

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

# E-Newsletter September 2024



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From The OTC COLA President

While it's been good to extend the summer and the leaves are mostly still green, the cool nights remind us it is Fall. OTC COLA rates the summer member meetings successful! Attendance was good! Speakers were educational, informative and answered our questions. The COLA Board is already planning for 2025. If you have requests of interest, please let us know that.

There are two articles in this newsletter related to the August meeting. Rock arch rapids are new throughout the county, Ottertail River and the Red River Basin. What they mean for fishing is of interest to 99% of people who love the lakes. Safety concerns us all. In a short time you can have much information about them.

Remember to clean those Zebra Mussels off equipment by next Spring to be legal entering the water again. It's easy after they dry. ZM were found in four more lakes in OTC this year.

[Sylvia Soeth, OTC COLA President](#)

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Nicholas Kludt, DNR Red River Fisheries Specialist

## **Nicholas Kludt Speaker At OTC COLA Annual Meeting**

Nick Kludt, Red River Fisheries Specialist for the Minnesota DNR, was the featured speaker at OTC COLA's Annual Meeting at the Ottertail Community Center in Ottertail, MN on August 15, 2024. His work area covers the Red River of the North and its Minnesota tributaries, where he works on a wide array of river and fish management issues. Additionally, Nick guest-lectures at several local universities and is the American Chair of the International Red River Watershed

Nick's presentation focused on local fish management within the larger context of Northwest Minnesota. River systems are managed at a landscape-level, and the interconnection of lake and river habitats is critical for long-term system function. Nick's presentation included regional history, fish reproduction & migrations, habitat management, and how current actions create positive outcomes for rivers and local lakes, now and in the future.

[Nick Kludt presentation slideshow](#)

[Nicholas Kludt, DNR Red River Fisheries Specialist](#)

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## **Lake Koronis Update On Starry Stonewort Infestation**

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. In 2015 Starry Stonewort was discovered in Lake Koronis in Central Minnesota. From that discovery the Koronis Lake Association along with its consultants have embarked on a management plan that today costs around \$170,000 per year. The size of the infestation at the time of discovery, estimated to be greater than 250 acres, dictated that irradiation was not possible and our only option was to develop a management protocol or do nothing. Doing nothing did not seem like a good option for the lake, so we started a pilot project testing some of the options presented to us from our consultant out of Clemson University. The protocol developed in 2016 – 2019 for chemical treatment is still used today.

[Koronis Starry Stonewort Case Study](#)

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# Thank You 2024 Water Samplers

The final lake sample drop-off for 2024 was August 19th. Thank you dedicated water sampler volunteers for continuing the 32-year legacy of COLA's water monitoring program.

OTC COLA partners with [RMB Laboratories](#) for its Lake Association Water Monitoring program. Dedicated individuals from over 50 OTC COLA Lake Associations collect water samples from over 65 lake sites five times during the summer season. The samples are analyzed by RMB Laboratories for phosphorus, chlorophyll-a and secchi disk measurements. Data from the analysis is used to create the OTC COLA annual 10-year trend analysis Water Quality Analysis Reports.

[OTC COLA Water Quality Analysis Reports](#)  
[OTC COLA Water Quality Analysis Report Library](#)  
[RMB Lake Assessment Services](#)

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## RMB Environmental Laboratories

### **RMB Achieves Certification For Low-Level Mercury Testing**

RMB Environmental Labs has achieved certification for Low-Level Mercury Testing, in both soil and water, marking a significant milestone in commitment to environmental excellence and public health. This certification reflects dedication to maintaining the highest standards in environmental testing.

Mercury, a highly toxic element, poses severe risks to human health and the environment, even at low concentrations. Accurate detection and measurement of mercury levels are critical for ensuring compliance with environmental regulations and protecting ecosystems. With this new certification, RMB is equipped to provide unparalleled accuracy and reliability in low-level mercury testing.

RMB state-of-the-art laboratory facilities are outfitted with advanced analytical instruments capable of detecting mercury at extremely low concentrations. The RMB team of skilled scientists and technicians has undergone rigorous training to

ensure the highest level of proficiency in conducting these sensitive tests. This certification confirms RMB Laboratory's capability to perform mercury testing that meets stringent regulatory standards and industry best practices.

This achievement not only enhances our testing capabilities but also reaffirms our commitment to supporting our clients in their efforts to maintain environmental compliance and safeguard public health.

[RMB Laboratories](#)

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### **Thank You For Donating to OTC COLA**

OTC COLA appreciates the donations it has received from foundations, Member Lake Organizations and individual lake property owners. It is also very grateful for support from the Otter Tail County Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) Task Force.

OTC COLA's 32-year history has proven it to be a major advocate for the protection and preservation of Ottertail County lakes. It serves to inform and educate lake property owners promoting best practices of lake stewardship.

For more information about OTC COLA see our [www.otccola.org](http://www.otccola.org) website.

OTC COLA is a 501 (c)(3) allowing donations to qualify for tax deductions.

To donate to OTC COLA please send your check to: OTC COLA 4302 13th Ave S, Suite 4-333 Fargo, ND 58103 Please direct questions to: John Kruse, OTC COLA Administrative Assistant [otccola2@gmail.com](mailto:otccola2@gmail.com)

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# MN COLA



Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations

## MN COLA September 2024 Update

Chris LeClair of Otter Tail County Land & Resource spoke at the MN COLA membership meeting on Tuesday, September 17. Chris spoke on OTC's new Vacation Home Rental ordinance.

U of M Wake/surf boat study:

Phase 2 is fully funded. Results are expected after Jan 1

Phase 3 is funded by an LCCMR grant

Go [HERE](#) for a review of the benefits of joining MN COLA

[MNCOLA.ORG](http://MNCOLA.ORG)

[Subscribe to the MN COLA E-Newsletter](#)

[David Helgerson](#), OTC COLA Director Liaison with MN COLA

Minnesota  
Lakes & Rivers



<https://mnlakesandrivers.org/>

PO Box 22262

St. Paul, MN 55122

# MLR Newsletter July 2024

The MLR Water Connects Us All Newsletter is a staple to our communications. Every month, we compile the most up to date articles on lake issues and share the work we've been doing through these communications. We love to share success stories, give program updates, and share new innovative technologies with you all to help better awareness and understanding of the issues facing our waterways. Become a member of MLR to receive these helpful updates.

[MLR July 2024 Newsletter](#)

[Jeff Forester, MLR Executive Director](#)

[Minnesota Lakes & Rivers](#)

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## **Check For Invasive Species When Removing Docks, Equipment For Seasonal Storage**

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources reminds lake property owners to carefully check boats and trailers, docks and lifts, and all other water-related equipment for invasive species when removing equipment for seasonal storage.

Several zebra mussel confirmations in recent years were initially reported by property owners and lake service providers removing docks, boats and boat lifts.

“This is a good time of year for people to check for invasive species when taking equipment out of the water, because animals like zebra mussels attach to surfaces like docks, lifts and boat hulls that have been in the water over the summer,” DNR Invasive Species Unit Supervisor Kelly Pennington said.

Whether pulling equipment directly onto shore for the winter or transporting it on the road to a storage location, it is important for equipment owners to take steps to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species.

Remember to:

- Keep docks and boat lifts out of the water for at least 21 days before putting them into another body of water. This is state law.
- Look on the posts, wheels and underwater support bars of docks and lifts, as well as any parts of boats, pontoons and rafts that might have been submerged in water for an extended period.
- If hiring a lake service provider to install or remove boats, docks, lifts or other water-related equipment, check that they are on the [permitted lake service provider business list](#) ([webapps15.dnr.state.mn.us/ais\\_business\\_training/](http://webapps15.dnr.state.mn.us/ais_business_training/)  
[lake\\_service\\_provider\\_permits/public\\_website\\_list](#)). These businesses

have attended training on Minnesota's aquatic invasive species laws, and many have experience identifying and removing invasive species.

- Equipment owners may need a no-cost transportation [permit](http://mndnr.gov/invasives/ais_transport.html) (mndnr.gov/invasives/ais\_transport.html) to transport equipment from an access or shoreline property if it cannot be completely cleaned of aquatic plants or prohibited invasive species before transport.
- People should [contact an area DNR aquatic invasive species specialist](http://mndnr.gov/invasives/ais/contacts.html) (mndnr.gov/invasives/ais/contacts.html) if they think they have discovered an invasive species that has not already been confirmed in their lake.

More information is available on the [DNR website](http://mndnr.gov/AIS) (mndnr.gov/AIS).

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## Zebra Mussels Confirmed in OTC's Marion Lake

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has confirmed the presence of zebra mussels in Marion Lake, near Richville in Otter Tail County.

A lake user contacted the DNR after finding an adult zebra mussel attached to a native mussel in Marion Lake. A DNR invasive species specialist found juvenile zebra mussels attached to the dock at the public access, about one-half mile from the location of the initial report.

Marion Lake is near other lakes where zebra mussels were previously confirmed.

Whether or not a lake has any invasive species, Minnesota law requires people to:

- Clean watercraft, trailers and equipment to remove aquatic plants and prohibited invasive species.
- Drain all water and leave drain plugs out during transport.
- Dispose of unwanted bait in the trash.
- Never release bait, plants or aquarium pets into Minnesota waters.
- Dry docks, lifts and rafts for 21 days before moving them from one water body to another.

These additional steps reduce the risk of spreading aquatic invasive species:

- Decontaminate watercraft and equipment – find free stations on the [courtesy decontamination page of the DNR website](http://mndnr.gov/decon) (mndnr.gov/decon).
- Spray watercraft and equipment with high-pressure water or rinse with water if high-pressure water is not available.
- Dry watercraft and equipment for at least five days before using in another water body.

People should [contact a Minnesota DNR aquatic invasive species specialist](http://mndnr.gov/invasives/ais/contacts.html) (mndnr.gov/invasives/ais/contacts.html) if they think they have found zebra mussels or any other invasive species that was not already known to be in the water body.

More information is available on the [aquatic invasive species page of the DNR website](http://mndnr.gov/ais) (mndnr.gov/ais).

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## New Documentary Highlights Red River Lake Sturgeon Recovery Efforts

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has released a new 30-minute documentary called “Kings in the North: Lake Sturgeon Recovery in the Red River Basin.”

The video tells the story of decades-long efforts by Minnesota DNR fisheries biologists and their partners to restore the lake sturgeon population in the Red River of the North and its tributaries, known as the Red River Basin. The Red River Basin stretches 395 miles along the border between Minnesota and North Dakota. It has a long, rich history and was once a primary trade and commerce route.

[Full article](#)  
[Video](#)

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### Permits Now Available On GIS Map

Otter Tail County is excited to announce a new enhancement to its Geographic Information System (GIS) map. This feature allows residents and stakeholders to search for permits more easily and efficiently, representing a significant step forward in the county’s commitment to improving public access to vital information.

The new permit search functionality will enable users to:

**Easily Locate Permits:** Users can search for permits issued within Otter Tail County directly through the GIS map interface, including shoreland permits, variance permits, septic permits, and more.

**Enhance Accessibility:** The county aims to help residents stay informed about neighborhood development activities by providing easy access to permit information. Permits issued after 2018 are being phased in and will be available soon.

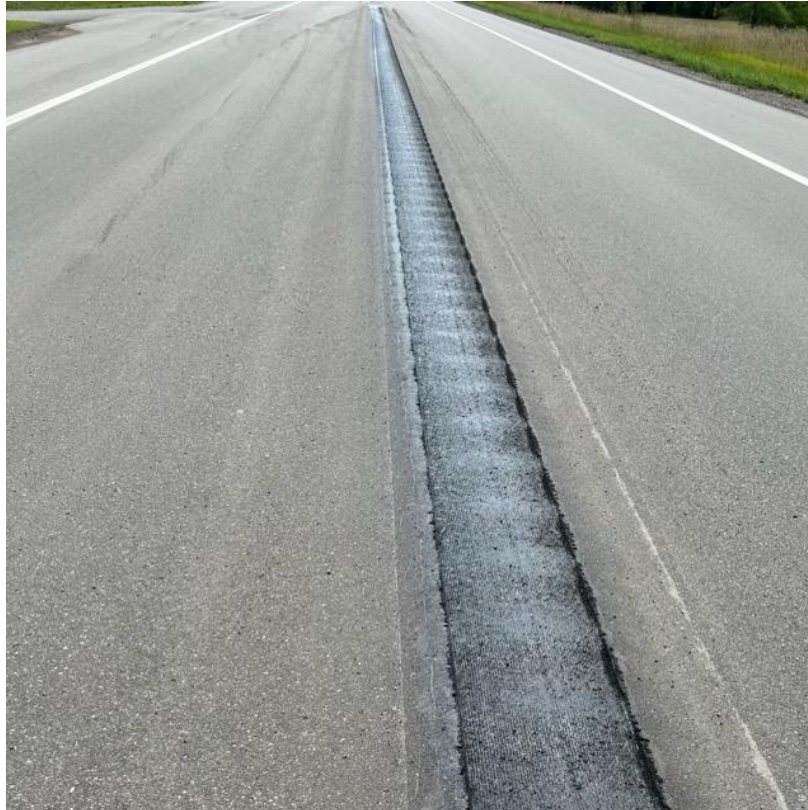
**Improve User Experience for Professional Services:** The GIS map has been updated with a user-friendly interface that makes navigating and searching

for permits straightforward and intuitive. Users can search by address, parcel number, or permit type to quickly find the necessary information.

“Otter Tail County works to leverage technology to better serve our communities,” said Chris LeClair, Otter Tail County’s Land and Resource Director. “Adding the permit search feature to our GIS map is another example of our commitment to innovating services and providing our property owners easy access to important information.”

[OTC GIS Permits Webpage](#)

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**53 Miles Of Mumble Strips**

Otter Tail County Highway Department announces the installation of fifty-three miles of centerline mumble strips during the 2024 construction season.

“Residents may wonder why the county considered this project,” shared County Engineer Krysten Foster, “The newer design is a different style, which is intended to be less annoying for adjacent property owners. This project is the first ‘mumble strip’ project in Otter Tail County.”

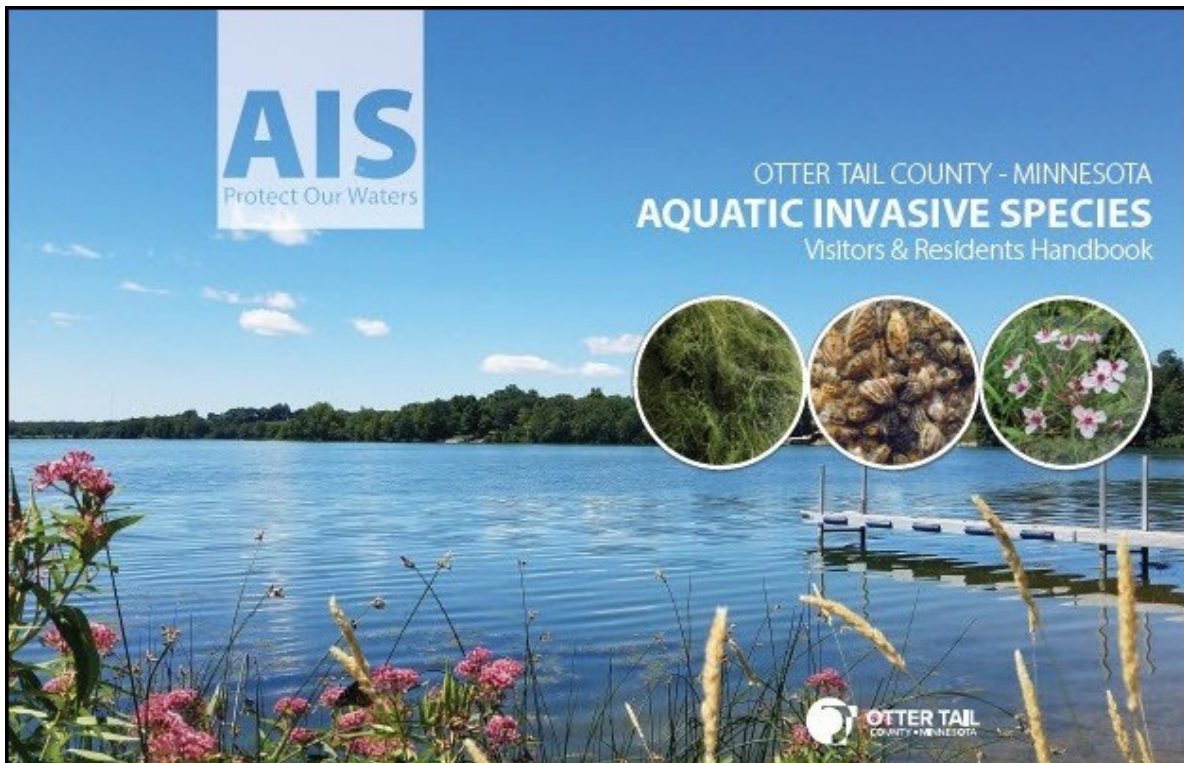
Before-and-after studies find that centerline rumble strips reduce life-changing crashes by as much as 51%. Further, a recent Local Road Research Board study found the details of mumble strips significantly reduce exterior noise compared to traditional rumble strips.

[OTC Mumble Strip webpage](#)

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# 2023 PROGRAM SUMMARY

## [AIS Prevention Aid Program Snapshot 2023](#) [AIS Prevention 2023 Report](#)



### **AIS Handbooks Now Available**

The enthusiastically acclaimed AIS Handbook sponsored by the Otter Tail County AIS Task Force is now available. The Handbook will be distributed to lake property owners, resort owners, and civic organizations in Otter Tail County. Quantities can be reserved from Otter Tail County Land & Resource 218-998-8095. Besides disseminating AIS prevention best practices in the Handbooks, the AIS prevention information will also be published in area newspapers and included in social media posts.

[AIS Handbook for Visitors and Residents](#)

[AIS Handbook for Visitors and Residents Cover](#)

[Spencer McGrew, Otter Tail County AIS Specialist](#)

## AIS Task Force Minutes

- [August 8, 2024](#)
- 

## OTC Board Of Commissioner Minutes

- [July 23, 2024](#)
  - [August 13, 2024](#)
  - [August 27, 2024](#)
- 



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

## Featured Posts - September 2024

- [Power Loading Causes Damage](#)
- [Watershed Districts / SWCDs](#)
- [Tool For MN Lake Health Information](#)

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- [Newsletter Article Index](#)- Visually scan article titles from all OTC COLA E-Newsletters from 2018.
- [Water Quality Analysis Reports \(2023 samples- Individual reports for 60 OTC COLA Lakes](#)
- [Lake Property Owner Directories \(2019\)](#)- Directories by

Street and Name for 100 OTC Lakes

- [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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