

Hubbard County Coalition of Lake Associations (HC COLA) Accomplishments Topline 2023

HC COLA, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) formed in 1988, currently represents 43 lakes with 31 lake associations (LAs) composed of 2,776 members. An all-volunteer organization, its mission is to protect and enhance the quality of our lakes and rivers, preserve the economic, recreational and natural environmental values of our shorelands, and promote the responsible use of our waters and related habitats.

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- Celebrated 35 Year Anniversary of HC COLA with games like the fun Bean Bag Toss at Zorbaz tent.
- Collaborated with Hubbard County AIS Prevention to hang Aqua Weedsticks (AWS) on DNR signs at 70 public accesses by Fishing Opener to help boaters clean boats / trailers. Retrieved by Nov.
- HC COLA provided complimentary AWS to 21 Resorts with Private Accesses for use by their guests.
- Ten 4-H Youth participated in 4 class sessions over the winter lead by HC COLA volunteers and Hubbard County Solid Waste / GreenCorps, & UMN Extension Educators. The youth learned about loon preservation. The educational S.T.E.A.M method was used incorporating Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math. Youth assembled artificial nesting platforms (ANP) for loons on 4 lakes building to MN DNR Loon Preservation Project specifications and used some repurposed materials. Half of the youth were able to launch the Daisy Lake ANP. One loon chick produced on E. Crooked.
- There are now 26 lakes that have Loon Liaisons in Hubbard County. They maintain Loon Friendly Lake Management Plans for their lakes in partnership with the MN DNR Loon Preservation Project. Many are LoonWatchers themselves and/or collaborate with their lake's LoonWatchers, who survey loons monthly May-Aug, sharing the annual data and other loon observations with the MN DNR.
- Collaborated with Hubbard County AIS Prevention on the Hwy 34 billboard. This featured the Wildlife Forever message showing the Angler with fishing rod along with slogan Clean.Drain.Dry.
- HC COLA volunteers help with the Freshwater Festival for area 6th graders; hosted by HC SWCD.
- Interacted with 1000 Hubbard County Fair guests in Environmental Education Building in 5 days. Our focus areas included aquatic vegetation identification, how to use the CD3 waterless cleaning stations at lakes where stary stonewort is present to prevent the spread. We also shared info on the "Be Nice To Our Ice" message and new MN law to prevent trash on the ice & "Keep It Clean MN!" We were able to discuss the UMN Healthy Waters Initiative studying recreational boating impacts on lake health at the St. Anthony Falls Propulsion Lab and the DNR education on "Own Your Wake."
- Lead-free tackle samples from the MPCA were provided for 275 youth at 2 Ice Fishing Derby's, a June Kinship fishing event, and at the Fair along with education. Lead tackle collected by lake associations was delivered to Hubbard County Household Hazardous Waste-South Transfer Station.
- The 4-H Youth put together 50 Zebra Mussel Settlement Samplers (ZMSS) made from repurposed PVC pipe on a rope. These early detection tools are hung by LAs at 24 public accesses & provided for interested lakeshore owners. There were 117 survey responses in our "Eyes on the Water" program this autumn from 33 different lakes on results from ZMSS & early detection shoreline observations.
- Several HC COLA Reps attended the UMN AIS Research Center's Update in Cass Lake in June. HC COLA helped MN Lakes and Rivers Advocates share info there on CD3 waterless cleaning stations.
- Collaborated with Hubbard County AIS Prevention; 2 letters on services available sent to 77 resorts.

- The AIS Prevention Operating Team together with the Hubbard County AIS Prevention Program team members collaborated on several objectives for 2023. The [accomplishments & 2024 plans](#) are available on the HCCOLA website. Our annual goals for these 19 years have been focused on public awareness, prevention, early detection, rapid response & containment, mitigation & mgmt goals.
- Discovery Guide 1/2 page HC COLA ad focused on “Keep Your Waters Pristine” with educational outreach to over 40,000 – distributed to tourist info centers throughout MN and 2000 direct mail requests thru PR Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce. The Residents Guide full pg ad with the PR Enterprise was “Keep Your Waters Pristine” with Decon plus “Own Your Wake” in outreach of 7500.
- 12 Monthly HC COLA Column articles were featured in the PR Enterprise - Northland Outdoors.
- Monofilament Line Recycling Tubes were created for use at 5 public accesses with fishing activity to prevent wildlife entanglement. The pilot sites were granted permission by the access administrators.
- Fifty copies of the 2nd issue of the Shoreline Living magazine provided for participants of the Garden Stroll 2023, during lunch. This event is organized by CHI St. Joseph Health Auxiliary with garden questions at sites explained by Hubbard County Master Gardeners. Shared 1st version in 2022.
- Piloting updated “Restore The Shore” process with HC COLA member LAs for trees from HCSWCD. Extended order timeline (due 2/1/24) & order form options for LAs now in Excel & PDF file types. Our website now has process outline, an example letter for LAs to tailor and history of RTS program.
- Shoreland Advisors were invited by 8 separate lakeshore owners for coaching visits on ideas for reducing runoff and erosion. Shared Shoreland Advisor 101 online training with 3 individuals.
- Completed our 26th year of water quality monitoring; 38 lakes sampled in 2023. Beginning in 2023, RMB Environmental Laboratories asked that we place each LAs samples into a few giant coolers with ice packs at our collection point at the PR Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce for our HC COLA volunteer shuttle service to the Lab in Detroit Lakes. The LAs used the same small cooler all season.
- Zebra Mussel Veligers were sampled by 23 lakes in the county using plankton nets. 10 of these lakes had their water samples also analyzed for Spiny Waterfleas. No ZMV or SWF were detected by Lab.
- 2 lakes are in MAISRC’s volunteer surveillance pilot checking for spiny water fleas w/plankton net.
- HC COLA is participating with KeepItCleanMN.org to educate on the new MN law to keep the ice free of garbage and waste. LAs may purchase banners. Posters with a Walleye and QR code to educate were placed on local bulletin boards and bait stores. Table toppers provided to West Forty.
- Lake levels are recorded by LA volunteers and provided to DNR. HCCOLA helps enlist volunteers.
- The Hybrid HCCOLA monthly mtgs Apr - Oct featured educational speakers at the beginning of the meeting; open to the public. Presentations were recorded & on website to promote continuous educ.
- 22 public accesses were checked on 20 lakes in the County; several HC COLA volunteers helped.
- The Long Lake Area Association (Hubbard County) Foundation was awarded the \$2000 HC COLA Charitable Fund Grant in 2023 to help pay for part of their professional aquatic vegetation survey conducted every 5 years. The grantee reported back to HC COLA at the Sept meeting on the results.

- During the Long Lake Aug survey by vendor, Aquatic Survey Professionals, a 5-ft diameter patch of Starry Stonewort (SSW) was discovered. After discussions with DNR AIS Specialist, the LLAA Fndn arranged and paid for chemical treatment in Aug and hand-pulling in Sept.
- To help prevent the spread of AIS to/from the south access of Long, the Township of Hubbard applied for a CD3 waterless cleaning station Stop Starry Stonewort grant through the MN Environmental and Natural Resources Trust Fund administered by MN Lakes & Rivers. The CD3 unit was installed Nov with start-up in Spring 2024. The LLAA Foundation is paying for annual CD3 maintenance costs & volunteers will learn to handle the CD3 management tasks. Ongoing SSW monitoring and mitigation treatments are planned & LLAA Fndn to fund.
- The HC COLA Board of Directors approved, for 2024 only, up to \$8000 for matching grants with the suggested focus area on early detection of AIS and aquatic vegetation surveys for HC COLA member LAs. The limit is \$2000 per LA with the matching \$1 for \$1 still required. We have 3 tools in place to help LAs as they consider applying:
 1. The applications for the 2024 HC COLA Charitable Fund Grants will continue to follow the process used since 2019 when the grants began.
<https://www.hubbardcolamn.org/hc-cola-charitable-fund--grant.html>
 2. This HCCOLA Grant History Google Drive below contains the reference information from the 4 previous HCCOLA lake association recipients of the grant, both their application and the aquatic vegetation analysis survey results and possibly other helpful info. We are hopeful these examples will help you in completing your grant applications.
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1_hmQfhXulVcMjm8KzER8wmHHTAVgHvld?usp=sharing
 3. Additionally, as an unbiased coach and recipient of the 2021 HC COLA Charitable Fund grant, Ingrid Bey, Kabekona LA, is willing to help answer questions as you navigate the application process. Email Ingrid at: belleacres@earthlink.net

The HC COLA Board of Directors will be provided recommendations to consider by the HC COLA Charitable Fund Advisory Team at the HC COLA Hybrid Meeting on Thurs April 25th, 2024 at 6:30 PM. The BOD will vote at that meeting. The 2024 Grantees will receive funds in June 2024 and are to be utilized in 2024.

- Part of our “Eyes on the Water” program, near-shore monitoring of aquatic vegetation for early detection of AIS is engaged in by volunteers in some LAs. Coaching was provided for 11 volunteers (including a resort) on identifying aquatic vegetation, use of a double-headed rake and recording samples. We collaborated with Hubbard County Solid Waste / GreenCorps & DAC Salvage Depot on repurposed double-headed, welded rakes on a rope; available thru the Salvage Depot for only \$30.
- Hubbard County Lake Associations (LA) contributed \$132,719 in supplemental funding for Hubbard County watercraft inspections in 2023. Townships / Cities contributed \$55,445. State funding, administered by Hubbard County, provided \$180,300 for the watercraft inspection portion of the overall Hubbard County AIS Prevention Program for 2023. The total number of watercraft inspections in 2023 in Hubbard County was 20,363 with 144 Decontaminations.
 - From 2009 - 2023, the total amount of supplemental funding for watercraft inspections contributed by LAs is \$1,083,345. The Townships / Cities overall total is \$454,724. The State of MN, along with some early years of DNR grants, contributed a total of \$1,505,125. Overall total for Hubbard County Watercraft Inspection Program 2009 – 2023 = \$3,043,194.
 - 2024 Supplemental Funds are due 1/31/24 to the Hubbard County AIS Prevention Program!