

OTC COLA Member Lakes

OTC COLA Looks Back At Major Campaigns and Events

There are 1048 lakes in Otter Tail County (OTC). Approximately 150,000 acres (11% of the county) are lakes.

The Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA) has been in existence since 2001. There are currently over 50 OTC COLA Member Lake Associations representing over 60 lakes, covering over 70% of the lake acreage in the county.

OTC COLA is a valuable ally and advocate for Otter Tail County lake property owners. It administers the water quality monitoring program including publishing of annual Water Quality Analysis Reports. The organization hosts seasonal educational monthly meetings. It provides education on prevention of Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) and offers a variety of opportunities for the promotion of good lake stewardship best practices. [Monthly E-Newsletters](#) have been published since 2016 containing lake news, articles on AIS control, water quality and state and county regulations. OTC COLA constantly reaches out to lake property owners on non-COLA lakes. It is active in recruiting and assists in the formation of new lake associations (four new lake associations since 2018). OTC COLA's rapport with lake property owners continues to be demonstrated by receipts of largely unsolicited donations.

Looking back over two decades OTC COLA has been aggressive in sponsoring campaigns and events to educate and engage Otter Tail County lake property owners. A review of the major campaigns and events for the last six years exemplifies the active role OTC COLA plays in protecting and preserving Otter Tail County lakes.

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

OTC COLA Campaigns and sponsored events

April 2017. *We Love Our Lakes* letter to over 2,000 Otter Tail County lake property owners

OTC COLA composed a letter for distribution to over 2,000 lake property owners on lakes in Otter Tail County having a DNR access. The letter introduced OTC COLA and listed the programs and benefits of Membership in the organization. The letter invited responses via the OTC COLA website.

[*We Love Our Lakes Letter*](#)

September 2017. Starry Stonewort Bus Tour to Lake Koronis 2017



OTC COLA hosted a bus tour to lake Koronis September 14, 2017 to investigate Starry Stonewort (SS) infestation. The participants on the tour included interested lake association members and lake property owners of Otter Tail County. The two-hour travel times between Fergus Falls and Lake Koronis were filled by informative discussions led by David Majkrzak, outgoing President of OTC COLA, Dr. Peter Sorenson, Professor, Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology, U of M and Jeff Forester, Executive Director, Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates.

[**Bus To Koronis 2017**](#)

September 2018. COLA On The Move Bus Tour

COLA ON THE MOVE

OTC COLA will finish the season with a bus trip on Saturday, September 15. EOT Soil and Water Conservation District Director Darren Newville spoke at the August meeting about actions we can take on our lake shores. COLA ON THE MOVE will follow through to show you ambitious projects here in Otter Tail County that property owners and SWCD have successfully implemented for the good of the lakes and rivers.

I'm constantly amazed that 1 pound of phosphorus can grow 500 pounds of weeds! With the hot summer I hear lots of people complaining about more weeds in the lake. Soil rolling into the water brings phosphorus. What can you do to hold the soil back?

Have you heard of rain gardens? Maybe you have a spot in your yard that would be a perfect rain garden.

Do you love to watch butterflies and hummingbirds? Plant native flowers to bring them to you.

Are there grants available to help you? Yes, and technical assistance, too.

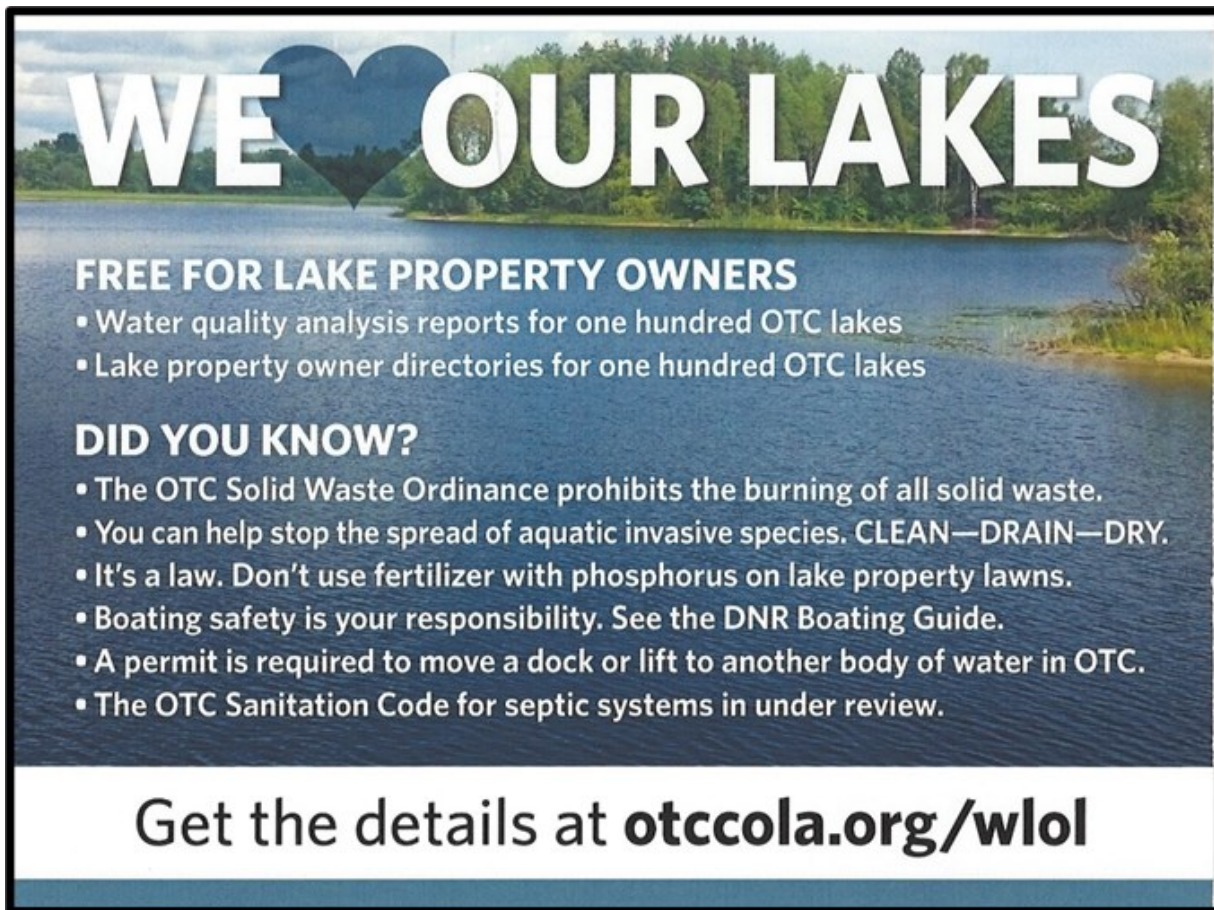
Hop on the bus with us on September 15, 9 a.m. at the EOT SWCD office. Continental breakfast in their office will give us a good start. Water and treats will keep us going. Darren, Aimee and Lisa will guide us on our tour and have us back by 12:30.

A bonus will be the leaves that are already turning red and yellow!

Sylvia Soeth, President OTC COLA

COLA On The Move Flyer

November 2018. We Love Our Lakes post card to 1,252 Otter Tail County lake property Owners

The graphic is a postcard-style image with a background of a calm lake and a line of green trees under a blue sky. At the top, the text 'WE ♥ OUR LAKES' is written in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The heart symbol is a solid blue color. Below this, the text 'FREE FOR LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS' is written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Underneath, there is a bulleted list of two items in white text: '• Water quality analysis reports for one hundred OTC lakes' and '• Lake property owner directories for one hundred OTC lakes'. Below the list, the text 'DID YOU KNOW?' is written in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Underneath, there is a bulleted list of six items in white text: '• The OTC Solid Waste Ordinance prohibits the burning of all solid waste.', '• You can help stop the spread of aquatic invasive species. CLEAN—DRAIN—DRY.', '• It's a law. Don't use fertilizer with phosphorus on lake property lawns.', '• Boating safety is your responsibility. See the DNR Boating Guide.', '• A permit is required to move a dock or lift to another body of water in OTC.', and '• The OTC Sanitation Code for septic systems is under review.' At the bottom of the graphic, there is a white rectangular box containing the text 'Get the details at **otccola.org/wlol**' in black, sans-serif font.

WE ♥ OUR LAKES

FREE FOR LAKE PROPERTY OWNERS

- Water quality analysis reports for one hundred OTC lakes
- Lake property owner directories for one hundred OTC lakes

DID YOU KNOW?

- The OTC Solid Waste Ordinance prohibits the burning of all solid waste.
- You can help stop the spread of aquatic invasive species. CLEAN—DRAIN—DRY.
- It's a law. Don't use fertilizer with phosphorus on lake property lawns.
- Boating safety is your responsibility. See the DNR Boating Guide.
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Get the details at **otccola.org/wlol**

The first of several post card campaigns *We Love Our Lakes* post cards were sent to OTC lake property owners. The purpose of the cards was to increase awareness of the existence of OTC COLA and educate people for best practices and good stewardship of lakes. Responders were pointed to a unique page on the OTC COLA website that included links to more information.

OTCCOLA.ORG/WLOL

November 2019. Shoreland Regulation Opinion Survey

OTC SHORELAND REGULATION OPINION SURVEY

The Otter Tail County (OTC) Commissioners have asked the Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA) to reach out to OTC lake and river shoreland property owners to get their views on the Shoreland Management Ordinance.

The Ordinance impacts us as lake and river shore property owners in that it governs what we can do on our properties within 1,000 feet of the shore. The DNR requires Counties to have an ordinance that cannot be less restrictive than the DNR minimum standards. The County Commissioners periodically review and revise the Ordinance with input from the public through one or more public hearings.

Please complete a short survey. It should not take more than 5 minutes to complete. The results of the survey will be compiled and sent to the Otter Tail County Commissioners. Your identity will be kept confidential.

- To see the Shoreland Ordinance, go to the Otter Tail County website (www.ottertailcountymn.us) and SEARCH- **Shoreland Ordinance**.
- To take the survey online go to the OTC COLA website home page (www.otccola.org) and follow the link under **OTC Shoreland Regulation Survey**.
- To request an email with a link to take the survey, email: otccola2@gmail.com
- For questions on taking or submitting the survey, email: otccola2@gmail.com

At the request of the Otter Tail County (OTC) Board of Commissioners OTC COLA conducted a survey of OTC lake and river property owners on the Shoreland and Septic Ordinances. The post card instructed responders to go to the OTC COLA website page that contained a link to access the survey.

The survey consisted of multiple choice questions and the opportunity to give extensive comments. Over one thousand responses were received and compiled.

[OTC Shoreland and Septic System Ordinance Article](#)

[OTC Shoreland and Septic System Ordinance Survey](#)

June 2019. Septic System Workshop

The OTC Land & Resource Management Department sponsored the Homeowner Septic System / Well Workshop on June 8, 2019. The Workshop featured Dr. Sara Heger from the University of Minnesota.

OTC COLA was instrumental in promotion of the event with creation of flyers and newsletter articles. OTC COLA also administered registration of attendees.

Septic System Workshop

October 2021. Lake Service Provider Workshop

Targeted listings of lake service providers not only in Otter Tail County but also selected neighboring counties were invited to the Partners In Prevention Workshop. The event featured Meg Duhr of the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Center.

Automated registrations and event administration were accomplished with the Lake Property Owner Event Administration system.

Partners In Prevention Workshop

Lake Property Owner Event Administration

June 2022. MAISRC Research Center Update



MAISRC Research Update June 9



The mid-day meal was served by OTC COLA and OTC Task Force Directors

The University of Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Center (MAISRC) event occurred on June 9, 2022 in Detroit Lakes, MN. The event was sponsored by Hubbard County COLA, Becker County COLA, Pelican River Watershed District, Becker Soil & Water Conservation District, Otter Tail County AIS Task Force and Otter Tail County COLA. Newsletter articles and flyers were provided by OTC COLA. Automated registrations and event administration were accomplished with the Lake Property Owner Event Administration system.

[MAISRC Research Update](#)

[Newsletter Article](#) June 2022 E-Newsletter

[Lake Property Owner Event Administration](#)

July 2022. Starry Stonewort Bus Tour to Lake Koronis 2022

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 Starry Stonewort Bus Tour will focus on the alarming outbreak of starry stonewort on Lake Koronis, near Paynesville, MN. The tour helped increase awareness of the threat and encourage aggressive action to stop its spread. [NEWS RELEASE](#). Automated registrations and event administration were accomplished with the Lake Property Owner Event Administration system.

[Starry Stonewort Bus Tour 2022](#)

[Newsletter Article](#) July 2022 E-Newsletter

[Lake Property Owner Event Administration](#)

September 2023. Shoreline Restoration Bus Tour



The Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA) and East Otter Tail County Soil and Water Conservation District (EOT SWCD) sponsored a bus tour of successful native plant shoreline and rain garden projects. Automated registrations and event administration were accomplished with the Lake Property Owner Event Administration system.

[Shoreline Restoration Bus Tour Flyer](#)

[Newsletter Article](#) September 2023 E-Newsletter

[Lake Property Owner Event Administration](#)