

E-Newsletter October 2018



[OTC COLA WEBSITE](#)

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From the President

We came to the end of summer like hitting a brick wall, from 94 degrees one day to frost on the pumpkin! I'd like to enjoy my flowers longer into October. If we don't have an Indian summer it will be a long winter.

With the change of seasons member meetings of OTC COLA come to an end, also. We've shared a lot of information and ideas from May to September. The COLA Board will continue to meet monthly. As we plan for another season in 2019 there is more information to share with Lake Associations who attend the meetings and read the newsletter. Ideas have come from the

surveys from members.

We need to stay vigilant protecting the precious water resources that we enjoy. While removing boats, docks and lifts this Fall watch for invasive species and remember the new OTC Ordinance about docks and lifts!

[Sylvia Soeth](#), President OTC COLA



COLA On The Move

OTC COLA along with East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District (EOT SWCD) sponsored a bus tour of shoreline restoration sites on September 15, 2018. The sites demonstrated the potential collaboration of lake property owners and EOT SWCD to create native shorelines, helping to improve water quality. Native shorelines slows runoff and filters nutrients, reducing erosion and providing habitat for wildlife. They also add beauty and color to shorelines as well as provide privacy.

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[Tour Handout](#)

NTLA Is Officially A Reality

Jim Wilkus, President of North Turtle Lake Association (NTLA) has received confirmation of the 501(c)(3) tax exempt status with the IRS. This was the last step in the process of officially bringing the Association into existence.

It all started in early spring when Jim Wilkus approached OTC

COLA investigating solutions for high water conditions, cyanobacteria (blue-green algae) and curly-leaf pondweed on the lake. It was determined that forming a Lake Association would give a common voice to the lake property owners when seeking advice and help from Otter Tail County and Minnesota agencies.

The first step was securing a mailing list from the Otter Tail County GIS Department for North Turtle Lake property owners. When the final list was selected a mailing was made to invite property owners to an organizational meeting. The meeting was held on June 2, 2018 at the Sverdrup Township Shop in Underwood, MN. At the meeting a Board of Directors and Officers were elected and membership dues were established. The property owners were unanimous in supporting the creation of North Turtle Lake Association.

"John Kruse was very instrumental in our ability to setup the North Turtle Lake Association; especially with Bylaws and the application for 501 (c) (3) status. At times, when I was overwhelmed, John stepped in and kept me going. I have nothing but praise for his enthusiasm and ability to get things done. Thanks John!"

[Jim Wilkus, President NTLA.](#)

To become an official entity a number of documents needed to be created and filings made.

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Are Efforts To Fight AIS Working?

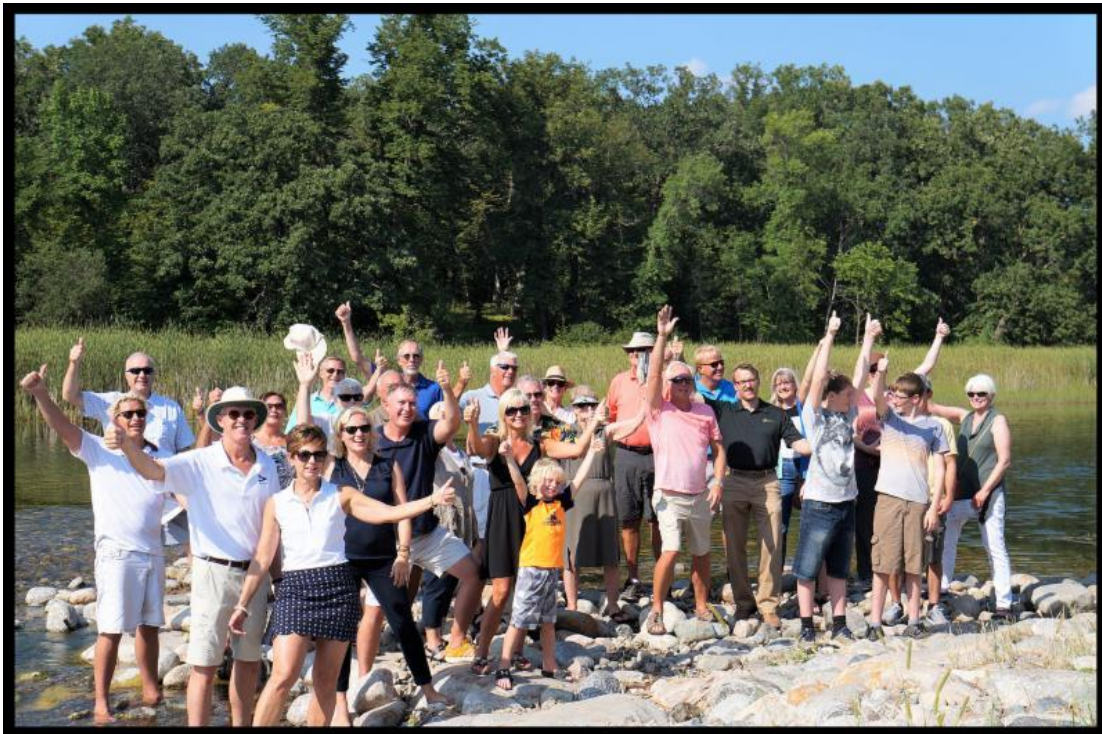
State law requires docks and boat lifts to be out of the water for 21 days - the amount of time it takes to kill an attached invasive species like a zebra mussel - before being moved to a new lake. Now, any time a boat lift or dock is bought in Otter Tail County, its owner must notify the county.

Experts say those docks and boat lifts are among the biggest risk factors for moving zebra mussels from lake to lake. But there's been little enforcement or inspection of private sales of that equipment.

"We did a lot of research across the state, and this is really the first of its kind. It lets us sort of quantify the problem," said Spencer McGrew, the county's aquatic invasives coordinator. "How many docks and lifts are actually moving? We don't really know, so I think with this registry we're going to be able to put some figures to that and really see what the magnitude of it is."

Aquatic invasive coordinators in other counties are watching Otter Tail's registry pilot closely to see if it works as a potential solution to what many consider a vexing problem. And Otter Tail County is also seen as a leader in getting aquatic invasive species education into schools. McGrew says between 2014 and 2017, nearly 1,500 students learned about aquatic invasive species.

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PGOLID Fish Lake Dam Project

One thing muskie fishermen and Pelican Lake property owners agree on, for sure, is the habitat and conservation benefits of

opening up the Fish Lake Dam. Converting the 1932 dam from a concrete structure to a free flowing rapids has been complete. With fanfare and applause from a group of over 30, the project was dedicated August 9.

A "permanent fix" to a dam that has been deteriorating for decades is how Jay Elshaug described the project.

Elshaug is chairman of the Pelican Group of Lakes Improvement District (PGOLID)-a quasi-governmental body, with taxing authority over Pelican Lake structures and parcels. In addition to allocations from the Lake Improvement District's annual levy of \$130,000, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service chipped in about \$100,000. State money from the DNR's fish passage program; and also from the "Legacy Fund" helped the project become a reality. Other contributors included the Muskie group, the Red River Area Sportsmens Club and the Pelican Area Property Owners Association.

[**MORE**](#)

[**Dam Pictures and Chronology**](#)

[**PGOLID Video**](#)

New! Newsletter Article Index

A new page has been added to the [**OTC COLA website**](#). The new page is called the [**Newsletter Article Index**](#). The Index is comprised of the quick-read "In This Issue" headings that appear at the beginning of each monthly E-Newsletter. Scanning the Index on the website page, the monthly issue containing the desired article is found. Clicking on the monthly newsletter link brings up the entire monthly issue containing the article in a pdf format.

OTC COLA E-Newsletter - Dramatic Growth

The OTC COLA E-Newsletter has experienced dramatic growth in the past year. The programs and events provided by OTC COLA have resonated with Otter Tail County lake property owners as they recognize the need to take action to protect and preserve the lakes. This has prompted new interest in being kept informed of COLA activities.

[**MORE**](#)

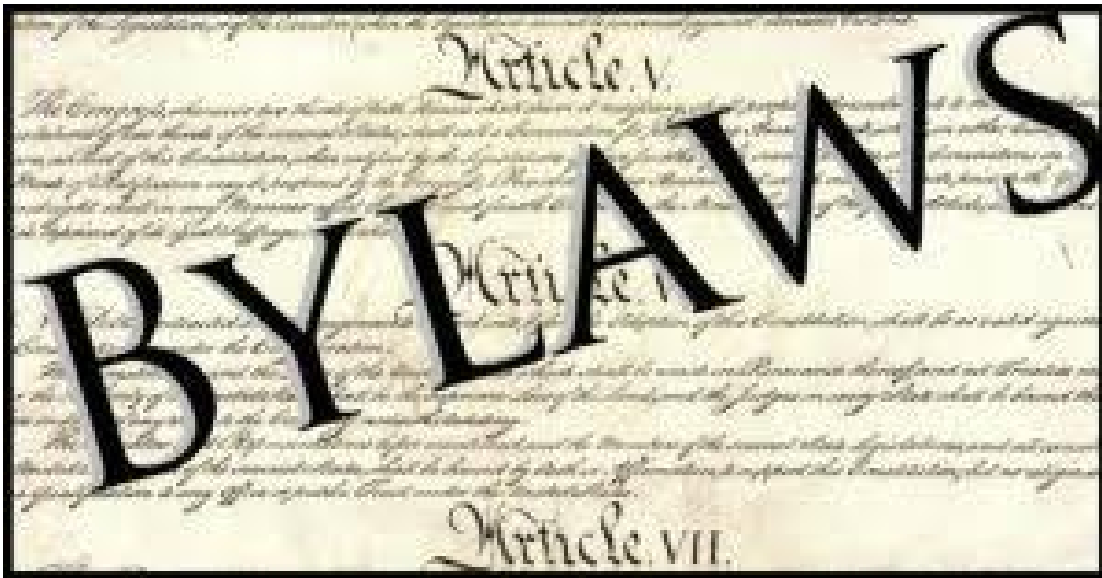
COLA Hears From Members

OTC COLA held Member meetings in May, June, July and August in 2018. Instead of a meeting in September COLA sponsored COLA ON THE MOVE, a bus tour of shoreland restoration projects conducted by the East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District (EOT SWCD). The meetings targeted issues and subjects of paramount importance to the protection and preservation of Otter Tail lakes.

- May- Call 911, And Then What?
 - Panel of OTC Emergency Service Providers
- June- Why Are We Testing The Waters?
 - Moriya Rufer, Environmental Services Director, RMB Labs
- July- Legislative Forum
 - Panel of 6 OTC Commissioner and 3 Sheriff candidates
- August- Who is responsible for water quality of our lakes?
 - Darren Newville, District Manager, EOT SWCD

Following each meeting a request for comments and suggestions was sent to each person who attended. The results were enlightening.

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Lake Association Bylaws Exchange

When a group of lake property owners recognize the need or desire to unite together for a common cause they normally will define the purpose, structure and personality of the new organization. This is most often accomplished by creating Bylaws.

The Bylaws are predicated on delegation of responsibility and authority from the Members in the aggregate to a Board of Directors, Officers, Committees and Members. The Bylaws will generally provide for meetings, a Board of Directors, duties of Officers, Member assessments and other such provisions deemed appropriate by the Members.

A suggestion heard frequently at OTC COLA is for more interaction between Lake Associations, to provide the opportunity to share ideas and learn from the successes and challenges experienced by others. Specifically, the question of creating or updating Bylaws has come up. To facilitate assistance to COLA Members in this regard COLA will host an Exchange of Lake Association Bylaws.

Copies of Lake Association Bylaws (preferably electronic versions) can be submitted by authorized Lake Association Members to otccola2@gmail.com. By submitting Bylaws to the Exchange, the library of Bylaws submitted will be made available to those who have made a contribution to the library.

Please let me know if you have any questions or suggestions on this program.

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



Zebra Mussels Confirmed In Round Lake

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has confirmed zebra mussels in Round Lake, located just west of Rush Lake in Otter Tail County.

DNR conservation officers confirmed zebra mussels that were found on equipment being removed for the season on Round Lake's eastern shore. No additional zebra mussels were found during a follow-up search of several other areas of the lake.

Zebra mussels were confirmed in Rush Lake in July of 2017. Round Lake is not connected to Rush Lake, but they are about one-quarter mile apart, separated by Highway 78.

"This is a key time of year to check for zebra mussels and other invasive species, especially when removing docks and boat lifts that have been stationary in the water all season," said Heidi Wolf, DNR invasive species unit supervisor. "It helps a lot when property owners, lake associations and lake service provider businesses contact the DNR if they think they've found an invasive species."

[MORE](#)

Water Testing Results Now Available

The Otter Tail County COLA contracts with RMB Laboratories in Detroit Lakes, MN to manage and direct the water testing on over fifty area lakes. Water samples are taken by lake association volunteers in May, June, July, August and September each year. To learn more about this great program to monitor the health of your lake, go to our web site: ottertailcountycola.org or to RMB's website: <https://www.rmbel.info>

The OTC COLA program lake water testing results are available on the RMB website.

- Go to www.rmbel.info
- Click on: Lakes & Streams
- Scroll down to: Lakes Monitoring Program
- Click on: Lakes Database
- Choose from one of the following categories:
 - One page summary
 - Sample data results
 - Individual lake data summary
 - Multi lake data summary
 - Trend analysis report
- After choosing which summary to use, fill in the "query criteria" information

Russ Severson, OTC COLA Director- Environmental

otccola2@gmail.com

We Want To Hear From You!

OTC COLA is very interested in informing and assisting OTC lake associations and lake property owners. Click [HERE](#) to quickly

give us your **comments, suggestions** to make your OTC COLA the best it can be.



MN COLA Minutes

[September 18, 2018](#)

OTC AIS Task Force Board Minutes

[September 10, 2018](#)

OTC Board of Commissioners Minutes

[September 4, 2018](#)

[September 12, 2018](#)

OTC COLA Board of Directors

Bernie Steeves · Dave Sethre · David Majkrzak · Jeff Stabnow ·
Patrick Prunty · Roger Neitzke · Russ Severson · Sylvia Soeth

OTC COLA Members

Berger Lake Association · Big McDonald LID · Boedigheimer Lake Association ·
Clitheral Lake Association · Dead Lake Association · Devils Lake Association ·
Eagle Lake Lakeshore Association · East Battle Lake WS Association · Elbow
Lake Association · Franklin Lake Association · Hoffman Lake Association ·
Jewett Lake Association · Lake Lida Property Owners Association · Lake Lizzie
Lakeshore Association · Lake Seven Association · Lake Six Association · Leaf
Lakes Association · Little McDonald Kerbs and Paul Lakes LID · Long Lake at
Vergas Association · Loon Lake Association · Marion Lake Association ·
McDonald Lake Improvement Association · North Long Lake Association ·
North Turtle Lake Association · Otter Tail Lakes Property Owners Association
· Pelican Lake Property Owners Association · Pickerel Lake Improvement

Association · Pine Lakes LID · Prairie Lake Lakeshore Association · Round Lake
56-214 · Rush Lake Association · Silent Lakes Association · Silver Lake
Property Owners Association · Stalker Lake Association · Star Lake Property
Owners Association · Stuart Lake Association · Swan Lake Association · Sybil
Lake Association · Tamarac Lake Association · Ten Mile Preservation
Association · Trowbridge-Leek Lake Association · Wall Lake Association · West
Battle Lake Association · West McDonald Lake Association

[John Kruse](#) OTC COLA Administrative Assistant

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