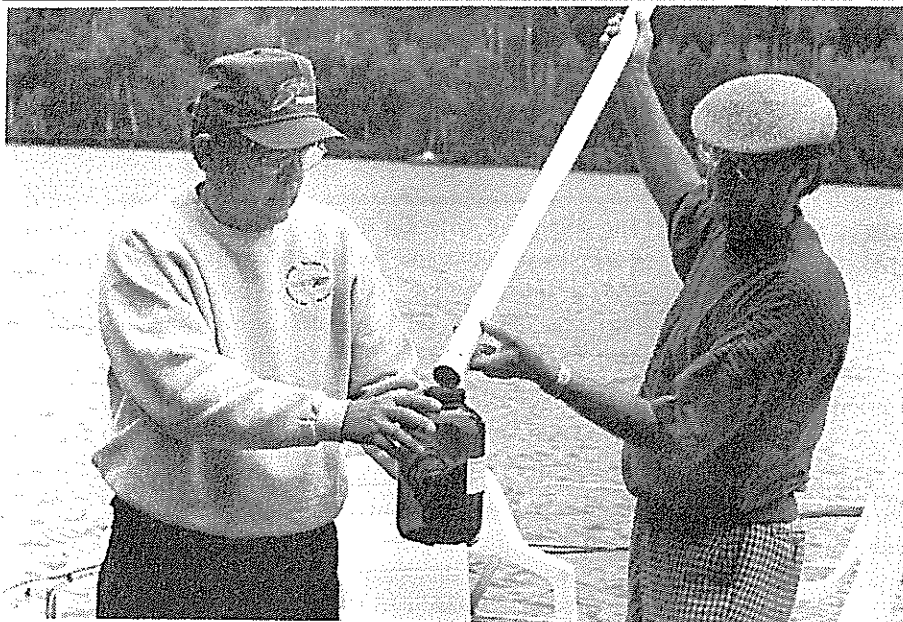




The COLA Update

P.O. Box 746, Park Rapids Minnesota 56470



Jerry Knoblich (right), COLA water testing director pours a sample of lakewater that has been collected in a two meter "integrated sampling tube" into a brown bottle used to collect water samples for chlorophyll. Roger Anderson, water sampling volunteer for Lake Gilmore holds the chlorophyll bottle. The bottle is brown because chlorophyll is sensitive to light. Collections like these went on every month for five months on twenty-three lakes in Hubbard County. The test program sponsored by COLA with financial help from the Local Water Task Force was highly successful

Results of COLA Lakewater testing program for 1997

The 1997 COLA water testing program has proved to be an unqualified success. Under the direction of Jerry Knoblich of Portage Lake, the twenty-three lake program enjoyed 100% participation by all the water sampling volunteers for the five month program.

The testing was conducted for phosphorous and chlorophyll, and Secchi disk readings were taken as well so as to get a definitive picture of lake water quality for the five month period in which the sampling and testing was conducted. By establishing baseline data for all of Hubbard County lakes, COLA hopes to be able to help Lake Associations keep an eye on trends in lake water quality over the years.

The samples were taken to RMB Laboratories in Detroit Lakes. This is a certified lab that does the testing of lakewater samples for several counties in Northern Minnesota

The total cost for the program was \$3910.00 for all 23 lakes. The Hubbard County Local Water Task Force provided \$1400.00 and participating Lake Associations contributed \$2300.00. COLA made up the difference as well as providing all the tools required for sampling such as Integrated Sampling tubes and Secchi discs where required. In addition, Jerry Knoblich assisted by Jerry Lamp and Everett Miller reminded all the sampling volunteers each month plus collected all coolers with the water samples and transported them to the Detroit Lakes Lab. The program was 100% successful because of the dedication of the sampling volunteers as well as the careful coordination of the COLA support team for this complex task.

(See complete listing of lake testing results ranked by TSI on Page 3)

President's Message

Fall has come and passed. With the vibrant color of leaves now gone, many of our friends have made their journey to the mild climates to get away from the natural northern winters here in Northern Minnesota. Those of us that are left will presumably find some time to set back by the fire and reminisce about the year of 1997 that is about to end another chapter in the history books for COLA.

It was not a year without trials and tribulations for the many Lake Associations and our COLA memberships. But as we look back to review our projects and also the problems we faced and we must concur that our activities produced a very positive rewarding result. The Children's Freshwater Festival was a real success and we will look forward to another one in 1998. The Shoreland Ordinance revision took up a majority of our time, as it did in 1996, but now should be completed and consigned to history shortly. As of this writing it appears the County commissioners did listen to the majority and dealt with the proposed changes in a very positive manner. Here is a list of the probable outcome of the Shoreland Ordinance revision process.

1. Septic setbacks remain at 150 feet. with a four foot separation. There was some administrative latitude given to Beth Kluthe about the separation.
2. Water Oriented Structures will only be allowed for individuals that qualify for handicapped status using the same requirements as required for handicapped stickers. The structure will be a unit not to exceed 6' by 8' with a nine foot height, no closer than 10 ft from the lake and must be earth tone in color and be provided with vegetative screening. The structure must be removed upon change of the owner's handicap status.
3. Nonconforming structures in the shore impact zone, closer than 50 feet back from the high water mark, may not be enlarged. However, these structures may be torn down and rebuilt using the same footprint dimensions. In these cases, a second story is not allowed but an 8/12 roof pitch is allowed. For structures between 50 and 100 feet back, enlargement up to 2000 square feet is allowed for a one level home. For two story, split level or structures with a walk out basement, a maximum footprint of 1200 square feet is allowed. Garages within the setback area whether attached or not will be considered in the square foot limits.
4. The ordinance also requires that impervious surfaces of any kind cannot cover more than 25 percent of a shoreland lot, whether or not in the setback area

Now that we have the focus on the shoreland ordinance behind us, we need to get back to the purpose of COLA's organization, namely to facilitate cooperation among member Lake Associations and to assist in fostering wise and

legal use of lakes and watersheds by building working relationships with County and State Agencies and providing educational activities.

We should thank Frank Smith, Paul Child, Ted Spencer and Joyce Wilson for all their hard work in helping to make COLA a success during the past two year period. We all owe them a debt of gratitude.

Thanks to all of you for the support and hours of work you have given to COLA in the past and we know that will continue in the future. You are a great group. It is my pleasure to serve as your president. Thank you.

Larry Batley

Citizens in Ottertail County Take Action!

The citizens of Ottertail County found that County officials were sidestepping the Shoreland Management Ordinance and granting septic system variances with no public hearings, allowing the Board of Adjustment to subdivide lots rather than the Planning Board and not requiring written plans drawn to scale in considering variances.

Shoreland Management Ordinances that are mandated by the state provide that

"any taxpayer or taxpayers of the county may institute mandamus proceedings in District Court to compel specific performance by the proper officer or officers of any duty required by this Ordinance"

A group of taxpayers wrote a letter to the County commissioners, with a copy to the County Attorney informing them of the problems. They stated in the letter that if the County did not respond, then the issue would be taken to District Court. For a nominal fee, the District Court Judge may make a ruling.

In the Ottertail case, immediate changes were made to correct the septic public hearing problems, however, to date other issues have not been resolved.

We are fortunate that in Hubbard County, our officials are becoming aware of their responsibility toward administering and enforcing the Shoreland Ordinance and our lakeshore property owners, especially COLA members are aware of what the Shoreland Ordinance means to all of us. But education not only of our members but of County officials is and should be our principal goal in our COLA activities

(Note: portions of this report were condensed from and article in the "Minnesota Lakes Association Reporter)

Lakes ranked by test results

The chart below shows the results of the COLA 1997 Water testing program ranked by Tropic State Index. This TSI value is a composite number developed from the average of the phosphorous, chlorophyll and Secchi disc readings taken over the five month period (See story on page 1). The TSI is a value that shows the general clarity of the water in a lake and can be used as a comparative value. The lower the TSI value, the clearer the lakewater.

All the lakes in the test sample fall into the satisfactory range and the ranking is simply to show the comparative clarity of all the lakes in the sample. In general, the deeper larger lakes will tend to have lower TSI values than smaller or shallow lakes. Some larger lakes with higher TSI values are showing some effects from development along the shores of the lake

The chart also lists the volunteers that took the tests, rain or shine on the third Sunday of each of the five months. We all owe them a debt of gratitude for their dedication to this task.

	Lake Name	TSI*	Volunteer(s)
1	Little Sand	33	Rod Westrum
2	Belle Taine	35	Jerry Lamp
3	Spider	36	Everett Miller
4	Gilmore	37	Roger Anderson
5	Lower Bottle	39	Jim Sponsler
6	Kabekona	40	Howard Willet
7	Palmer	40	Al Pussner
8	Big Mantrap	42	C.Gabbert/L. Laske
9	Peysensky	42	John Gibbs
10	Potato	43	Rich Rothermel
11	Stony	43	L. Battey/M. Carter
12	Long	44	M.Wisland/T. Guinn
13	4th Crow Wing	45	L. Swindt/J.Fox
14	Island Lake South	45	Shelly Howes
15	Hinds	46	Robert Tulgren
16	Eagle	48	M. Loffler/O. Selid
17	3rd Crow Wing	51	L. Swindt/J.Fox
18	8th Crow Wing	51	Judy Novak
19	Stocking	51	Iva Thielges
20	2nd Crow Wing	52	L. Swindt/J.Fox
21	7th Crow Wing	53	C. Bastis/H.Sinner
22	1st Crow Wing	56	Oscar Forcier
23	Portage	59	J. Knoblich/M. Peterson
	Average Value	44	

Viewpoint

(Editor's Note: With each issue, we plan to have a statement from one of our County Commissioners concerning their job with the County. In this issue, we are happy to bring to you the thoughts of Floyd Frank, Chairman of the Hubbard County Board of Commissioners)

Many times I have been asked "What does a Commissioner do in Hubbard County?" To answer this, I thought a review of the county budget, which is set by the County Board might help shed some light on this subject. The county budget can be broken up into four main areas:

Social Services \$5,000,000

Roads and Bridges \$5,000,000

General fund* \$5,000,000

Solid Waste & Recyl \$1,500,000

* General Fund covers department operations such as Sheriff, Planning & Zoning, District Court etc.

Out of this budget of almost \$16,000,000 the county levies approximately \$4,500,000 (The rest of the County budget comes from the State in the form of payments, grants etc.). The Commissioner's job is to help Department Managers oversee the budget and set County policies.

With approximately 16,000 County residents and a large tourist population, roads are a major topic year around. The increase in traffic count on many of our roads has created a major challenge in maintaining and improving our roads with a limited budget.

The state has placed a levy limit on counties for the next two years. In doing this the state feels it can help control the spending of counties which in turn should maintain or even reduce property taxes. Hubbard County is fortunate to be experiencing growth, which has helped in stabilizing property taxes. I feel very grateful to live in a county in which so many people desire to live. The challenge for all of us is to continue to make our county the best place to visit or to live.

Floyd Frank



Loons can fly at speeds over 100 mph. They can also dive as deep as 100 feet, but they normally fish in shallower water.

What about those Deformed Frogs?

We saw thousands of frogs this year, in North Dakota of all places. While on a trip we camped one night at Clausen Springs just south of Valley City and along the spring fed creek there were thousands of leopard frogs. None of them seemed deformed but we didn't examine them very carefully either. We had never seen so many frogs in one place anywhere.

Frogs seem to be under some environmental pressure these days. I've heard that there is a worldwide decline of frogs although no one seems to have an explanation of just why this is occurring. Some say that because the frog is environmentally sensitive we all should be concerned about this and I agree.

In 1995, some students from southern Minnesota reported finding some deformed frogs and the event received wide media attention. Since then, deformed frogs have been found in many places in Minnesota including our own Hubbard County. Deformed frogs have also been found in other parts of the country including a very high incidence of deformities in the Lake Champlain Vermont area. As yet no confirmed cause of the deformities has been determined.

In September of this year, the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) released the results of testing done by the National Institute of Health Sciences (NIEHS) on water samples collected from areas where deformed frogs had been found in Minnesota. Using a lab test called "Fetax" the NIEHS scientists grew embryos of frogs in the water from two sites.

The test, which takes four days to complete, was run multiple times using dilutions of the water from the Minnesota sites ranging from zero to 100 percent. At concentrations above 50 percent, a high percentage of the frog embryos developed in the water showed a wide range of abnormalities. The test gave positive (abnormal) results from both surface and ground water including some samples of tap water from private wells used by the closest residents to each site.

MPCA Commissioner Peder Larson is quoted as saying "So far these findings do not provide evidence of a human health link but it does underline the need to look more closely as to what this may all mean to the environment."

So the jury is still out on the deformed frog question. Perhaps it will prove only to be a media flap, OR maybe it has some significance to we humans. We will keep you posted

(Note: Since this article was initially written the Federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) announced on November 5th that the MPCA study was flawed and that EPA researchers in Duluth under the direction of Steven Hedtke could not duplicate the results of the NIEHS test. They blamed the use of water samples with an ion unbalance (Ultra soft water) as leading the MPCA tests to the wrong conclusion.

So the jury is still out on the case of the deformed frogs!



Trees from SWCD

We have ordered trees from the Soil and Water Conservation District office now for two years. As a result, our lakeshore property has a good many fine trees and shrubs that would have never been there had we failed to get these nice plants.

The trees and shrubs from SWCD are truly exceptional. The first year we got 25 old fashioned lilacs and 25 Nanking cherry. The total order only cost about \$25.00 and we were really pleased with the size and obvious good health of the plants. They were all "dry root stock" about two feet high (hardly seedlings) and every one of them has grown.

One Nanking Cherry close to the house is now a bush almost four feet tall and one of our lilacs bloomed last year.

In the spring of 1997 we got three species all of which are doing well. The minimum order is 25 of any species. Prices vary from \$6.25/bundle for white pine and Norway up to \$25.00/bundle for mountain ash and \$27.50/bundle for American cranberry.

A total of 29 species are offered the numbers balanced between deciduous trees, shrubs and conifers. All trees are sold for conservation purposes only. The survival rate of trees or shrubs is not guaranteed.

Order blanks may be obtained from the Hubbard County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) at 1003 South Park (Highway 71 just south of Park Rapids Building Supply) phone (218)732-0201. The sooner orders are placed, the better choice you will have of getting the species that you want. People placing orders are notified when the trees are ready in the spring. They are picked up at the Fairgrounds and must all be picked up by May 15th.

If you have been thinking of improving the vegetation in the shoreland impact zone, this is the perfect way to do it. Think Spring!

Meet Bruce Paakh Water Specialist Extraordinary!



Meet Bruce Paakh - a "water quality specialist" for the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency - stationed in Detroit Lakes. Want to know something about water quality? ask Bruce. Want to know about "TSI" (trophic status index)? Want to know about your lake's assessment program? Want to get a secchi disk for your lake? -Want to know a lot more? ask Bruce - he has the answers!

He attends most COLA meetings (at night - 45 miles from home)& is always available as a consultant on COLA water quality projects.

He lives on Floyd lake - north of Detroit Lakes. he has worked for the MPCA since 1983 - first in their central office, located in Roseville, where he worked with industry on their wastewater treatment systems for the Division of Water Quality - Enforcement Section. In 1986 he transferred to Detroit Lakes and worked on a wide array of issues that included: municipal and industrial wastewater treatment systems, responding to spills of hazardous materials (pipeline breaks, train derailments, storage tank leaks, etc.), feedlot inspection and compliance, lake water quality, and County Water planning. His current primary responsibilities involve implementation of the agency Lake Monitoring Programs, providing technical assistance in the water planning process to 10 of the 20 counties that the Detroit Lakes regional office covers, provide assistance to various watershed projects throughout the region, assist Lake Associations and COLA's on water quality issues, and the resolution of various nonpoint source pollution issues.

Bruce was born in Pennsylvania but did some moving with his Father's jobs. He finished high school in Wheaton, Illinois and was an Eagle scout. He started college at Northern Illinois University on a swimming scholarship and transferred to Bemidji State University after his junior year to complete a B.S. in aquatic biology. He finished his masters degree in environmental studies at BSU in 1982. Bruce is married to Lori (a Fargo native) who teaches private voice and piano lessons to about 45 students. They have 2 girls, Laura 7 and Melissa 5. As a primary hobby Bruce enjoys managing 350 acres of his land for conservation and wildlife. He has restored 25 wetlands on his properties and is working to restore native prairie to much of it. He also enjoys competitive target archery and bow hunting.

When asked about what the goals should be for Hubbard County COLA, Bruce says, "I am extremely impressed with the excellent leadership I have seen at the Hubbard County COLA since its inception. your COLA has been and continues to be very well guided and focused." He goes on, "I would encourage COLA to continue its efforts toward lake protection by maintaining your involvement in influencing environmental policy at the county and state levels. Your continued participation and leadership in the county water plan process is important as is your continued support and assistance to the dedicated staff in the county environmental services office and SWCD. With these partners you can continue to shape the future of water management and resource protection in the county. The COLA has done an excellent job of providing accurate and timely information on natural resource protection and stewardship to its membership, and to the community at large, and this effort should continue." "The COLA has served its membership and the environment very well since its inception. I urge the COLA to continue to create an informed public. Good information usually leads to informed (good) decision making at all levels and this is how I feel the resources of the county will ultimately be protected."

All the COLA presidents have sincerely appreciated Bruce's efforts - without him we probably wouldn't have started the task of water testing area COLA lakes. He provided special classes and equipment to help us. We always look forward to his presence with the COLA board.

Thanks Bruce !

Headline Humor

. War Dims Hope for Peace

. If Strike isn't Settled Quickly, It May Last a While

Cold Wave Linked to Temperatures

THE COLA UPDATE

Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations

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Hubbard County COLA Member Lake Associations

★ Kabekona

★ Bad Ax

★ Big Mantrap

★ Upper Bottle

★ Stocking ★ Lower Bottle

★ Eagle ★ Lake Emma

★ Spider

★ Potato ★ Blue ★ Big Sand ★ Gilmore

★ Little Sand

★ Portage ★ Fish Hook

★ Belle Taine

★ 5&6th CW

★ Stony

★ 8th CW

★ Palmer

★ Lower Crow Wings

★ Island

★ Hinds

★ Twin Lake