

IMPORTANT NEWS from Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations

E-Newsletter October 2024



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From The OTC COLA President

We've wrapped up the season of member meetings, but COLA goes on. The newsletter keeps us in contact with members and friends of lakes year round. The constant question we ask is how do we reach more people?

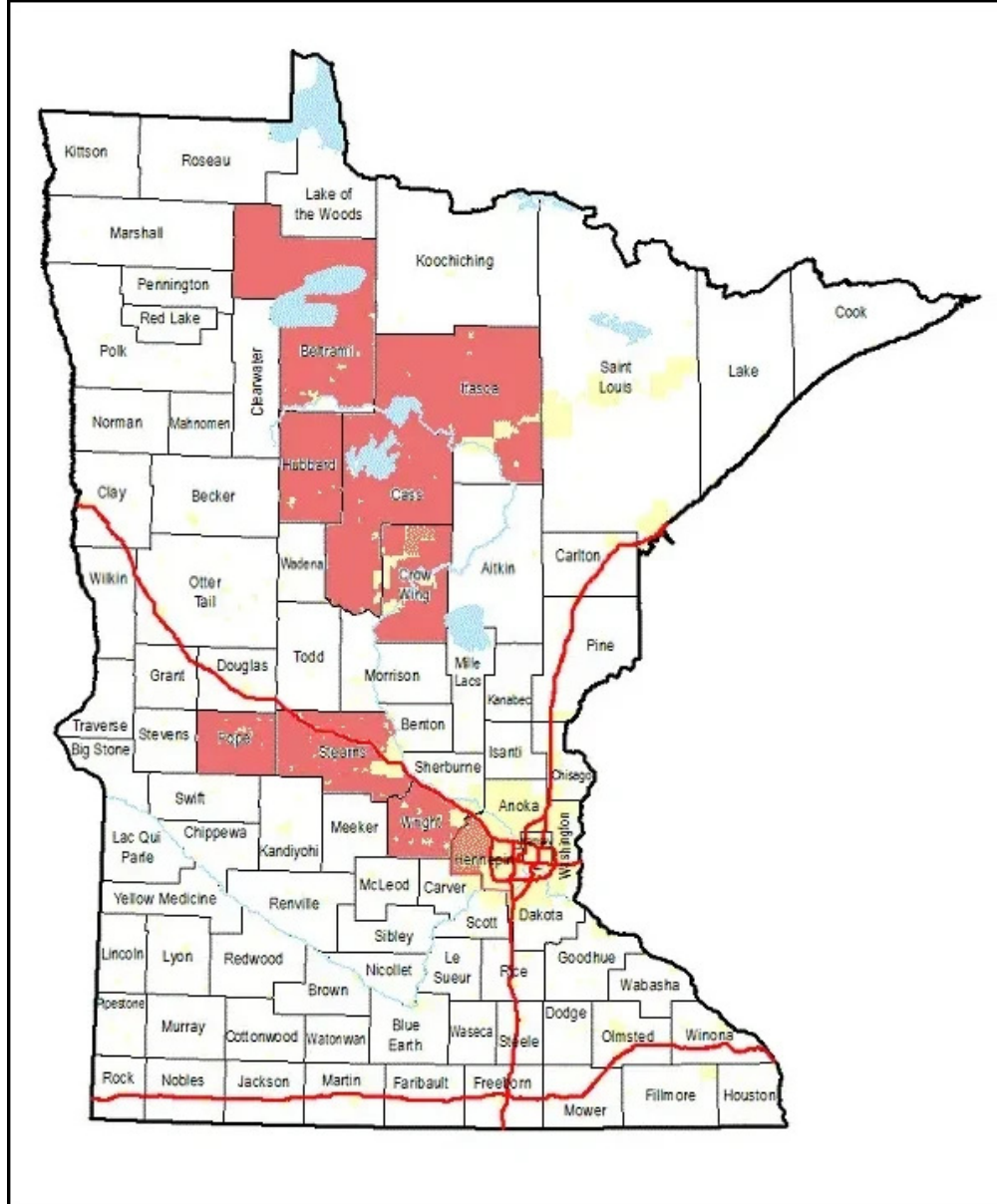
The Aquatic Invasive Species Task Force began 13 years ago. OTC COLA is 32 years old. Together we work to raise awareness to prevent and control Invasive Species. We want to spread the news about Starry Stonewort appearing in counties on three sides of OTC. Clean, Drain and Dry! Most boats are in storage now, but hunting season is here so there's still activity in the water.

Timely articles in this newsletter report on Starry Stonewort and a new tool for next summer. MN COLA representative from OTC, David Helgerson, tells about "self cleaning signs and tools." OTC AIS's Spencer McGrew is gathering those signs and tools to be installed at accesses starting in 2025. Make use of the tools available to remove anything clinging to your equipment. Don't carry Starry Stonewort - or any AIS - into or out of a lake. Tiny pieces can grow huge masses.

More help is now available next summer at self-operated rinse stations. The original is at Paul Miller Park on Little Pine Lake and the second is operational on West Battle Lake, west access, with a third planned at Erhard. These are in addition to DNR operated stations.

Enjoy this fall weather!

[Sylvia Soeth, OTC COLA President](#)



Minnesota counties reporting starry stonewort- DNR September 2024

Starry Stonewort Encroaches On Otter Tail County

Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA) is a dedicated advocate for the prevention of starry stonewort infestation in Otter Tail County. The first DNR report of starry stonewort in Minnesota was Lake Koronis in Stearns County, in 2015. As of September 2024 the DNR shows infestation in 31 Minnesota lakes and rivers. Seven new infestations were recorded in 2016 in Beltrami, Cass, Itaska and Wright counties. Since that time six more counties have been added to the list. The map shows that starry stonewort is encroaching on Otter Tail County from three sides.

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What's Up With One Watershed One Plan

Over the past several years you may have heard about how local government

partners including Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), Counties, and Watershed Districts have been working together to develop Comprehensive Watershed Management Plans commonly referred to as One Watershed One Plans. Through this process, plans drafted identified priority water resource concerns and focus areas for each watershed. These watershed plans set 10-year goals that if accomplished will help to improve and/or protect our local water resources. Currently, most of Minnesota's watersheds now have approved plans, and the last few have started the planning process.

Darren Newville, District Manager, East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District

[MORE](#)



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 Tail 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 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

MN COLA



Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations

MN COLA October 2024

Best Practice - Leveraging the Water for change

This video was presented at the December 2023 MN COLA Meeting. It discusses the value of getting your elected officials out on the water! There's nothing like being there to see, feel and touch the problems. Minnesota Lakes and Rivers and MN COLA teamed up to show Minnesota Legislators what the waves from wake and surf boats are actually like. The Legislators were treated to immediate observations of the wave power induced by wake boats as they flew by.

VIDEO - Leverage the water for change

Association of Cass County Lakes AIS Self-Cleaning Tool

When the land of 10,000 lakes has more than 11,000 that are on the DNR's infested water list for aquatic invasive species, groups like the Association of Cass County Lakes are hoping to stop the spread of AIS and maintain the health of their water bodies through a new self-cleaning setup at area accesses.

"Communities are starting to take action against the spread of aquatic invasive species" reports Mary Balstad, Lakeland PBS. Steve Henry, Cass County AIS Technician, says "It's really important to clean your boat coming off the lake. There are invasive plants out there and 90% of the lakes in Cass County don't have any invasive species, so we don't want to be moving those around from lake to lake".

The Association of Cass County Lakes is promoting use of new self-cleaning signs and tools. Nicholas Blum, Association of Cass County Lakes, Treasurer, says "The mission is to protect and preserve our lakes, rivers and waterways. The answer was getting involved in putting up signs and tools to remove the AIS at boat landings. In a study conducted with simulated AIS results, we found that using the self-cleaning tools for about two minutes has an average of 60% chance of less AIS being left on a boat and an extra 2 minutes added on top of that raises that number to 80%".

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

[MNCOLA.ORG](#)

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



Red Flag Warning Issued for Extreme Fire Risk

The National Weather Service has issued a Red Flag Warning for 27 counties in southwest and west central Minnesota due to extreme fire danger beginning Wednesday, October 16, from 1:00 p.m. through 7:00 p.m.

Affected counties include Big Stone, Brown, Chippewa, Clay, Cottonwood, Douglas, Grant, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac Qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, Martin, Murray, Nobles, Otter Tail, Pipestone, Pope, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Stevens, Swift, Traverse, Watonwan, Wilkin, and Yellow Medicine.

A Red Flag Warning means fires can spread quickly and easily progress out of control under the predicted weather conditions, including gusty winds and low relative humidity. Do not burn in counties where a Red Flag Warning is in effect and check any recent burning to ensure the fire is completely out. The DNR will not issue or activate open burning permits for large vegetative debris burning during the Red Flag Warning, and campfires are discouraged.

“Embers can be carried for over a mile in high winds like this. People should use extreme caution until conditions improve,” said Karen Harrison, DNR wildfire prevention specialist.

Red Flag Warnings are evolving situations. Visit the **National Weather Service**, (weather.gov) for updates.

For more information and daily updates on current fire risk and open burning restrictions, visit the [statewide fire danger and burning restrictions page of the DNR website](#) (mndnr.gov/burnrestrictions). To receive email updates on current wildfire risk and open burning restrictions in Minnesota text “FIRE” to 66468.

Fall Walleye Fingerling Stocking

By Steve Kubeny Minnesota DNR

During late September and through October, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' fisheries crews will be busy harvesting and stocking walleye fingerlings all across the state. In Otter Tail County, DNR Fisheries will harvest and stock Walleye fingerlings into nineteen lakes. These lakes include: Adley, Big McDonald, Clitherall, Devils, Eagle, East Silent, First Silver, Jewett, Long (north of Jewett), Long (by Vergas), Norway, Paul, Pebble, Pickerel, Rose, Sybil, Wall, West Battle and West McDonald. Approximately 8,000 pounds of walleye fingerlings will be stocked into these lakes this fall.

[MORE](#)

DNR Accepting Orders For 2025 Seedlings

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources' State Forest Nursery will begin spring 2025 seedling sales on Tuesday, Oct. 15 at 9:30 a.m. With around 5 million seedlings available, landowners can reforest their property, create wildlife habitat, plant shelterbelts, or establish a woodland oasis by bulk ordering bareroot tree seedlings.

Landowners can order their seedlings using our [online ordering form](#) when sales open. The Nursery only takes orders via the online request form but if needed, staff is available to assist during work hours at 218-364-8010.

[MORE](#)





Otter Tail County Honored With Seven Seals Award

The **Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR)**, a Department of Defense office, has awarded Otter Tail County with the distinguished Seven Seals Award in recognition of its exceptional support for service members of the Guard and Reserve. This prestigious award acknowledges the county's commitment to fostering a supportive work environment for military personnel and their families. This is the first Seven Seals Award presented in Minnesota this year.

[MORE](#)



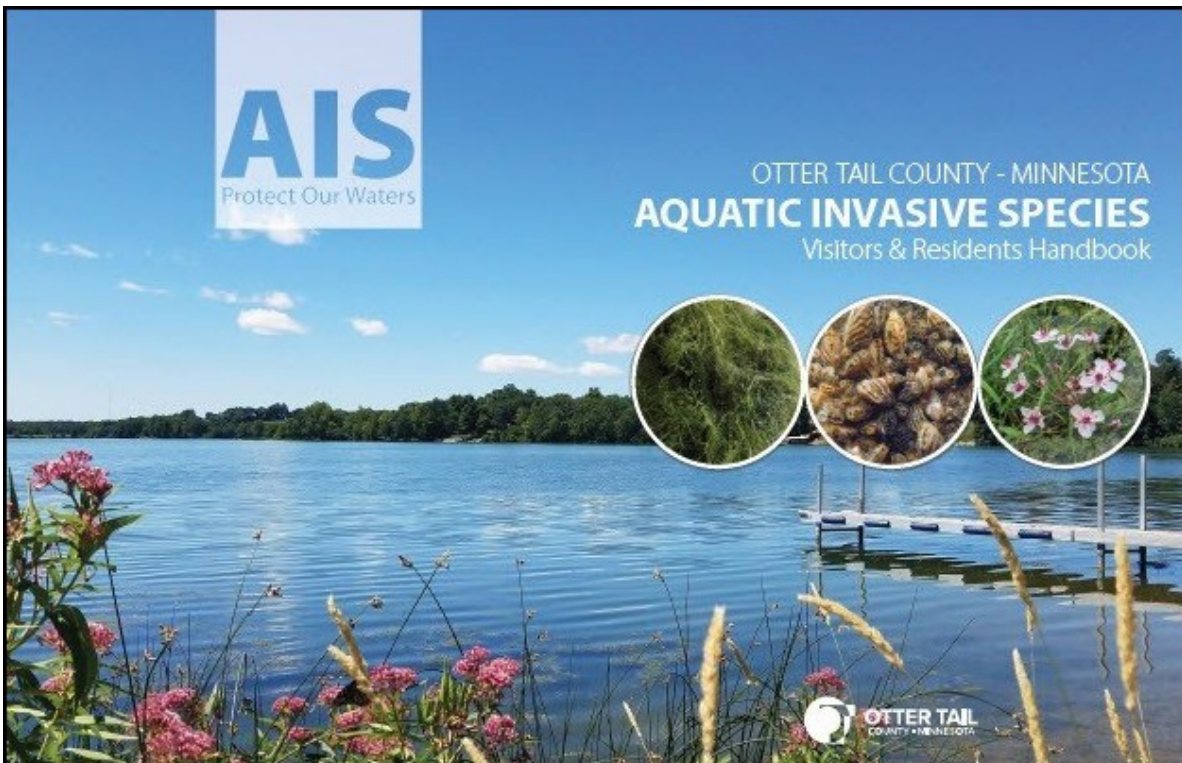
OTC Right-Of-Way Must Be Clear

Do you have personal property near the highway right-of-way? The Otter Tail County Highway Department reminds you to move personal items, political signs, and items for sale away from the roadway to ensure public safety. Storing property too close to the road puts it at risk for damage and poses a safety hazard. Please keep the right-of-way clear.

[MORE](#)

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 Update

- [October 2024](#)
-

AIS Task Force Minutes

- [September 12, 2024](#)
-

OTC Board Of Commissioner Minutes

- [September 10, 2024](#)
 - [September 24, 2024](#)
-



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- [Am I At Risk - Radon](#)
- [Balancing Road Safety - Salt](#)

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

