



Short Ears, Long Tales

Courte Oreilles Lakes Association

Issue #40 June 4, 2020

Protecting the Lakes: Aquatic Invasive Species Mapping and Management

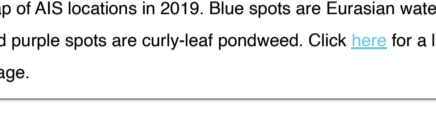
To protect and preserve this fifth largest natural lake in Wisconsin, designated as an Outstanding Resource Water

– The mission of the Courte Oreilles Lakes Association

By Allison Slavick
Contributing Writer

For more than twenty-five years, COLA has advocated, educated, and acted on protecting Lac Courte Oreilles and Little Courte Oreilles. Preventing lakeshore erosion, restoring native shoreland, protecting the lakes' water quality and unique fisheries – these are some of the areas in which COLA has led the way. With aquatic invasive species (AIS) a growing concern (pun intended), COLA has a new tool that will help guide the organization in controlling invasive plants.

The tool is an app called "Collector for ArcGIS," developed by ESRI. To clarify, ESRI is the Environmental Systems Research Institute, headquartered in Redlands, California. ArcGIS is the name for ESRI's geographic information system software. In the form of a mobile data collection app, Collector allows people to gather and record data ("capture" data is commonly said) in the field. The app has, well, application, to many areas of study, management, and planning beyond natural resources and even science. In COLA's case, the app will allow COLA to pinpoint and record the location and status of aquatic invasive species on the lakes.



Map of AIS locations in 2019. Blue spots are Eurasian watermilfoil, and purple spots are curly-leaf pondweed. Click [here](#) for a larger image.

The overall AIS control effort is handled mainly by four COLA volunteers, Gary Pulford (overall AIS management), Mark Lastrup (mapping), Richard Laumer (volunteer recruitment and training), and Jeff Aspenwall (Collector app implementation).

Jeff Aspenwall has, among other things, adapted the app to COLA's goals by establishing the map "layers" that form the basis for aquatic invasive species tracking (think of the layers as transparent overlays of information placed on top of a map). Here's how it works: When a volunteer AIS Monitor identifies an invasive species in the lake in his or her assigned survey area, the app is used to mark the location on a map. The app's GIS program pinpoints coordinates, similar to placing a "you are here" icon directly on the map. A series of drop-down menus leads the app's user through the steps to record more information. This includes data such as type of plant, lifecycle stage, an estimate of the square footage, water depth, and a few other data points that will help COLA develop and carry out a management plan. Observers will be asked to take photos of the plants and any nearby features on land that might assist in finding the plant again. There's space to add notes, and resources for plant identification within the app. The Observer adds his or her name, hits "send," and the data is transmitted to the mapping server instantly.



Observers can use all manner of watercraft, from kayaks to pontoon boats to map AIS. But collectors must remember to tether their phones! Photo by Ann Pollock.

Observers will conduct surveys using their boat of choice or from shore as appropriate, securely tethered cell phone or tablet in hand. The system works in real-time, which means if someone maps a population of Eurasian watermilfoil in the morning and another volunteer encounters that same population an hour later, he or she will see it already marked on the map. Supplemental data may be added by new Observers. Historic data and data collected in 2019 are two of the map layers that can be turned on and off.



Observers can input a variety of observations and supplemental data. Click [here](#) for a larger image.

COLA has purchased eight perpetual licenses for the ArcGIS Collector app, at approximately \$100 apiece, which members of an AIS Observation Team will download to their smartphones or tablets. Jeff has also developed a video tutorial to take AIS Observers through the steps of capturing AIS data. For those who use Facebook to keep in touch with family and friends, an app like Strava to record running or cycling, or myriad other online programs and apps, using the Collector app will be a cinch. An in-person workshop training is in the works to get volunteers up to speed and comfortable with using this powerful tool. Jeff hopes all AIS monitors will attend the workshop, even if not part of the pilot team of Collector app users, as not all licenses have been distributed. COLA members who have previously signed up to be an AIS monitor will receive an email with more information about training. Members may also contact Jeff at aspjdipers2019@outlook.com for additional information.

A major goal of the ESRI mapping initiative is for COLA to become self-sufficient in identifying and tracking AIS, thereby reducing the reliance on outside contractors.

Why should use of the app and mapping of AIS matter to residents of the Courte Oreilles lakes? You may know that COLA has in past years used a private contractor to survey the lakes and report on invasive species to aide in AIS control. A goal of this mapping initiative is for COLA to be self-sufficient in identifying and tracking AIS. COLA is especially keen on tracking curly-leaf pondweed in an effort to control or eradicate it using non-chemical means – specifically by employing the nifty Eco-Harvester, for which fundraising is underway. Volunteers taking action to monitor a lake and collect data about invasive species on a lake they love is environmental stewardship at its best, and COLA welcomes your support and participation.

Update on the Eco-Harvester Campaign

Thanks to many of you, COLA has passed the half-way point in raising funds to purchase the Eco-Harvester!

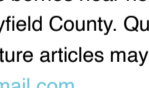
The Eco-Harvester will be an essential element for non-herbicide control of AIS, especially curly-leaf pondweed. When paired with data collected from ESRI's Collector app described above, the Eco-Harvester will significantly reduce the annual cost of AIS control in LCO.

COLA's goal in 2020 is to raise \$100,000 for the Eco-Harvester, its trailer, the dump trailer, all necessary and required accessories, insurance, maintenance, and the first year's (2021) operation. To have delivery of the Eco-Harvester in spring 2021, we must raise the money to purchase it by October, 2020.

Please help COLA protect the lakes from invasive species by donating now. Thanks!

[DONATE NOW](#)

Please also circulate this request to all of your friends and neighbors. If you'd like a printed handout describing COLA's Eco-Harvester campaign, [click here](#).



Allison Slavick works as a consultant to nonprofits all over the country, especially museums. For fifteen years she directed the Cable Natural History Museum, and previously worked as a scientist at the New York Botanical Garden and the Smithsonian Institution. She mountain bikes, skis, and picks berries near her home on Crystal Lake in southern Bayfield County. Questions, comments, or suggestions for future articles may be sent to her at allison.slavick@gmail.com.

Questions, comments, or suggestions for future articles may be sent to communications@cola-wi.org.

[View this email in your browser](#)

COLA NEEDS A NEW AIS COORDINATOR

COLA is a volunteer organization. That means essential jobs don't get done unless someone steps up to help out. And AIS Coordinator is a most essential job!

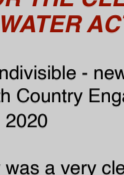
COLA can't afford to back off on what could be a huge game-changer handling the ever-increasing invasive plant species just because we couldn't get enough people to volunteer.

AIS Coordinator Duties:

- Identify, write, and administer grant requests.
- Write and submit permit requests.
- Coordinate pre- and post-treatment surveys of both LCO lakes working with contractors.
- Coordinate herbicide treatment and/or mechanical weed removal for both lakes.
- Oversee Clean Boat coordination at boat launches.

LCO really needs your help.

Don't be intimidated by the scope of the position. COLA can provide all training and support to do this essential job. If not convinced, just read the main column to the right. A dedicated and talented AIS group welcomes your involvement. Contact communications@cola-wi.org if interested or you need more information.



A CLEAR VICTORY FOR THE CLEAN WATER ACT

From Indivisible - newsletter of North Country Engaged, May 3, 2020

"Today was a very clear victory for the Clean Water Act and the protection of groundwater by the Supreme Court. The Court ruled that groundwater is also protected under the Clean Water Act because of its connection to surface water. This is a big win for the Clean Water Act and its implementation."

This was the "... Clean Water Case of the century. The fate of the nation's clean water had hung in the balance in County of Maui v. Hawaii Wildlife Fund." Click [here](#) for details on court's decision.

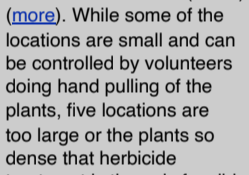
WISCONSIN CITIZEN LAKE MONITORING NETWORK WEBINAR

Aquatic Plant Ecology and Identification

Wednesday, June 24th at 9:00AM-1:00PM central time

Wisconsin is blessed with a great diversity of aquatic plants – nearly 160 separate species! Learn all about aquatic plants and how to distinguish many of these species with aquatic plant experts Paul Skawinski (Extension Lakes/CLMN), Susan Knight (UW – Trout Lake Station), Michelle Nault (WDNR), and Michaela Kromrey (WDNR).

[Click HERE to register](#)



2020 AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES TREATMENT

Late last summer a COLA Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) contractor identified and documented the location of all known AIS in the LCO lakes. The two AIS are curly-leaf pondweed (CLP) and Eurasian watermilfoil (EWM) ([more](#)). While some of the locations are small and can be controlled by volunteers doing hand pulling of the plants, five locations are too large or the plants so dense that herbicide treatment is the only feasible option to manage the spread of these infestations.

COLA applied for a [WDNR permit](#) to apply herbicide at the [five locations](#) this mid-spring for CLP and mid-summer for EWM. COLA is hopeful that by treating these five locations with herbicide this season we will reduce the aerial extent and density at each location, reduce the risk of spreading CLP and EWM to other part of the lake(s).

Next year we hope to deploy the Eco-Harvester to control AIS without herbicides ([see update at bottom of main column](#)).

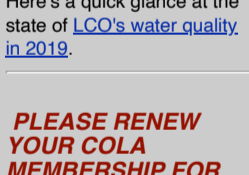
A MESSAGE FROM MAX WOLTER, WDNF FISHERIES BIOLOGIST, ABOUT HOW COVID-19 MIGHT AFFECT FISHING

Hey folks,

Lots of questions about how COVID might impact fishing this season. Please see the [attached FAQ](#), as it might answer a lot of questions people have. If you have questions beyond what is covered here, I would be happy to help track down that answer.

Take care,

Max H. Wolter
715) 634-7429
Max.wolter@wisconsin.gov



LCO WATER QUALITY SUMMARY FOR 2019

Here's a quick glance at the state of [LCO's water quality in 2019](#).

PLEASE RENEW YOUR COLA MEMBERSHIP FOR 2020-2021

[Renew your membership](#) today in one of Wisconsin's most active and respected lake associations.

Are your neighbors and extended family members of COLA? If not, please ask them to [join](#).

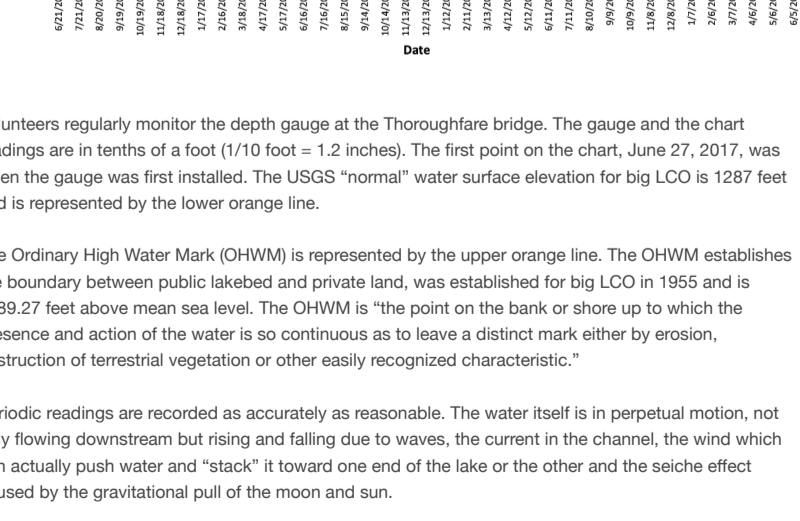
700 FT SETBACK REQUIREMENTS FOR ENHANCED BOAT WAKES

An enhanced boat wake ordinance became effective on November 12, 2018. To view the ordinance [click here](#).



A higher resolution map of the 700 ft setback requirements for enhanced boat wakes is provided [here](#).

[ARCHIVED ISSUES OF SHORT EARS, LONG TALES](#)



Volunteers regularly monitor the depth gauge at the Thoroughfare bridge. The gauge and the chart readings are in tenths of a foot (1/10 foot = 1.2 inches). The first point on the chart, June 27, 2017, was when the gauge was first installed. The USGS "normal" water surface elevation for big LCO is 1287 feet and is represented by the lower orange line.

The Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) is represented by the upper orange line. The OHWM establishes the boundary between public lakebed and private land, was established for big LCO in 1955 and is 1289.27 feet above mean sea level. The OHWM is "the point on the bank or shore up to which the presence and action of the water is so continuous as to leave a distinct mark either by erosion, destruction of terrestrial vegetation or other easily recognized characteristic."

Periodic readings are recorded as accurately as reasonable. The water itself is in perpetual motion, not only flowing downstream but rising and falling due to waves, the current in the channel, the wind which can actually push water and "stack" it toward one end of the lake or the other and the seiche effect caused by the gravitational pull of the moon and sun.

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COLA Mission: 1) to protect, preserve and enhance the quality of Lac Courte Oreilles and Little Lac Courte Oreilles, their shorelands and surrounding areas, while respecting the interests of property owners and the rights of the general public; and 2) to consider, study, survey and respond to issues deemed relevant by COLA's membership.

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