

E-Newsletter August 2016



[OTC COLA WEBSITE](#)

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2016 CALENDAR of OTC COLA Member Meetings Third Thursday of the month

- **Aug 18 Annual Meeting & Lake Association Awards**
 - **Sep 15 Pelican Lake AIS Education Boat Tour
(Special location: Fair Hills, Pelican Lake)**
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From the OTC COLA President- David Majkrzak

This is the time of year when the discovery of new zebra mussel (ZM) infestations are more likely to be found. With the ZM microscopic veligers peaking in the warm water temperatures of July, they attach and grow to visible juveniles in August, with 1/4 inch size young adults from this year's "hatch" showing up in September. Of course adult ZM's that have been somehow moved, or been in a lake for over a year are larger, about thumb fingernail size, and can also show up on hard surfaces. Unfortunately, we have a few new cases of ZM infestations already reported in OTC, and other potential concerns being investigated. Any potential new cases of AIS should be reported to Mark Ranweiler of the Fergus Falls MNDNR, 218-739-7576 (x254). Please record and photograph date, time, location etc., so proper

follow-up investigation work can be completed.

We also recently received word that no new OTC lakes will be stocked with muskie this year. This is welcome news for the majority of fishermen and property owners of Lizzie, Loon and Franklin Lakes who are concerned about the immediate and long term effects of this non-native predator fish on other more desired sport fish, and the lake ecosystem.

August usually can be a great month for lake enjoyment; great weather, warmer water, less busy schedules (for those not involved with the back to school rush). Enjoy the lakes... Please attend our upcoming OTC COLA Annual Meeting and Awards night on August 18th. And let us know how we can help do a better job of representing your lake interests and concerns.

[David Majkrzak](#)

OTC COLA Member Meeting July 21, 2016



Barry Stratton

Barry Stratton joined the MN DNR, Ecological and Water Resources in Fergus Falls after 28 years with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Barry supervises hydrology and watercraft inspection efforts and is responsible for AIS management.

What does the DNR do when AIS is reported? The first step is investigation. Often when zebra mussels (ZM) are reported to the DNR they are actually native snails or native clams. Time and effort can be saved if the original report includes a picture. All reports are investigated. Presently there are 243 bodies of water in the County with ZM; 111 have adults, 132 are designated "precaution" lakes (suspected to soon contain ZM), 196 are lakes. Confirmed veligers have been found in an additional 11 lakes.

So far attempts to control ZM using chemicals or other means have been unsuccessful. It is not

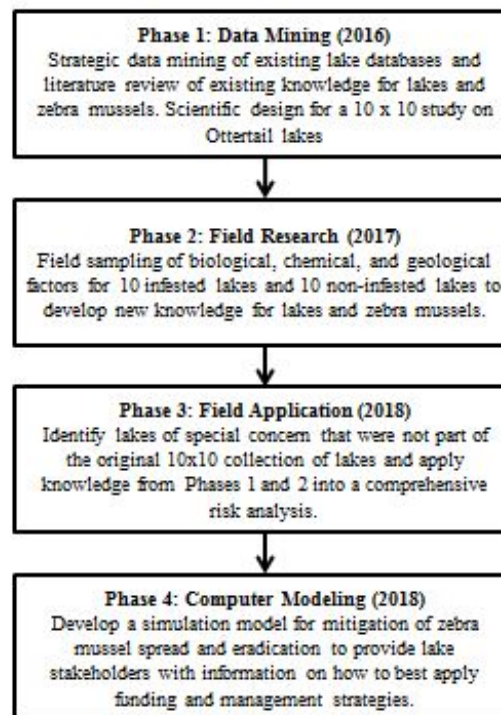
unders tood why some lakes are infested while others seem to be immune. The DNR also will de-list bodies of water as ZM infested when it is determined they are no longer present.

Barry Stratton

Otter Tail AIS Task Force Partners with RMB to Combat Zebra Mussels

RMB Environmental Labs Inc. has been provided funds to begin a scientific research study on potential factors controlling the distribution of zebra mussels in Otter Tail County lakes. Since zebra mussels were first discovered in Minnesota in 2007, on average 24 new lake infestations have occurred per year, and approximately three of those lakes per year are found within Otter Tail County. While the majority of studies on zebra mussels have focused on only a few factors, this study will examine hundreds of variables, including biological, chemical, geological, and human factors that potentially contribute to the spread of zebra mussels. It will be the most exhaustive study on zebra mussel distribution in Otter Tail County ever conducted.

RMB has proposed a study with four separate phases, which include data mining, field research, field application, and computer modeling. The Otter Tail Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force has agreed to fund part of Phase 1, which involves pulling all information for lakes of interest from state databases and formatting them to be useable in an analysis. RMB will make their first progress report to the Task Force on August 8, 2016 and discuss the next step in using these collected data to begin using statistical methods to learn about which set of variables are most important in determining whether zebra mussels are in a particular lake. The four phase study, should it be funded in full, will seek to answer why some lakes are particularly vulnerable to becoming infested and some are not. Ultimately, results will help stakeholders to make more informed decisions because they will have the best information available about how limited invasive species funds can be best spent to combat zebra mussel invasiveness.



Dan McEwen, Ph.D. RMB Environmental Laboratories

Zebra mussels confirmed in East Spirit Lake, Lake Osakis

The Department of Natural Resources has confirmed zebra mussels in northwestern Minnesota's East Spirit Lake in Otter Tail County and central Minnesota's Lake Osakis in Todd

and Douglas counties.

On July 9, an East Spirit Lake user brought a one-quarter inch zebra mussel to the DNR Fergus Falls office. A subsequent two-day search of four locations by DNR staff found one live zebra mussel one-quarter mile from the initial report.

On July 20, DNR invasive species staff conducted dive and shoreline searches to investigate reported zebra mussel veligers (larvae) in Lake Osakis. They found two three-quarter inch adult zebra mussels.

Invasive species alert signs are being posted at lake accesses, and the DNR will determine whether connected waters will also be added to the infested waters list. The DNR appreciates the help of the alert citizen who reported the find on East Spirit Lake and the work of the Sauk River Watershed District collecting veligers that led to the confirmation in Lake Osakis.

While zebra mussels are a serious problem for infested lakes, more than 98 percent of Minnesota's lakes are not listed as infested with zebra mussels. To protect the state's waters from the spread of invasive species and the environmental, recreational and economic damage they cause, Minnesota law requires boaters and anglers to:

- Clean their watercraft of aquatic plants and prohibited invasive species.
- Drain all water by removing drain plugs and keeping them out during transport.
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.

In 2016, there are more DNR-trained watercraft inspectors and more decontamination units on Minnesota lakes than ever before. Watercraft inspectors check to ensure that boaters and anglers follow clean, drain, dispose laws and may deny access if necessary. Decontamination stations provide a free and thorough process of removing aquatic plants and animals.

More information, including a 30-second public service announcement about stopping the spread of aquatic invasive species, is available on the [web page](#).

Aquatic Invaders Summit II

An Exploration of Local Collaboration, Innovation and Opportunity

Jeff Forester of Minnesota Lakes and Rivers (MLR) and Don Hickman of The Initiative Foundation are hosting the Aquatic Invaders Summit II on October 5-6 at the River's Edge Convention Center, St Cloud, MN.

Click [HERE](#) for Information

Lake Association Newsletter Exchange

One of the primary goals of the Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA) is to assist lake associations to educate and inform their members, their elected officials, and the general public regarding the necessity of environmental concerns and policies that protect our lakes, rivers and streams. Communication is the key to accomplishing this goal.

A Newsletter Exchange database of lake association editors is being constructed so editors will be included on distribution lists for other lake association newsletters. The exchange will be very useful for editors to take appropriate copy from other lake association newsletters to use in their own newsletters. This process will provide the opportunity to disseminate valuable information like new regulations, AIS threats, etc. quickly and effectively throughout the County.

OTC COLA Newsletter editors desiring to be included in the exchange should contact [John Kruse](#), OTC COLA Administrative Assistant,

Muskie Issue Updates

Muskie Fishing Drops to 13th Place-Fishing Preference

A new MNDNR study now shows muskie fishing has dropped from 6th place to 13th place in fisherman's preference in Minnesota. This is an interesting fact for the fish they claim to be the "fastest growing fishing segment in MN".

This recent study, completed in June 2015 and published under the title of "2015 Schroeder Study" is the most recent and largest survey done by the MNDNR accessing input from resident fisherman.

Some other details in this study have also been misrepresented by some in the MNDNR, and promoted as reasons for continued muskie stocking. The MNDNR has now admitted they were misinterpreting this study in regards to the claim that 32 % of fisherman "prefer" muskie fishing, and have corrected this information to 16% on their web-site.

See full study, and new ranking table where muskie has now dropped to 13th place.

[Muskie Schroeder 2015 ranking table](#)

[Muskie Schroeder 2015 full study](#)

Support State-Wide Common Sense Sport Fishing

While OTC received good news regarding no additional muskie stocking in new lakes, our friends in other areas of the state were not as fortunate.

Please support other lakes in the state, and our efforts to limit the spread of this non-native fish into new lake ecosystems. By standing together our voices can be heard.

Click [HERE](#) to sign the Gull Lake Petition.

Click [HERE](#) to join the state-wide Minnesotans for Family Fishing database.

OTC COLA Annual Meeting and Volunteer Awards

The Annual Member Meeting of the OTC COLA will be held 7:00 p.m., August 18, 2016 at the Otter Tail Community Rooms, 93 Lake Avenue South, Ottertail, MN 56571. ALL OTC COLA Members are invited to attend.

Coalition of Lake Associations/COLA Awards Volunteer of the Year Award and Lake Association of the Year Award *Presented on August 18, 2016 at the COLA Meeting*

The monthly General Meeting of OTC COLA will focus on honoring volunteers who tirelessly share their time and talent, either individually or as a group.

The OTC COLA's **Volunteer of the Year and Lake Association of the Year** is about inspiring, recognizing and encouraging volunteers to assist in protecting and preserving the lakes they love.

Do not pass up this opportunity to inspire, recognize, encourage and engage your volunteers who have demonstrated that they have the fortitude to meet challenges and accomplish goals.

Please show your support by attending the awards presentations at the OTC COLA General Meeting on August 18, 2016, in the Otter Tail Community Rooms in the City of Ottertail.

[Jerry Horgen](#)

Pelican Lake AISEducation Boat Tour

The September OTCCOLA Member Meeting will be held on the Fair Hills boat on Pelican Lake, September 15, 2016. The boat will depart at 5:00 p.m. During the tour Jerry Horgen and Moriya Rufer will conduct the AIS training currently being presented at schools and for organizations in Otter Tail County. Snacks will be served and a cash bar will be available during the ride. In case of inclement weather the event will be moved indoors at Fair Hills. For more details on the education session contact [Jerry Horgen](#) or [Moriya Rufer](#). Space is limited to 40 persons. For reservations contact [John Kruse](#)

Lookout for Divers



Diving flags look like this

The Little McDonald and Kerbs Lake Association (LMKLA) Board has been asked by some of those who dive on our lakes to do some education, making our residents aware that areas flagged by divers need to be avoided, for the safety of the divers. There have been several incidents lately of fast-moving jet skis and speed boats getting much too near to divers.

All operators of any watercraft (except those involved in the dive operation) must stay 150 ft (half a football field) away from any diving flag. If there is more than one flag on the water, that means that a perimeter is being marked, and boaters must stay 150 feet outside of that entire perimeter.

Also, we continue to remind residents that within 150' of the shoreline is a No Wake Zone. Please be sensitive to the fact that erosion is ongoing around the lake, and wakes exacerbate the problem.

Thank you

[LMKLA Board](#)

Power Loading Damaging to Boat Landings

We have become aware of an issue of boat launch area damage due to boat loading, when the boat's power is used to load/push the boat onto a trailer. This practice is called power loading, and with many

of the bigger/ higher horsepower boats, can cause considerable damage to the boat launch area (MNDNR boat access areas). The power of the water coming off the propeller of the boat can wash away sand, rocks and gravel, as well as even concrete "planks", ruining the access for the next user. The gravel and sand that is pushed back can also create a berm or shallow area right behind the typical loading area, making it difficult for the next boat to even enter the usual boat loading area.

Power loading has seriously damaged many MNDNR boat access ramps, and is causing major concerns for the ongoing maintenance and upkeep of these public water launch areas. Please encourage all property owners and lake users to limit the use of boat power to load their trailers. The problem is aggravated by lower lake water elevations, and hopefully the recent rains will raise the lake levels and help the issue. However certain lake accesses are shallower and not as steep, so the power loading damage can be an issue all the time on some MNDNR lake access locations. Please do your part to help keep the accesses open and usable for all the public.

[Dave Majkrzak.](#)

MN State Issues

Minnesota News Affecting Otter Tail County

Enbridge pipeline- Environmental groups question federal order on Enbridge pipeline in Minnesota

Minneapolis- Representatives of local environmental groups remain skeptical about the inclusion of Minnesota oil pipelines in a \$172 million settlement reached last week by pipeline company Enbridge and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for 2010 oil spills in Michigan and Illinois.

Click [HERE](#) for full article.

Sulfide Mining-Toxic pollution from new mine proposals threaten our lakes, rivers, streams, wetlands and groundwater.

Sulfide mining extracts copper, nickel, and other metals from sulfide ores. The environmental risks are much different from Minnesota's traditional iron ore mining. Here's just one reason why: when rain falls on the waste from iron mining, it makes rust; when rain falls on sulfide ore waste, sulfuric acid is produced. Sulfuric acid leaches out metals and chemicals from the waste and creates acid mine drainage which:

- Contaminates lakes, rivers, and groundwater
- Harms human health, fish, wildlife, and damages entire ecosystems

Click [HERE](#) for full article.

Lake Association Issue Updates

OTC COLA Lake Associations are invited to submit newsletter updates on issues currently affecting their lakes. Examples would be commercial developments, detection of invasive species, help with pursuit for grants, etc. Please submit appropriate items to [John Kruse](#), OTC COLA Administrative Assistant.

Star Lake- Casino

The proposed casino on Star Lake is currently undergoing environmental reviews. [STAR LAKE](#)

Lake Six- Grant application

Lake Six is pursuing a \$5,000 grant from the Fresh Water Society to write a Lake Management Plan. They are inviting advice and support from other OTC COLA lake associations to construct an action plan comprised of reasonable ideas from lake residents.

[LAKE SIX](#)

Pelican Lake Property Owners Association (PLPOA)- Golf Course Conversion to RV Park

PLPOA is pursuing action to prevent the sale of a golf course to a new 150 unit RV Park, which would adjoin a 185 unit existing RV Park. Neither of the RV Parks own any lake frontage and use the public DNR access as the only access to the lake. [PLPOA](#)

Pelican Group of Lakes Improvement District (PGOLID)- DNR dam on Pelican River
The Pelican River dam controlling water flow out of Pelican Lake is deteriorating and is becoming unsafe. PGOLID is encouraging the DNR to repair the dam.
[PGOLID](#)

[John Kruse](#) OTC COLA Administrative Assistant

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