



# The COLA Update

Publication of Hubbard County Coalition Of Lake Associations

PO Box 746 • Park Rapids Minnesota 56470

Fall 1996

## COLA Annual Meeting

The Water Safety Forum sponsored by COLA (Coalition of Lake Association) on July 25, 1996 was an interesting and very informative meeting. The excellent panel of experts (see photo) contributed to the success of the meeting which was moderated by Herm Bailey, COLA Past President.

### PERSONAL WATERCRAFT

All agreed that personal watercraft (Jet Skis) were here to stay along with other boaters, swimmers, fishermen and wildlife and the challenge is how to determine how all these elements could get along on our lakes. Rep. Kinkel said the most recent change by the legislature was the age limit of 13 for operators. Mike Lawrence informed the audience that these craft are limited by law to no-wake speeds within 100 feet of docks, other boats etc. The low wake speeds also apply through weed beds and shallow water. We were very surprised to learn that the 100 foot limitation did not apply to other watercraft including speed boats or water skiers.

### EXOTIC SPECIES

Mike Lawrence said that most road blocks set up by the DNR found that about 5% of the boats had milfoil. This is a shocking fact since there are only about ten roadblocks a year. What about all the other days?

### LIFE JACKETS

PICTURED ABOVE: The panel of experts for the COLA Annual Meeting consisted of Sheriff Larry Johnson, his two water patrol deputies, Larry Dierks and Ted Godfrey, Mike Lawrence the DNR Conservation Officer, Tony Kinkel, Representative District 4B and Commissioner Floyd Frank.

Larry Dierks updated us on the new law stating that a life jacket be immediately available to each occupant of a boat. We are not to store our life jackets in lockers while the boat is in use. Seat cushions are no longer acceptable as flotation devices.

### SAFETY FUNDING

Both Sheriff Johnson and Commissioner Floyd Frank spoke on funding of the Hubbard County water safety enforcement program. Currently, it is funded by State funds. However, Com-

missioner Frank stated, that with increased use of boats in Hubbard County lakes, some county funding may be necessary.

### VOLUNTEER OBSERVERS

At this time, a recruitment program is underway for volunteers to act as observers of boating activity and to report violations immediately. Volunteers would be equipped with hats and jackets furnished by the Sheriff's Department. The response to this program has been extremely encouraging.

### TOWNSHIP REGULATIONS

An interesting aspect of township regulations is the fact that the township has the ability to set speed limits, hours of operation, size of motors

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## Shoreland Ordinance Amendment Developments

From time to time over the past year and a half, we have included in issues of the COLA UPDATE, articles related to the efforts to amend the Hubbard County Shoreland Ordinance. In the Spring 1996 issue, we reported on the actions of the Planning Commission and the County Board to resolve the contiguous lot issue (Article 708). This action permitted owners of nonconforming contiguous lots to sell them, providing the lots were capable of meeting setback and sanitary standards now in the ordinance.

COLA on a split vote of its board, supported this action out of a sense of fairness to the property owners involved.

COLA, however, opposes the current recommendation of the Planning Commission enacted in August to allow storage building up to 250 sq. ft. within 10 feet of the lakeshore. This change can be put in place by the County Board after public hearing.

Most of our Hubbard County lakes have natural uncluttered shorelines. These unspoiled shorelines are a

welcome contrast to those overpopulated, overdeveloped shorelines of lakes south of us near metropolitan areas. This contrast should be preserved and we will work to that end. If you share COLA's view, read the President's message which contains a call for action you can join.

Herm Bailey

Be sure to see the 'Call to Action' in the President Message on page 2.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The Hubbard County Planning Commission has been working on the revisions to the Shoreland Ordinance since February of this year. However, they have ignored the public input indicating what the majority of people in the county want.

The latest recommendation as Herm Bailey noted in his article, is to allow accessory structures of up to 250 sq. ft. only 10 feet from the water line. This size building could house two small cars. In addition, decks would be allowed on top of the structures. All of this, if enacted will change the appearance and quality of our lakes forever.

They introduce changes in spite of the fact that the public input requested by the Board of Commissioners indicated that 68% of the people who responded did not want the ordinance changed in any way. COLA has formally requested the Board of Commissioners to stop this ordinance revision process, based on the

public input and on the fact that the petition presented by Al Hoops was flawed and misstated, but to date, they have ignored our request.

The Planning Commission is an advisory body and their recommendations are then presented in a public hearing. The results of the public hearing at which citizens may testify, either in person or in writing, are then forwarded to the Board of Commissioners who may also hold a public hearing before taking action. We expect that the Planning Commission will be holding public hearings in the summer of 1997.

This is the point where you, as lake association and COLA members come in. Our County government needs to hear from you regarding your feelings on the Shoreland Ordinance. We would hope you would support COLA's official position that the Shoreland Ordinance should not be changed, but whatever your sentiments on this subject are, they need to hear from you

on this matter. You obviously care for the lakes of Hubbard County if you have chosen to invest your money here and make this your home or vacation retreat. What you treasure is in danger right now and action is needed. For this we can't depend on others to write the letters and make the phone calls, it has to come from all of us.

I would appreciate your writing to your County Commissioner within the next month, expressing your thoughts on the revisions to the Shoreland Ordinance process. In addition, I would appreciate you sending a copy of your letter to COLA (see address below). We will compile your letters and use them at next summer public hearings. But our commissioners need to hear from you soon if our lakes are to be protected. Adresses and phone numbers listed below for your convenience.

## COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

District 1	Ed DeLaHunt	P.O. Box 49 Park Rapids, MN 56470	(218)732-4948
District 2	Dick Thoreson	Route 2 Box 47 Park Rapids, MN 56470	(218) 732-3532
District 3	Floyd Frank	Route 2 Box 352 Park Rapids, MN 56470	(218) 732-7359
District 4	Lyle Robinson	Box 58 Benedict, MN 56436	(218) 224-2669
District 5	Cindy Dudley	HCR 34 Box 243 Bemidji, MN 56601	(218) 854-7456
Planning Commission		Hubbard County Courthouse Park Rapids, MN 56470	Attn. Norma Loomis Fax: (218) 854-732-3645
Park Rapids Enterprise		5th and Pleasant Ave. Park Rapids, MN 56470	(218) 732-3364 Fax: (210) 732-8757
Northwoods Press		Nevis, MN 56467	Fax (218) 653- 3475
COLA		P.O. Box 746 Park Rapids, MN 56470	

## Annual Meeting

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and type of watercraft. The Legislature thought such special provisions were best left to township and county units of government.

### BOAT REGISTRATION

Boaters should be encouraged to register their boats in Hubbard County if they primarily use their boat here, since the registration money goes to the county. For example, many of the boats are owned by people in the Twin Cities and that money goes to Hennepin or Ramsey County. Perhaps a special effort could be made to encourage registration here.

COLA would like to express appreciation to all panel members, and to thank them for their participation.

Frank Smith



### DNR VOLUNTARY EXOTIC SPECIES ROAD CHECK

Paul Child, COLA Vice President hands out literature while Fish Hook Association member Jean Wilson checks a boat for milfoil. These two volunteers along with President Frank Smith spent an educational afternoon on Sept. 7th working with the DNR and Minnesota Lakes Association to inspect boats and educate drivers. No milfoil was found, but the volunteers all felt the day was well spent.

## Eagles are an attraction of lakes area

By Joe R. Town

Two tons. That's how much a single bald eagle nest can weigh, not to mention the fact that it can be large enough to hold three full grown adults within it comfortably. Besides that, eagles usually have more than one nest, sometimes up to three or four. While they most likely won't use all of them in the same year, they periodically alternate, for different reasons some of which are obvious and others that are uncertain to experts.

The bald eagles are occasional sights in the area and there are fairly large settlements in the Chippewa National Forest. Usually, eagles' nests are located in tall, bushy, strong trees with a supercanopy like white pine, red pine or aspen. They will put their nests in the crotch formed by the trunk and a large branch, wedging it tight.

Building a nest is a strong bonding activity for eagle couples. Great care is taken in building and maintaining a nest and the couple always does it together. Eagles are highly loyal, although it is possible the surviving mate will pick another partner if its previous partner dies.

According to Jill Kelly, a Department of Natural Resources worker at Chippewa National Forest, there are 340 nests in the national forest alone, 74 of which are active. Some of the bird's nests date back to the '60s and eagles may come back to the same nest and same territory some 20 years later, either continuously or after a period of time.

Despite the ferocity of adult bald eagles, the eaglets are really quite docile, although this is not a suggestion to get out and find an eaglet and toy around with it yourself. Eaglets cannot fly for a period of time, although they are constantly flapping their wings in order to learn. They also have oversized feet like puppies; a theory is that they might grow into their feet and legs like puppies do.

Eaglets are not born all at the same time; usually there is one that hatches first and many times this is the one that gets to play the family bully, getting food first and occasionally pushing the others out of the nest.

The size of the eagle couples' territory can vary, depending on the quality of the habitat. If water is not near, the territory may expand out to some shoreline. Most often, eagles like to put their nests near bodies of water. However, due to the geographical changes to the shoreline areas from human construction, eagles are forced to fly farther to look for food because their nests must be located farther away.

If you were to look inside a nest (which is not recommended), you might find a strange collection of junk. Kelly said that



once she and another forest worker found tennis shoes in one nest in an Idaho national forest where she worked before she came here.

Zoning is important for eagles, so the DNR take great pains to work with zoning officers to make sure that construction will not go up in an area that will adversely affect eagles and their nests. Eagle couples can be highly individualized, ranging from those who could care less whether there are humans mowing the lawn under their tree to those that hate it when a human sneezes a hundred yards away.

*Courtesy of Park Rapids Enterprise*

## PARTIAL PAYBACK

We have enjoyed an August that brought the most beautiful weather to Hubbard County lakes in the memory of most of us who live here during the summer. Cool nights, blue skies, occasional stiff but not damaging winds (remember the early morning storms of July 12 and 13, 1995) — who could ask for anything more?

Well, I suppose if you garden on a big scale, you would have appreciated more rain, but generally it was a good month to be on the lakes, show off our country to guests, and to enjoy.

So, do we owe one to Mother Nature? Maybe summer residents do. But those of us who toughed it out through the winter of '95-'96 figure August '96 is only a partial payback. Give us a pleasant fall, an average sort of winter, and in the summer of '97 another month like August '96 and we'll call it even.

## STOCKING FISH IN HUBBARD COUNTY

Fish stocking is one of the most highly visible and widely recognized DNR Fisheries activities, but the public often misunderstands its benefits and drawbacks. Years ago, about all it took to get a truckload of walleye fry or fingerlings dumped into a lake was a phone call. But today, fisheries managers still stock, but it is done far more prudently than in the past. These days there is the need to consider cost-effectiveness and the effects of stocking on the lake's other fish populations.

Stocking of lakes and streams is not necessary to maintain fish populations where the spawning habitat is adequate. However, where natural reproduction is limited it may be a practical and effective tool for the establishment, reestablishment, or maintenance of a fishery. In general, this means using fish from local or regional sources within the same drainage area to insure genetic integrity. Throughout Minnesota, more than 2,500 lakes receive fish raised in state hatcheries and it usually helps. A recent evaluation by the U of M showed that stocking artificial walleye lakes (those with little or no natural walleye reproduction) has increased their numbers. However, the study also showed that stocking natural lakes (those with good natural reproduction) is largely a waste of time and angler license dollars.

So why does DNR decide that stocking in certain lakes is not a good idea? It doesn't work in many lakes because nature has already decided what type of fish will do best in particular waters. Some lakes are good for walleyes, others for northerns. Some are best for bullheads, others make great homes for bass and bluegills. These bass-panfish lakes, for example, often don't produce many walleyes for a good reason: the habitat they need to reproduce simply isn't there. Consequently, the decision not to stock is determined when:

- \* It's redundant. Many lakes, especially the big ones in the northern half of the state already have good fish populations.
- \* It wastes money. On many lakes, stocking just doesn't work. After 10 or 20 years of not getting results, managers have decided that money would be better spent on other ways of improving fishing.
- \* It can disrupt native fish communities. For example, stocking walleyes in a lake adapted for other species can disturb the entire fish community. In some cases biologists believe that stocking can actually make fishing worse.

When asked about stocking in a particular lake, managers first reach for the lake's fisheries management plan. It can be justified by one or more of the following criteria:

- \* In newly created or rehabilitated waters.
- \* In lakes experiencing winterkill

where potential for public use is great and winterkill does not occur annually.

- \* Where investigation has shown that an introduced desirable species is suitable for the water body and compatible with management of the indigenous fishes.
- \* To maintain a species of game fish where all elements of the required habitat exist, except for adequate spawning conditions.
- \* Where reproductive success of predatory species is too variable to establish a proper balance with prey.
- \* Where carrying capacity of intensively managed waters is inadequate to supply angler demand. This application is expensive because it involves stocking catchable-sized fish.

In Hubbard County, DNR stocks about 25 lakes each year, not necessarily the same lakes as many are on an alternate year plan. While the species is primarily the walleye, some muskies, rainbows and brook trout are also introduced. Where fry (just hatched) work, it is least expensive, but trout and muskies are stocked as fingerlings (4-6 inches). Most of the walleye fry, as well as trout fry, are produced in waters throughout the county. However, muskie fry are received from the Bemidji or St. Paul areas. Fry programed to be released as fingerlings are placed in local rearing ponds. Warm water species are normally stocked in the spring, cold water species (trout) in the fall. So which lakes and streams are stocked with which species? This is determined by the specific management plan, which is developed from fish surveys and the results over a period of time.

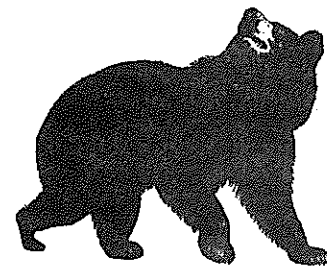
However, just because the DNR decides that some lakes don't meet the criteria discussed above doesn't mean that they have given up on a lake. Other ways to improve angling include rehabilitating lakes to remove carp, installing lake aeration systems, establishing experimental regulations for increasing lunker fish, reestablishing native aquatic plants and improving the health of a lake or stream's watershed. Lake associations are encouraged to contact our local DNR Fisheries Office to learn about the management plan for their lake.

\* Information for this article was drawn largely from "Taking Stock of Stocking," which appeared in the Summer 1996 issue of Fish & Wildlife Today and from discussions with Dennis Ernst, DNR Fisheries Manager, Park Rapids.

Paul Child

*An always interesting "Candidates Night" will be held October 22 at 7 P.M. at the courthouse basement in Park Rapids. It is sponsored by the 'Enterprise.' Candidates for elective offices of the Legislature and County Commission expected.*

## LIVING



This year, bears have generally stayed in the woods and problems with bears and humans in Hubbard County have been at a minimum. That is because there has been adequate food in the woods for bears. The blueberries have been plentiful, acorns and hazelnuts have been in good supply so the bears have been content to stay in their own environment and leave humans alone.

In years when the woods cannot supply all the bear's needs it is a different story. The humans living in rural areas, and lake-shore can expect visits from bears that are looking for food. When this happens, it is fortunate that most bears are wary of people and usually leave when encountered. Although seeing a bear can be a memorable experience, some people are frightened when they encounter these animals.

Bears can become a nuisance when they visit homes, resorts, campgrounds and restaurants. Although some bears become used to people, they are still wild animals no matter how "tame" they may appear. People must always be cautious around bears since they may react unpredictably. **THE BEST WAY TO AVOID BEAR PROBLEMS IS TO NOT ATTRACT THEM IN THE FIRST PLACE!**

Bears are attracted to homes and cabins by garbage and bird feeders. Pet food, charcoal grills, and fruit trees may also attract bears. Once a bear finds food around your home, it will likely return. **NEVER FEED BEARS!** They will associate people with food and may become a problem.

**To minimize bear problems on your property:**

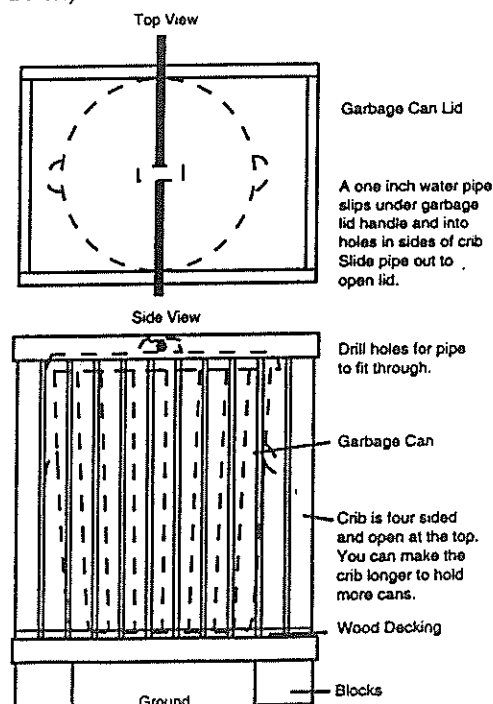
- \* Reduce garbage odors, rinse food cans and wrappers before disposal.
- \* Compost vegetable scraps.
- \* Keep meat scraps in your freezer until garbage pickup day.
- \* Wash garbage cans regularly and use lime to cut odors.
- \* Keep garbage cans in bear-proof container. (see drawing)
- \* Remove bird feeders in the spring, or take them in at night.
- \* Keep pet food inside.
- \* Keep barbecue grills and picnic tables clean.
- \* Barking dogs, bright lights and noisemakers will sometimes discourage bears from coming into the area.

## WITH BEARS

If a bear comes into your yard:

- \* DON'T PANIC! DON'T SHOOT! DON'T APPROACH IT!
- \* Learn to tolerate bears. Many bears are killed or injured when not causing problems.
- \* Most bears fear people and will leave when they see you. If a bear woofs, snaps its jaws, slaps the ground or brush or bluff charges: **YOU ARE TOO CLOSE!**
  - \* Back away slowly.
  - \* Go inside and wait for the bear to leave.
- \* IF A BEAR REFUSES TO LEAVE:
  - \* Make loud noises or throw something to scare it away.
  - \* Always allow a bear an escape route.
- \* IF A BEAR IS TREED:
  - \* LEAVE IT ALONE! The bear will usually go away when it feels safe.
  - \* Have people leave the area.
  - \* Remove your dog from the area.

(Note: Much of this article is drawn from a DNR publication and is reprinted with permission. Art work is by Amy Beyer, DNR.)



## COPY MACHINE MOVES TO PIER 34

COLA Lake Associations have available to them a copy machine for lake association matters (not personal) at 5 cents a page. It is located with Charly's Marine where Pier 34 used to be. Give one of the officers a call if you need help operating it.

## News From Our Lake Associations

### FOUR NEW ASSOCIATIONS JOIN COLA!

The Bottle Lake Association (consisting of Upper Bottle, Lower Bottle, Emma and Stocking Lakes) has joined COLA this year. Their president is Duane Wallace. Also joining COLA is the Lower Crow Wing Lake Association consisting of 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th Crow Wing Lakes and its president is Nicholas Busher and COLA representative is Mary Hood. We also welcome Big Sand Lake Association back to the COLA. 8th Crow Wing Lake Association was recently formed and voted to join COLA. Its president is Judy Novak.

There hasn't been any official notification from the Long Lake Association but the local paper and letters to the editor indicate that Long Lake is withdrawing from COLA this year. Their members are receiving this copy of the "COLA Update" as a friendly gesture.

### FISH HOOK ASSOCIATION

The Fish Hook Lake/River Association applied for a Conservation Partners Grant through the DNR in the amount of \$1,377. This is a matching grant with the association providing an equal amount. The monies will be used to do a "Mass Balance Analysis," which includes an analysis of water samples taken at the inlets of Potato and Portage River and the outlet into the Fish Hook River. Flow studies are included in the study.

The Fish Hook Board of Directors voted to also do sampling at the "Government Ditch," located west of the Potato River inlet. These samples will be paid for by the association.

The association received a memorial from the Cline family in memory of Kenneth Cline. The Clines have spent their summers on Fish Hook Lake since sometime in the 1940's, and Ken served on the Association's Board of Directors for several years. A bench was purchased with a part of the memorial and will be placed at the boat access on the south side of the lake. The water sampling done at the site of the "Government Ditch" will be paid for with memorial funds, and the balance will be put into the "Ken Cline Memorial Fund" to be used for educational purposes such as sending a child to an environmental camp or adults to conferences related to lake protection. It is planned to make this an ongoing memorial fund.

### BELLE TAINE LAKE ASSN.

After a short rain delay our boat parade

got under way in July with just over twenty entrants. After the parade, refreshments were served at the swimming beach. We had a great turnout at our August picnic with around 60 people to enjoy the great food and company of friends and neighbors. The next social outing is the "October Fest" to celebrate the end of summer and a new season.

In late August, the DNR was on Belle Taine netting fish as part of their ongoing analysis of the fish population in area lakes. It won't be officially completed until this winter but it looks like we have a fairly good fish population.

### 5TH/6TH CROW WING LAKE ASSN

Our very busy association is in its 8th year with 101 members. This summer we elected Chuck Anderson president. The Board meets monthly and plans its many activities and still mix fun and environmental matters such as coffee parties, a weiner roast, horseshoe tourney along with protecting our lake waters and get out a monthly newsletter to keep us all informed.

### SPIDER LAKE ASSN.

We held our fall meeting on September 14th at the Spider Web Restaurant and had a pot luck afterward with about 25 people attending. We are discussing raising our dues (now \$15) to \$20. Another topic with us is restricting the size of crappies caught to at least 10 inches as an experiment to see if we can improve the fishing.

### LAKE GILMORE "GILLY FEST 1996"

The 12th annual Gilly Fest was held on Aug. 3, 1996 and as always, it was an all-day affair culminating after dark with the lighted float traversing clockwise around Lake Gilmore. The festivities began with the boat parade, and as usual, the judges had a difficult time selecting winners, since all of the entries were exceptional. A visit by four members of the Renaissance Festival Royal Court was a surprise to everyone, except the parents of Queen Catherine, who reside on Lake Gilmore.

A pot luck dinner with roast turkey as the entree was enjoyed by all and no one gave a thought to calories. The residents of Lake Gilmore donate and bid on items at the auction held at dusk around a campfire. The money raised is used to finance next year's Gilly Fest.

This year, the weather was perfect, but even if it rains, the sun is always shining in the hearts and minds of the residents of Lake Gilmore as we celebrate our Gilly Fest, held in honor of Gilly, our legendary mascot.

## COLA OFFICERS

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**VICE PRESIDENT**  
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**PAST PRESIDENT**  
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**SECRETARY**  
TED SPENCER  
218-732-7083

**COLA UPDATE  
COORDINATORS:**  
TED SPENCER, HERM BAILEY

NEWSLETTER DESIGN AND LAYOUT BY DICK AND CANDY NELSON-6TH CROW WING LAKE

## COLA LAKE ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

**LAKE**  
*Bad Ax*  
*Belle Taine*  
*Big Mantrap*  
*Blue*  
*Eagle*  
*East Crooked*  
*Gilmore*  
*Potato*  
*5th/6th Crow Wing*  
*Bottle Lakes*  
*Emma*  
*Stocking*  
*Lower Bottle*  
*Upper Bottle*

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Rose Loeffler  
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Joyce Alto  
Joan Smith  
Rich Roethermel  
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\*\*\*\*\*  
E. Stenevik  
Bill Pauley  
Dale Martin  
Bobbi Thomas

**LAKE**  
*Hinds*  
*Kabekona*  
*Lower Crow Wing*  
*Little Sand*  
*Palmer*  
*Spider*  
*Portage*  
*Fish Hook*  
*Stony*  
*8th Crow Wing*  
*Big Sand*

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Leona Neilson  
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Richard Einerson  
Carolyn Allison  
Vicki Hartz  
Stan Rotegard  
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AND PROTECT THE BEAUTY OF  
ALL OF OUR LAKES  
YOUR "COLA UPDATE"