



MEMORANDUM

Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District

Date: December 12, 2024
To: CLFLWD Board of Managers
From: Mike Kinney, District Administrator
Subject: 2024 Watercraft Inspection Yearend Report



District Wide

Background/Discussion

The purpose of this agenda item is to present a draft of the 2024 Watercraft Inspection Report. The report is enclosed. In 2024, district-wide, watercraft inspectors performed 6,446 inspections and worked 3253.67 hours, averaging 1.98 inspections per hour.

Attached

2024 Watercraft Inspection Yearend Report



Comfort Lake-Forest Lake Watershed District
2024 Yearend Watercraft Inspection
Program Report



Drafted By Tori Philippi and Jackie Bussjaeger

Drafted November 2024

Cover Photo: Foggy, early autumn morning on Bone Lake. Credits: Greg Fogarty, Watercraft Inspector

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2024 Watercraft Inspection Summary Infographic

Introduction

In 1992, the Watercraft Inspection Program was created in response to legislation proposed by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Lakes Associations, and angling groups, with a goal “to prevent the spread of invasive species within Minnesota through boater education, watercraft inspections, and watercraft decontaminations at public water accesses.” Legislation aimed to strengthen Minnesota’s ability to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species was signed into law in 2011. These changes in the law allowed watercraft inspectors to visually and tactilely inspect water related equipment, decontaminate water-related equipment, prohibit access to boaters that refuse inspection or fail to remove contaminants and require watercrafts be decontaminated prior to launching into Minnesota waters.

In 2024, the Comfort Lake–Forest Lake Watershed District (CLFLWD or “the District”) was granted authority to conduct boat launch inspections by entering into a joint power agreement with the DNR. The partnership between the District and Chisago County continued. Chisago County hires, trains, and oversees inspections for their watercraft inspectors. Through this partnership, Chisago County managed payroll and human resources for inspectors and received reimbursement from the CLFLWD for hours worked within the District. Chisago County inspectors were stationed at public lake accesses within the CLFLWD (which covers portions of Washington and Chisago counties) as well as throughout the rest of Chisago County. The District also hires watercraft inspectors.

Within the District, there are five public boat launches where inspectors were scheduled throughout the season. The public accesses include one at Bone Lake, one at Comfort Lake, and three at Forest Lake: Forest West (located on the west basin near Lakeside Park), Forest Central (located on the middle basin on the east side of Willow Point), and Forest East (located on the east basin on the east shore). The number of hours worked at each access was dependent on funding and boater traffic. The Forest West access has historically had the highest boater traffic and therefore, more watercraft inspectors were assigned shifts here.

The DNR has two levels of authorized inspectors. Both are trained by the DNR and can inspect watercraft and deny access if necessary. Level two, however, can also use decontamination equipment at the access. The decontamination units are self-contained, high pressure, high heat wash units that spray the watercraft to remove plants, animals such as mussels, and other potential contaminants from watercraft. The DNR decontamination units rotate between Forest West and other East Metro accesses. Chisago County also operates a decontamination unit that rotates between fourteen high-traffic accesses throughout CLFLWD and Chisago County including Forest West, Forest East, Comfort Lake, and Bone Lake.

Funding and Goals

The CLFLWD Watercraft Inspection Program received funding from a variety of entities, including the Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Aid Program for both Washington and Chisago counties, local municipalities, and local interest groups such as lake associations and the Lions Club. Figure 1 illustrates the yearend financial contributions to the 2024 watercraft inspection program. Note that certain organizations opted to allocate funding to specific waterbodies (e.g., Bone Lake Association’s donations allocated to Bone Lake).

Goals and hiring needs were based on the estimated financial contributions using the billing rate of \$23/hour. The 2024 pre-season funding estimate for the program was \$77,901 which could have funded 3,387 hours. In 2024, the yearend watercraft inspection program contributions totaled \$89,236.86. Figure 2 illustrates the number of hours each yearend financial contribution would cover.

With the available funding, this year the District was able to hire a total of eleven inspectors to perform watercraft inspections at District accesses. Some inspectors were hired through the Chisago County joint program (2 staff), and others were hired directly by CLFLWD (9 staff).

2024 Watercraft Inspection Program Funds Per Lake

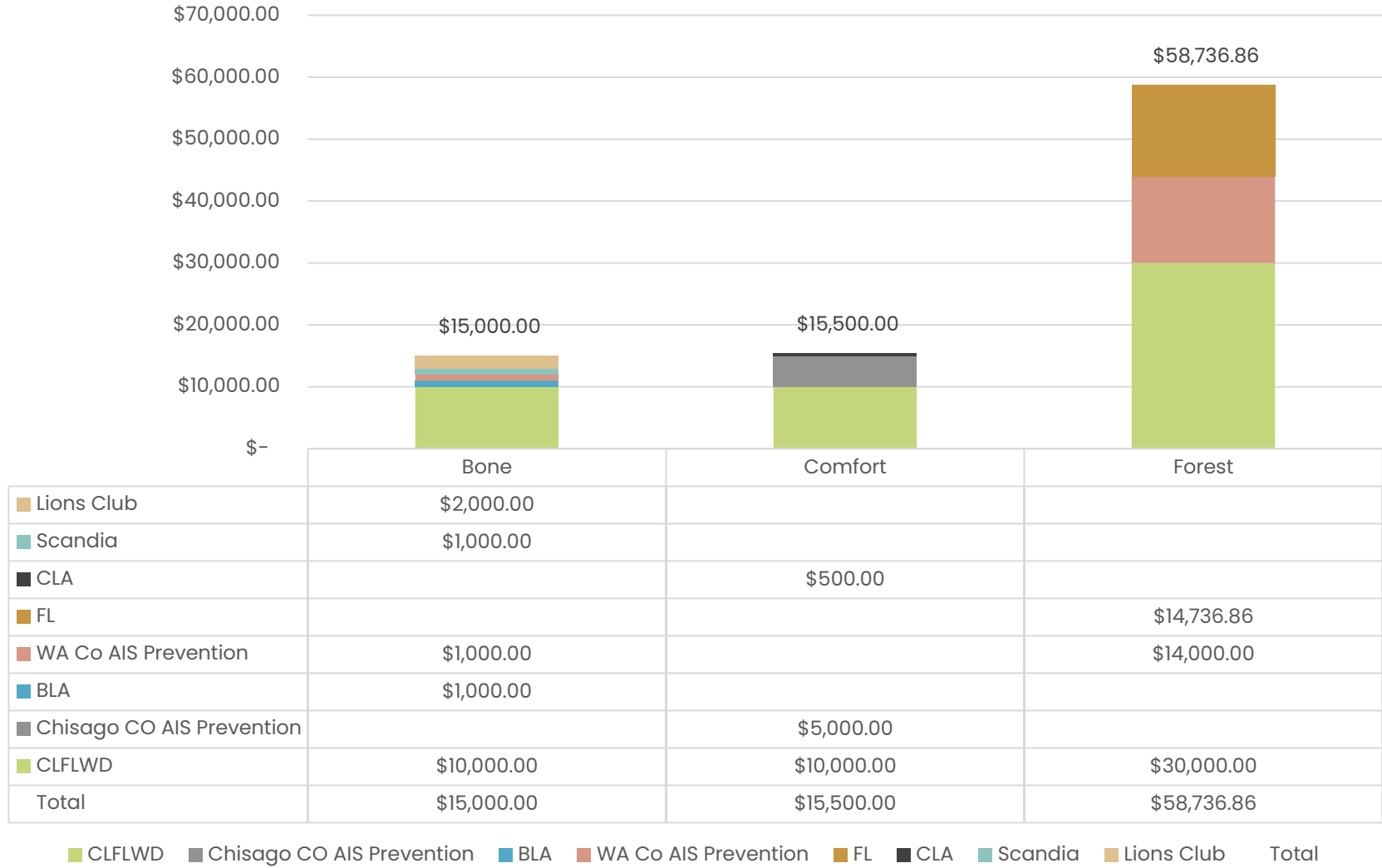
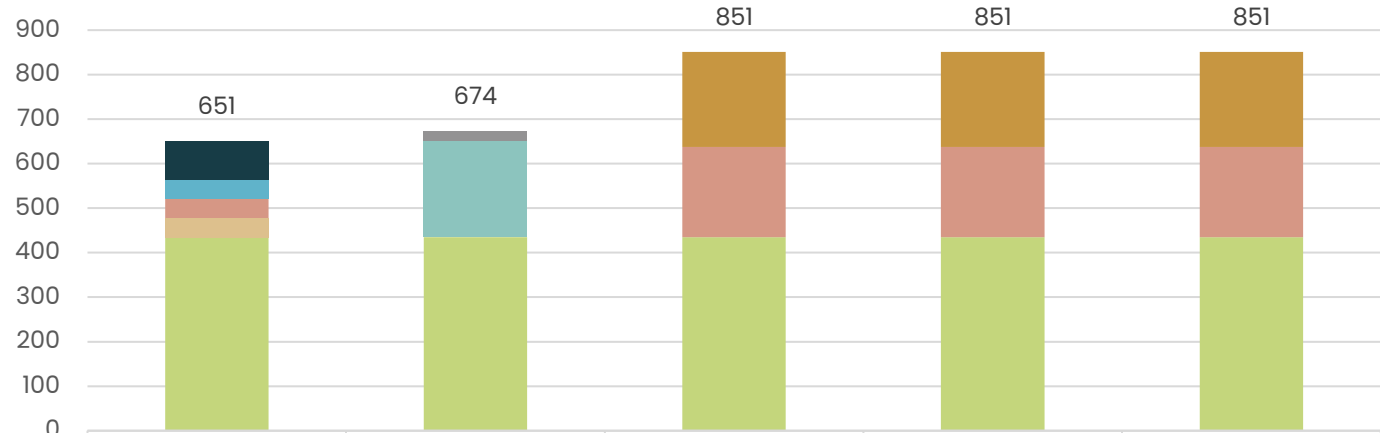


Figure 1. 2024 Watercraft Inspection Program Funds per Lake

Estimated Funded Hours per Access



	Bone	Comfort	Forest West	Forest Central	Forest East
■ Lions Club	87				
■ Scandia	43				
■ CLA		22			
■ FL			214	214	214
■ WA Co AIS Prevention	43		203	203	203
■ BLA	43				
■ Chisago CO AIS Prevention		217			
■ CLFLWD	435	435	435	435	435
Total	651	674	851	851	851

■ CLFLWD ■ Chisago CO AIS Prevention ■ BLA ■ WA Co AIS Prevention ■ FL ■ CLA ■ Scandia ■ Lions Club

Figure 2. Estimated Funded Hours Per Access

Results

District-Wide

In 2024, district-wide, watercraft inspectors performed 6,450 inspections and worked 3,219.67 hours, averaging 2.00 inspections per hour. Figure 3 summarizes the total number of inspection hours and inspections completed District-wide since 2014.

Figure 4 shows the inspection hours at each access and the percentage of the total hours in 2024. Forest Lake West has historically had the highest number of visitors, so 36% of all hours (1,165.5 Hours) were spent at this access. Forest East completed 21% (679.5 hours), Comfort completed 16% (512.5 hours), Bone completed 15% (470.17 hours), and Forest Central had the least number of hours completed with 12% (392 hours).

The CLFLWD watercraft inspectors performed a total of 5418 inspections (84% of all inspections) over 2,268.67 hours (71% of all hours). In total, Chisago County Inspectors worked 431 hours (13% of all hours) and performed 366 inspections (6% of all inspections). The DNR performed a total of 520 hours (16% of all hours) and completed 666 inspection surveys (10% of all inspections). The partnership and collaboration with both parties helps provide great coverage across the District. The total number of inspections completed by each of the 3 parties can be found in Figure 5 and the total number of hours worked by each of the 3 entities is shown in Figure 6.

As a planning tool to meet inspection hour goals, District staff take the number of funded inspections hours and divide it by the number of weeks in the watercraft inspection season. This calculation generates an average number of hours to work per week to use all funded hours by the end of the season. The goal number of hours per week of 135.48 (3,387-hour goal/ 25 weeks = 135.48 goal number of hours per week) was met for most of the season, with some spikes in inspections per hour attributed to holidays, seasonal changes, and watercraft inspector availability. The number of inspections, and inspection hours by week throughout the season, as well as the rate of inspections per hour, and the hours per week goal can be found in Figure 7.

To maximize cost effectiveness and inspection numbers, weekend hours are prioritized for conducting watercraft inspections due to the general higher level of activity. As a result, 72% of hours and 87% of inspections occurred Friday through Sunday. Inspection hours worked during the week (Monday – Thursday) are typically performed by Chisago’s and the DNR’s inspectors. Figure 8. shows the number of inspections and hours per day of the week for the 2024 season.

District Wide Inspection Hours and Number of Inspections per Season (Includes DNR and Chisago)



Figure 3. District-wide inspections and hours per season

Inspection Hours at Each Access and % of Total Hours (DNR and Chisago Included)

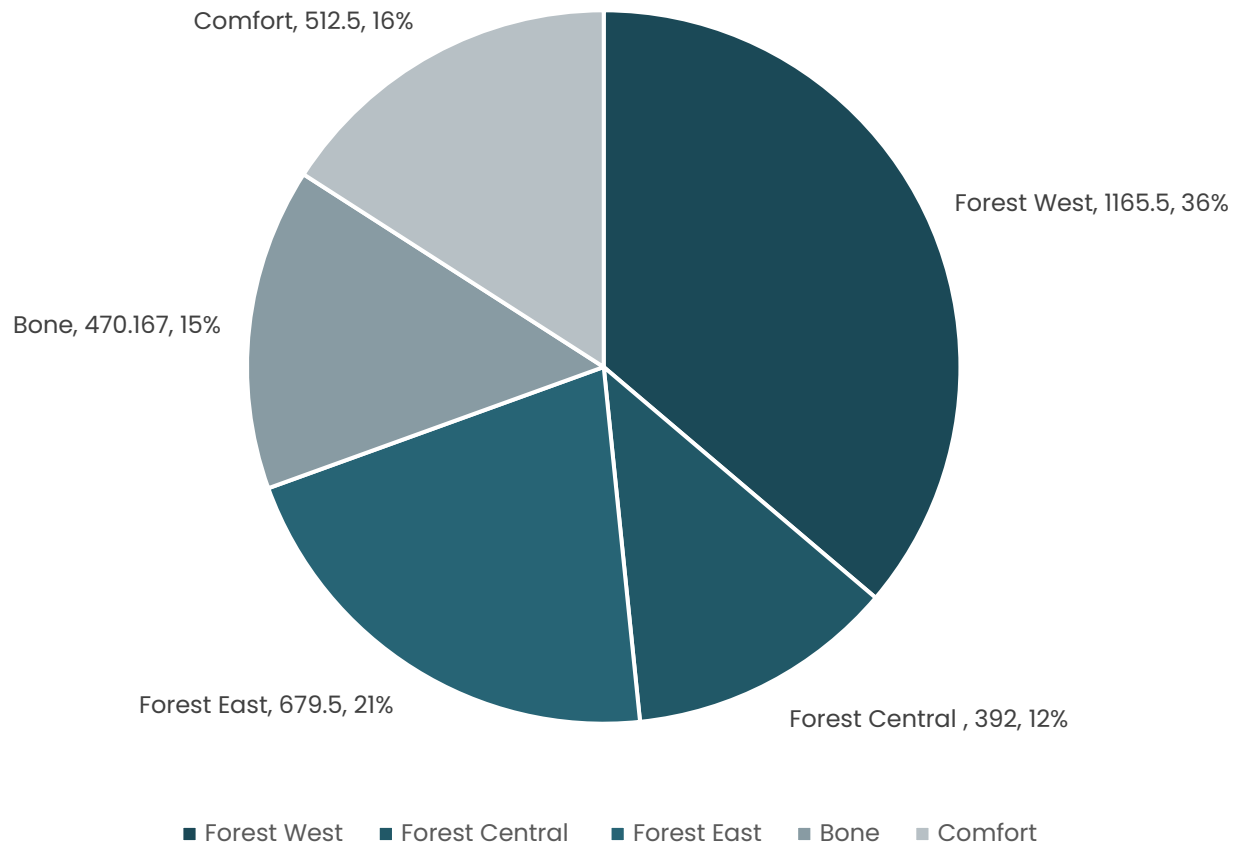


Figure 4. Inspection hours at each access and percentage of total.

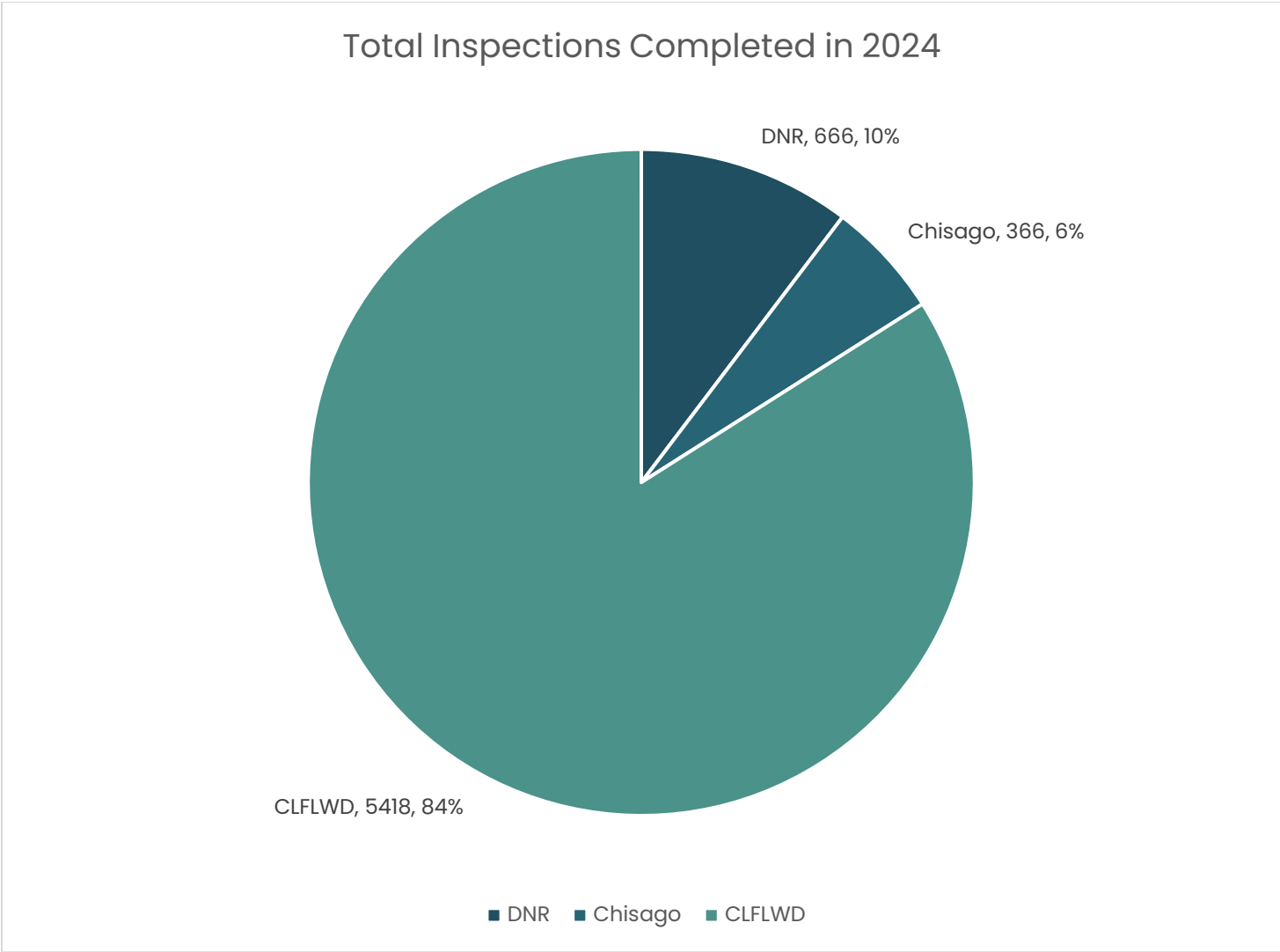


Figure 5. Total Inspections Completed in 2024

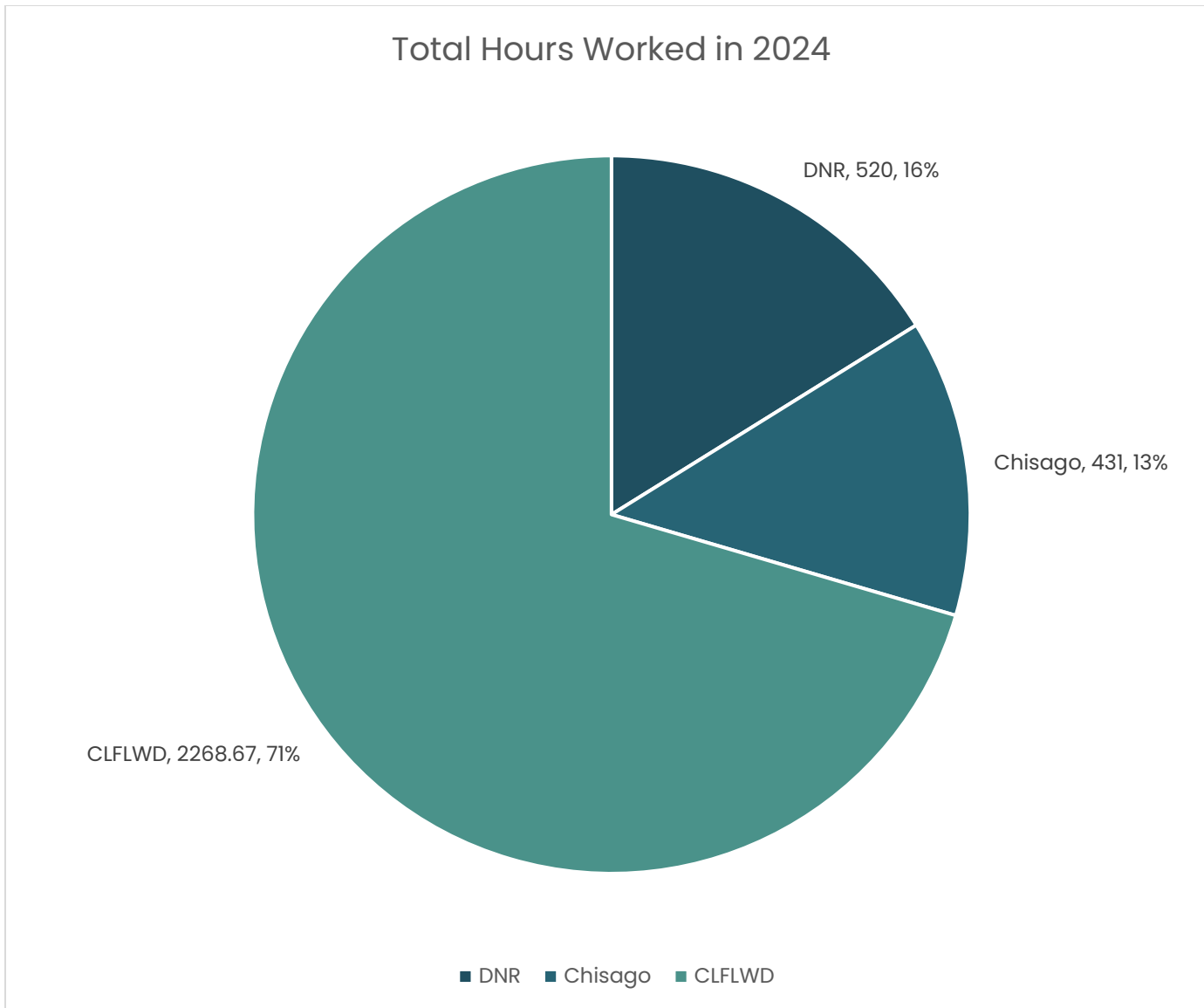


Figure 6. Total Hours Completed in 2024

2024 District-Wide Inspections, Hours, and Inspection Rate Per Week

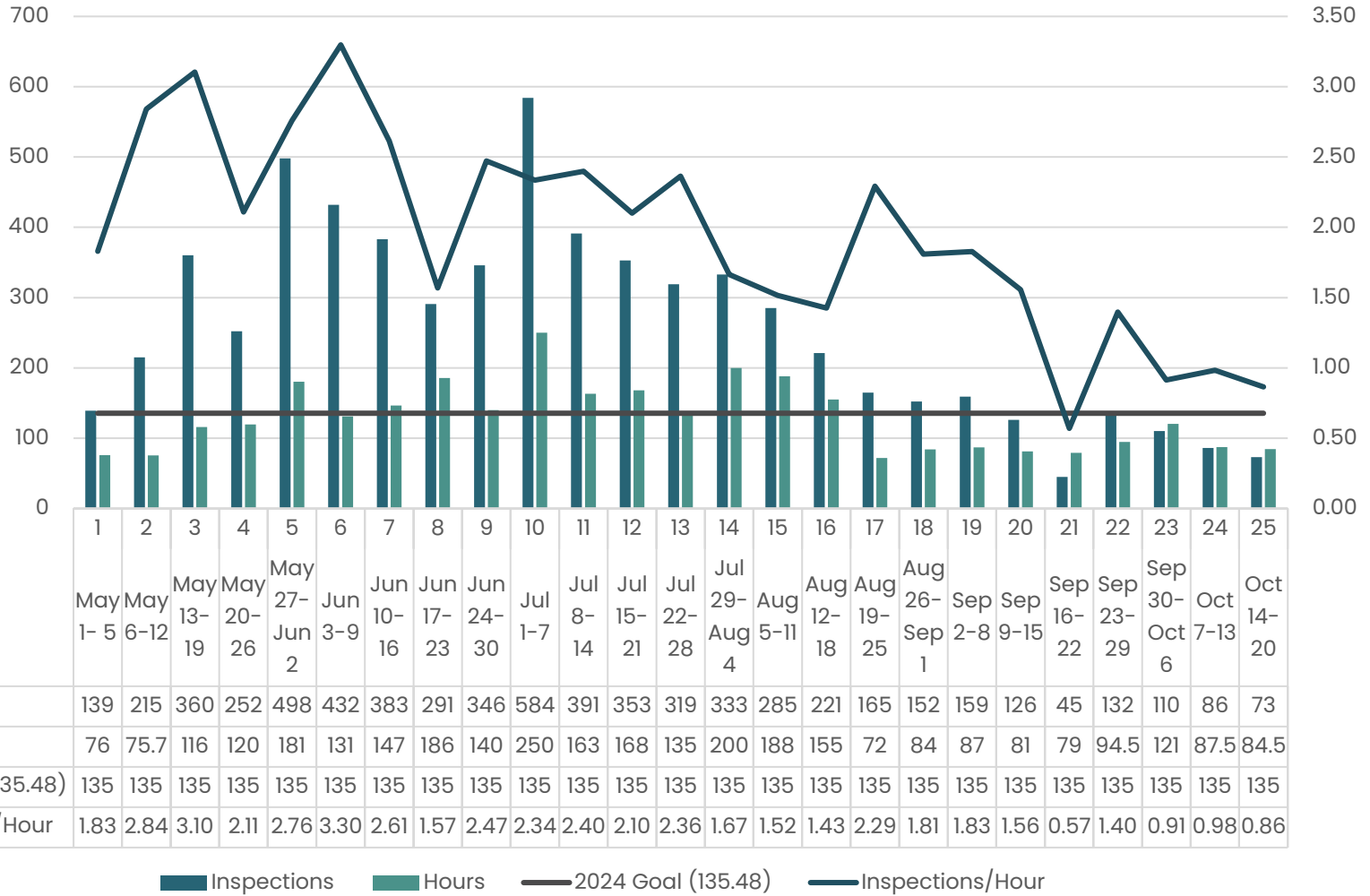


Figure 7. District-wide inspections, hours, rates, and goals.

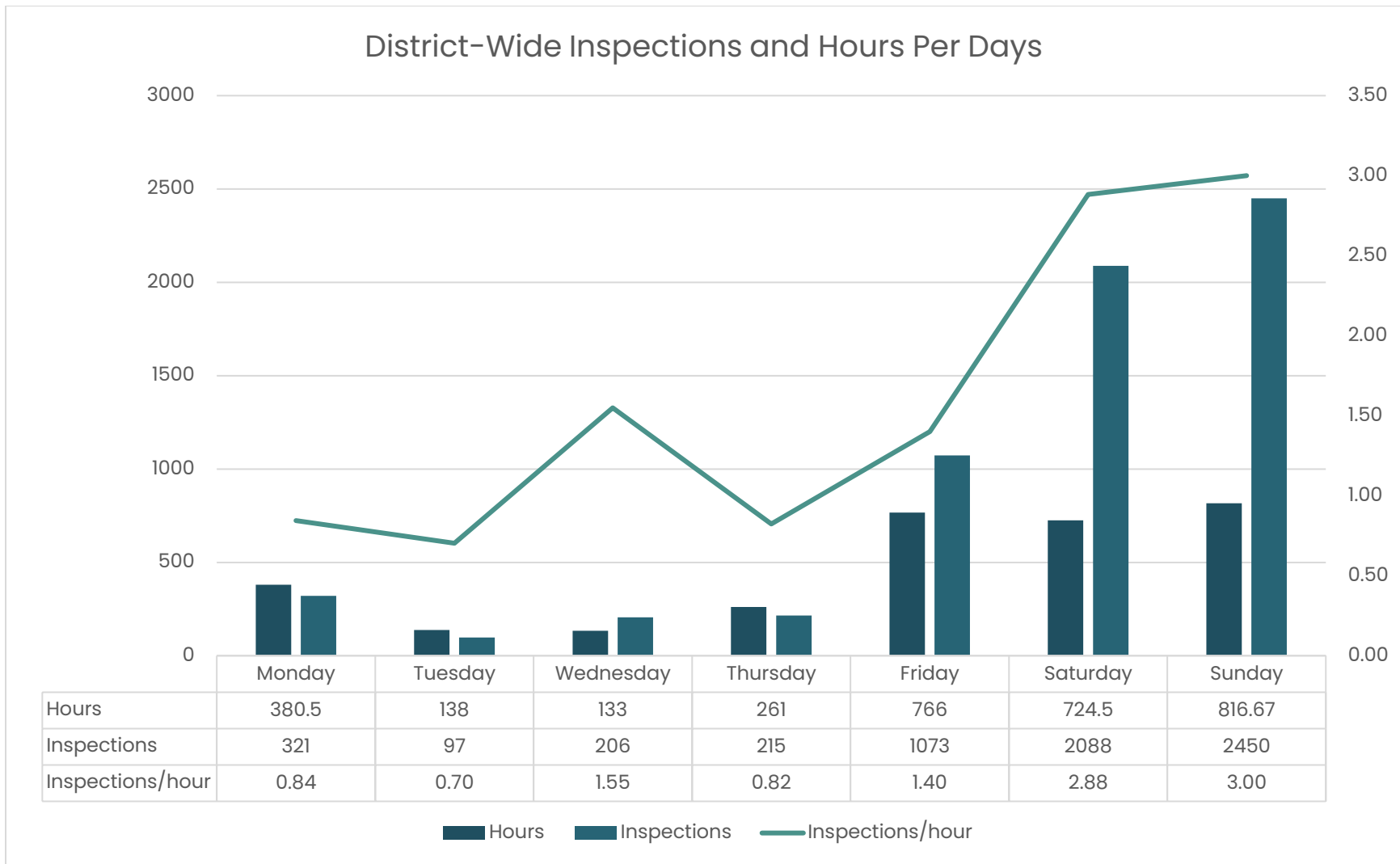


Figure 8. District-wide inspections and hours per day of the week for the 2023 season

Survey Results

In addition to a watercraft inspector's responsibility to thoroughly inspect watercrafts for aquatic invasive species (AIS) and other contaminants, they must also complete an inspection survey for each boat that enters or exits a lake. Completed surveys are uploaded to the DNR's state-wide inspection survey database where program coordinators across the state can view the data. Valuable information such as number of boats entering and exiting a lake, incoming boat AIS violations, and new AIS infestation risk assessment can be calculated. In 2024, a total of 6,450 watercraft inspection surveys were performed on District lakes. Below are some findings from the inspection survey data. A summary of this information can be found in Figure 9.

86 watercrafts arrived at District lakes with contaminants such as plants, animals, mud, or water on their equipment, about 2.2% of all arriving watercraft. This number was 67 in 2023, 50 in 2022, 65 in 2021, 148 in 2020, 122 in 2019, 140 in 2018, 213 in 2017, 41 in 2016, and 39 in 2015. Transportation of any plants or animals, invasive or not, is prohibited on watercraft. These watercrafts were cleaned off and/or drained prior to launching. Watercraft that could not remove vegetation or mud by hand were denied launch.

83 watercraft (2.1% of arriving watercraft) required removal of the bilge drainage plug upon arriving at District lakes. This number was 68 in 2023, 29 in 2022, 33 in 2021, 83 in 2020, 85 in 2019, 115 in 2018, 115 in 2017, 19 in 2016, and 67 in 2015. After educating the watercraft user on the potential of AIS in their bilge water, bilge plugs were removed from the watercraft and all water was drained prior to the watercraft launching in an area that would not flow into the lake.

38% of watercraft (986 watercraft) exited District lakes with contaminants such as plants, animals, mud, or water present. This number was 1275 in 2023, 850 in 2022, 786 in 2021, 1462 in 2020, 867 in 2019, 931 in 2018, 804 in 2017, 187 in 2016 and 260 in 2015. Note that transportation of any plants or animals on watercraft, not just invasive species, is prohibited. All contaminants were removed from the watercraft and trailer before departing from the lake.

Included in the inspection survey are questions regarding the waterbody most likely to be visited next by the boater. Many of the lakes that boaters intend to visit after leaving a District lake do not have all the same AIS present in them. This information stresses the importance of not just preventing AIS from entering District lakes but also preventing AIS from leaving them. Results of this aspect of the survey can be found in Table 1.

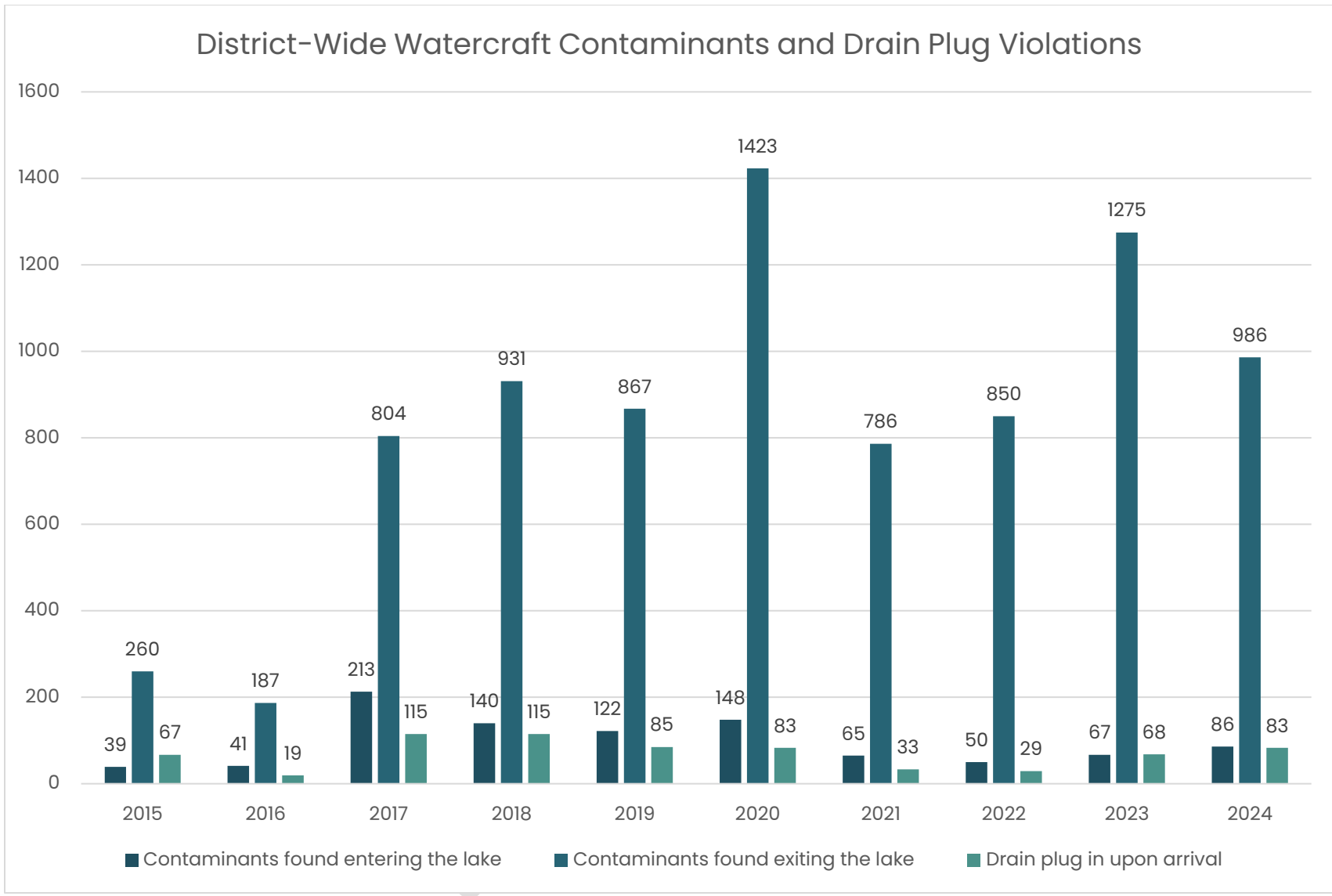


Figure 9. District-wide watercraft contaminants and drain plug violations as reported since 2015.

Next Lake	Eurasian Watermilfoil	Zebra Mussels	Flowering Rush	Spiny Water flea
Big Marine, Washington	EWM			
Coon, Anoka	EWM			
Bald Eagle, Ramsey	EWM	ZM	FR	
Clear, Washington	EWM			
White Bear, Ramsey	EWM	ZM		
Green, Chisago	EWM			
Mille Lacs, Mille Lacs	EWM	ZM		SW
Chisago, Chisago	EWM			
Gull, Cass	EWM	ZM		SW
North Center, Chisago	EWM			

Table 1. Top ten lakes boaters intended to visit after leaving a District lake.

Risk of New Invasive Species

Aquatic invasive species such as curly-leaf pondweed, Eurasian watermilfoil, flowering rush, and zebra mussels have been documented within several lakes in the CLFLWD. The presence of these species represents a threat to the ecological, recreational, economic, and physical wellbeing of the lakes and the surrounding communities. While the District has taken action to monitor and manage the spread of AIS, prevention remains the most effective management strategy. One of the main goals of the CLFLWD watercraft inspection program is to prevent the introduction of new AIS that have not yet spread to District lakes.

Starry stonewort and the spiny water flea are two examples of aquatic invasive species found in Minnesota that are not yet found in District lakes. Starry stonewort is an invasive macroalgae that forms dense mats in lakes that can impede boating and prevent the establishment of beneficial native plants. Starry stonewort was discovered in Lake Koronis near Paynesville, MN in 2015 and has since been discovered in 29 additional lakes across the state. In 2024, it was found in Pokegama Lake in Itasca County and Middle Cullen Lake and Rush Lake in Crow County.

The spiny water flea is an invasive species of zooplankton which is about the size of a grain of rice that competes with small fish for the same food resource (other zooplankton). The spiny water flea was first discovered in Lake Superior in the early-1980s and has since spread to more than 68 inland lakes Minnesota including Mille Lacs Lake, Lake Vermilion, Lake of the Woods, and others. Both invasive species are thought to be transported primarily by recreational watercraft. Figure 9 contains photos of spiny water flea and starry stonewort.



Figure 9. Spiny water flea (left) and starry stonewort (right). Source: MNDNR

Part of the watercraft inspection survey involves asking the boaters which lake they visited last. The boaters' responses can be cross referenced with records that the DNR keeps of infested waters. This is a way to estimate the risk of these species spreading to District lakes. Note that transportation of water or any plants or animals on watercraft, not just invasive

species, is prohibited. District watercraft inspectors required that these watercrafts be cleaned off, decontaminated and/or drained prior to launching into the lake.

72 boats launching into District lakes came from lakes infested with spiny water flea. This number was 151 in 2023, 95 in 2022, 96 in 2021, 158 in 2020, 111 in 2019, 104 in 2018, 171 in 2017, and 231 in 2016.

43 boats launching into District lakes came from lakes infested with starry stonewort. This number was 35 in 2023, 48 in 2022, 48 in 2021, 30 in 2020, 22 in 2019, 61 in 2018, 14 in 2017, and 83 in 2016.

In 2024, 9 boats came from a waterbody infested with New Zealand mud snail, 36 from a faucet snail infested lake, and 9 from a lake with the VHS virus.

Table 2 shows the number of watercrafts entering District lakes that had reported last being in an AIS infested lake.

AIS	Bone	Comfort	Forest West	Forest Central	Forest East	Totals
Bighead Carp	15	4	43	17	37	116
Eurasian Watermilfoil	101	103	445	82	231	962
Faucet snail	2	0	20	3	11	36
Flowering Rush	12	10	76	12	70	180
Grass Carp	15	4	43	17	37	116
New Zealand mud snail	1	0	3	1	4	9
Round Goby	1	0	3	1	4	9
Ruffe	1	0	3	1	4	9
Silver Carp	15	4	43	17	37	116
Spiny Water flea	4	7	29	5	27	72
Starry Stonewort	4	2	24	0	13	43
VHS Virus	1	0	3	1	4	9
White Perch	1	0	3	1	4	9
Zebra Mussels	43	38	270	42	145	538

Table 2. The number of watercrafts entering District lakes that reported last being in an AIS infested lake.

Bone Lake

Inspection Hours and Scheduling

This season, watercraft inspectors performed 470.17 hours of inspections on Bone Lake which resulted in 618 inspections and associated surveys. Inspectors averaged 1.31 inspections per hour. Figure 10 below summarizes the total number of inspection hours and inspections conducted on Bone Lake since 2014.

Survey Results

A total of 618 surveys were performed on Bone Lake in 2024. Findings and a summary of the results from the compiled inspection survey data for Bone Lake can be found below and in Figure 11.

5 watercraft arrived at Bone Lake with plants, animals, mud, or water on their watercraft. This number was 4 in 2023, 1 in 2022, 2 in 2021, 3 in 2020, 7 in 2019, 16 in 2018, 11 in 2017, 1 in 2016 and 4 in 2015. Note that transportation of any plants or animals on watercraft, not just invasive species, is prohibited. These watercrafts were cleaned off and/or drained prior to launching into Bone Lake.

5 watercraft required removal of the bilge drainage plug upon arriving at Bone Lake. This number was 8 in 2023, 1 in 2022, 13 in 2021, 12 in 2020, 12 in 2019, 8 in 2018, 1 in 2017, 2 in 2016 and 6 in 2015. After educating the watercraft user on the potential of AIS in their bilge water, bilge plugs were removed from the watercraft and all water was drained in an area that would not flow into the lake prior to the watercraft launching.

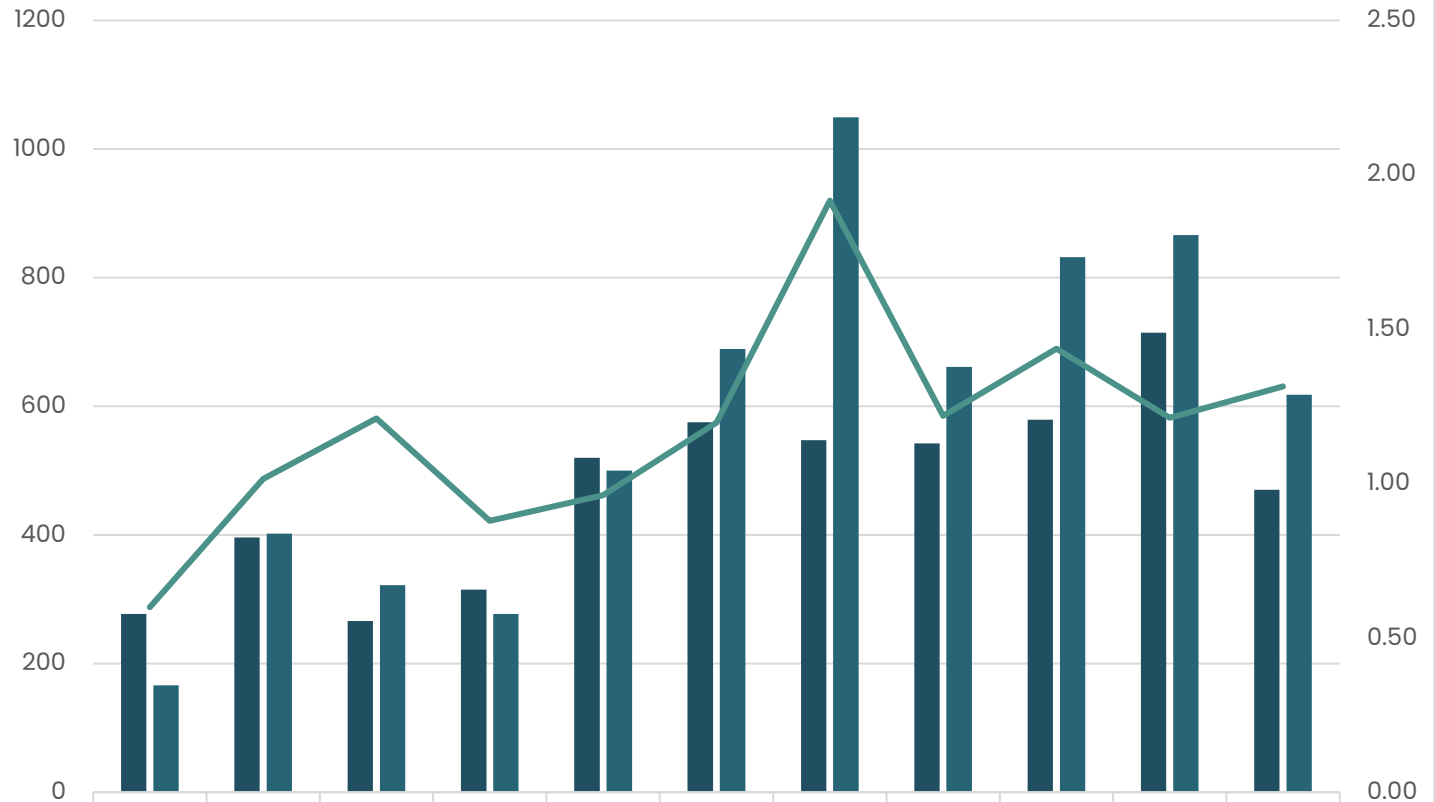
109 watercraft exited Bone Lake with plants, animals, mud, or water present. This number was 38 in 2023, 79 in 2022, 35 in 2021, 47 in 2020, 50 in 2019, 70 in 2018, 59 in 2017, 7 in 2016 and 24 in 2015. Note that transportation of any plants or animals on watercraft, not just invasive species, is prohibited. All contaminants were removed from the watercraft and trailer before leaving Bone Lake.

Risk of New Invasive Species

4 boats launching into Bone Lake came from lakes infested with spiny water flea. For comparison, this number was 18 in 2023, 10 in 2022, 5 in 2021, 14 in 2020, 7 in 2019, 2 in 2018, 5 in 2017, and 25 in 2016.

4 boats launching into Bone Lake came from lakes infested with starry stonewort. This number was 3 in 2023, 4 in 2022, 5 in 2021, 2 in 2020, 3 in 2019, 3 in 2018, 0 in 2017, and 2 in 2016.

Bone Lake Inspections and Hours Worked



Number of Hours	277	396	266	315	520	575.3	547.5	542.5	579	714.25	470.167
Number of Inspections	166	402	322	277	500	689	1049	661	832	866	618
Inspection Rate	0.60	1.02	1.21	0.88	0.96	1.20	1.92	1.22	1.44	1.21	1.31

Number of Hours Number of Inspections Inspection Rate

Figure 10. Summary of the total number of inspection hours, number of surveys, and inspection rates for Bone Lake since 2015.

Bone Lake Watercraft Contaminants and Drain Plug Violations

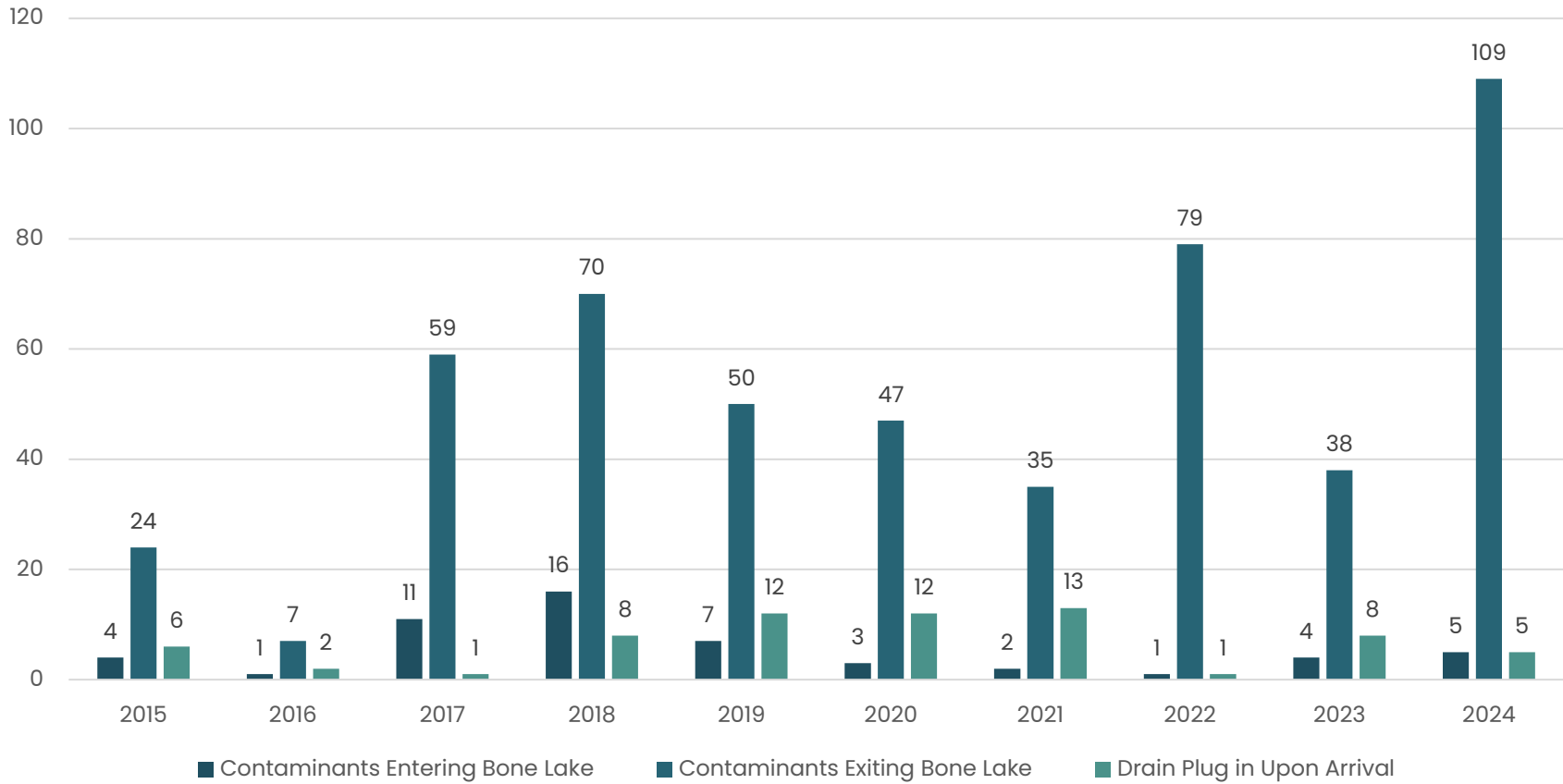


Figure 11. Bone Lake watercraft contaminants and drain plug violations reported over the last ten seasons.

Forest Lake

Inspection Hours and Scheduling

In 2024, CLFLWD watercraft inspectors performed 1,589 hours of inspections, the DNR inspectors performed 520 hours, and Chisago inspectors performed 128 hours, for a grand total of 2,237 hours at the three Forest Lake public accesses. CLFLWD inspected 4,305 watercraft, DNR inspected 666 watercraft, and Chisago inspected 154, totaling 5,125 inspections. An inspection rate of 2.29 inspections per hour was achieved by CLFLWD, Chisago, and DNR. A summary of this information is presented in Figure 12 and Tables 3-5.

Survey Results

A total of 5,125 inspections were performed on Forest Lake this season. Figure 13 shows the findings and a summary of the results from compiled inspection survey data for Forest Lake. Other findings are told below:

80 watercraft arrived at Forest Lake with plants, animals, mud or water on their watercraft. The number was 59 in 2023, 44 in 2022, 61 in 2021, 132 in 2020, 87 in 2019, 117 in 2018, 177 in 2017, 32 in 2016, and 32 in 2015. Note that transportation of any plants or animals on watercraft, not just invasive species, is prohibited. These watercraft were cleaned off and/or drained prior to launching into Forest Lake. It is against state law to launch a contaminated watercraft at a Minnesota lake, regardless of known current infestations of that lake.

77 watercraft required removal of the bilge drainage plug upon arriving at Forest Lake. This number was 55 in 2023, 20 in 2022, 131 in 2021, 62 in 2020, 65 in 2019, 92 in 2018, 110 in 2017, 15 in 2016, and 54 in 2015. After educating the watercraft user on the potential of AIS (e.g., microscopic zebra mussel larvae) in their bilge water, bilge plugs were removed from the watercraft and all water was drained in an area that would not flow into the lake prior to the watercraft launching.

869 watercraft exited Forest Lake with plants, animals, mud, or water present. This number was 1,207 in 2023, 755 in 2022, 727 in 2021, 1,191 in 2020, 762 in 2019, 817 in 2018, 670 in 2017, 158 in 2016, and 229 in 2015. Note that transportation of any plants or animals on watercraft, not just invasive species, is prohibited. All contaminants were removed from the watercraft and trailer before leaving Forest Lake.

Risk of New Invasive Species

61 boats launching into Forest Lake came from lakes infested with spiny water flea. This number was 119 in 2023, 74 in 2022, 82 in 2021, 131 in 2020, 92 in 2019, 101 in 2018, 153 in 2017, and 183 in 2016.

37 boats launching into Forest Lake came from lakes infested with starry stonewort. This number was 29 in 2023, 38 in 2022, 42 in 2021, 27 in 2020, 18 in 2019, 53 in 2018, 12 in 2017 and 74 in 2016.

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Forest Lake Inspections and Hours Worked



Figure 12. Summary of inspections hours, number of surveys, and inspection rates since 2014 at all three Forest Lake public boat launches.

Inspections	West	Central	East	Total
CLFLWD Inspection	2058	644	1603	4305
DNR Inspection	666	-	-	666
Chisago Inspection	77	7	70	154
Total Inspections	2801	651	1673	5125

Table 3. Forest Lake number of inspections

Inspection Hours	West	Central	East	Total
CLFLWD Inspection Hours	600.5	362	626.5	1589
DNR Inspection Hours	520	-	-	520
Chisago Inspection Hours	45	30	53	128
Total Inspection Hours	1165.5	392	679.5	2237

Table 4. Forest Lake inspection hours

Inspection Rate	West	Central	East	Total
CLFLWD Inspection Rate	3.43	1.78	2.56	2.59
DNR Inspection Rate	1.28	-	-	1.28
Chisago Inspection Rate	1.71	0.23	1.32	1.09
Average Inspection Rate	2.14	1.01	1.94	1.84

Table 5. Forest Lake inspection rate

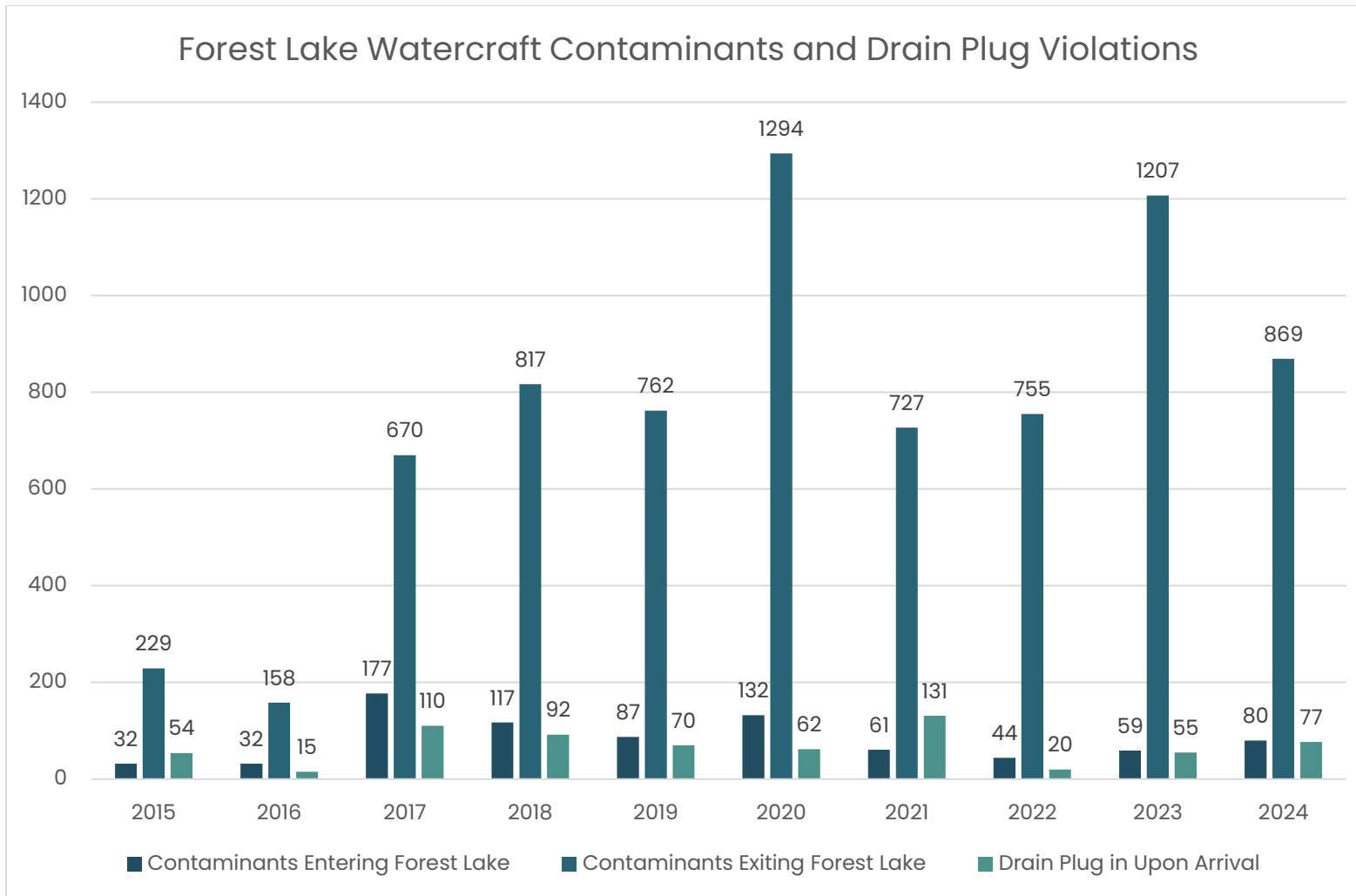


Figure 13. Forest Lake watercraft contaminants and drain plug violations as reported at Forest Lake accesses over the last ten seasons.

Comfort Lake

Inspection Hours and Scheduling

During the 2024 season, watercraft inspectors performed 512.5 hours of inspections on Comfort Lake with a total of 707 inspections. Inspectors averaged 1.38 inspections per hour. A summary is provided below in Figure 14.

Survey Results

A total of 707 surveys were conducted at Comfort Lake this season. Findings and a summary of the results from the compiled inspection survey data for Comfort Lake can be found below and in Figure 15.

1 watercraft arrived at Comfort Lake with plants, animals, mud, or water on their watercraft. This number was 4 in 2023, 5 in 2022, 5 in 2021, 13 in 2020, 28 in 2019, 7 in 2018, 25 in 2017, 8 in 2016, and 3 in 2015.

1 watercraft required removal of the bilge drainage plug upon arriving at Comfort Lake. This number was 5 in 2023, 8 in 2022, 10 in 2021, 9 in 2020, 8 in 2019, 15 in 2018, 4 in 2017, 2 in 2016 and 7 in 2015.

8 watercraft exited Comfort Lake with plants, animals, mud, or water present. This number was 30 in 2023, 16 in 2022, 24 in 2021, 82 in 2020, 55 in 2019, 44 in 2018, 75 in 2017, 22 in 2016 and 7 in 2015. Note that transportation of any plants or animals on watercraft, not just invasive species, is prohibited. All contaminants were removed from the watercraft and trailer before leaving Comfort Lake.

Risk of New Invasive Species

7 watercraft launching into Comfort Lake came from lakes infested with spiny water flea. For comparison, this number was 14 in 2023, 11 in 2022, 9 in 2021, 13 in 2020, 12 in 2019, 7 in 2018, 13 in 2017, and 24 in 2016.

2 watercraft launching into Comfort Lake came from lakes infested with starry stonewort. This number was 3 in 2023, 6 in 2022, 1 in 2021, 1 in 2020, 1 in 2019, 5 in 2018, 2 in 2017 and 7 in 2016.

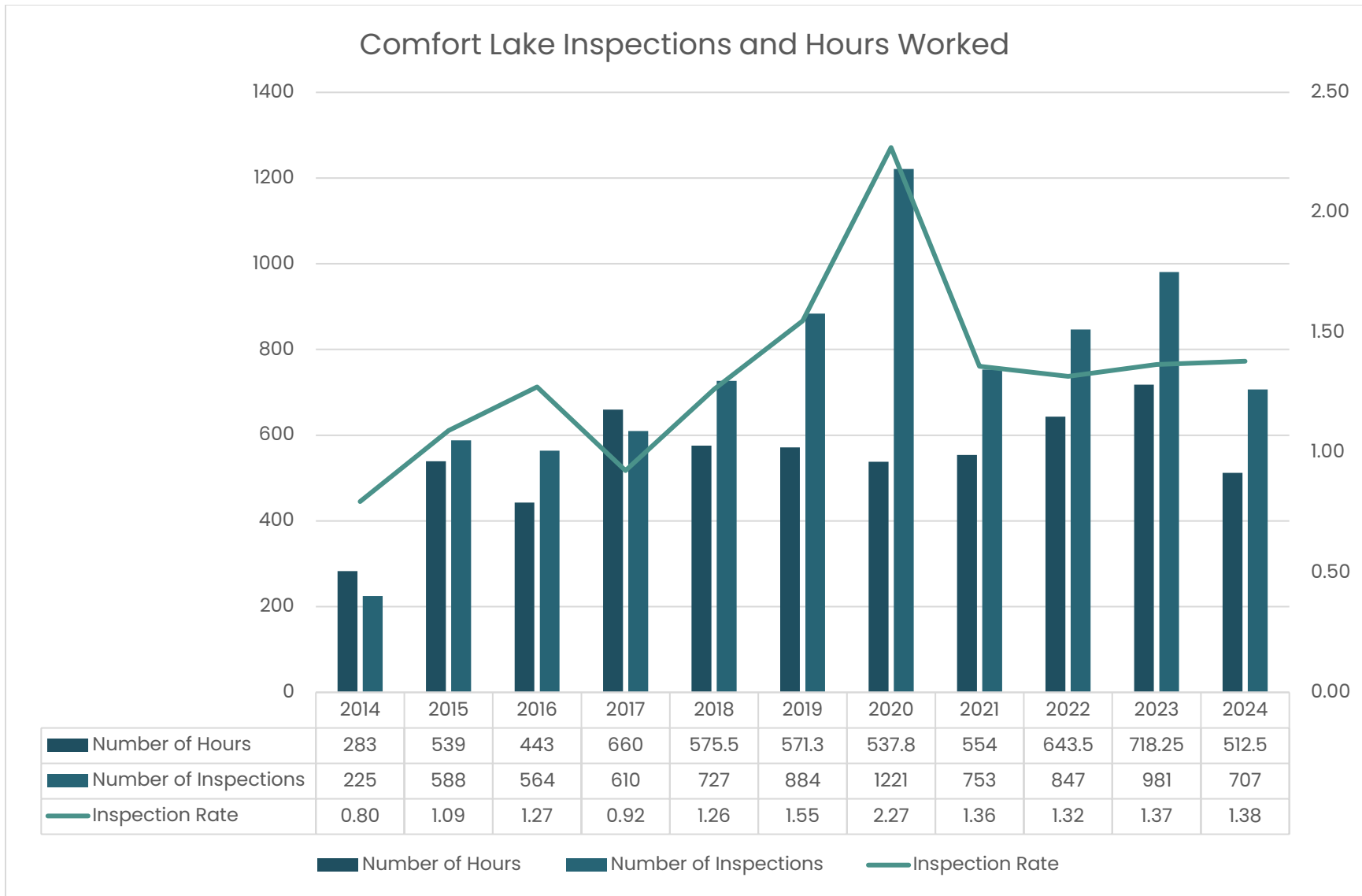


Figure 14. Summary of inspections hours, number of surveys, and inspection rates since 2014 at the Comfort Lake public boat launch.

Comfort Lake Watercraft Contaminants and Drain Plug Violations

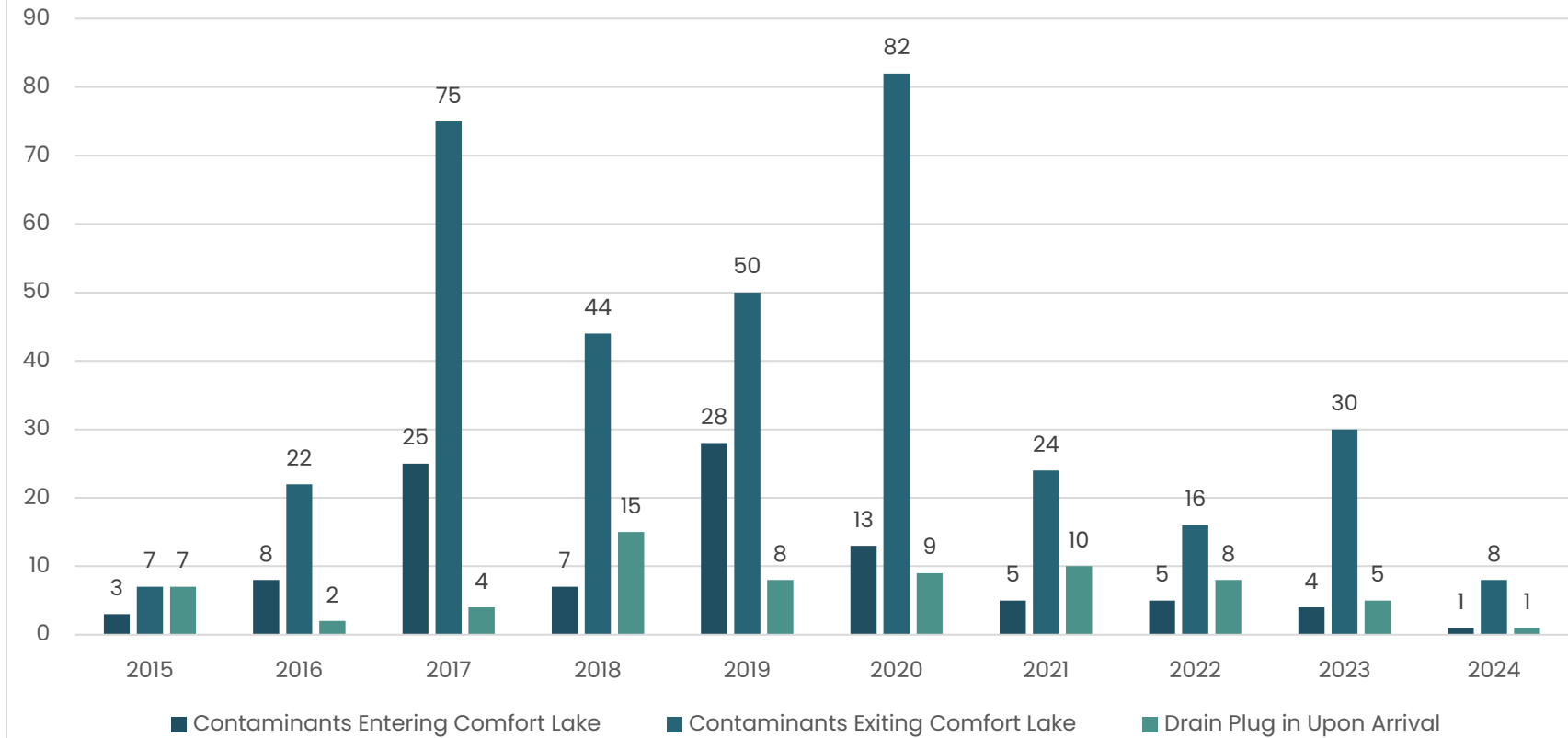


Figure 15. Comfort Lake watercraft contaminants and drain plug violations as reported at Comfort Lake since 2015.

Discussion and Conclusion

In 2024, CLFLWD, DNR, and Chisago County completed 95.1% of the 3,387-hour goal. In total, 3,219.67 hours were worked by watercraft inspectors across the District's five public accesses, which resulted in 6,450 related inspections surveys. There were fewer inspections completed this year than the previous 8 seasons; this may be due to the fact many of the District Lakes had no-wake restrictions in place during the 2024 watercraft inspection season. Even with a slower season, the goal of 135 inspections per hour was met June 10th-August 18th, 2024. Even with a slower season, watercraft inspectors found 2.2% of incoming boats carrying contaminants such as water, mud, plant debris, drain plug, etc. The inspectors were able to catch 38.2% of boats leaving the access with some form of contamination.

The District started the 2024 watercraft season with 9 CLFLWD Watercraft Inspectors; 3 of these inspectors were returning from previous seasons. The District greatly values its returning inspectors and has made efforts to retain them through yearly pay raises, among the other compensation offerings available to all, which include competitive starting wages, holiday pay, and performance bonuses. Three watercraft inspectors worked the entire length of the season. One of the District's Seasonal Technicians helped to conduct inspections starting after September 15th. Chisago County provided two additional watercraft inspectors through its joint power agreement with CLFLWD. These two inspectors rotated through the District's five accesses and focused their hours Monday-Thursday, while the District primarily focused its hours Friday-Sunday. The DNR also provided coverage at the Forest Lake West public access.

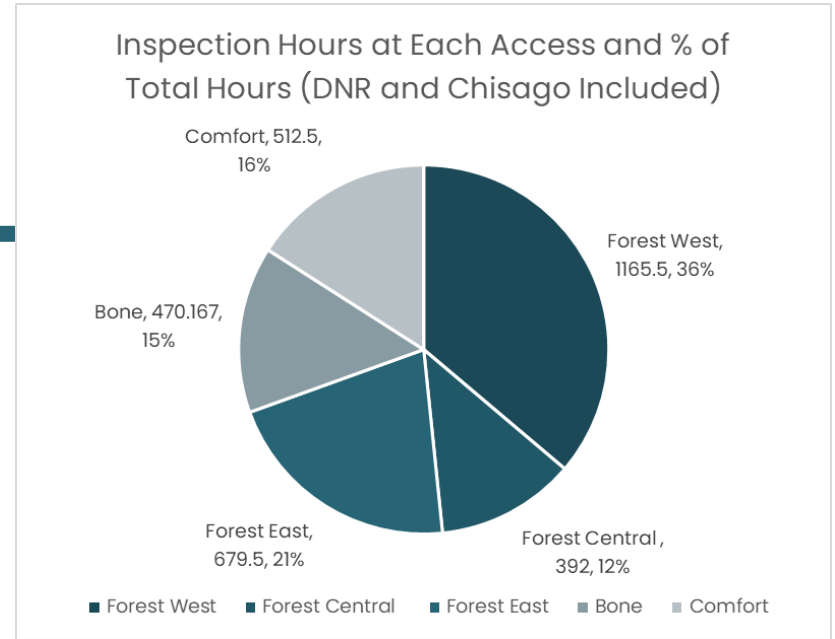
Beyond inspections, District inspectors continued to emphasize the importance of education and engagement. Included in the inspector's equipment kits were lake brochures and other educational AIS handouts. Inspectors were encouraged to offer these items to interested visitors, especially those that were new to the area or were unfamiliar with aquatic invasive species. For Independence Day, inspectors were given other fun District-branded handouts which included key floats, can koozies, sunglasses, buttons, stickers, and pens. The District continues to strive toward making each interaction a positive one. Next season, District staff will consider other educational handouts and public access amenities to maintain a positive, helpful, and educational public image.

Finally, the successes of this season would not be possible without the District's partners, the community, and local lake associations. Their continuous financial support and feedback are greatly appreciated and tremendously help the program continue to thrive and grow. In 2025, the District will continue to seek out enthusiastic water stewards for the watercraft inspector positions, who will best represent and serve the community to preserve the ecological health and recreational quality of the area's waterbodies.

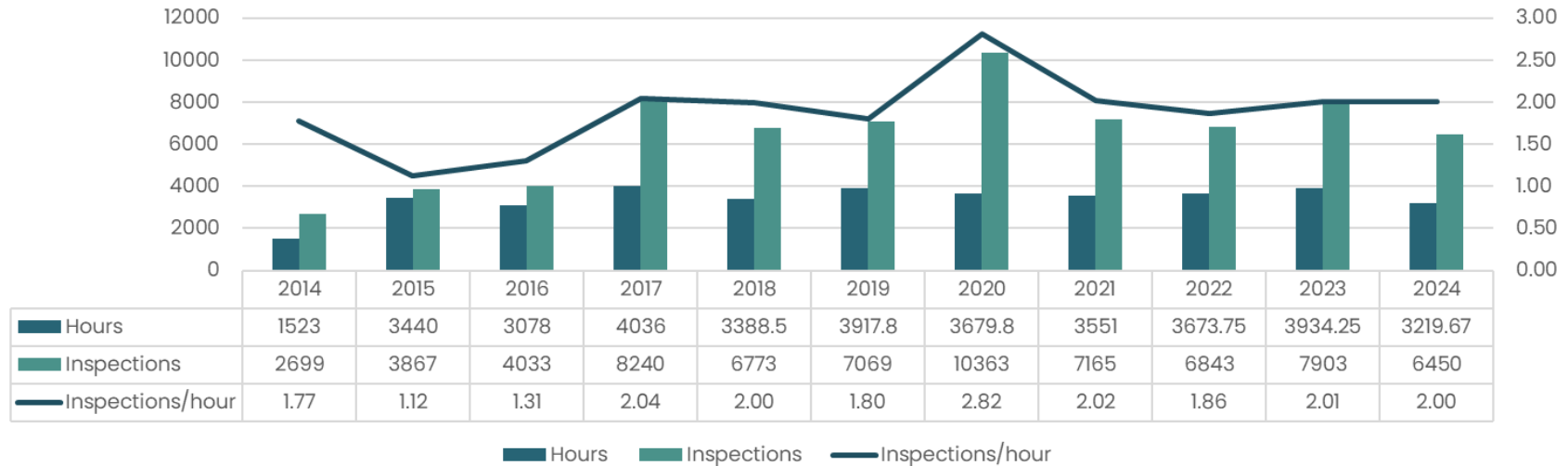
Comfort Lake—Forest Lake Watershed District

2024 Watercraft Inspections

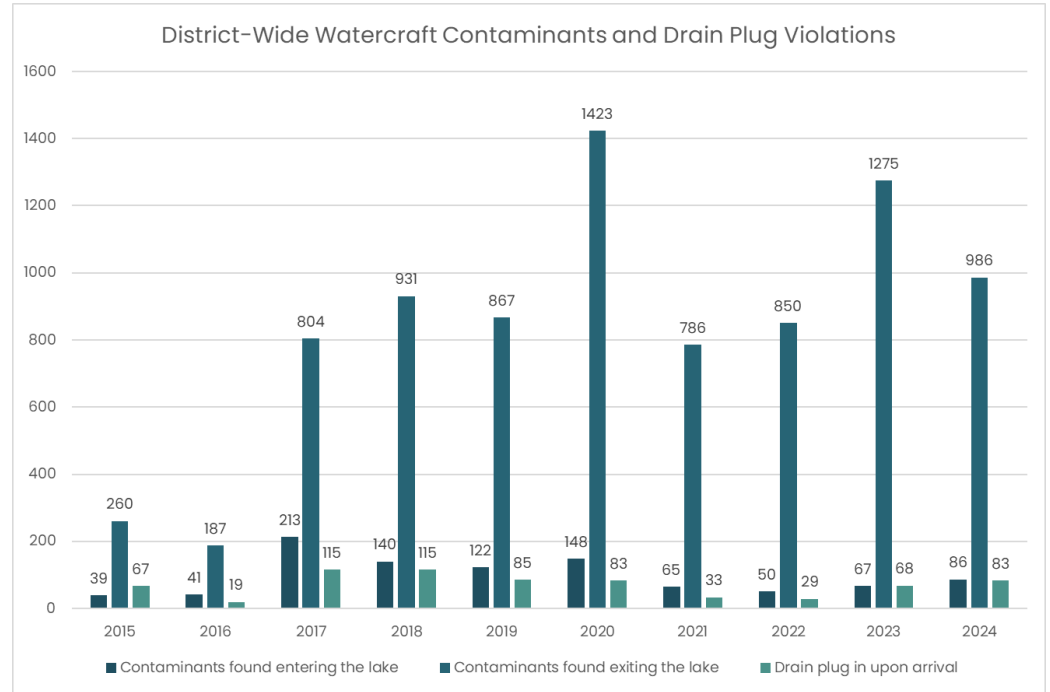
In 2024, CLFLWD and Minnesota DNR inspectors spent a total of **3219.67 hours** at landings in the CLFLWD inspecting watercraft and educating boaters. **6450 inspections** were completed this year, averaging **2.00 inspections per hour**.



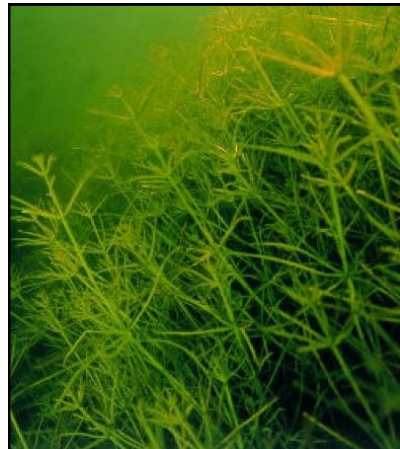
District Wide Inspection Hours and Number of Inspections per Season (Includes DNR and Chisago)



- 2.2 % of boaters **entering** the water had **plants, animals, water, mud**, etc. on their boat at the time of inspection. This can be compared to 1.48% in 2023, 1.23% in 2022, 1.06% in 2021, 0.03% in 2020, 1.7% in 2019, 3.8% in 2018, 5.4% in 2017 and 2.4% in 2016.
- **2.1%** of boaters **arriving** at the launch had their **drain plug in** at the time of inspection. This can be compared to 1.5% in 2023, 0.72% in 2022, 0.54% in 2021, 0.01% in 2020, 1.2% in 2019, 3.1% in 2018, 3.8% in 2017 and 3.1% in 2016.
- Inspectors averaged **1.98 inspections per hour**. This can be compared to 2.01 in 2023, 1.86 in 2022, 2.02 in 2021, 2.83 in 2020, 1.8 in 2019, 2.0 in 2018, 2.04 in 2017 and 1.31 in 2016.



Spiny Water Flea



Starry Stonewort

- **72 watercraft that had previously been in spiny water flea-infested lakes.** This number was 151 in 2023, 95 in 2022, 96 in 2021, 158 in 2020, 111 in 2019, 104 in 2018, 171 in 2017, and 231 watercraft in 2016.
- **43 watercraft that had previously been in starry stonewort-infested lakes.** This can be compared to 35 in 2023, 48 in 2022, 48 in 2021, 30 in 2020, 22 in 2019, 61 in 2018, 14 in 2017, and 83 watercraft in 2016.