

TABLE DISPLAYS

- OTC Land & Resource Department
- OTC AIS Task Force
- EOT Soil & Water Conservation District
- Aquatic Weed Harvesting
- Minnesota Lakes & Rivers Advocates
- UMN AIS Research (MAISRC)
- OTC Coalition of Lake Associations
- MN Coalition of Lake Associations
- Nat North LLC lake landowner services
- Lake Shield LLC I-LID maintenance
- WCI & Prairies Solar Co-op



WELCOME

*To the 2026
Lake Stewardship Symposium!*

Minnesota lakes are a vital component for enjoyable living in America's northwest. Value of this resource is measured in recreation, family bonding, asset value appreciation and tourism.

The Lake Stewardship Symposium is for Minnesota lake property owners to learn how to engage best practices for the protection and preservation of lakes.

SPONSORS



AGENDA

- 8:00 - 9:00** **Breakfast & Welcome - Spencer McGrew**
Aquatic Invasive Species Specialist for Otter Tail County
- 9:00 - 9:30** **Chris LeClair - Chris LeClair is the Director of the Land & Resource Management Department for Otter Tail County**
Septic Systems and You
- 9:30 - 9:45** **Break & Table Displays**
- 9:45– 10:15** **Nick Phelps - MAISRC Professor & Interim Head**
Director of the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center at the University of Minnesota.
- 10:15– 10:30** **Break & Table Displays**
- 10:30 - 11:00** **Pete Guck - Pete Guck is the Riparian Conservation Specialist at the EOT SWCD (East Otter Tail Soil & Water Conservation District).**
SWCD Handbook—A New Guide to Lake Stewardship
- 11:00 - 11:15** **Break & Table Displays**
- 11:15 -11:45** **Maddie Hayden**
Madeline Hayden, MAISRC Research Outreach Specialist
Does AIS influence Swimmer's Itch?
- 11:45 -12:30** **Jeff Forester**
Executive Director of Minnesota Lakes and Rivers
- 12:30 - 1:00** **Coffee, light snacks, Table Displays**
outro @ 1:00 by Sylvia Soeth OTC COLA



Spencer McGrew

Spencer McGrew is the **Aquatic Invasive Species Specialist** for Otter Tail County. He has led the county's AIS Prevention Program since 2016. He studied history and geosciences at Minnesota State University Moorhead and received his M.A in Geography at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks. His master's thesis explored the economic impact of zebra mussels on lakeshore property values. In 2025 he was elected Chair of the Statewide AIS Advisory Committee.

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Chris LeClair

Chris LeClair is the **Director of the Land & Resource Management Department for Otter Tail County**. Chris began his career in 1993 as a regulator in the environmental health field at Anoka County while finishing his B.S. in Natural Resources & Environmental Studies at the University of Minnesota. In 1996, Chris was the Environmental Health Specialist at Washington County where he remained for 22 years.

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Nick Phelps

Nick Phelps is a **Professor and Interim Head in the Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Conservation Biology and the Director of the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center at the University of Minnesota**. His research focuses on emerging threats to aquatic systems at both the macro and microbial scales in the fields of fish health and aquatic invasive species (AIS).

phelpo83@umn.edu 612-624-7450



Pete Guck

Pete Guck is the **Riparian Conservation Specialist** at the EOT SWCD (East Otter Tail Soil & Water Conservation District). He specializes in riparian conservation partnering with Otter Tail County lake property owners providing technical, financial, and educational opportunities to restore shorelines. This all by incorporating methods and expertise that benefit water quality throughout our regional watersheds.

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Madeline Hayden

Madeline Hayden serves as the **Research Outreach Specialist** at the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC),

MAISRC has addressed the swimmer's itch issue and have compiled information regarding its cause and control.

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Jeff Forester

Jeff Forester is the **Executive Director of Minnesota Lakes and Rivers (MLR)**. MLR seeks to protect Minnesota's lake and river heritage for current and future generations by forging powerful links between lakes, lake advocates and policymakers. MLR has been working to stop the spread of Aquatic Invasive Species in Minnesota since 2009.

jeff@mnlakesandrivers.org 952-854-1317



Sylvia Soeth

Sylvia Soeth is the **President of the Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations (OTC COLA)**. OTC COLA was formed in 1992. OTC COLA works with lake property owners for prevention of aquatic invasive species and promotes best practices of lake stewardship in the county. The organization sponsors a water quality Analysis program, has regular seasonal lake property owner meetings and has hosted numerous events of bus tours and other educational opportunities.

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