

E-Newsletter December 2016



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In This Issue:

- **From the President**
- **Train the Teachers to Train The Kids**
- **Lake Associations, Local Governments Boost Spending Against Aquatic Invaders**
- **Save Our Lakes for the Future**
- **OTC COLA Lakes Monitoring Program**
- **Lake Association Newsletter Exchange**
- **How to Build Grassroots Advocacy for Lakes and Rivers**
- **OTC COLA Website Update in Progress**
- **Lake Association Issue Updates**

From the OTC COLA President- David Majkrzak

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. This is always a fun and nostalgic time of the year for all of us. Watching the excitement of the

grandkids reminds me of my “growing up” days, and what this time of year means to all of us.

Next year MNCOLA and Minnesota Lakes and Rivers (MLR) are co-hosting a webinar on “build grassroots advocacy for Lakes and Rivers”, December 15th, see more info below.

Going forward please support and provide input to the groups that promote and defend your lake property investment and enjoyment.

Merry Christmas!!

David Majkrzak



Train the Teachers to Train the Kids

“Train the Teachers to Train the Kids” is a program funded by the Otter Tail County Commissioners and approved by the Otter Tail Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force. The purpose of this program is to give accurate data on aquatic invasive species (AIS) to science teachers (in eleven school districts) in order that science teachers inform their kids and in turn “kids train other kids” on the prevention of aquatic invasive species in a format unique to kids. A unique format, if you will, using perhaps some form of technology, then broadcasting the information to other kids in each school district, again in a format that other kids will respond to... “kids training other kids.”

Go **HERE** to learn more.

Jerry Horgen

**Lake Associations, Local Governments Boost Spending
Against Aquatic Invaders**



Lake associations and local governments have significantly boosted their spending in recent years against aquatic invasive species, or AIS, according to a statewide survey of local efforts.

Although the dollar amount — about \$3 million a year — isn't huge, it's nearly half of what the state government spends on prevention and eradication of invaders like zebra mussels and starry stonewort.

Private residents and lake associations spent nearly \$2 million fighting invasive species in 2015, while local governments spent about \$1 million, according to the survey, sponsored by the Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations and Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates. That's nearly double the amount spent five years ago by private groups and local governments.

"Lake associations, if taken collectively, are the hardest-working, most generous, most effective conservation group in the state," said Jeff Forester, executive director of Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates.

Forester said the statewide spending survey actually understates the amount being spent locally, as fewer than half of the state's 500-plus lake associations participated.

By [John Reinan](#), Star Tribune
December 06, 2016 -12:48 AM

Save Our Lakes for the Future

Lake property owners are taking a serious look at ways to protect and manage lakes for the enjoyment of future generations. The most common and productive way is to GET ORGANIZED.

Lake associations are fundamental to this effort. They provide the opportunity for friends and neighbors at the lake to join together to work for

the common good. Otter Tail Coalition of Lake Associations offers programs of communication, organizational development, Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) control and water sampling to assist lake associations.

Lake Improvement Districts (LID) sanctioned by Otter Tail County are a valuable component of the overall effort to preserve Otter Tail lakes. There are currently six LIDs in Otter Tail County; Big McDonald Lake Improvement District, Little McDonald Kerbs and Paul Lake Improvement District, Pelican Group of Lakes Improvement District, Pine Lakes Improvement District, South Turtle Lake Improvement District, and Devils Lake Improvement District. LIDs are funded by County tax receipts.

Another tool used to protect and manage lakes is the formation of foundations. Foundations possess the opportunity to incorporate as a tax-exempt 501-c3 and use tax-deductible donations to fund appropriate projects and operations. A recent article in the Detroit Lakes Tribune by Nathan Bowe is an excellent case study on how Bad Medicine Lake has created and is using their Foundation.

See Lovers of Bad Medicine Lake rally to protect lakeshore article [HERE](#)

Lakes Monitoring Program

OTC COLA Has partnered with RMB Environmental Laboratories for Otter Tail lake sampling for 20 years

The online data is used by lake associations, counties and other local organizations in local decision-making. At the end of each year, all the lake data from that year is quality-checked and sent to the EQUIS database, which is an EPA database managed in Minnesota by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). The MPCA then uses this data to classify lakes for recreational use and to assess lakes for the Impaired Waters List. In this way, the results don't just sit in a drawer being unused. The strength of this program is that the data is collected locally, and used by the state and everyone in between.

Click [HERE](#) for full article.

[**Moriya Rufer**](#), RMB Laboratories

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.

How to Build Grassroots Advocacy for Lakes and Rivers

Thursday, December 15, 2016 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (Central Time)

How to Build a Grassroots Advocacy Force to Protect Minnesota's Lake Heritage

You are the best advocate for the lake you love. Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates Executive Director Jeff Forester will lead a webinar designed to help you turn your Lake Association members into a potent advocacy force to protect your lake and lake heritage.

Webinar will include:

- * Current political landscape and how to determine your role
- * Proven strategies for long term advocacy success
- * Strategies for organizing local grassroots energy to impact policy at the local, county and state level

REGISTRATION FORM

MLR Jeff Forester

OTC COLA Website Update In Progress

The OTC COLA Website is in the process of being updated with current information and new features. Of special note is the invitation to sign up for the monthly OTC COLA E-Newsletter. Please forward this email to anyone and everyone who will support OTC COLA in the cause of protecting and preserving Otter Tail Lakes.

OTC COLA Website

Lake Association Issue Updates

Lake associations across the county are addressing issues and pursuing projects to protect and preserve their lakes. Sharing information and strategies can make efforts to accomplish these objectives much easier and more efficient. If your lake association is currently involved in an issue or project OTC COLA would like to help by listing it here. Send them to **John Kruse**

Star Lake- Casino- The Star Lake Concerned Citizens Group (SLCCG) continues its attempt to alert and educate people on the impact of locating a casino on the shores of Star Lake. Their effort is an excellent case study on what methods lake associations can use in the management of lakes and rivers in Otter Tail County. Click [HERE](#) for a the most recent update on the issue.

Go to the [SLCCG](#) website for more information and to sign up for future updates.

Ty Dayton

John Kruse OTC COLA Administrative Assistant

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