

IMPORTANT NEWS from Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations

E-Newsletter February 2026



[SUBSCRIBE](#)

Someone forward this Newsletter to you?

Go to the link above to subscribe to the monthly E-Newsletter

[View as Webpage](#)

In This Issue:

- **Water Quality Analysis Published**
- **OTC COLA Donations- Thank You!**
- **MAISRC- Upcoming Events**
- **MAISRC- In The News**
- **MAISRC- Your Gift Helps Power Science**
- **MLR Speakers For Summer Meetings**
- **MLR Water Connects Us All December Newsletter**
- **MN SOS Business Identity Theft Protection**
- **MN COLA MAISRC Research Summaries**
- **DNR- Rulemaking**
- **DNR- Fun Winter Adventures**
- **AIS Prevention Aid Snapshot 2025**
- **AIS Handbooks - Still Available**
- **OTC Board Of Commissioners Minutes**
- **www.lakeadmin.org - Featured Posts**
- **Instant Access Links-**

[Newsletter Article Index](#)

[Water Quality Analysis Reports \(2025 Samples\)](#)

Water Quality Analysis Report 2025

Big Pine 56-0130-00



10-Year Trend Analysis

Lake / Site	Year	Phosphorus Ave	Chlorophyll a Ave	Secchi Ft	TSI Ave
Big Pine 56-0130-00 207	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
	2025	25.2	6.1	15.7	44.4
Big Pine 56-0130-00 207 Total		33.1	13.1	10.4	49.4

Water Quality Analysis Reports Are Now Published

The Otter Tail Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA) Water Quality Analysis Program has been completed for the 2025 season. The data came from fifty-eight lakes and sixty-eight sample sites.

OTC COLA was formed in 1992 by a group of Otter Tail County lake associations for the benefit of all Otter Tail County lakes. Over its 34-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 sponsoring of the Water Quality Analysis program.

[Water Quality Analysis Reports Library 2025](#)

[Water Quality Analysis Program](#) (from otccola.org website)



Thank You For Donations to OTC COLA!

Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA) is grateful for donations received in 2025. The recognition for OTC COLA's efforts to promote stewardship of Otter Tail County lakes is enormously appreciated.

OTC COLA's ability to continue its efforts to protect lakes is in jeopardy. OTC COLA funding will be drastically impacted by Minnesota's defunding of the AIS Prevention Aid program that was created in 2014. Please consider your donation to OTC COLA to help save Otter Tail County lakes.

To learn more about what OTC COLA does, please go to www.otccola.org

[Learn more about Minnesota's defunding of the AIS Prevention Aid Program](#)

Please send your gift to:

OTC COLA
4302 13th Ave S, Ste.4-333
Fargo ND 58103.

For questions please contact
[John Kruse, OTC COLA Administrative Assistant](#)
701-219-0465



Upcoming Events

- February 17–19, 2026: [Invasive Species Forum](#), hosted by the Invasive Species Centre
- March 4, 2026: MAISRC Containment Lab free guided group tour: [Register](#)
- May 6, 2026: AIS Detectors webinar: [Genetic options for controlling invasive carp species](#), presented by: Michael Smanski
- July 8, 2026: AIS Detectors webinar: [Genomic surveillance of zebra mussel populations using genotyping by sequencing](#), presented by Daryl Gohl"

MAISRC In The News

- [New Genomic Study Reveals Hidden Pathways Driving Minnesota's Zebra Mussel Spread](#), Daryl Gohl and Michael McCartney interviewed, (*UMN News*)
- [Frog patrol: How scientists, students, and community members are guarding Minnesota's wetlands from disease](#), Amy Kinsley interviewed, (*UMN Vet Med*)
- [University of Minnesota survey finds Minnesotans concerned about health of lakes, rivers](#), Nick Phelps and Gretchen Hansen interviewed, (*MPR News*)
- [Invasive rusty crayfish trapping offers lake benefits, and a tasty meal](#), Valerie Brady interviewed, (*Outdoor News*)
- [Minnesotans' water worries run deep, see science as a solution](#), Nick Phelps and Gretchen Hansen interviewed, (*UMN News*)
- [Tag, bait, scoop: Researchers explore new ways to rid Minnesota lakes of pesky common carp](#), Sarah Unruh, Solomon David, Przemek Bajer interviewed, (*MPR News*)

Your Gift Helps Power The Science That Protects Our Waters

Time is everything when it comes to stopping aquatic invasive species (AIS) in Minnesota's lakes and rivers. For many years, the search for AIS has meant relying on finding the individual organisms themselves; zebra mussels **clinging to docks**, starry stonewort bulbils **hidden in sediment**, or spiny water fleas **tangled on fishing lines**. But now, a breakthrough in environmental DNA (eDNA) technology is transforming how we detect and respond to AIS.

eDNA is genetic material that organisms shed into their environment, like a biological footprint left behind in the water. By collecting and analyzing water samples from lakes and rivers, scientists can identify the presence of AIS **even when populations are small** and the organisms are difficult to find.

[MORE](#)



Speakers for Your Summer Meetings

Are you interested in having MLR speak at your summer meeting? Let us know now, because open water season is the busiest time of the year at Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates!

Last season we visited over 60 lake association meetings, community gatherings, or festivals. We discussed wake boats, AIS, shoreline initiatives, and upcoming legislation, and we listened closely to the issues and problems lake associations like yours are facing.

As we work to expand support for the AIS Prevention Aid before the next budget year in 2027, we want to talk with lake association members across the state at lake associations like yours.

What kind of info do we need from you?

- When and where the meeting will be,
- What time we need to be there,
- Whether your association is a member of MLR,
- Which issues are dominating discussions in your lake association.

Please send all of this information to me at sami@mnlakesandrivers.org.



New Business Identity Theft Protections Begin January 1, 2026

Beginning January 1, 2026, a new set of protections went into effect to better protect business owners from a growing threat: business identity theft.

In recent years, our office has heard from individuals who discovered companies created in their names without permission, inactive business entities reactivated without their knowledge, or their home addresses listed on filings they had never seen. Some even faced surprise collection calls or credit issues tied to transactions they never authorized. Previously, the only options were costly court actions or law enforcement intervention.

To address this, our office proposed the Business Filing Fraud Prevention Act, which passed with bipartisan support. This law gives the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State new authority to quickly investigate and correct fraudulent business filings through the Business Identity Recovery process. For the first time, individuals will have a direct, accessible path to report wrongful filings and have them reviewed by our Business Services division.

[MORE](#)



MN COLA Summaries of MAISRC Showcase

This past October, the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) hosted their 2025 AIS Research and Management Showcase. A few of us took some time

to write up summaries of the sessions we attended and we have packaged that up for your use.

Here is a [link to the summaries](#) (7 pages)

If you have further questions about any of the research, please contact the presenters at MAISRC. They are always pleased to respond.

As usual, this showcase was a testament to the strength and ingenuity of the population working on the AIS problem. People that are concerned about AIS and its impact come together to think up big solutions to big problems, and it is when we come together that we can have the biggest impact.

Special thanks to Ezri Farnum and Jim Kutzner as they did most of the work to make this available to you.

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

[MNCOLA.ORG](#)

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

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



DNR Rulemaking:

Fishing Regulations for Inland Waters (walleye and sauger)

- What is this rule about?
- Why am I receiving this notification?
- What will this rulemaking do?
- Who might be affected by these rule changes?
- Where do I send my Comments?
- Where can I get more information?
- DNR contact person

[MORE](#)

MN Parks and Recreation Areas Offer Fun Winter Adventures

Minnesota's state parks and recreation areas are ready to welcome visitors for a full season of winter recreation, with opportunities ranging from skiing and snowshoeing to wildlife watching and peaceful candlelit walks. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources invites Minnesotans to embrace the season by getting outdoors, trying

something new, and enjoying the magical beauty that winter brings to parks and trails across the state.

[MORE](#)

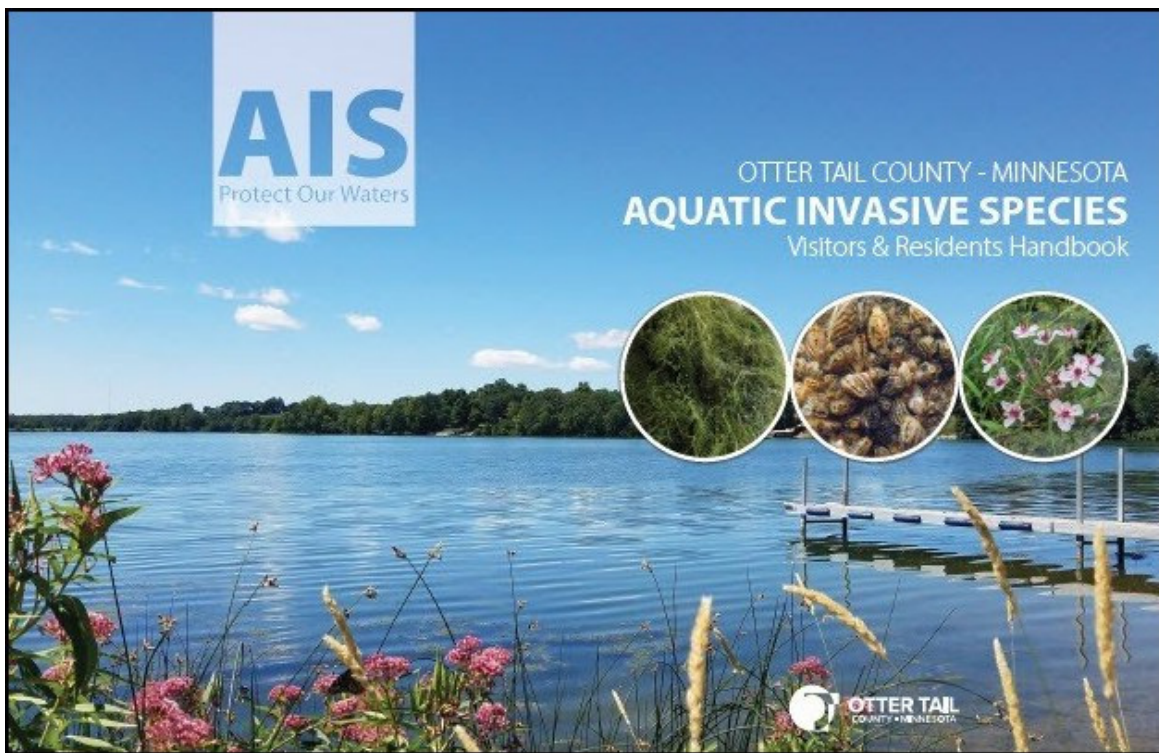


AIS Prevention Aid Program Snapshot 2025

The AIS Prevention Aid Program Snapshot is prepared annually for submission to the state of Minnesota outlining use of funds provided for control of aquatic invasive species in Minnesota lakes and rivers. The Snapshot for 2025 has been created and submitted to the state of Minnesota.

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

[**AIS Prevention Aid Program Snapshot 2025**](#)



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**](#)

OTC Board Of Commissioner Minutes

- [**November 18, 2025**](#)
- [**December 02, 2025**](#)
- [**December 16, 2025**](#)



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

Featured Posts - February 2026

- [Lake Property Owner Event Administration](#)
- [MN Lake Organizations & Agencies](#)
- [Ground Water Connection Videos](#)

www.lakeadmin.org

[Subscribe to the FREE lakeadmin.org BULLETIN](#)
to learn about new and featured posts

Instant Access Links

- [Newsletter Article Index](#)- Visually scan article titles from all OTC COLA E-Newsletters from 2018.
- [Water Quality Analysis Reports \(2025 samples\)](#)
- [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**

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

OTC COLA Board of Directors

David Helgersen · Jeff Stabnow · Jeff Vansteenburgh
Roger Neitzke · Ronald Christensen · Scott Gaudette · Sylvia Soeth

OTC COLA Members

Bass Lake Underwood Association · Berger Lake Association · Big McDonald LID ·
Boedigheimer Lake Association · Buchanan Lake Association · Clitherall Lake
Association · Dead Lake Association · Devils Lake Association · Eagle Lake Lakeshore
Association · East Battle Lake WS Association · Elbow Lake Association · Franklin Lake
Association · Hoffman Lake Association · Jewett Lake Association · Lida Lakes
Improvement District · Lake Lizzie Lakeshore Association · Lake Seven Association ·
Lake Six Association · Leaf Lakes Association · Little McDonald Kerbs and Paul Lakes

LID · Long Lake at Vergas Association · Loon Lake Association · Marion Lake Association · McDonald Lake Improvement Association · North Long Lake Association · North Turtle Lake Association · Otter Tail Lakes Property Owners Association · Pebble Lake Lakeshore Association · Pelican Lake Property Owners Association · Pickerel Lake Improvement Association · Pine Lakes LID · Prairie Lake Lakeshore Association · Round Lake 56-214 · Rush Lake Association · Silent Lakes Association · Silver Lake Property Owners Association · South Turtle Lake Improvement District · Spitzer Lake Property Owners Association · Stalker Lake Association · Star Lake Property Owners Association · Stuart Lake Association · Swan Lake Association · Sybil Lake Association · Tamarac Lake Association · Ten Mile Preservation Association · Trowbridge-Leek Lake Association · Wall Lake Association · West Battle Lake Association · West McDonald Lake Association · Wymer Lake Association

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

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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)