term endangerment from invasive species (glossy buckthorn, reed canary grass, phragmites, etc.).

This site is located in northern Washington County, in the City of Scandia which does not impose hunting restrictions beyond Minnesota regulations. Once fully restored and open to the public, this site will be an excellent hunting resource for both upland bird and waterfowl.

**What other fund may contribute to this proposal?**

- N/A

**Does this proposal include leveraged funding?**

Yes

**Explain the leverage:**

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District will leverage local tax levy dollars in order to separately purchase the homestead portion of the site so that OHF dollars are only allocated to the undeveloped portion of the site. All CLFLWD staff time costs for project management and ongoing oversight and site management will be leveraged as well.

**Per MS 97A.056, Subd. 24, Please explain whether the request is supplanting or is a substitution for any previous funding that was not from a legacy fund and was used for the same purpose.**

This request does not supplant or substitute for any other funding.

**How will you sustain and/or maintain this work after the Outdoor Heritage Funds are expended?**

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District levies approximately \$1.6 million annually in order to support ongoing operations including a full-time permanent staff of 10 employees and regular land management inspections and maintenance actions. As part of this funding request, the District will develop a restoration and management plan for the site, which will include a schedule for inspection and maintenance activities. The restoration and management plan will be in compliance with MS 97A.056, Subd. 13., paragraph (c), including identification of sufficient funding for implementation.

**Actions to Maintain Project Outcomes**

Year	Source of Funds	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
2023-Ongoing	CLFLWD Tax Levy	Annual inspection	Necessary	-

			maintenance actions identified from inspection	
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### Identify indicator species and associated quantities this habitat will typically support:

Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*): The conversion of 100+ acres of cropland to oak savanna or restored native prairie (planting seed mix BWSR U3) is estimated to grow an additional 500+ new stems of milkweed and produce an additional 250+ monarch butterflies. An acre of restored/enhanced grassland could potentially contribute 3-8 monarchs to the population (LSOHC Guidance 2016).

Blanding's turtle (*Emydoidea blandingii*): Within a 2.5-mile radius of the proposed acquisition property, there are twelve element occurrence observations for the state-threatened Blanding's turtle (NHIS database, 2022). This is one of the largest concentrations of Blanding's turtles in Minnesota (Carol Hall, DNR Herpetologist, Personal Communication). This proposal supports all required habitats for Blanding's turtle to persist and breed. The District will restore/manage 305 acres of critical wetland/upland habitats which will directly support nesting, feeding, juvenile survivorship, overwintering/hibernation.

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*): One element occurrence of trumpeter swan occurs within 4.5 miles of the proposed acquisition property (NHIS 2022). The proposed restoration/management of 119 acres of wetland with associated open water provides breeding, nesting and foraging habitat for one additional breeding pair of trumpeter swan, (June 2016 LSOHC Guidance).

Mallards (*Anas platyrhynchos*): The proposed 119-acre wetland restoration of 119 supports the life history requirements of an additional 48 mallard ducks (June 2016 LSOHC guidance).

White-tail deer (*Odocoileus virginianus*): This proposal provides critical habitat for white-tail deer, supporting an additional 6 deer per 300 acres of restored habitat (June 2016 LSOHC Guidance).

### How will the program directly involve, engage, and benefit BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) and diverse communities:

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District has a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We seek to use diversity, equity, and inclusion as a lens in project, partner, and contractor selection. District staff is in the process of developing a Comprehensive Education & Outreach Plan, which will include a plan/policy for diversity, equity, and inclusion. The District will seek input on the plan from a variety of diverse organizations and experts on the topic of DEI. District staff attends a monthly interagency workgroup to discuss DEI's intersection with watershed management. The land area where this project is located will be open to all members of the public for hiking, bird watching, hunting, and other outdoor recreational activities. The District will also implement access/information/educational signs in several languages so as to encourage use of the property by underserved/underrepresented populations. Target languages, based on communities present in the Twin Cities area, include Spanish, Hmong, and Somali. The public can also provide comments to the Board of Managers of the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District by attending monthly Board meetings.

### Activity Details

#### Requirements

**If funded, this proposal will meet all applicable criteria set forth in MS 97A.056?**

Yes

**Will county board or other local government approval be formally sought\*\* prior to acquisition, per 97A.056 subd 13(j)?**

Yes

**Is the land you plan to acquire (fee title) free of any other permanent protection?**

Yes

**Will restoration and enhancement work follow best management practices including MS 84.973 Pollinator Habitat Program?**

Yes

**Is the restoration and enhancement activity on permanently protected land per 97A.056, Subd 13(f), tribal lands, and/or public waters per MS 103G.005, Subd. 15?**

Yes

**Where does the activity take place?**

- Other : Watershed District owned

## Land Use

**Will there be planting of any crop on OHF land purchased or restored in this program?**

No

**Is this land currently open for hunting and fishing?**

No

**Will the land be open for hunting and fishing after completion?**

Yes

**Describe any variation from the State of Minnesota regulations:**

City of Scandia does not have any specific hunting ordinances. Hunting regulations align with State of Minnesota statutes. There is some open water wetland present on the site, but fishing is not a likely use.

**Are there currently trails or roads on any of the proposed acquisitions?**

Yes

**Describe the types of trails or roads and the allowable uses:**

Farm trail system and crossings throughout the property.

**Will the trails or roads remain and uses continue to be allowed after OHF acquisition?**

Yes

**How will maintenance and monitoring be accomplished?**

Trail system will remain in place, but will not be maintained or improved and will revert back to natural state over time and/or be used as foot path/hiking access through the property for hunting and recreation.

**Will new trails or roads be developed or improved as a result of the OHF acquisition?**

No

**Will the land that you acquire (fee or easement) be restored or enhanced within this proposal's funding and availability?**

Yes



## Other OHF Appropriation Awards

Have you received OHF dollars in the past through LSOHC?

No

### Timeline

Activity Name	Estimated Completion Date
Activity 1 - Execute purchase agreement	July 2023
Activity 2 - Close on acquisition	July/August 2023
Activity 3 - start restoration/enhancement projects	August 2023
Activity 4 - complete restoration/enhancement projects	No later than August 2027



**Budget****Totals**

Item	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Personnel	-	\$15,000	CLFLWD Tax Levy	\$15,000
Contracts	\$875,000	-	-	\$875,000
Fee Acquisition w/ PILT	-	-	-	-
Fee Acquisition w/o PILT	\$3,500,000	\$750,000	CLFLWD Tax Levy	\$4,250,000
Easement Acquisition	-	-	-	-
Easement Stewardship	-	-	-	-
Travel	-	-	-	-
Professional Services	\$100,000	-	-	\$100,000
Direct Support Services	-	-	-	-
DNR Land Acquisition Costs	-	-	-	-
Capital Equipment	-	-	-	-
Other Equipment/Tools	-	-	-	-
Supplies/Materials	-	-	-	-
DNR IDP	-	-	-	-
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$4,475,000</b>	<b>\$765,000</b>	-	<b>\$5,240,000</b>

**Personnel**

Position	Annual FTE	Years Working	Funding Request	Antic. Leverage	Leverage Source	Total
Land Mgmt Specialist	0.03	1.0	-	\$3,200	CLFLWD Tax Levy	\$3,200
Project Coordinator	0.03	1.0	-	\$4,400	CLFLWD Tax Levy	\$4,400
Planning Coordinator	0.01	1.0	-	\$700	CLFLWD Tax Levy	\$700
District Administrator	0.03	1.0	-	\$6,700	CLFLWD Tax Levy	\$6,700

**Amount of Request:** \$4,475,000**Amount of Leverage:** \$765,000**Leverage as a percent of the Request:** 17.09%**DSS + Personnel:** -**As a % of the total request:** 0.0%**Easement Stewardship:** -**As a % of the Easement Acquisition:** -**Describe and explain leverage source and confirmation of funds:**

District will leverage local tax levy dollars in order to: separately purchase the homestead portion of the site so that OHF dollars are only allocated to the undeveloped portion of the site, provide personnel time to oversee and manage project, and provide long-term staffing and perpetual site management.

**Does this proposal have the ability to be scalable?**

Yes

### **If the project received 70% of the requested funding**

#### **Describe how the scaling would affect acres/activities and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

Obtain a loan to help cover acquisition cost, implement enhancements, create perpetual conservation easements on the restored/enhanced areas, sell the entire site for potential development in non-protected areas to recoup some funds. Alternative: work with MLT to implement conservation easements first, drop price of acquisition, and acquire using OHF.

#### **Describe how personnel and DSS expenses would be adjusted and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

N/A

### **If the project received 50% of the requested funding**

#### **Describe how the scaling would affect acres/activities and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

Obtain a loan to help cover acquisition cost, implement enhancements, create perpetual conservation easements on the restored/enhanced areas, sell the entire site for potential development in non-protected areas to recoup some funds. Alternative: work with MLT to implement conservation easements first, drop price of acquisition, and acquire using OHF.

#### **Describe how personnel and DSS expenses would be adjusted and if not proportionately reduced, why?**

N/A

### **Contracts**

#### **What is included in the contracts line?**

Restoration and enhancement contracts.

### **Fee Acquisition**

#### **What is the anticipated number of fee title acquisition transactions?**

1

### **Federal Funds**

#### **Do you anticipate federal funds as a match for this program?**

No

Output Tables**Acres by Resource Type (Table 1)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	0	0	-	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	119	100	0	86	305
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>305</b>

**How many of these Prairie acres are Native Prairie? (Table 1b)**

Type	Native Prairie (acres)
Restore	100
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0
Protect in Easement	0
Enhance	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

**Total Requested Funding by Resource Type (Table 2)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat	Total Funding
Restore	-	\$445,000	-	-	\$445,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	\$1,365,600	\$1,147,500	-	\$986,900	\$3,500,000
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	\$530,000	-	-	-	\$530,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,895,600</b>	<b>\$1,592,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$986,900</b>	<b>\$4,475,000</b>

**Acres within each Ecological Section (Table 3)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Acres
Restore	0	0	0	0	0	0
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	-	0
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	0	0	0	0	305	305
Protect in Easement	0	0	0	0	0	0
Enhance	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>305</b>

**Total Requested Funding within each Ecological Section (Table 4)**

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest	Total Funding
Restore	-	-	-	-	\$445,000	\$445,000
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$3,500,000	\$3,500,000
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	\$530,000	\$530,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>\$4,475,000</b>	<b>\$4,475,000</b>

**Average Cost per Acre by Resource Type (Table 5)**

Type	Wetland	Prairie	Forest	Habitat
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Restore	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	\$11,475	\$11,475	-	\$11,475
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-

### Average Cost per Acre by Ecological Section (Table 6)

Type	Metro/Urban	Forest/Prairie	SE Forest	Prairie	N. Forest
Restore	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee with State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	-
Protect in Fee w/o State PILT Liability	-	-	-	-	\$11,475
Protect in Easement	-	-	-	-	-
Enhance	-	-	-	-	-

### Target Lake/Stream/River Feet or Miles

## Outcomes

### Programs in the northern forest region:

- Healthy populations of endangered, threatened, and special concern species as well as more common species ~ *Performance measures: The District will report on acreage of wetland and prairie habitat actually restored, including quantity of habitat created for the monarch butterfly, Blanding's turtle, trumpeter swan, mallard, white-tail deer, and Rusty-patched bumblebee.*

## Parcels

### Sign-up Criteria?

[Yes](#)

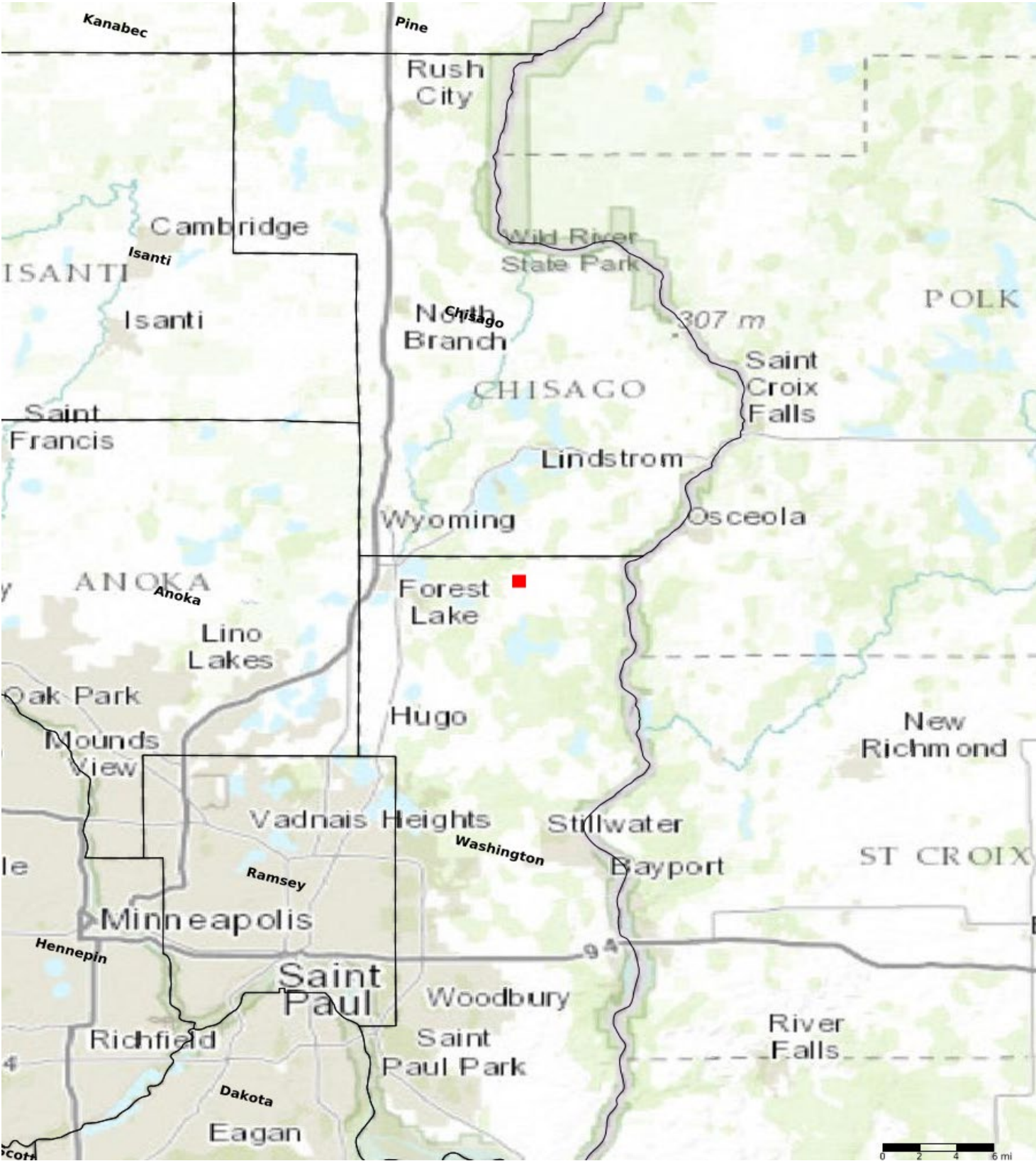
### Explain the process used to identify, prioritize, and select the parcels on your list:

These parcels are located within the high priority Bone Lake South Wetland area, which is identified in the District's 2022-2031 Watershed Management Plan. The District identified this high priority area for protection/enhancement due to the site's presence of the threatened Blanding's turtle; presence of native plant communities connected with groundwater, including wet meadow/shrub carr and forested wetland; presence of wetland habitat and water storage potential; potential for prairie habitat restoration; proximity to Bone Lake, which is impaired for aquatic recreation due to eutrophication; and high pollution sensitivity of near-surface materials. MCBS native plant communities include shrub swamp, rich fen (transition), and tamarack swamp minerotrophic subtype. The project will permanently protect and enhance a variety of upland and wetland plant community types including an area of southern tamarack swamp (FPs63) which is rare in the State (S2/S3).

### Protect Parcels

Name	County	TRDS	Acres	Est Cost	Existing Protection
Larson Property	Washington	03220208	305	\$3,500,000	No

Parcel Map



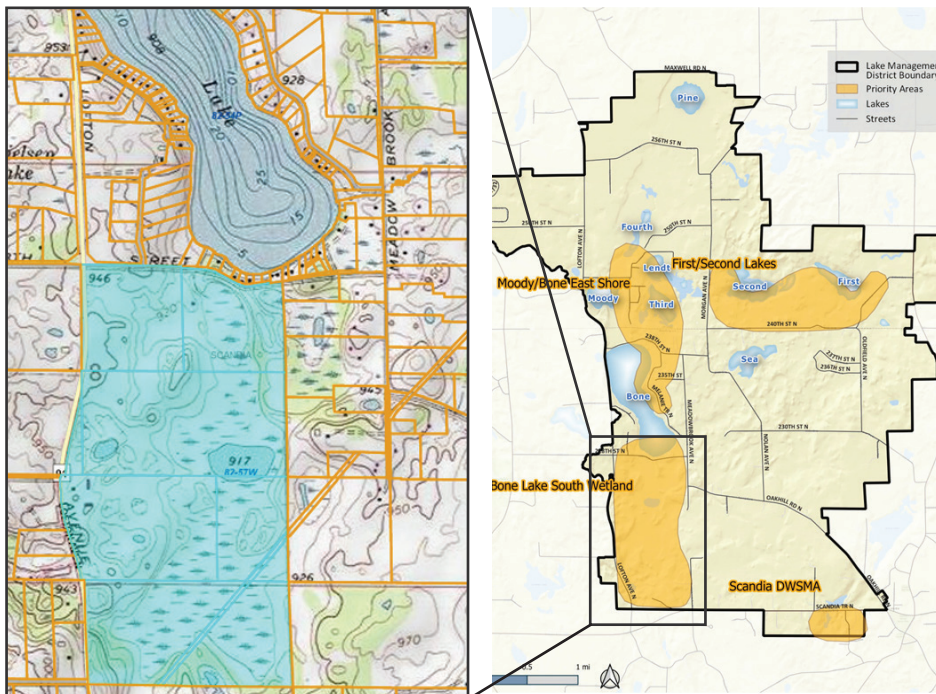
- Protect in Easement
- ▲ Protect in Fee with PILT
- Protect in Fee W/O PILT
- ★ Restore
- ✕ Enhance
- ✚ Other



# BONE LAKE SOUTH WETLAND ACQUISITION & RESTORATION



Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District will acquire in fee, implement habitat enhancements, and perpetually protect a property containing 119 acres of high priority wetland south of Bone Lake in the northern metro Washington County. The property is 305 acres and also presents an opportunity to establish 100+ acres of upland prairie or oak savanna habitat. This proposal will enhance habitat for the Blanding's turtle and other native species, keep water on the landscape, improve water quality, and protect groundwater. The landowner intends to sell to the District, so the District will close immediately once grant is available.



## Priority Area

Bone Lake South Wetland (highlighted above in light blue) is a priority protection/restoration area identified in the [10-year Watershed Management Plan](#).

## Habitat Benefit

Enhance and preserve native habitat for threatened and endangered species including the Blanding's turtle and Rusty-patched bumblebee

## OVERVIEW

### WHO:

Comfort Lake- Forest Lake Watershed District

### WHAT:

Fee title acquisition of property containing wetland and restorable upland habitat for enhancement and perpetual protection.

### WHERE:

The property underlying a high priority wetland complex south of Bone Lake in northern Washington County (Scandia, MN).

### WHEN:

Immediately once grant funds are available. Protect wetland/upland habitat acreage before it can be developed into residential subdivision with potential wetland fill and bank credits outside of this region.

### HOW:

Landowner is willing to sell to the District and signed a letter of support for this proposal. Close on sale immediately once grant funds are available, then begin restoration work thereafter.





# BONE LAKE SOUTH WETLAND ACQUISITION & RESTORATION

## Why this location?

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District identified this site as a priority area due to several factors:

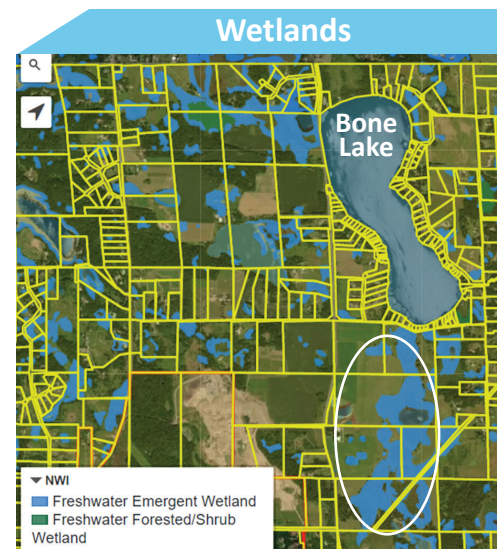
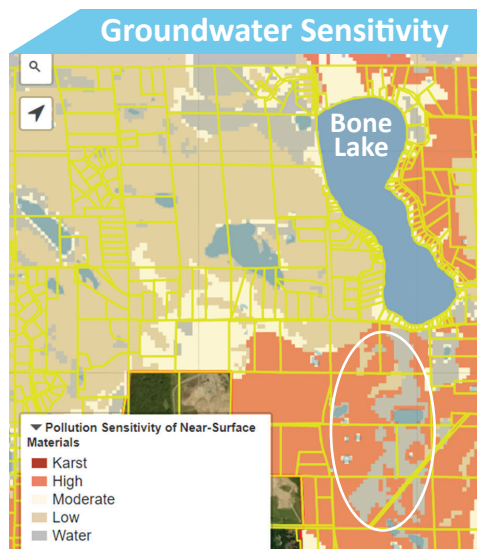
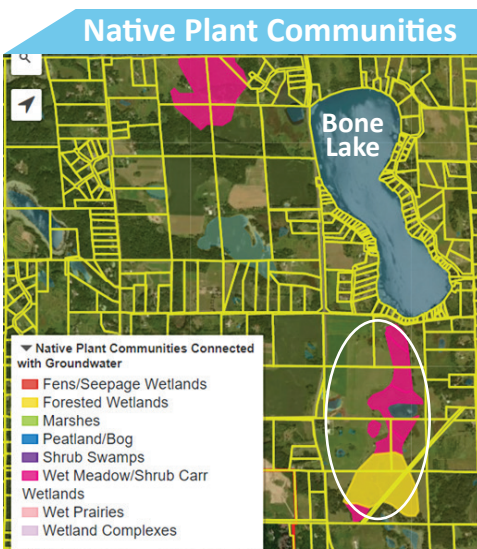
- It contains native plant communities connected with groundwater, including wet meadow/shrub carr and forested wetland.
- It is close in proximity to Bone Lake, which is impaired for aquatic recreation due to eutrophication.
- It is an area of high pollution sensitivity of near-surface materials.
- It is predominantly covered by wetland and restorable plant habitat.

This site is called out in the District's [10-year Watershed Management Plan](#) as a high priority area for protection in order to achieve water resource benefits and District goals including:

- Provide habitat benefits
- Keep water on the landscape
- Improve water quality
- Protect groundwater

### Key Outputs & Outcomes

- 305 acres of land protected in fee and enhanced
  - 119 acres of wetland
  - 186 acres of upland native prairie or oak savanna
- Protect biologically diverse wetland and native prairie/oak savanna plant communities
- Promote healthy populations of threatened and endangered species such as Blanding's turtle and Rusty-patched bumblebee



**Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District**  
44 Lake St. South, Suite A | Forest Lake, MN 55025  
651-395-5850 | [info@clflwd.org](mailto:info@clflwd.org) | [www.clflwd.org](http://www.clflwd.org) | [@clflwd](https://twitter.com/clflwd)

[illegible]

**LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR COMFORT LAKE FOREST LAKE WATERSHED  
DISTRICT:**

**Southern Bone Lake Agriculture Lands Acquisition**

Date: May 17, 2022

To: Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

From: Roger Larson

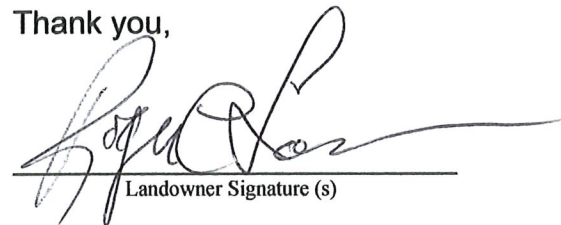
To whom it may concern,

Please consider this letter as support for the Southern Bone Lake Agriculture Lands Acquisition grant that the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District (CLFLWD) is requesting from the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council.

I am the owner of the property and I support the District's goals of conserving, restoring, and protecting habitat within its boundaries.

I look forward to working with the District to make their vision for this property a reality.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Larson', written over a horizontal line.

Landowner Signature (s)

22211 LOFTON AVE N

SCANDIA, MN 55073

Landowner Address

Bone Lake Association  
12166 228<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Scandia, MN 55073

Date: May 23 , 2022

To: Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council  
100 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.  
State Office Building, Room 55  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Re: Letter of Support for Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District Proposal

To whom it may concern,

The Bone Lake Association supports the Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District (CLFLWD) in its proposal to purchase and protect the Larson property south of Bone Lake. The mission of the Bone Lake Association is to promote friendships, to celebrate events and to improve the water quality to preserve the natural beauty of Bone Lake for future generations. By preserving this property which contains native plant species connected with groundwater and a priority wetland draining to Bone Lake, this proposal will help protect wetland habitat (particularly for the threatened Blanding's turtle), groundwater quality, and water quality in Bone Lake.

We fully support this project, and hope the grant proposal is well received.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Lofstrom', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Lofstrom  
President  
Bone Lake Association