

E-Newsletter January 2018



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**From The OTC COLA President-
Sylvia Soeth**

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Did you make a Resolution for 2018? Lots of people do, apparently.

According to the media reports most of them involve going to a gymnasium or going on a diet. One year slides into another for me without the need for resolutions to remind me another year flew by!

OTC COLA has encouraged the county's Lake Associations to sample lake water and test it through RMB Labs for many years. The program was expanded to all lakes in the county that have DNR access in 2017. This valuable data is used by the State of MN and several agencies to assess the condition of the lake and, only recently, to indicate vulnerability to aquatic invasive species.

Phosphorus is one of the nutrients measured in the OTC COLA water testing program. Please read the newsletter article and learn the significance of phosphorus in Minnesota waters. "Before you can care, first you have to know." The Big Pine Lake Association began water testing in 1991 and learned with volunteers and grants that phosphorus was our worst enemy. There will always be phosphorus but without taking action the lake would have continued to deteriorate.

Use Best Management Practices: No phosphorus in fertilizer; it's been outlawed for shorelines since 2005. No vegetation dumped in the lake. Manage your septic system. Use phosphorus-free soaps. Check incoming rivers, streams and drainage.

Make it your Resolution for 2018 to know about phosphorus! "One pound of phosphorus grows 500 pounds of weeds."

[Sylvia Soeth](#)



Fight AIS With Hippos?

There are numerous examples in history where good intentions produced disastrous results by injecting non-native species into an existing ecosystem. Exemplifying the point is almost importing hippopotamus from Africa to control aquatic invasive species in the Mississippi River.

These two articles though entertaining are a reminder that interfering with existing ecosystems is a dangerous prospect.

The Crazy, Ingenious Plan To Bring Hippopotamus Ranching To America

IN THE EARLY years of the last century, the U.S. Congress considered a bold and ingenious plan that would simultaneously solve two pressing problems - a national meat shortage and a growing ecological crisis. The plan was this: hippopotamus ranching.

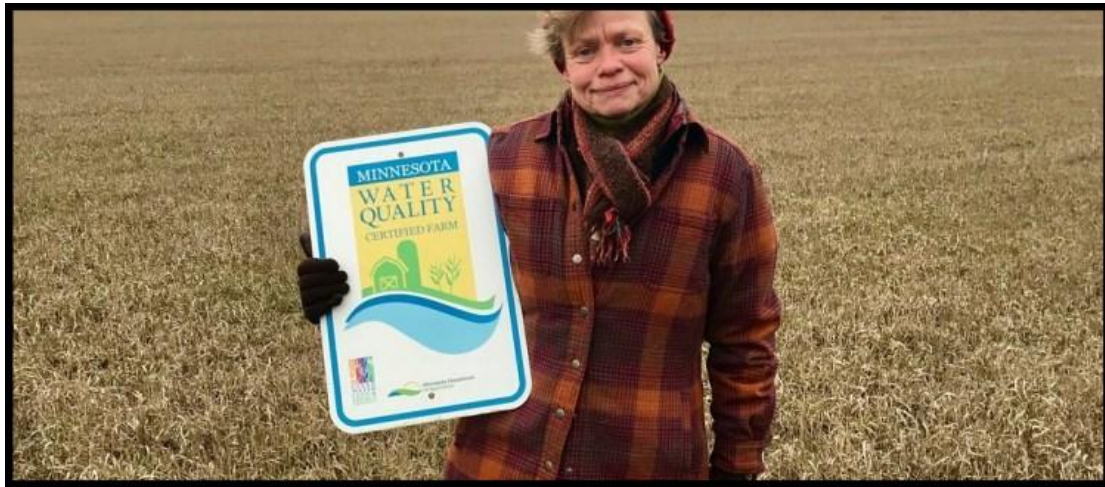
Hippos imported from Africa and raised in the bayous of Louisiana, proponents argued, would provide a delicious new source of protein for a meat-hungry nation. In the process, the animals would gobble up the invasive water hyacinth that was killing fish and choking off waterways. It would be an epic win-win. A bill was introduced in Congress, and newspaper editorials extolled the culinary virtues of "lake cow bacon." The proposed 1910 bill failed in congress by just one vote, and was endorsed by Theodore Roosevelt.

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11 Animals More Likely To Kill You Than Sharks

2,900 people are killed by hippopotamus annually in Africa. That roly-poly exterior is just to lure you in.

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Water Quality Certification Program Helps To Nudge Minnesota Farmers In A New Direction

The Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification is a voluntary program designed to encourage sustainable farming practices that are less likely to pollute lakes and rivers. Farmers who implement and maintain approved farm management practices become certified and obtain regulatory certainty for a period of ten years. In Washington County, approximately 20 farmers have participated in the program so far, and 40-50 parcels of land have been certified.

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Others including Bob and Tiffany Dombeck of Big Pine Lake have completed the certification. OTC COLA would like to recognize certification recipients in future Newsletters. If you know of others that should be recognized please send information to [OTC COLA](#).

Up To 30 Watercraft Inspectors To Be Added In Otter Tail County In Fight

Against Invaders

Published on January 3, 2018 at 10:52am CST | Author: Pelican Rapids Press

Otter Tail County board members approved hiring up to 30 watercraft inspectors for the 2018 boating season, subject to the hiring candidate pool and resources to manage the inspectors. Some workers may be hired for part-time duties.

This directive follows the recommendation of the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Task Force.

AIS Task Force Chairman Bernie Steeves is reviewing how other counties are operating the boat decontamination process.

Discussion took place regarding the recommendation of the AIS Task Force to accept a \$5,000 donation to support the operation of I-LIDS at the Dead Lake public accesses.

The I-LID system utilizes advanced sensors that activate when a boater has entered the launch area. Video monitoring then begins.



Antibiotics Are Accumulating In Minn. Lakes, Posing Health Risk

Antibiotics used in medicine are accumulating in the bottom of Minnesota lakes.

That's the finding of a new study in which a group of scientists

examined decades of sediment pulled from the bottom of lakes.

Why's it matter? Persistent low doses of antibiotics can lead to bacteria that are resistant to antibiotic treatment. The World Health Organization says currently antibiotic resistance is one of the greatest threats to human health and food security.

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Related article: [Drugs in the Water](#)- Harvard Medical School



Listen Up Ice Fishermen!

We need your help! Our lakes belong to the residents of Minnesota, but many lake association volunteers work to keep them clean. Otter Tail County is blessed with beauty and the most lakes of any county in the United States. Yet, lake associations find debris left on the ice such as wooden planks, cylinders, plastic bottles, pop cans and yes, even human waste. Would you be so kind and assist us in keeping our lakes clean? So, as you ice fish this year we hope you'll make sure your area is clean upon leaving, but also assisting a fellow fisherman to ensure his/her spot is clean as well. We all want beautiful lakes that are clean. Would you be so kind and help us?

[Jerry Horgen](#), Member
Otter Tail Coalition of Lake Association

One Watershed, One Plan:

Otter Tail County taking cross-agency approach to water, conservation

Otter Tail County and area counties are adopting the philosophy of "one watershed, one plan."

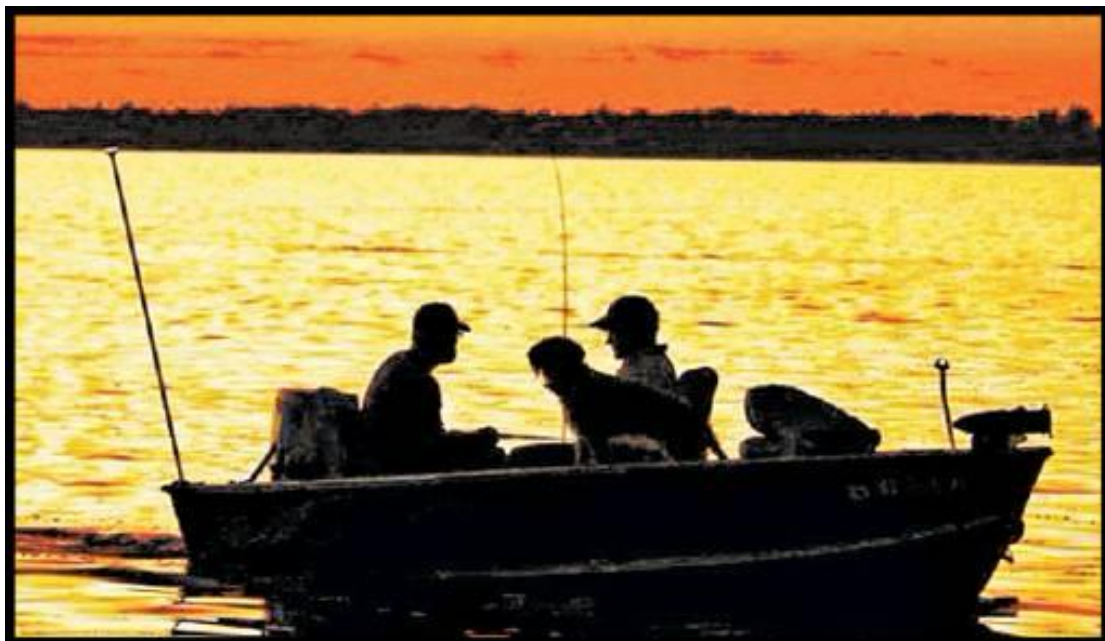
This plan is intended to utilize the existing structures of county government, soil and water conservation districts and watershed districts while increasing collaboration across county lines.

"We'll work to prevent erosion, ensure continued soil productivity, protect water quality, reduce damages caused by floods, preserve wildlife and protect public lands," said County Land and Resource Director Bill Kalar, at the Dec. 19 county board meeting.

Counties work in association with the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR).

Advisory committees meet periodically to provide technical support and make recommendations. Elected officials from Otter Tail County and adjoining counties have representation on the committees.

Area News | Published on December 27, 2017 at 8:10am CST | Author: Pelican Rapids Press



Clearer Mille Lacs Water Stirs Questions

As light reaches deeper into the lake, walleye numbers decline.

The sharp decline in the Mille Lacs walleye population that began in the late 1990s has coincided closely with significant increases in the lake's water clarity, new research by the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has found.

DNR scientist Gretchen Hansen, who also is studying how invasive zebra mussels and spiny waterfleas are disrupting the food webs within Minnesota's nine biggest walleye lakes, said the optical conditions in Mille Lacs have changed far more than the lake's water temperatures. Mille Lacs has warmed since the '90s, she said, but the water temps have remained suitable for walleyes.

Hansen said the shortage of low-light conditions alone leaves walleyes with less habitat. Similar research on walleye lakes in Canada also found correlations of reduced walleye numbers when water clarity increased. The fish thrive best in low-light, nutrient-rich, cool water.

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Sheriff Warns Ice Still Not Safe

After Suburban Plunges Into Little Detroit Lake

Katie Erb, 28, and Cody Grendall, 31, along with a child whose name is not being released, were traveling in the vehicle on a previously-travelled path, located approximately 300 feet south of the American Legion, when the vehicle broke the ice and sank into water that was 11 feet deep.

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The Aquatic Invaders Summit III, scheduled Feb 28-Mar 1, 2018 at the Earle Brown Heritage Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is an important Best Management Practice towards preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species in Minnesota's waters.

The Aquatic Invaders Summit III, will provide:

- The latest and most useful applied science,
- Updates on the most innovative programs across the state,
- Opportunities for Continuing Legal Education Credits, with programs focused on writing local ordinances and State Laws,
- Time to forge new partnerships and increase the collaboration, consistency and communication in existing partnerships.

The Aquatic Invaders Summit is a timely and important event for individuals on the front line in the fight against AIS. County government officials, tribal resource managers and leaders, lake associations, lake improvement districts, lake service providers, angling and conservation groups, hospitality industry, chambers of commerce, boat manufacturers and others will have the opportunity to share, learn and plan together for effective local AIS prevention in Minnesota.

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[Jeff Forester, Executive Director](#)

A Great Year For Hunting, Fishing And Getting Outdoors

The DNR opened two new state campgrounds, added new resources to combat aquatic invasive species, connected more Minnesotans to information about the state's natural resources, and engaged Minnesotans in the decision-making process on how to best plan for the future of the state's natural resources.

"Minnesotans had more occasions in 2017 to engage with us on conservation decisions," said DNR Commissioner Tom Landwehr. "I want to thank the outdoors-loving residents of this state for taking the time to share their ideas and opinions with us."

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Ice Fishing Electronics Are Getting Better

The electronics for ice fishing, particularly flashers, graphs, and GPS mapping have continued to improve, and thus improved anglers understanding of location and fish behavior.

The modern flasher can not only identify depth, but based on the signal, help interpret bottom content and locate fish in the water column. The sensitivity of these units will not only signal fish, but you can see your lure in relation to the bottom and fish. Learning how to make adjustments to your unit will help you adapt to maximize your unit for varying situations.

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Brad Laabs



Landowner's Feud With DNR Closes Access To Lake

The latest shot in an ongoing battle between a local landowner and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was fired last month, when a stout fence went up on the gravel road leading to the boat launch at Jolly Ann Lake, blocking public access to the 256-acre lake near the town of Ashby.

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Why Does Our Lake Continue To Get Weedier? You Ask...

The elephant in the room appears to be the amount of phosphorus in the water. The Trophic State Index components of chlorophyll-a reading and secchi disk measurement are directly connected to phosphorus. Phosphorus feeds the growth of algae, which in turn produces chlorophyll, which in turn will cause shallower secchi disk readings. Also, of the three components of the Trophic State Index the best candidate for being "controllable" is phosphorus.

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Minnesota Awards \$15.2 Million In Clean Water Fund Grants

Gov. Mark Dayton commended the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources Board action to improve water quality in streams, rivers, lakes, and groundwater across the state. The new grants, from the state's Clean Water Fund, include \$6.5 million dollars which will be used to protect at-risk waters and restore polluted waters throughout the state.

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No winds of change in Pelican lakes area

"Green energy" shouldn't be this hard to sell to the public.

That is no doubt what Lake Region Electric Cooperative officials thought when they brought forward a solar and wind project in the Pelican Lake area.

The \$4.5 million project has now been completely abandoned after hitting opposition at two proposed sites.

The abandonment of the project followed a roller coaster of meetings, email traffic and neighborhood coffee talk that spanned only a few weeks.

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Where Have All The Finches Gone?

What I haven't observed are the hordes of birds belonging to the finch clan, like purple finches, pine siskins, common red polls, and American goldfinches that I often delight in most seasons. Perhaps with inclement winter weather that's bound to eventually arrive, maybe more of these species will begin showing up once again.

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[John Kruse](#) OTC COLA Administrative Assistant

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