

E-Newsletter

August 2017



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From the OTC COLA President- David Majkrzak

You have to believe the end of Summer lake season is near when you see back to school ads, and Fall soccer and football practice starting. But we all know September and October are great months to enjoy our lakes, and in fact all months of the year offer lots of opportunity.

And speaking of opportunities, our upcoming OTC COLA General Meetings provide you an great chance to express your opinions, ask tough questions, and learn more about solutions and problems affecting OTC and MN lakes.

On Thursday August 17th, US Representative Collin Peterson will be our guest. We have asked him to address our group and to answer questions. This night we will also present awards to the many key groups and people that make our volunteer COLA group so effective. Further details below.

And keep September 14th on your calendar as well. Dr. Peter Sorensen, AIS specialist, U of M Professor and founder of the AIS research group at the U of M, will address our group and answer questions on AIS issues, and his thoughts on creating freshwater protection zones in Minnesota.

I am wrapping up my 2 year term as your OTC COLA President, and would like to encourage you to become more involved in making your voices heard on lake issues. Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen and Rep Bud Nornes attended our last meeting, and they reminded us that they need input on issues, and many times a half dozen emails or calls is all they receive on new legislation. It is obvious to me that small special interest groups have too much influence on our lake property, AIS, and other recreational uses of our public waters. We need your support at your local lake, at OTC COLA, and MN COLA to keep our voices heard.

[David Majkrzak](#)

OTC COLA 2017 Member Meetings

OTC COLA Member Meetings are scheduled for the third Thursday of each month, April through September. They are normally held at 7:00 pm at the Ottertail Community Room , Ottertail MN. The September Member Meeting will be the Starry Stonewort Bus Tour, the 2nd Thursday of September.

August	17	OTC COLA Annual Meeting, Awards
September	14	AIS Bus Tour- Peter Sorensen



OTC COLA Starry Stonewort Bus Tour

Starry stonewort is a noxious, matting algae posing a clear and present

danger to lake property values and the quality of lake experience across Minnesota. The alarming outbreak of starry stonewort on Lake Koronis, near Paynesville, MN is creating high awareness of the threat and prompting aggressive action to stop its spread.

Otter Tail Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA) is sponsoring a bus tour from Fergus Falls, MN to Lake Koronis on September 14, 2017. The bus will start loading at 11:45 am and leave promptly at 12:00 pm. The tour will include two-hour travels to and from Lake Koronis and approximately two hours visiting several sites of starry stonewort infestations.

Dr. Peter Sorenson, a respected authority on Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) from the University of Minnesota, will be leading discussions and answering questions on AIS while traveling with us on the tour.

To request a reservation for the bus tour please fill out the form provided [HERE](#). Prompt replies are encouraged as capacity may be limited. As the event approaches we will send confirmation of your reservation and updates for the event.

Please let me know if you have any questions
[John Kruse, Administrative Assistant](#)



Volunteers Hunt For Lake Invader

In an effort to curb the spread of starry stonewort, Minnesota's newest aquatic invasive species, scientists at the University of Minnesota and two partner organizations put out the call to citizen volunteers who want to help save the state's lakes - or at least learn more about icky weeds.

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MN Legislators Speak At July 20 Member Meeting

MN Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen and Representative Bud Nornes spoke at the July 20, 2017 OTC COLA Member meeting. The informal setting was conducive to foster meaningful conversation on accomplishments of the recent MN legislative session and the challenges that were addressed.

Bud Nornes, member of the higher education committee, indicated that there was significant progress toward improving education in the state.

Programs will be implemented to make teaching in the state more attractive to competent teachers.

Bill Ingebrigtsen relayed that MN spent \$900 million to address healthcare issues. Efforts are being made to assist the 7% of the population that does not have healthcare insurance. Besides the MN Zoo and Science Museum Bill is on committees overseeing the MN DNR and MPCA. He is promoting closer coordination of agencies for management of muskie and lake sturgeon in the state.

Bud and Bill fielded questions from OTC COLA Members on the feasibility of increasing fines for AIS program violations, support for AIS decontamination stations and other issues of interest to the group. The proliferation of AIS related studies was addressed resulting in the consensus that studies are valuable only if they spur appropriate action.

The Train The Teachers program headed by OTC COLA's Jerry Horgen was recognized by both Bud and Bill as being one of the most innovative programs in the state for AIS education. In response to a question of what can organizations and individuals do to influence what happens in MN government it was stated that emails to legislators are the most effective.

OTC COLA Annual Award Night

Volunteer of the Year Award and

Lake Association of the Year Award

Presented on August 17, 2017 at the COLA Meeting

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. Self-nominations are accepted.

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.

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OTC COLA Annual Meeting August 17

The Annual Meeting of OTC COLA will be held at 7:00 pm at the Ottertail Community Center in Ottertail MN. The agenda will include election of Officers and other matters of interest to the Members.

Special guest will be US Representative Collin Peterson who will field questions on lake issues as well as any concerns of those in attendance.

WE LOVE OUR LAKES!

OTC COLA is dedicated to combating the threats to Otter Tail County Lakes

The Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA) is a private volunteer group that partners with lake organizations and property owners to preserve the quality of lake living in Otter Tail County.

See Results of Water Quality Testing on Your Lake
OTC COLA is now conducting water quality testing in nearly 100 lakes in Otter Tail County. You can view the test results straight from the testing laboratory website.

Directories Are Available
Request a directory of lake shore property owners on your lake.

We Would Like To Connect With You
Please visit the OTC COLA website at www.ottertailcountycola.org. On the home page, after the "Welcome to OTC COLA" please read "WE LOVE OUR LAKES". There you will learn more about OTC COLA and have the opportunity to give us your contact information.

David Majkrzak, *President OTC COLA*
John Kruse, *OTC COLA Administrative Assistant*
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We Love Our Lakes

OTC COLA is reaching out to lake associations in Otter Tail County to become included in OTC COLA's water testing program. This postcard is being sent to non-OTC COLA lake property owners in Otter Tail County.

Test results for water testing provided by both COLA and MPCA are being posted to the [RMB Labs website](#). OTC COLA can also assist in providing lake property owner directories for Otter Tail Lakes.

[John Kruse](#), OTC COLA Administrative Assistant



Power Loading Causes Damage To Boats, Ramps, Trailers

The Fergus Falls DNR Parks and Trails Office takes care of close to 230 public water accesses in an eight county area. Increasingly we are noticing problems at many of these sites. At the end of the boat ramp is a hole. On the other side of the hole is a mound of sand, gravel and rocks. An inventory of our sites last season showed these problems at approximately two-thirds of our boat ramps (that's about 150 total).

Why is this a problem? Some people back their boat trailer off the ramp and into the hole. Then they have trouble pulling the trailer back out, often damaging it. The mound makes it difficult to motor out into the lake or back to the access and can damage the boat and motor. Our office receives many calls each year from users about power loading related issues. In extreme cases users have ripped wheels and axles off their trailers trying to get the trailer back onto the ramp.

Why is this happening? Power loading is the culprit.

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Release of Pet Goldfish May Have Killed Thousands Of Carp In Southern MN Lake

WASECA, Minn. -- Thousands of carp died last month in Waseca County's Lake Elysian because of a virus likely introduced by the release or escape of a pet goldfish or ornamental koi.

The University of Minnesota and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources determined koi herpesvirus was the main cause of the late June fish kill in southern Minnesota.

It was the first documented case of the virus in a wild fish population. The virus doesn't affect humans and isn't believed to affect other fish species either. Goldfish can be carriers of the virus but typically don't show signs of the disease.

Craig Soupir, DNR's Waterville area fisheries supervisor, said, "What this incident tells us is the virus can be introduced by human action - a goldfish or koi was likely released from a home aquarium or pond into Lake Elysian or a connecting waterway."

The DNR said releasing ornamental fish into the wild is illegal. Residents looking to dispose of exotic species are urged to contact their area DNR fisheries or wildlife office or local humane society.

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Help Celebrate Monarch Month In August

August is an important month for monarchs. After this generation emerges from their chrysalis, during a process known as eclose, these adults are physiologically different than the monarchs we've seen all summer. These monarchs will make the 2,300 mile trip to Mexico arriving in early November just in time to celebrate Día de Muerto, the Day of the Dead. This traditional holiday honors loved ones who have died and some believe that the monarchs are the spirits of their loved ones returning home.

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Restoring Shorelines And The Numbers Involved

This July, it took 37,980 native plants and 51 pounds of native grass and flower seed to restore 55,640 square feet of shoreline on 10 lakes in Otter Tail County. But those plants sure don't plant themselves. It took six Soil & Water Conservation District staff, three Conservation Corps interns, six Conservation Corps crew members and numerous volunteers to get the 55,640 square feet of shoreline restored in only seven days. The temperature reached near 90 degrees for three of those seven days.

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Doctors And MDH Caution Locals About 6 Water Ailments

"Shark Week" airs on the Discovery Channel every July, captivating audiences with terrifying fascination. Viewers sit in awe of the great white and its sister species.

But locals can let out a sigh of relief; they need not fear the sea's apex predators when they dip their toes into nearby waters.

However, other waterborne ailments exist in the surrounding lakes and rivers.

Waterborne diarrheal illnesses.

Swimmer's itch

Swimmer's ear

Hot tub folliculitis

Naegleria fowleri

Chiggers

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MN COLA Board Meeting

The next MN COLA Board meeting will be held on Thursday, September 28th in Little Falls, MN, at the offices of the Initiative Foundation. The meeting will start at 10:00 am and will conclude by 4:00 pm. Members and guests are welcome to attend.

[Joe Shneider](#)

Secretary, MN COLA



Getting To Clean Water: Complex Problem

If you're looking for one place that best illustrates the challenges facing

Minnesota's water, paddle a canoe just past Pike Island, near Fort Snelling, where the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers flow together.

On a clear day, you can see a line in the water. On one side is the clear, coffee-colored Mississippi. On the other, the milky waters of the Minnesota, laden with sediment and pollutants from the agricultural land it flows through.

"It's like somebody poured milk in the river," said Whitney Clark, executive director of Friends of the Mississippi River.

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Lake Association Issue Updates

OTC COLA will be advocates for lake associations on issues and provide information and education to COLA members without necessarily endorsing the positions of individual lake associations on specific issues. If your lake association is currently involved in an issue or project, OTC COLA would like to help by including it here. Send items to [OTC COLA](#)

UPDATE FROM SLCCG

We of SLCCG (Star Lake Concerned Citizens Group) are pleased and optimistic with the progress made to date. We have strong indications and actions that the OTC Board of Commissioners will order a full Environmental Impact Statement on August 22, 2017. We are presently working diligently to assure that action happens and that the EIS is broadly scoped to cover all significant environmental concerns. To date, after two years, not one permit of any consequence (state or federal) has been issued to the developer and the publicized planned opening has again been postponed.

[MORE](#)

[SLCCG](#)

[John Kruse](#) OTC COLA Administrative Assistant

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