

MEMORANDUM
Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

To: Board of Managers
From: Mike Kinney
Subject: RCWD-SRWMO Boundary Review

Date: March 21, 2019

Background/Discussion

Staff has recently been in communication with the Rice Creek Watershed District (RCWD), the Sunrise River Watershed Management Organization (SRWMO) and the Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) regarding the WDs/WMO political boundaries as they align with hydrologic boundaries where the three entities converge. The area in question is located just outside the District's western border, south of Broadway Avenue and east of Kettle River Boulevard NE (see map below). It is in Anoka County.

The CLFLWD north-south boundary in that area follows the county line between Anoka and Washington. While it is presently uncertain, it seems possible that part of this area (up to 6 parcels) may drain to CLFLWD. Further investigation is necessary to confirm the actual hydrology. Work completed by the SRWMO suggest that they do not drain into the SRWMO.

In summary, the issue is:

- A 2015 boundary change created a geographically disconnected area of the Sunrise River WMO. It is 8 parcels.
- Of the 8 parcels, at least 2 hydrologically drain to the RCWD. Others may drain to the CLFLWD or RCWD. None appear to drain to the SRWMO, the organization which they are now within.
- An examination of these properties might also lead to discovering other boundary edits, particularly between the CLFLWD and RCWD.

The RCWD recently created a program to address boundary adjustments in a more systematic manner. Pending RCWD Board approval, in 2019 the RCWD will initiate the technical process of confirming the RCWD hydrologic boundary and associated political boundary along the entire common boundary with SRWMO and Coon Creek WD. Note that this would not include any BWSR boundary adjustment petition processes.

In the meantime, the CLFLWD Board may wish to discuss the possibility of a scenario in which part of this area in Anoka County drains to our District. Incorporating these 6 (or less) parcels would generally entail a formal investigation of the area, going through the boundary change petition process with BWSR, and incorporating a third county (Anoka) into the District's ongoing coordination process. BWSR staff has already advised that a manager living in Anoka County would not be required to be added to the Board (i.e. the Board makeup requirements would remain as three Washington County managers and two Chisago County managers). Alternatively, if some part is confirmed to drain to our District, CLFLWD may wish to pursue a scenario in which it cooperates with RCWD and/or SRWMO to ensure proper management (e.g. permitting) of that relatively small area.

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Area in question circled in yellow, CLFLWD boundary in red

Recommended Action

At this time, staff is requesting Board direction to stay informed on this matter as it progresses. Additionally, the Board may wish to direct EOR to begin some preliminary investigation of our own regarding the hydrology in this area.