

IMPORTANT NEWS from Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations

E-Newsletter April 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 Monitoring Kick Off**
- **OTC COLA Upcoming Events**
- **Lake Stewardship Symposium**
- **OTC COLA Speaker Team**
- **The Case For Water Quality Monitoring**
- **MAISRC Upcoming Events**
- **MLR Annual Report Published**
- **MN COLA**
- **Red Flag Warning Includes Otter Tail County**
- **Commissioners Meetings Now On YouTube**
- **OTC AIS Snapshot Of Accomplishments**
- **AIS Handbooks - Still Available**
- **OTC Board Of Commissioners Minutes**
- **www.lakeadmin.org - Featured Posts**
- **Instant Access Links-**

[Newsletter Article Index](#)

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



2026 OTC COLA Water Monitoring Kick Off April 16, 4-6 pm

The annual OTC COLA lake water monitoring program Kick Off will be on April 16 at the Ottertail Community Center in Ottertail MN from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The annual event has evolved over the years from an opportunity to take part in an educational seminar on how to properly obtain water samples to what might resemble the drive-through at McDonalds. Most water samplers have participated in the program for many years. Some of them over 25 years. Coolers for transporting samples to RMB Laboratories can also be picked up at RMB Laboratories in Detroit Lakes MN, 218-846-1465.

For those that are new to the program or would like some updated instruction on collecting water samples, Jeff Vansteenburgh, OTC COLA, Environmental Director, will be happy to help. Please call him at 641-420-0928 or email

jeffrey.vansteenburgh@gmail.com.

UPCOMING EVENTS!

OTC COLA Upcoming Events

OTC COLA events scheduled for 2026 include the Lake Stewardship Symposium in May and Lake Property Owner meetings, third Thursdays in June, July and August.

May 16, 2026- Lake Stewardship Symposium, Thumper Pond Resort
June 18, 2026- Lake Property Owner Meeting, Ottertail Community Center
July 16, 2026- Lake Property Owner Meeting, Ottertail Community Center
August 20, 2026- Lake Property Owner Meeting, Ottertail Community Center

OTC COLA events and meetings are always opportunities learn how to be better stewards of their lakes and for networking and socializing with other lake property owners.

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



Logo photo courtesy whittenaerials@gmail.com www.vernwhittenphotography.com

Have You Checked Out the Symposium Yet?

Registrations keep coming in for the 2026 Lake Property Owner Symposium on May 16 at the Thumper Pond Resort. They have been received from Otter Tail County as well as from a number of regional counties.

The event will start off with a free hot breakfast for all attendees from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

The speakers will cover a variety of subjects and issues of great interest to lake property owners.

Get the latest news and scientific updates to help lake property owners become better stewards of their lakes

- Why was swimmer's itch so bad in 2025? Scientific answers from experts.
- Hear about new statistical approaches to analyze data at the University of Minnesota. Recommendations for prioritizing future funding will be presented.
- Learn how septic systems work and what is looked at during state and county compliance inspections.
- Learn about harnessing the power of Lake Associations to drive public policy. Hear about what you can do to reverse the MN defunding of the AIS Prevention Aid. It is estimated the result will be a \$200,000 hit to Otter Tail County.
- The East Otter Tail County Soil & Water Conservation [Lake Stewardship Booklet](#) is now available. The 20-page booklet outlines tips to help guide lake property owners to become better lake stewards.

Invitations have been extended to organizations to host table displays for dissemination of relevant lake property owner information. To reserve a table at the Symposium please email [John Kruse, OTC COLA Administrative Assistant](#).

The Symposium will be held at Thumper Pond Resort in Ottertail City from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on May 16, 2026. There is no cost for the event including the free hot breakfast.

Registrations for the event are greatly appreciated to assist in capacity planning. For more information and to register, watch for registration invitations in future articles of the [OTC COLA E-Newsletter](#), postings on the [otccola.org](#) website or news releases to be published in regional newspaper publications. You can also register by calling [John Kruse, OTC COLA Administrative Assistant](#), 701-219-0465.

[Symposium Flyer](#)

[Speakers](#)

[Register HERE](#)

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



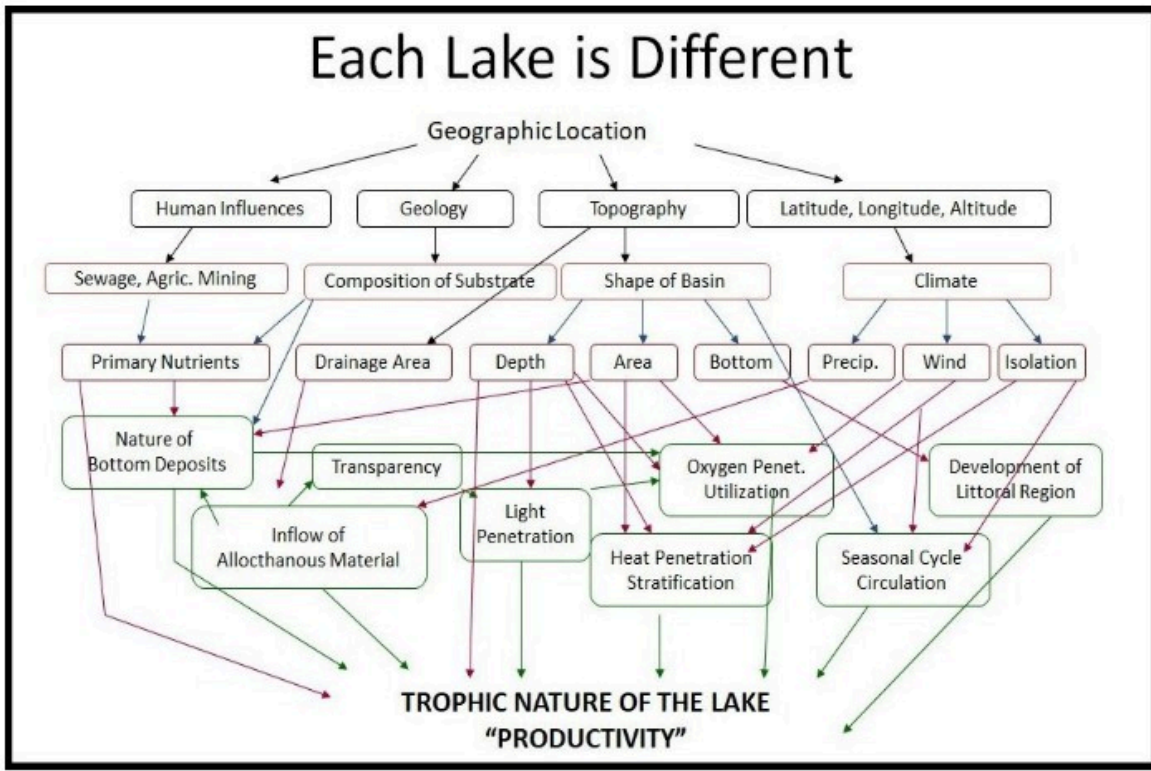
OTC COLA Board Members To Speak At Your Meeting

Lake Associations are in the process of planning their annual meetings for 2026. The OTC COLA Board Members on the Speaker Team are looking forward to invitations to speak at any lake property owner event. Topics are being explored and presentations prepared that are of high interest to lake property owners.

The Team is currently responding to Lake Association requests to schedule speaking dates. Coordinating Team Members with desired meeting dates and times is a challenge but we will do the best we can to accommodate requests.

There is no cost. Early submissions are the best way to help secure a desired place on the schedule.

To request an OTC COLA speaker at your meeting email [John Kruse, OTC COLA Administrative Assistant](mailto:John.Kruse@otccola.com), at otccola2@gmail.com.



The Case for Water Quality Monitoring

Water quality monitoring and the resulting data may appear complex to lake property owners. The science is solid but includes many components that are either difficult for people to understand or that may appear to be inconsistent. It seems that what people really want to know is “Why is my lake so mucky” or “why are there so many weeds in my lake”.

[OTC COLA Water Quality Analysis Reports 2025 samples](#)

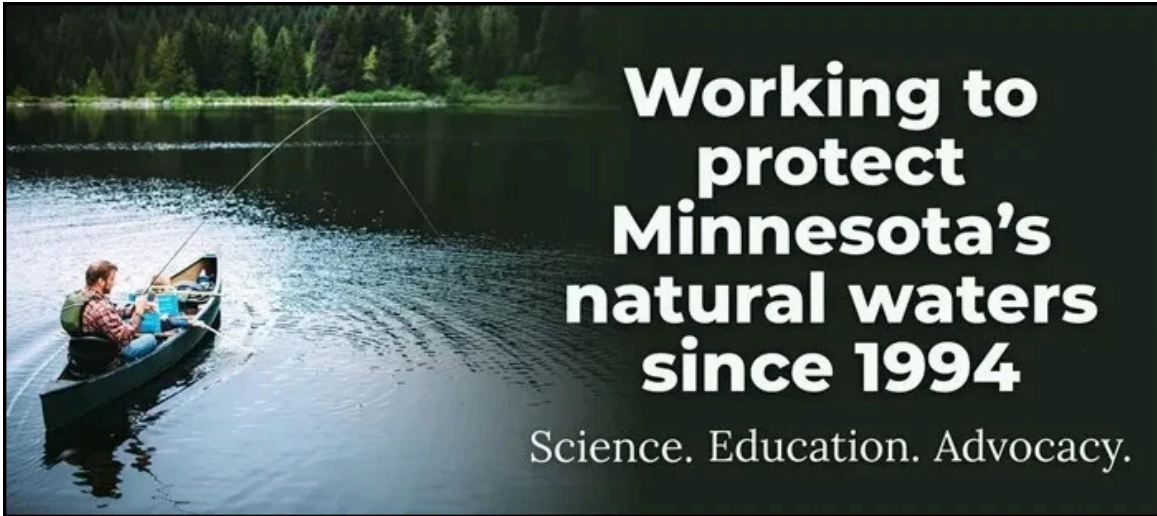
[MORE](#)



Upcoming Events

- 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"



Minnesota Lakes & Rivers 2025 Annual Report Published

As we look back on 2025, I want to thank you for protecting Minnesota's lake and river heritage with us. Whether you've been a member of Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates for 30 years or you joined just last year, thank you. If you haven't joined yet, take a look at this report to see all the wonderful work you could be supporting.

For the last three decades we have relied on our members, 8,763 individuals from across the state that have one thing in common: they know our lakes and rivers are the glue that holds Minnesota together. In times like these, that is what makes our work so important. We are focused on what has always brought us together, our lakes and rivers.

I hope you enjoy reading through our 2025 annual report. It was a great year for our organization. In these pages you'll get a window into our programs addressing AIS, shoreline, and water education; learn what people across the state are doing to protect our lakes and rivers; and witness policy wins at the legislature that will impact our state for decades to come.

None of this happens without members like you, so once again, thank you.

Open water season will be here before we know it.

As always, keep in touch,

Jeff, Sami, Dylan, Lily, and Tim - the MLR Team

[Minnesota Lakes & Rivers Advocates](#)

[View our annual report here](#)



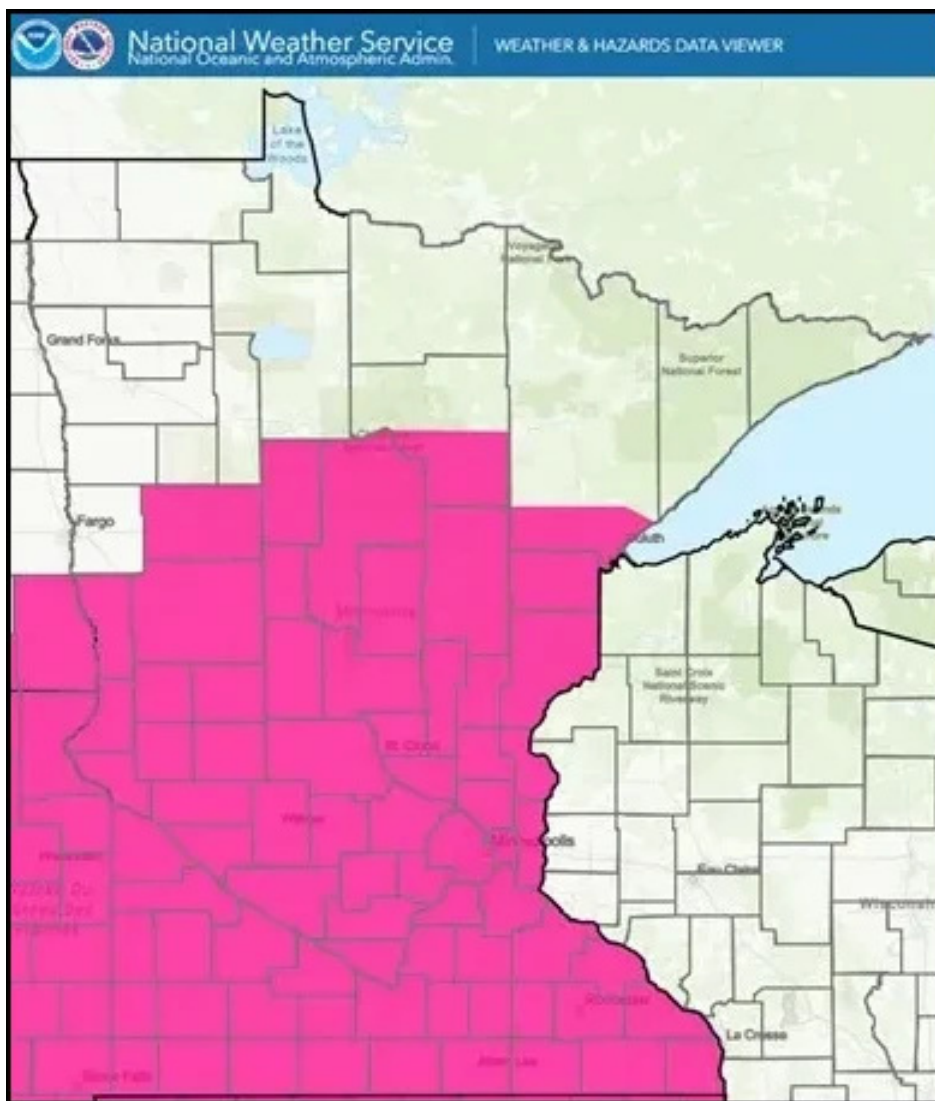
Go [HERE](#) for a review of the benefits of joining MN COLA

MNCOLA.ORG

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

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





Red Flag Warning Issued Includes Otter Tail County

The National Weather Service has issued a Red Flag Warning for most of Minnesota effective Saturday, March 28 due to extreme fire danger.

A Red Flag Warning means fires can spread quickly and grow out of control under the predicted weather conditions, including strong winds and low humidity. Do not burn in counties where a Red Flag Warning is in effect and check any recent burning to ensure the coals are completely out cold.

The DNR will not issue or activate open burning permits during the Red Flag Warning and campfires are discouraged. People should use caution when doing activities that can cause sparks or heat near vegetation by securing trailer chains, parking ATVs on gravel or pavement, and using chainsaws or other equipment outside of the Red Flag warning hours.

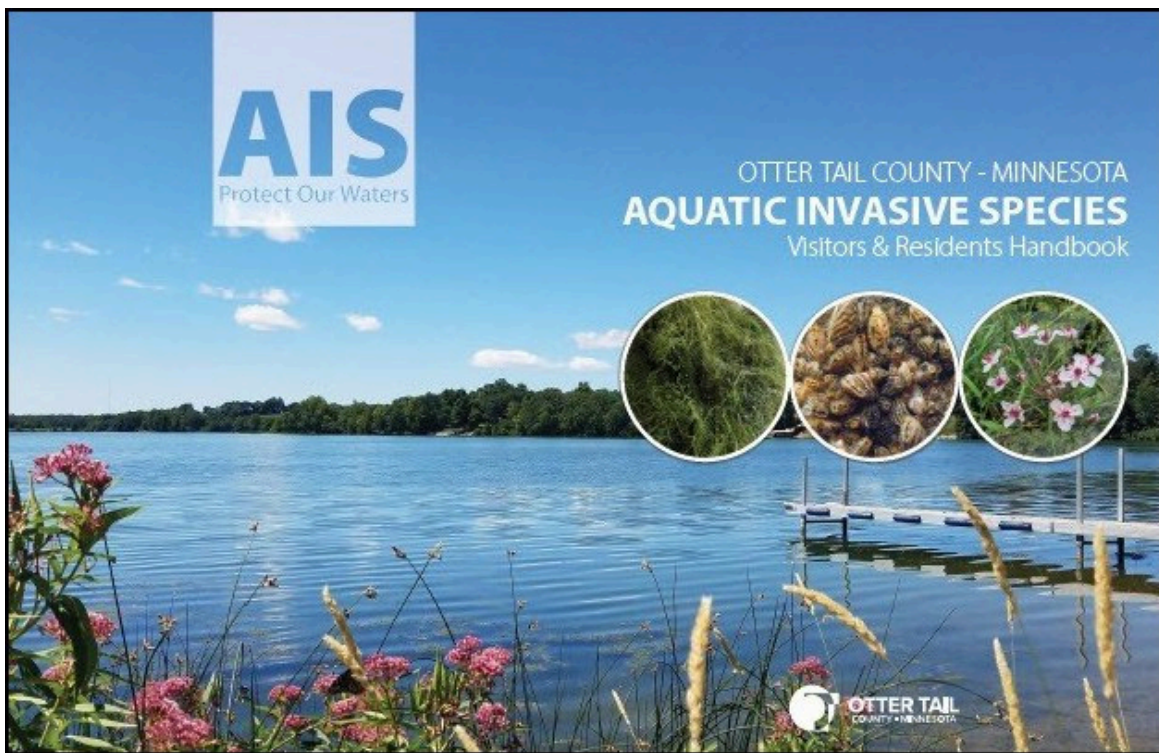
[MORE](#)



Board of Commissioners Meetings Now Available on YouTube

Board of Commissioners meetings are available to re-watch on YouTube. To access the videos, visit the [Board of Commissioners page](#) and scroll to “Recent Meetings and Events” or visit our [Public Meetings playlist on YouTube](#). The meeting videos are divided into chapters by agenda item so you can click the video timeline to jump directly to the segment you would like to watch. Videos remain available for three months after each meeting.

Otter Tail County AIS Prevention Aid Program
[A Snapshot of Accomplishments in 2025](#)
[Spencer McGrew](#), OTC AIS Specialist



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

- [**February 24, 2026**](#)



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

Featured Posts

- [Get the Lead Out](#)
- [Ultimate Lake Association Directory](#)
- [Endocrine Disruptors in Lakes](#)

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](#)