



HUBBARD COUNTY COLA
P.O. BOX 746
PARK RAPIDS, MN 56470

WEBSITE:
www.minnesotawaters.org/group/hccola/welcome

June 2012

President's letter By Dan Kittilson

What a great spring, or should I say extended spring? I actually put my dock into Little Sand Lake on March 31, 2012. I'll probably never do that again. March was absolutely beautiful and then came April fools. Need I say more? Once again, COLA is off to a great start this spring. The Children's Freshwater Festival continues to be a success, water quality monitors have completed their first sampling, watercraft inspections are full speed ahead and we look forward to ongoing lake protection strategies in 2012.

"Catch a Memory" is the motto for the 2013 Governor's Fishing Opener that is coming to the Park Rapids lakes area. Hubbard COLA will probably play a key role in making the Governor's Opener a success. While the Associated Press touted the Park Rapids area as the home of Itasca State Park, the Heartland Trail, the Lake Country Scenic Byway and the Chippewa National Forest....Hubbard COLA will focus on welcoming guests to the "Land of Clean Water and Pristine Lakes".

Hubbard County has some of the cleanest, clearest lakes in Minnesota. Earlier this spring both Big Sand Lake and Little Sand Lake recorded water clarity over 40 feet deep. As noted by our recent Hubbard County Large Lake Assessment Grant Program, Hubbard County has 28 lakes with stable or improving water quality trends.

To many Minnesotans, water and lakes are a major part of our lives; whether fishing, swimming, boating or just relaxing. Lakes are where we gather to share family stories and to "catch a memory". Yet our favorite lakes are at risk.

While we all continue to get caught up in the rush to prevent the spread of AIS, especially Zebra Mussels, from coming to our favorite lake, we must do more to focus on other risks that threaten our lakes. Utilizing the data from COLA's/SWCD's recently completed Large Lake Assessment Program; we must focus our attention on strategic water quality protection and restoration strategies with concerted action on lakes and lake watersheds.

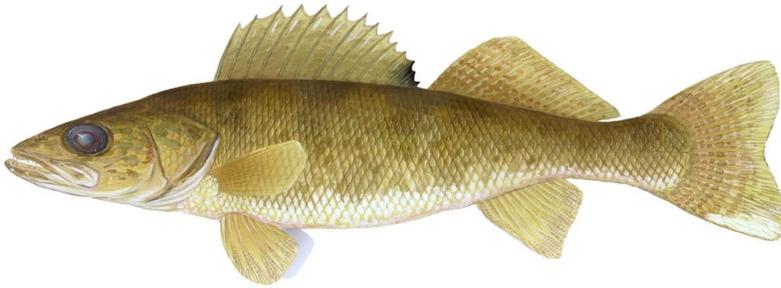
Strategic water quality protection and restoration strategies for all our COLA lakes could include storm water management, best management practices for agricultural areas, protecting land with conservation easements, aquatic invasive species prevention and containment, and shoreline restoration projects.

Along with everyone's right to enjoy our lakes, comes the responsibility to help protect our lakes. Lakes are a shared resource. Your lake cannot talk, but its people can. That's why we need lake associations.

Again, I extend a special invitation to lake presidents to attend our COLA meetings. If you plan to attend I would encourage you to come early for our social gathering where you can meet your lake neighbors and enjoy goodies and refreshments made by Mary Jo Groehler, Theora Goodrich and Ruby Kittilson.

Good Fishing, and hope to see you at our COLA meetings and maybe even on the water!

Dan



This is our COLA placemat project. Sponsored by Hubbard County COLA and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. Watch for it on your restaurant table in the future.

STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS • DON'T MOVE A MUSSEL • STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS • DON'T MOVE A MUSSEL • STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS • DON'T MOVE A MUSSEL • STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS

WELCOME TO THE LAND OF CLEAN WATERS AND PRISTINE LAKES

Help Protect Hubbard County Lakes and Rivers from Aquatic Invasive Species

Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations (COLA)

Welcome to Hubbard County... as Visitors and Residents of Hubbard County, it is your privilege to enjoy some of the cleanest, clearest lakes in Minnesota. Along with everyone's right to enjoy our lakes, comes the responsibility to help prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species like Eurasian Watermilfoil, Curlyleaf Pondweed, Zebra Mussel and Spiny Waterfleas.

MINNESOTA Aquatic Invasive Species Laws

You must...
CLEAN visible aquatic plants, zebra mussels, and other prohibited species off of watercraft, trailers, and equipment before transporting from any water access.
DRAIN water from the boat's bilge, livewell, motor, ballast tanks, and portable bait containers before transport from water access site or shoreline property.
KEEP drain plug out and water draining devices open while transporting watercraft.

You may not...
TRANSPORT aquatic plants, water, or prohibited invasive species (e.g., zebra mussels, Eurasian water milfoil).
DUMP live bait into state waters, on the shore, or on the ground.
LAUNCH, or attempt to place, watercraft or trailers with aquatic plants, zebra mussels, or prohibited invasive species into any waters of the state.

The Park Rapids Lakes Area

Zebra Mussels impact recreational use of lakes

Zebra Mussels attach to plants

Zebra Mussels on a native clam - ALSO: Zebra Mussels deplete food supply for native fish

Eurasian Watermilfoil

Spiny Waterfleas on fishing line

Before ZM and After ZM

Sponsored by Hubbard County COLA and Minnesota DNR

STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!

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The 2012 watercraft inspection program is up and running on many of our local lakes. A big **THANKS** to the Hubbard County Soil and Water District (SWCD) for taking on the largest Local Government Unit (LGU) program in MN. When many were finding reasons to block such an important effort, the Hubbard SWCD leaned forward and embraced the opportunity to help protect our area lakes. Without the leadership of District Manager Mark Sommer, with the backing of the SWCD board, this program would not have been possible.

The program this year involves the cooperation of many area Lake Associations: Belle Taine, Big Mantrap, Big Sand, Blue, Emma, Fishhook, Island/Eagle, Little Sand, Long, Potato and Spider, along with support from the Argo, Henrietta, Hubbard, Lake Emma and Mantrap townships, the city of Nevis, and the MN DNR.

In total, over \$82,500 has been committed to this year's program, funding 13 inspectors covering the lakes mentioned. We have also had 26 resort/campground owners attend training to enable them to inspect boats and train customers on the importance of proper procedures to prevent the spread of AIS. It bears repeating, that **this program is the single largest LGU effort in the state and many are to be commended for having the foresight and commitment to make this happen!**

While we have made great progress, much is left to do. With our focus on the 2013 program and beyond we face many challenges:

1). Sustainable Funding: This year's funding was 65% Lake Associations, 25% local government and 10% DNR. Our challenge as Lake Associations to obtain private donations is a continual struggle. A few contribute a great deal and many contribute nothing. Our challenge is to substantially increase the numbers who support the program. If everyone contributed, the amount needed would be minimal per owner.

Our second funding challenge is to increase the support from our local governments. While most would agree that our lakes are important to the local economy and quality of life, they hesitate to support the investment to protect this asset. **As lake shore owners, we respect the fact that the lakes are a resource for all to enjoy. Why then, is it not everyone's responsibility to protect them?**

2). Decontamination Station: For 2013 we hope to have at least one official watercraft decontamination station in Hubbard County. This will require specific equipment and trained operators who understand how to decontaminate each specific type of watercraft. We will be exploring both private sector and public sector opportunities to make this a reality for next season.

3). Increased Participation: We would like to see an increased level of participation from our area lake associations and resort/campgrounds. Educating all boaters who use our area lakes and rivers is important to keep AIS out of our waters. We have seen how quickly zebra mussels spread throughout a watershed and local area once they are found in one water body.

The most effective program is one where we have all lake associations and resorts participating. With support from everyone, we can keep this program going and protect our lakes until a real solution can be found. The research has begun to find a way to treat and eliminate zebra mussels. We must continue our vigilance until the threat can be eliminated.

Why should I care?..... These aren't the passive, happy freshwater clams we're used to. Zebra mussel populations grow exponentially (or worse). They want to live on your dock, your boat, your boat's motor, the cooling intake...you get the idea. Where they attach to the lake bottom, their sharp shells can cut feet. Where your fishing line crosses them, they can cut it too. They're also out for total dominance, attaching to our native, happy clams and killing them.

The problems go on, potentially impacting the entire lake ecosystem. Bottom line: We don't want them in our lakes.



*Why should I worry?.....*Zebra Mussels have spread throughout the Great Lakes and the Mississippi River from Brainerd downstream, and are now in other rivers and inland lakes.

Mussels attach to boats, nets, docks, swim platforms, boat lifts, and can be moved on any of these objects. They can also attach to aquatic plants, making it critical to remove all aquatic vegetation before leaving a lake. Microscopic larvae may be carried in water contained in bait buckets, bilges or any other water moved from an infested lake or river.

What should I do?



1. Remove visible zebra mussels and aquatic plants and drain water before transporting boats and equipment from one water body to another.

2. Read the article on ZM Monitoring by Peter Tuomisto in this newsletter & offer your help!

Zebra Mussel Monitoring by Peter Tuomisto

Zebra mussels are obviously a very high priority in our detection efforts at Hubbard County COLA. It will take all of our efforts to stop the spread of Zebra mussels (ZM) into our area lakes. Besides the

boat inspectors trained and hired for many boat accesses, the ZM monitoring will add two more actions. Both of these are voluntary for the lakes and require volunteers.

The first can be done by anybody on the lake that would want to hang a small cinder block on the end of their dock and check it for adult ZM every couple of weeks. The block is hung just below the water surface via rope or chain on the shady side. The best case scenario would be for observers to be spread around the lake. If any ZM are detected, that information would immediately be reported to the DNR.

The second step would be to have a special net used to collect possible veligers (early ZM). This is done by a hired professional or trained volunteer using a special plankton net. Laboratory identification will be done by RMB Environmental Laboratories in Detroit Lakes. This will be done in July and August. The special net will cost about \$275.00 and each sample inspection will cost \$90.00 each time.

Training would be required for volunteers that want to do this. It would last 1.5 – 2 hours and needs to be at a lake with dock access or on a pontoon boat to be able to demonstrate the sampling procedures. The training sessions could be held at the end of June or early July during a week day or evening or on a Saturday morning. Training will cost \$400 for a maximum of 20 trainees and will be paid by COLA.

Monitoring non-infested lakes for ZM allows for early detection if the lake becomes infested. Early detection can prevent the spread to other water bodies. Using both these methods together gives the best chance at detecting ZM in lakes.

Please contact me at the following if your lake is interested in participation in the ZM monitoring.

Peter Tuomisto
ptuomisto@rescol.com

P: 218-732-0963
C: 612-597-1386

24862 Hearth Drive
Park Rapids, MN 56470

Minnesota facts & figures

The name "Minnesota" comes from the Dakota Indian name "Minisota," which means sky-tinted water.

Minnesota contains the northernmost town in the contiguous 48 states: Angle Inlet, at 49.22° North latitude.

Lakes, rivers, and wetlands facts

General

Minnesota's waters flow outward in three directions:

North to Hudson Bay in Canada

East to the Atlantic Ocean

South to the Gulf of Mexico

Voyageurs National Park in northern Minnesota is the largest water-based park in the National Park System.

Restore the Shore 2012-2013 by Mary Groehler



Trees and shrubs do so much to beautify the shoreline on a lake. Sand just tracks in and ruins your carpet! Grass needs to be mowed! Tell your members that they will have so much more time to enjoy the lake when they Restore the Shore. Plus, it is much better for the health of your lake!

Our 2013 Restore the Shore delivery order forms may be picked up at the Hubbard County Soil & Water office (212 1/2 2nd St W, Park Rapids). All checks must be made out to your lake association for consolidation by the lake association treasurer. Orders are due to your lake association coordinator by September 17, 2012.

Trees will arrive the first part of May 2013. Check out the new items on the order form!

Lake Coordinators: Call me, Mary Jo Groehler (732-4200), if you need a packet. I do ask that the Lake Coordinators ONLY turn in the green form to me. Copy the member forms in white. Your treasurer needs to make out one check to COLA for your whole order, with 'Restore the Shore' in the memo line. The COLA Rep or President should then bring them to me at the September 27, 2012 COLA meeting.

Encourage all of your members to order!

I want to thank Theora & Lynn Goodrich for their help with the 2012 program. Also, thanks to Lyle for returning to lend a hand & Ruby & Dan too. Thanks to all who made arrangements for pick-up – it was great to have all delivered by Saturday!

Any questions~contact Mary Jo Groehler 732-4200 or mjgroehler @yahoo.com



Lake Water Quality Data Analysis and Lake Reports – The Hubbard County Large Lakes Assessment – 2012 by Mark Sommer, Hubbard SWCD District Manager

Based on the lake water quality data that has been collected by volunteers over the past 10-plus years on many of Hubbard County's COLA lakes, a summary report was generated that identified the water quality trends of 39 lakes. The report was the result of a partnership between Hubbard COLA, the Hubbard SWCD, and the state of Minnesota's Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR) with RMB Labs conducting the data analysis and summary writing.

Of the 39 lakes, the majority of them were grouped into 3 categories that described trend direction. The good news is that the water quality of 28 of the lakes is either improving or holding steady. There are, however, a group of 7 lakes that the data indicate a declining water quality trend. What we see in those lakes is either an increase in *chlorophyll a* (algae) and or a decrease in water clarity (as measured by Secchi disk). On a positive note, none of the 39 lakes were exhibiting increasing trends in total phosphorus. That's not to say that there aren't lakes with nutrient levels above what is typically expected for this region of the state, it just means that the amount being detected hasn't increased significantly during the years that water quality data was collected.

The lake water quality data trend analysis gives us a better understanding of what's going on in our lakes and can help us better focus our restoration and protection efforts. For lakes that are seeing declining trends in water quality, activities that address shoreline erosion and storm water runoff will likely help to slowly reverse the trends. For the lakes that are seeing increasing trends in water quality, the same activities are important but an additional protection component may also be necessary. It's important to remember that the negative impacts to water quality in Hubbard County have occurred in small increments over time. Consequently, to see improvements in lake water quality, the reverse will also need to occur over time.

Grassroots and Grasstops Key to Protecting Lakes from Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) by Jeff Forester, MSRPO

Grassroots, where individuals communicate directly with their elected officials on an issue, is the basis of advocacy. But grasstops in the form of professional advocacy is also critical to success.

Former State Representative Ron Erhardt joined the Minnesota Seasonal Recreational Property Owners Coalition (MSRPO) board in 2009. MSRPO is a non-profit advocacy group focused on representing lake families at the Minnesota State Capitol. I joined MSRPO because I appreciate that this is the one organization that pays attention to legislative issues that affect lakeshore property owners,' said Erhardt. "They have had numerous successes including legislation that helps stop the spread of water-borne invasive species."

As former state representative, professor and writer Darby Nelson said at a 2012 Legislative Summit on AIS, "I can tell you that legislators lead very busy lives. They can't know everything about everything. That's where lobbyists... play very important roles."

The MSRPO is the only grasstops organization working solely on AIS and other lake issues. Membership includes thousands of lake home and cabin owners across the state. In 2009 the MSRPO Board took on AIS and reached out to COLAs and lake associations, and their grassroots base. COLA and lake association officers joined the MSRPO board, including officers of the Minnesota Coalition of Lake Associations (MN COLA).

As the statewide organization grew, so did the combined power of MSRPO and local lake associations. In 2010 the Minnesota Legislature passed the most sweeping AIS legislation in 20 years. The grassroots/grasstops strategy works.

- Lakeshore owners bring issues to their lake associations and COLAs, and through the associated MSRPO board members, to MSRPO at the state level.
- MSRPO frames the issues, generates effective messaging and advances a legislative agenda in support.
- MSRPO carries to these messages to legislators, agencies, the media, and the governor's office.
- MSRPO members have a channel directly to key policy makers across the state.

The work is just beginning. Minnesota's lakes are still threatened by overuse, over development, aquatic invasive plants and animals, and other pollution factors along with increasing taxes on lakeshore properties. There is still no comprehensive statewide AIS plan or reliable funding for AIS work.

Today We Have A Once-in-a-Decade Opportunity

For the first time in a decade, every legislator in the state must stand for re-election. This creates a potent opportunity for the combination of grassroots and grasstops strategy to advance our issues. The window of opportunity is open for lakeshore owners. But we must begin now, working through the summer and the election, laying the groundwork for a 2013 legislative agenda.

If we do not seize this opportunity we risk lost property values and tax base, loss of recreation related revenue, and major negative impacts to local communities and business as entire watersheds become infested with zebra mussels or Asian carp.

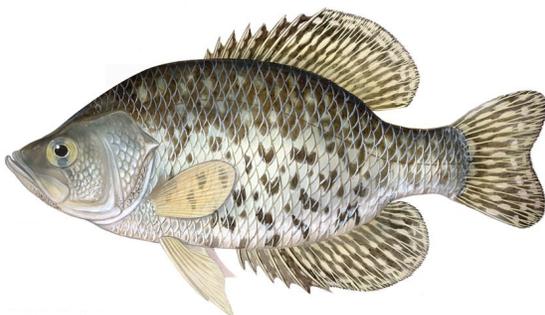
Lake Associations are making donations to MSRPO and individuals are joining as members because of the value they receive and the empowerment they gain by being part of a larger, statewide group that is solely focused on lake-related issues:

- A direct voice at the state capitol with state agencies to influence regulations and policies that impact lakes.
- Timely legislative alerts and updates during legislative session and election cycle to engage lake association members in grassroots support, adding value for member lake associations.
- An active voice in setting MSRPO's statewide political agenda.
- An advocate working year round to obtain funding to protect, enhance and restore our lakes.
- Informative communications to keep lake associations and individual members up-to-date on relevant issues through regular printed newsletters email legislative alerts, webinars and website resources at www.msrepo.org along with content for lake association newsletters and websites.
- Access to a network of statewide resources to build grassroots effectiveness at the state capitol.
- Appearances by MSRPO staff or board members at annual meetings as guest speakers.

For too long Minnesota's lakeshore owners have been without focused and organized professional advocacy at the state capitol. "Partnerships that span local, county and state government will win the day," said Jeff Forester, executive director of MSRPO.. "It is by building collaboration among stakeholders to engage the thousands of individual property owners that we can put Minnesota's lakes at the table when policy decisions are being made." Forester continued, "With a bigger, organized and strategic base, lakeshore owners will emerge as one of the most powerful political forces in the state. It is long overdue."

The lakes we all love deserve no less. MSRPO invites people and groups to visit their website at www.msrepo.org and join. Get involved in local lake associations and your county COLA. Each plays an important role. There is important work to be done together to preserve the Minnesota lake heritage we all love.

Minnesota Fish facts



Anglers and lakes

1.4 million licensed anglers.

- 2 million people fish.
- Minnesota has 11,842 lakes, 5,400 of which are managed by DNR fisheries.

Participation and the economy

- Fishing contributes \$4.7 billion to the state's economy.
- Minnesota ranks fourth among states with the highest number of anglers. The top three states are Florida, Texas and California. Wisconsin is fifth.
- As a percentage of population among those states, Minnesota boasts the largest number of resident anglers at 28 percent and is tied nationally with Alaska for the largest participation of resident anglers.
- Anglers spend \$2.8 billion on fishing each year in Minnesota.
- Dollars directly spent on fishing in Minnesota create an additional \$1.9 billion in economic activity, boosting angling's total statewide economic impact to \$4.7 billion. 2Equipment (rods, reels, line, boats, trailers, etc.) accounted for \$1.2 billion of the \$2.8 billion spent. Trip-related expenses accounted for \$860 million. Other expenses such as bait and equipment rental accounted for \$646 million.
- Salaries, wages and business earnings directly related to fishing total \$1.3 billion.
- Fishing creates Minnesota 43,812 jobs.
- Minnesota angling generates \$350 million in federal tax revenues and \$342 million in state and local tax revenues.

Who goes fishing?

- Most resident anglers – 755,000 of them in fact – are from the seven-county metropolitan area. The remaining 388,000 resident anglers live outside the Twin Cities.
- Men account for 69 percent of resident anglers. Woman account for 31 percent.
- The highest percentage of participation comes in the 35-44 year old age group. Most of the remaining participants come from the 45-64 year old age group, with those 16-24 years old accounting for only 12 percent of the people who fish.
- An estimated 40 percent of Minnesota anglers have household incomes of \$50,000-\$100,000. Households that make less than \$50,000 annually account for 27 percent of Minnesota anglers.
- An estimated 388,000 children ages 6-15 go fishing each year, with Twin Cities-area kids accounting for 76 percent of the total. Although close, more girls (52 percent) went fishing than boys (48 percent). Participation among age groups (6-8 years, 9-11 years and 12-15 years) remained fairly constant.

Fishing habits

- Significantly more time is spent fishing on lakes rather than rivers and streams.
- The average Minnesota angler spends 20 days fishing each year, with 86 percent of resident anglers never fishing anywhere else but Minnesota.
- Only 3 percent of Minnesota anglers try their luck on Lake Superior.
- Most sought-after fish species (in order): walleye, bluegill, northern pike, crappie, bass.
- Most resident anglers spend nearly half their time fishing for walleye and bluegill.



Dock Name Signs Available Again

Summer lake residents Larry and Karen Odegard are again this year producing name signs to be mounted on the lakeside end of your docks. The names are routed into composite decking material preventing any water rotting issues.

The sign panels are 5½” high, and have letters 4½” in height for easy reading from the water, with the length depending on the number of letters in your name. The signs have your Lake logo in lighter blue color and your name

can be done in any of 5 standard colors. Cost of the sign is \$40.00 for the first seven letters and \$5.00 extra per letter after seven. Five dollars (\$5.00) of that price is donated to your lake association and an additional \$5.00 is donated to COLA. These are high-quality signs and a real value for the price.

To order signs contact Larry or Karen at lkodegard@msn.com or 218-732-7310 or the cell 303-709-8635. Custom road signs are also available.

Your Hubbard County COLA needs some of your talents!

COLA needs members to step up to help our organization be a better one. We are actively looking for recording secretaries to take meeting notes at the monthly executive committee meetings (about two hours) in daytime meetings as well as monthly finance committee meetings (about one and one-half hours). Then prepare these meeting notes for presentation into the record at our COLA meetings.

We also need some volunteers with public relations skills to advise and assist the organization in improving our image and the quality of presentations and articles of our organization. These responsibilities are not overly time consuming and are sporadic as needed.

We also need Vice Presidential candidates that are getting involved with our organization and are preparing to assume the presidential position in the future.

And we can always use any volunteers that are willing to solicit, prepare, write, or publish articles for the newsletters or other needs.

Please contact Dan Kittilson: drkittil@msn.com (218-732-5566)
or John Hastings: johnhhastings@live.com (218-732-3260)

Or you can have your Lake Association COLA representative turn your interest and contact information in to one of us at a COLA board meeting.