

IMPORTANT NEWS from Otter Tail County Coalition of Lake Associations

E-Newsletter July 2026



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UPCOMING EVENTS!

OTC COLA Upcoming Events

OTC COLA Summer Meetings Are Back On Track

OTC COLA is back on track with its traditional schedule of summer Lake Property Owner meetings being held on third Thursdays in the season. Please mark your calendars for 2026 remaining meetings.

Join other lake property owners Thursdays, July 16, 2026 and August 20, 2026. All Minnesota lake property owners are welcome to attend OTC COLA meetings at the Ottertail Community Center, 93 Lake Avenue South, in Ottertail, Minnesota 56571. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. Attendees are encouraged to arrive early for coffee and cookies and a time of socializing and networking.



Pete Guck, EOT SWCD Riparian Conservation Specialist

July 16 2026 Lake Property Owner Meeting

July 16, 2026- Lake Property Owner Meeting, Ottertail Community Center.

Featured Speaker:

Pete Guck, Riparian Conservation Specialist at East Otter Tail Soil Conservation District (EOT SWCD). Pete specializes in riparian conservation partnering with Otter Tail County lake property owners providing technical, financial, and educational opportunities to restore lake shoreline.

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.

The EOT SWCD updated [Lake Stewardship Booklet](#) is a comprehensive review of what lake property owners need to know to be good stewards of their lakes.

All attendees at the July 2026 OTC COLA Lake Property Owners meeting will receive a complimentary copy of the Lake Stewardship Booklet. Also to be presented will be the opportunity for meeting attendees to purchase copies of the Booklet to bring back to their Associations for distribution to Association Members.

[**Lake Stewardship Booklet Table of Contents**](#)

[**Pete Guck, EOT SWCD Riparian Conservation Specialist**](#)

August 20, 2026- Lake Property Owner Annual Meeting, Ottertail Community Center. Spencer McGrew, Otter Tail County Aquatic Invasive Specialist will review activities of

the Otter Tail County Watercraft Inspection program. Assisting Spencer will be Deputy Derek Tollefson.

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

Remaining Water Monitoring Sampling Dates 2026

July 20

August 17

September 21



EOT Breakfast on the Farm Returns August 1

Summer in Lakes Country brings a variety of community events that celebrate the people, traditions, and industries that make our communities unique. One of those highlights is the annual East Otter Tail (EOT) Breakfast on the Farm.

The local agricultural community and a dedicated team of volunteers are preparing for this year's event, which will be held on Saturday, August 1, at the Ron Doll Farm, located at 44383 County Highway 14, Perham.

Breakfast will be served from 7:00 a.m. to noon on a first-come, first-served basis. The event is open to everyone, and breakfast is available for a free-will offering, making it an affordable outing for the entire family.

[MORE](#)



Samplers and Couriers recognized at Lake Property Owners Meeting

Samplers and Couriers Recognized at June 2026 OTC COLA Lake Property Owner Meeting

Special recognition was given to samplers and couriers who attended the June meeting of lake property owners at the Ottertail Community Center on June 16, 2026.

Samplers and couriers have been integral components of OTC COLA's water monitoring program for dozens of years. "Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these samplers and couriers from the swift completion of their appointed duties". Okay, maybe that's a little bit too dramatic. But the sentiment is still the same! Their efforts and dedication are sincerely appreciated and contribute directly to the success of the program. They contribute to collecting and compiling data for capturing status and trends of lake quality in Otter Tail County. Lake associations use the annual trend reports to help steer healthy stewardship of their lakes. The information is also shared with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) for statewide management of Minnesota lakes.

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



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 sometimes 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@otccola2@gmail.com), at otccola2@gmail.com.



The MN COLA Annual Membership Meeting Was On Tuesday, June 16, 2026

MN COLA NEWS

Two new MN COLA Board members elected...Ezri Farnum and Keegan Lund. Incumbents Steve Frawley and Tom Watson were re-elected for another term.

Membership remains strong among COLAs & large organizations, Individual & lifetime members, and lake associations.

Speakers at the Annual Meeting included:

Hilarie Sorensen and Chris Filstrup presenting on the *Minnesota Lake Lookout* program, and Jeff Forester of Minnesota Lakes & Rivers providing an update on their efforts. Save the date for the Aquatic Invaders Summit in St. Paul March 9 & 10, 2027.

MN COLA's Jim Kutzner presented new changes to the MN COLA web site. Of particular note is the extensive educational information and videos on wake boat surfing impact. www.Mncola.org/wake-surfing.

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

MNCOLA.ORG

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



DNR Launches New Electronic Licensing System

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources today launched the first phase of its modernized electronic licensing system for anglers, hunters and trappers, replacing a system that has served the state for more than 25 years.

The new ELS offers more flexibility than ever — three ways to buy a license (mobile app, online, or in-person from a license agent) and three ways to carry it (paper, PDF, or stored in the app). Customers can purchase and store licenses, and even register harvests from anywhere, including areas without cell service. Customers can access the new system on the [DNR website](http://mndnr.gov/buyalicense) (mndnr.gov/buyalicense) or by searching “Minnesota DNR Licensing” in the Apple or Google app stores.

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MAISRC June 2026 Newsletter

The latest MAISRC newsletter is now available! This issue's cover story explores mystery snails, an aquatic invasive species that can impact ecosystems, native species, and even human health. Learn how **four MAISRC research projects are working together to better understand** how to manage these increasingly common invaders.

[June 2026 Newsletter](#)

MAISRC's New eDNA Testing Lab And a Call for Volunteers

Early detection of aquatic invasive species (AIS) is an important factor in slowing or stopping the spread in a waterbody. More detections require more people. Fortunately, MAISRC research has demonstrated that [volunteer-collected samples are as accurate as University scientists](#), making large-scale environmental DNA (eDNA) monitoring feasible.

Now we are implementing this research to pilot an [eDNA testing lab](#) to monitor statewide. We are currently recruiting volunteers who are interested in testing Minnesota's lakes and rivers for **zebra mussel eDNA**.

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New Tool for Lake Management Decisions

As part of research funded by MAISRC, the **Muthukrishnan Integrative Ecology Lab** at St. Olaf College is **developing a tool to help communities make decisions about the tradeoffs of different AIS management strategies**. The tool is a web application that is designed to **help people involved with lake management decisions** (including lake association members, local and regional resource managers, and environmental consultants) consider the potential outcomes of different options and identify strategies that best fit their specific situations, budgets, and priorities.

[MORE](#)

Join the New Minnesota Cattail Collaborative

The Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center (MAISRC) and Minnesota Sea Grant (MNSG) are embarking on an exciting new project and looking for partners in collaboration! For the past several years, MNSG has been researching small-scale mechanical harvest of invasive cattails as a potential strategy to mitigate ecological impacts created by invasive narrowleaf and hybrid cattails. Previous research by MNSG's Amy Schrank and her team has shown that this management strategy helps to restore native aquatic plants, increase dissolved oxygen in removal sites, and improve habitat for nearshore fish communities

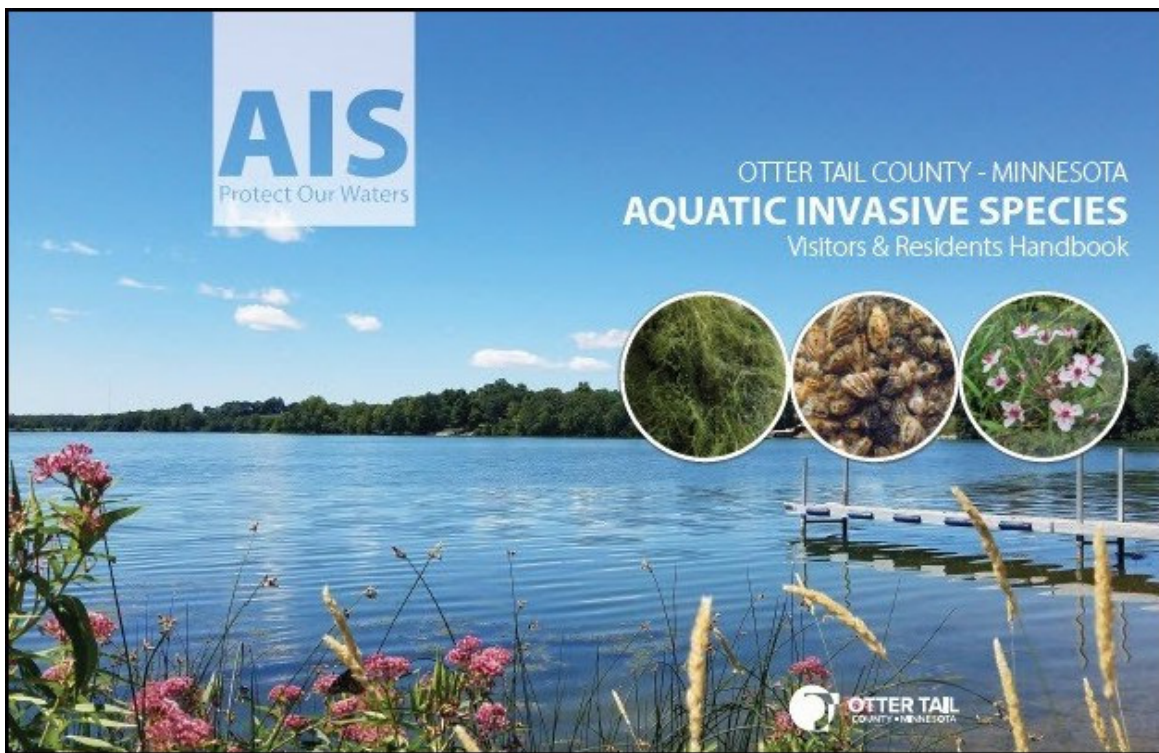
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Board of Commissioners Meetings Now Available on YouTube

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

- [**May 26, 2026**](#)
- [**June 9, 2026**](#)



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

July 2026 Featured Posts

- [Organization Of Lake Property Owners](#)
- [Steps To Start A New Lake Association](#)
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[John Kruse](#), OTC COLA Administrative Assistant

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