

IMPORTANT NEWS from Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations

E-Newsletter November 2024



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10-Year Trend Analysis

Lake / Site	Year	Phosphorus Ave	Chlorophyll a Ave	Secchi Ft	TSI Ave
Big Pine 56-0130-00 207	2015	31.6	10.8	7.6	51.6
	2016	50.8	19.6	8.0	53.2
	2017	37.8	24.8	8.1	53.6
	2018	36.2	16.2	7.6	52.8
	2019	39.6	16.5	9.8	52.6
	2020	29.4	12.3	10.1	49.4
	2021	24.8	5.2	10.3	46.6
	2022	40.6	20.1	8.8	53.4
	2023	25.1	5.8	11.2	45.6
	2024	22.0	4.6	14.0	42.4
Big Pine 56-0130-00 207 Total		33.8	13.6	9.6	50.1

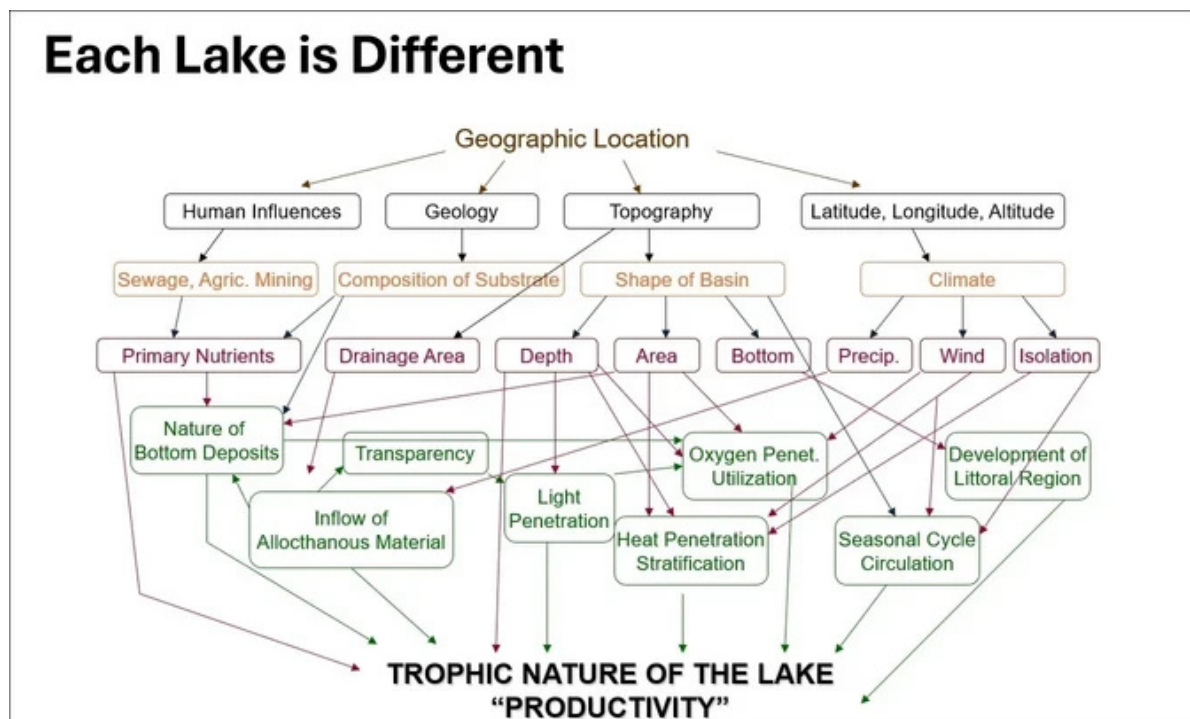
Water Quality Analysis Reports Published for 2024

The Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA) Water Quality Analysis Program (WQA) has wrapped up sampling and analysis activities for the 2024 season. Forty-nine OTC COLA Lake Associations participated. The data collected came from sixty-one lakes and seventy-one sample sites.

OTC COLA was formed in 1992 by a group of Otter Tail County lake associations for the benefit of all Ottertail County lakes. Over its 32-year history it has evolved as an advocate for the protection and preservation of lakes by providing information, education and networking opportunities for lake property owners. OTC COLA's hallmark activity has been its sponsoring of the Water Quality Analysis program.

[Water Quality Analysis Reports 2024](#)

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Pine Lakes LID Use of Water Quality Analysis

Analysis shows Big and Little Pine lakes support aquatic plants, birds, fish, insects and other wildlife. Trend analysis of water testing results shows there is little variation in both our lakes from year to year.

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OTC COLA's Water Quality Analysis Gives You MORE Than Just a Ten-Year Table of Lake Data

Your OTC COLA WQA report is replete with opportunities to learn about how data is collected and analyzed, how to understand monitoring data results and how the OTC COLA Water Quality Analysis program works. Did you know your Report also gives easy, one-click access to websites uniquely valuable to you?

There are multiple additional sources available to get valuable information on your lake. Among them are the Minnesota DNR Lake Finder, DNR Health Assessment, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, University of Minnesota Lake Browser and RMB Laboratories. Often there is a multi-step process to go through to navigate to the desired lake. From your Water Quality Analysis Report you have one-click access to these alternate lake information resources.

Look for these one-click links on your Report to see your lake

[DNR Lake Finder](#) (See the page for Big Pine Lake)

[MPCA Dashboard](#) (See the page for Big Pine Lake)

[MN DNR Health Assessment](#) (See the page for Big Pine Lake)

[UMN Lake Browser](#) (See the page for Big Pine Lake)

For additional information see :

[Minnesota Lake Health Assessment](#)

[UMN Lake Browser](#)

[Water Quality Analysis Reports](#)

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

Water Monitoring Unsung Heroes

Unsung heroes in the effort to provide data used for the OTC COLA Water Quality Analysis program are the volunteer samplers. They valiantly collect water samples and get them to RMB Laboratories for analysis. Too often we take them for granted and do not give them the recognition or express the appreciation they greatly deserve.

Samples and measurements are collected 5 times in the summer months for Phosphorus, Chlorophyll-a and Secchi disk (water clarity). The process includes the collecting and placing the samples in coolers and recording the Secchi measurement. The coolers and forms are either delivered to RMB Laboratories directly or dropped off at central distribution points where they are relayed to RMB.

RMB Laboratories has provided OTC COLA with information that identifies who was responsible for collecting the samples for each lake. The attached list shows who was responsible for collecting samples in 2024 and how many times they or the team responsible did the sampling.

Special thanks go to Kurt Maethner owner of KC Lawn in Battle Lake MN and Mike Allman who volunteers as the courier taking the coolers to RMB Labs. Also to Duane Lysne who lives on Lake Marion who's home was used as a collection point and he as courier of coolers to RMB Labs.

If you have the opportunity, please thank these volunteer samplers and couriers for their contribution to the OTC COLA Water Monitoring Program.

[Water Samplers-2024](#)

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



A Decade of Starry Stonewort - Part 1

What is Starry Stonewort - How did it get here?

Starry stonewort can grow to remarkable heights and depths. This characteristic can also aid in identification. It has been observed growing 2 meters (7') tall at 9 m (29') water depth. Starry stonewort forms dense mats of vegetation that completely cover the lake bottom. When it becomes dense and overcomes most of the other vegetation in an area, it is said to "pillow" or form irregularly spaced "pillows" of dense vegetation of various heights rather than a mat of uniform height

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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 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

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

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

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Zebra Mussels And Mercury Levels

A new study has found another negative effect of invasive zebra mussels in lakes: higher levels of mercury in fish.

Researchers from the University of Minnesota, the U.S. Geological Survey and other agencies studied 21 Minnesota lakes and compared mercury concentrations in the tissue of two species, walleye and yellow perch.

The results were unexpected: They found adult walleye in lakes infested with zebra mussels had 72 percent higher mercury concentrations than in lakes without the invaders. In yellow perch — a common prey for walleye — the mercury concentrations were 157 percent higher.

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2025 Invasive Aquatic Plant Management Grant Applications Open Nov. 18

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources is offering grants to lake associations and other groups for projects to manage invasive aquatic plants. Applications will be accepted starting at 9 a.m. Monday, Nov. 18. The application deadline is 4:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 18.

Entities receiving a grant will apply for an invasive aquatic plant management permit after receiving their award as a step in their grant work plan. This is a change from prior years, when grant applicants were required to have their management permit at the time of their grant application.

Application materials and details about the grant program are available on the [DNR website \(mndnr.gov/grants/aquatic_invasive/control-projects.html\)](https://mndnr.gov/grants/aquatic_invasive/control-projects.html).

Invasive aquatic plants are nonnative plants that can potentially reduce native plant diversity and create recreational nuisances in lakes. The DNR's invasive plant management goal is to minimize harmful effects caused by invasive aquatic plants while also protecting lake habitats and their use.

Questions can be directed to DNR Aquatic Invasive Species Research and Grants Coordinator Angelique Dahlberg, angelique.dahlberg@state.mn.us or to DNR [regional invasive species specialists](https://mndnr.gov/Invasives/AIS/Contacts.html) (mndnr.gov/Invasives/AIS/Contacts.html).



Eagle Pair Nest To Be Featured on DNR EagleCam

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources EagleCam, with viewers in all 50 states and more than 150 countries, will feature a new location and pair of bald eagles when it goes live Thursday. The original EagleCam will also remain on during the coming season.

The new camera will focus on the nesting behavior of a breeding pair of bald eagles that have successfully and consistently nested in the area for at least four years, rearing several broods of eaglets. The original camera will continue to show the territory that includes the previous eagle pair whose nest fell April 2, 2023.

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Otter Tail County
· AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES ·
T A S K F O R C E

AIS Task Force Update November 2024

- McGrew attends the Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference
- MAISRC found elevated mercury levels in zebra mussel infested waters
- Summer AIS programming is winding up
- AIS public awareness messaging continues at local high schools
- AIS promotion continues on social media
- Booth at the Kids-Parents Expo, Fergus Falls YMCA

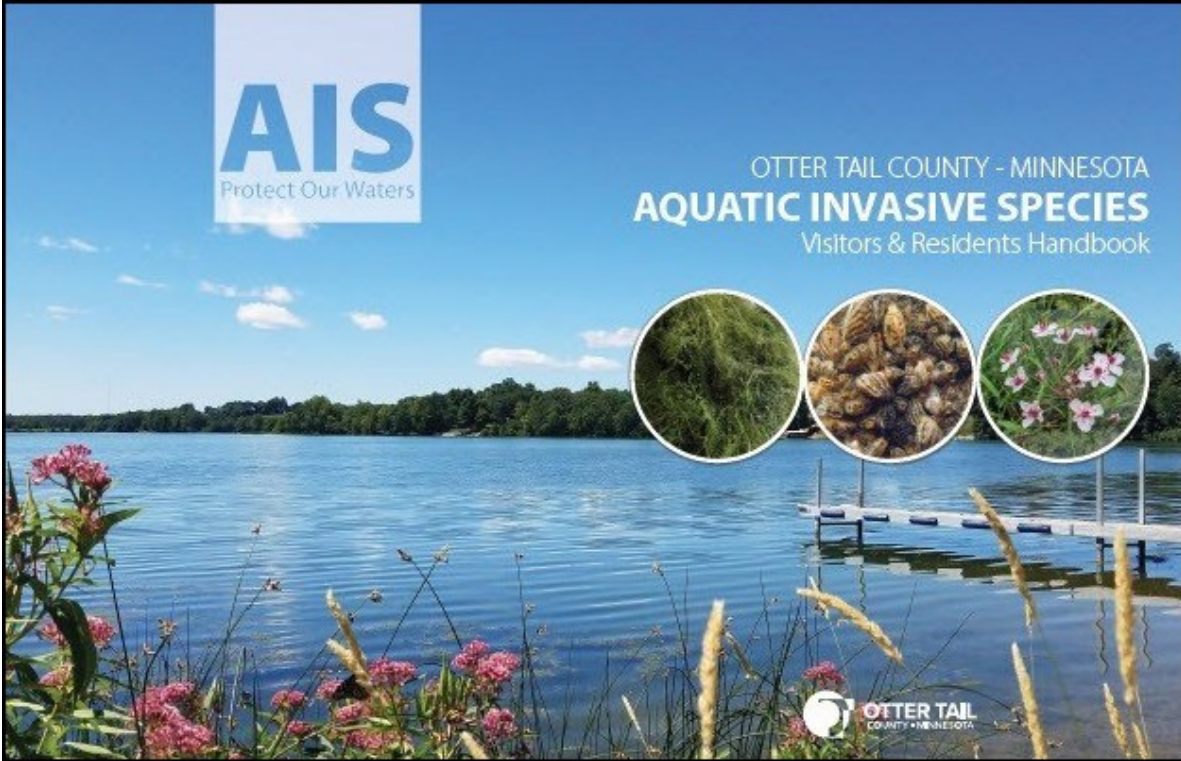
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[Spencer McGrew, AIS Specialist](#)



[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

- [**October 10, 2024**](#)

OTC Board Of Commissioner Minutes

- [**October 8, 2024**](#)
 - [**October 22, 2024**](#)
-



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- [Understanding Water Quality Analysis](#)
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- [Water Quality Analysis Reports \(2024 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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[John Kruse](#), OTC COLA Administrative Assistant

OTCCOLA | 4302 13th Ave S, Ste 4-333 | Fargo, MN 58103 US

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