

**IMPORTANT NEWS** from Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations

# E-Newsletter February 2021



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## **OTC AIS Task Force To Promote Use Of Bait Bags**

Minnesota laws govern the use and handling of live bait for angling purposes. Anglers wishing to save their minnows for another outing must keep a container of cool water on land to exchange their bait water with.

The AIS Task Force is working with 17 partnering organizations to distribute bait bags across the state to retailers to encourage and educate anglers about proper bait handling. Some bait retailers have pledged to provide extra water at no charge with each purchase of bait—this will make it even easier for anglers to do the right thing.

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## Thank A Lake Association

**If You Love Boating, Fishing, or Even Having a Day of Swimming,  
Thank a Lake Association..... Better yet, join one!**

"The lake association culture in Minnesota is unique in the United States," said Jeff Forester, Executive Director of Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates. "I meet and talk regularly with Statewide Lake groups in other parts of the country. No place has more, or more active lake associations, than Minnesota." MLR wanted to measure the contributions lake associations make.

The study, "**Minnesota's Lake Associations: Who they are and what they do,**" was conducted by researchers at Concordia College, Moorhead, on behalf of Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates (MLR), a non-profit organization with members statewide that is based in the Twin Cities. The research study was funded by a small grant from MLR, with matched funding provided by Concordia College's Office of Undergraduate Research.

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[Jeff Forester](#) Executive Director, MN Lakes and Rivers Advocates  
952-854-1317



**Colorful History Of Townships  
Featured On OT County Website**

Land of 1,000 lakes and 62 townships

Residents of Otter Tail County can find out more about their individual township by logging onto the county website.

After accessing the home page for [Otter Tail County](#), take your computer cursor to the far right to [“County and Government”](#) and scroll down and click on [“Cities and Townships.”](#)

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## **Minnesota's River Restorations Benefitting 'One Of The Most Exceptional Fish In The World'**

The bigmouth buffalo, a native fish species in Minnesota and North Dakota, has gained notoriety since North Dakota State University researcher Alec Lackmann documented a specimen in 2019 that was 112 years old from the Pelican River, a Red River Basin tributary of the Otter Tail River in northwest Minnesota.

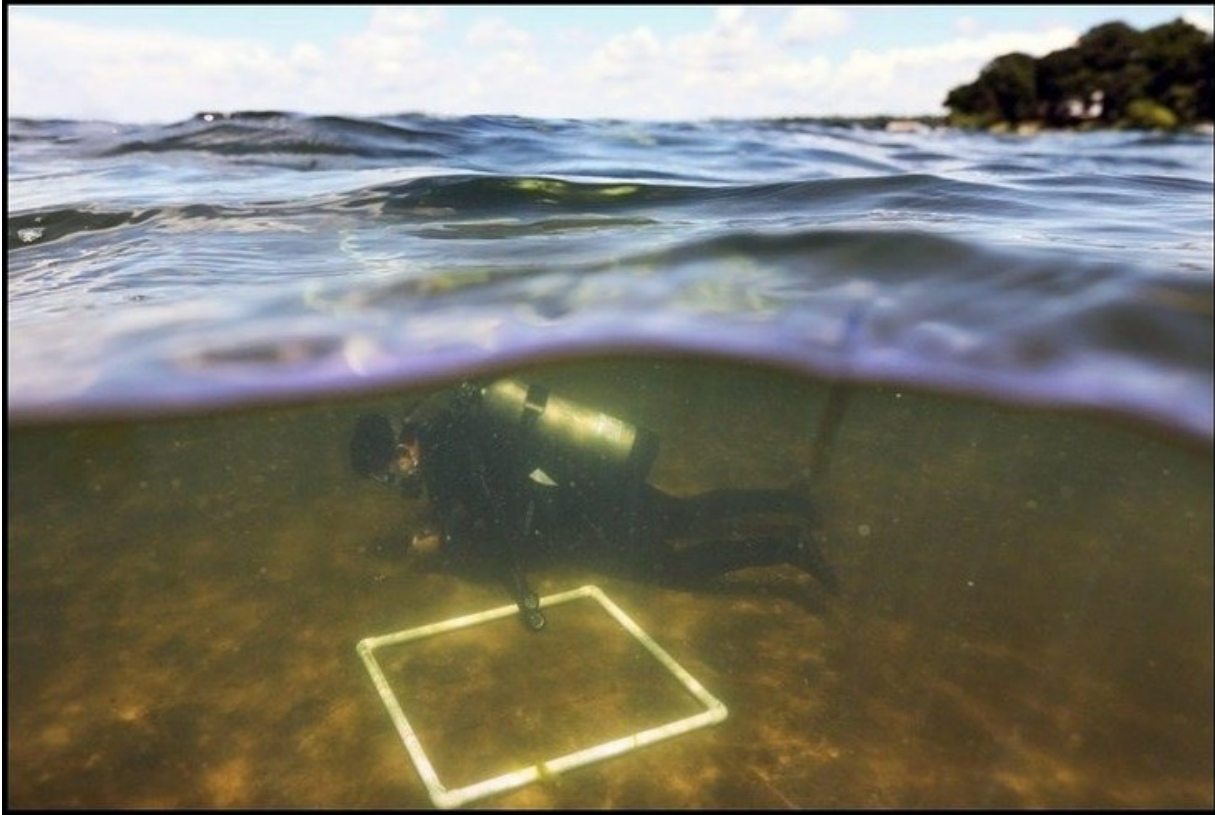
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MINNESOTA AQUATIC INVASIVE  
SPECIES RESEARCH CENTER





## **New Year, New Research**

We are seeking proposals for research studies that will advance control and management, prevent establishment and spread, assess risk, and allow for early detection of aquatic invasive species in Minnesota.

MAISRC will administer an estimated \$1,300,000 during this funding cycle for new lines of research and continuation of existing projects. Funds for new lines of research will be targeted towards priorities that were identified through a systematic needs assessment conducted by AIS managers, researchers, and the public in 2020.

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## **Muskrats Keep Minnesota's Marshes, Lakes And Rivers Interesting**

Muskrats are a locally abundant species of rodent that are related to beaver, porcupine, squirrels, mice, voles, and other rodents. Though they share similar habits as beavers, these semi-aquatic mammals more closely resemble overgrown voles than beavers.

Interesting occupants of marshes, lakes, and rivers, muskrats are active all year long, including in the wintertime, as they keep their holes through the ice open or semi-open by plugging the holes or cracks with vegetation. Over time, as the muskrat continues to push vegetation up through the hole, a mound forms on top of the ice creating a makeshift feed-house. Such temporary housing provides a warm and protected place to feed unseen.

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## **Minnesota Bills Would Affect Lead Fishing Tackle, Walleye Limits**

The lead fishing tackle ban, which has been introduced several times in recent decades but has always failed to advance, addresses a chronic issue of lead poisoning of loons and other birds when the birds ingest small sinkers and jigs lost by anglers while fishing.

Lead is a highly toxic substance, banned for years in gasoline and paint because of deadly toxicity to humans and also banned in shotgun ammunition for waterfowl hunting. Even a tiny lead sinker can kill loons, which ingest the lead pieces while picking up small pebbles on the bottoms of lakes and rivers that are used to digest their food.

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## **Lake Association Annual Filings**

Most Lake Associations are registered as tax-exempt by the IRS and do not file an annual tax return. However, this time of year is a good time to review the annual filings that may be required with Minnesota or the IRS. Here is a review of the most common filings that Lake Associations should be aware of as well as background information that may be interesting to you.

There are three most common filings or submissions that may need to be reviewed by Minnesota Lake Associations. They are the Minnesota Business Filing with the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, IRS Form 990 or 990-N annual reporting requirement for 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) corporations, and IRS form 1099s if you have made payments to freelance workers or independent contractors.

### [Lake Association Annual Filings](#)

### [Minnesota Business Renewal](#)

### [IRS Form 990, 990-N](#)

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## **Invasive Reed Threatens Lakes Area**

The nonnative common reed was added to the Becker County restrictive noxious weed list in 2013, and the state's control list in 2020. It threatens shoreline habitats and can be problematic to remove once it gets a foothold in the water, according to the Becker County agriculture inspector.

The nonnative common reed, *Phragmites australis*, can grow more than 15 feet tall and have a 4-foot root system below the ground, which makes them difficult to eradicate once they enter the water, said Marsha Watland, agriculture inspector for Becker County.

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[AIS \\* Water Quality \\* Administration \\* Regulation](#)

### **Featured Posts - February 2021**

- [Shoreland Management And Development](#)
- [Steps To Write A Lake Management Plan](#)
- [Water Quality Distorted By Zebra Mussels](#)

[www.lakeadmin.org](http://www.lakeadmin.org)

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### **OTC Board Of Commissioner Minutes**

- [January 12, 2021](#)

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### **Instant Access Links**

- [Newsletter Article Index](#)- Visually scan article titles from all OTC COLA E-Newsletters from 2018.
- [Water Quality Analysis Reports \(2020 samples\)](#) (includes 2020 samples) - Individual reports for 64 OTC COLA Lakes
- [Water Quality Analysis Reports \(2019 samples\)](#) (includes 2019 samples) - Includes available data for 102 OTC non-COLA Lakes
- [Lake Property Owner Directories \(2018\)](#)- Directories by Street and Name for 100 OTC Lakes
- [Interactive Access to OTC GIS](#)- Find addresses, navigate the OTC County map
- [OTC COLA Brochure](#)- View and/or download the OTC COLA Brochure
- **We want to hear from you!** - Go [HERE](#) to give OTC COLA your comments and suggestions

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