

# Wright County Aquatic Invasive Species Inspections Report 2021

## Budget

The Wright County Inspection Program is funded through the state Local AIS Aid Fund and contributions from individual lake associations. Lake associations pay for inspections on accesses for their respective lakes as well as a proportional amount to training and coaching. The remaining funds are from the state fund.

Table 1. Inspection program spending by category

| Category                            | Cost                 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Contractor Admin                    | \$ 2,000.00          |
| Coach                               | \$ 6,725.53          |
| Training                            | \$ 4,468.72          |
| Lake Association Funded Inspections | \$ 77,847.75         |
| State Funded Inspections            | \$ 82,734.63         |
| Decon Labor                         | \$ 18,711.00         |
| Other Agency Inspections            | \$ 7,410.00          |
| Porta-Potties                       | \$ 1,631.00          |
| Capital                             | \$ 1,547.94          |
| Consumables                         | \$ 1,712.30          |
| Utilities                           | \$ 1,008.17          |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>\$ 205,797.04</b> |

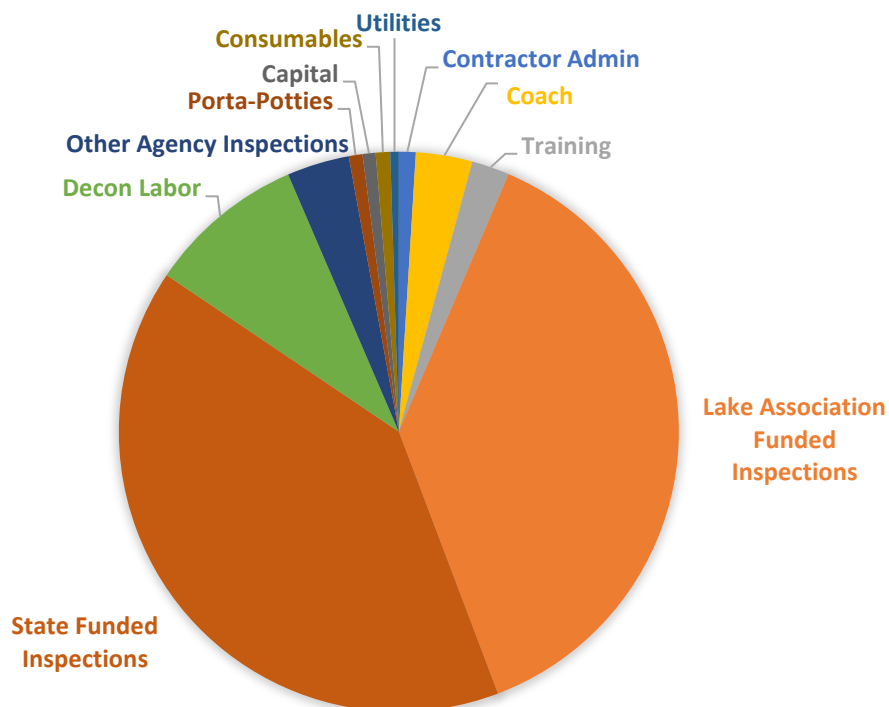


Figure 1. Inspection program spending by category

## Inspection Count

Inspectors manned 26 different accesses throughout the county (Figure 2). Due to the widespread staffing shortages significantly less hours were actually worked than originally contracted (8,216.25 hours worked of 9,450.00 hours contracted). This led to fewer inspections being completed (Figure 3). Inspections per hour (IPH) were also down (Table 2) from previous years but the cause of the decrease is unknown.

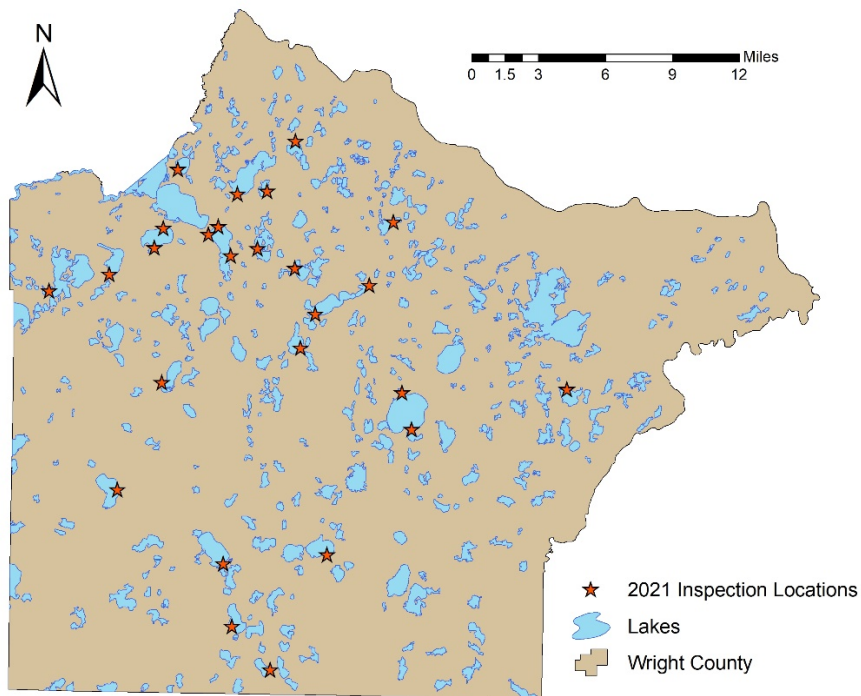


Figure 2. Locations of inspections by Wright SWCD in 2021

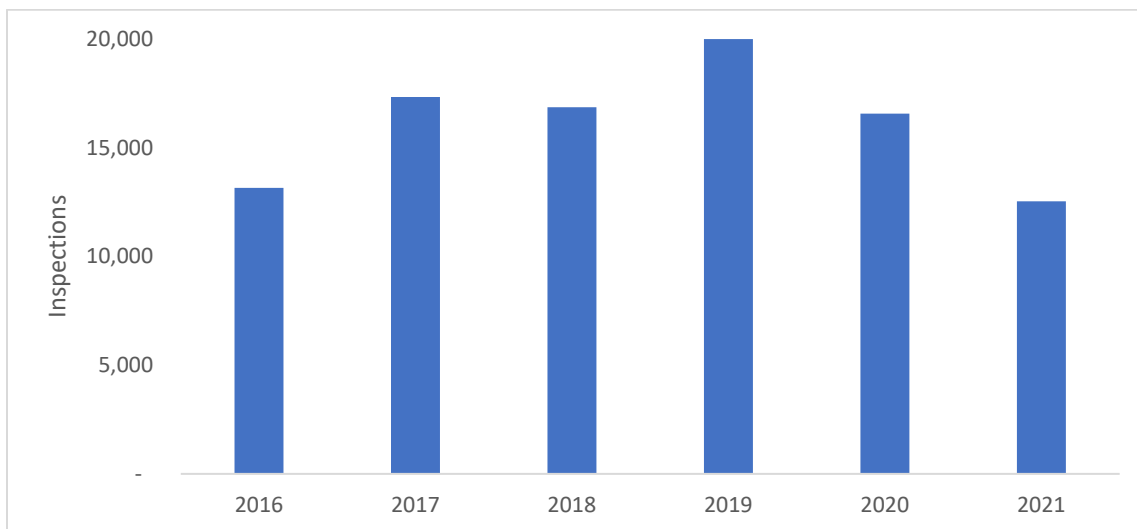


Figure 3. Inspection count each year from 2016-2021

Table 2. Inspection count, hour and inspections per hour (IPH) each year from 2016-2021

| Year | Inspections | Hours     | IPH  |
|------|-------------|-----------|------|
| 2016 | 13,157      | n/a       | n/a  |
| 2017 | 17,332      | 8971.00   | 1.93 |
| 2018 | 16,864      | 10,274.75 | 1.64 |
| 2019 | 20,576      | 12,333.50 | 1.67 |
| 2020 | 16,570      | 9,205.75  | 1.80 |
| 2021 | 12,539      | 8,216.25  | 1.52 |

Table 3. Inspections, hours and inspections per hour (IPH) by ramp in 2021

| Ramp                | Inspections   | Hours          | IPH         |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------|
| Ann                 | 88            | 160            | 0.55        |
| Bass*               | 281           | 399            | 0.70        |
| Beebe               | 456           | 167            | 2.73        |
| Buffalo N           | 284           | 230.75         | 1.23        |
| Buffalo S           | 146           | 217.5          | 0.67        |
| Cedar DNR*          | 732           | 759            | 0.96        |
| Cedar Schroeder*    | 526           | 632            | 0.83        |
| Cedar Wurm's**      | 31            | 260            | 0.12        |
| Cokato              | 105           | 167.25         | 0.63        |
| Eagle               | 149           | 126.5          | 1.18        |
| Granite             | 92            | 170.5          | 0.54        |
| Howard              | 328           | 218            | 1.50        |
| Indian              | 161           | 176.5          | 0.91        |
| John                | 101           | 156.25         | 0.65        |
| Limestone           | 121           | 151.75         | 0.80        |
| Maple E             | 100           | 156.75         | 0.64        |
| Maple W             | 252           | 160.25         | 1.57        |
| Mary (Howard Lake)* | 552           | 308.5          | 1.79        |
| Mary (Ney)          | 89            | 154.25         | 0.58        |
| Mink                | 117           | 227.25         | 0.51        |
| Pleasant N*         | 675           | 442.75         | 1.52        |
| Pleasant S*         | 156           | 247.25         | 0.63        |
| Ramsey              | 79            | 156.25         | 0.51        |
| Sugar S*            | 1909          | 845.75         | 2.26        |
| Sylvia*             | 4508          | 1294.5         | 3.48        |
| Waverly             | 501           | 230.75         | 2.17        |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>12,539</b> | <b>8216.25</b> | <b>1.53</b> |

\*Ramps that were partially funded by lake association dollars

\*\*Ramps that were fully funded by lake association dollars

## Inspections by date

As a general rule, the majority of inspections take place before mid-August. Traffic tends to decrease later in the summer but staffing also gets more difficult as students return to school. The only accesses monitored after Labor Day are those that are funded by lake associations.

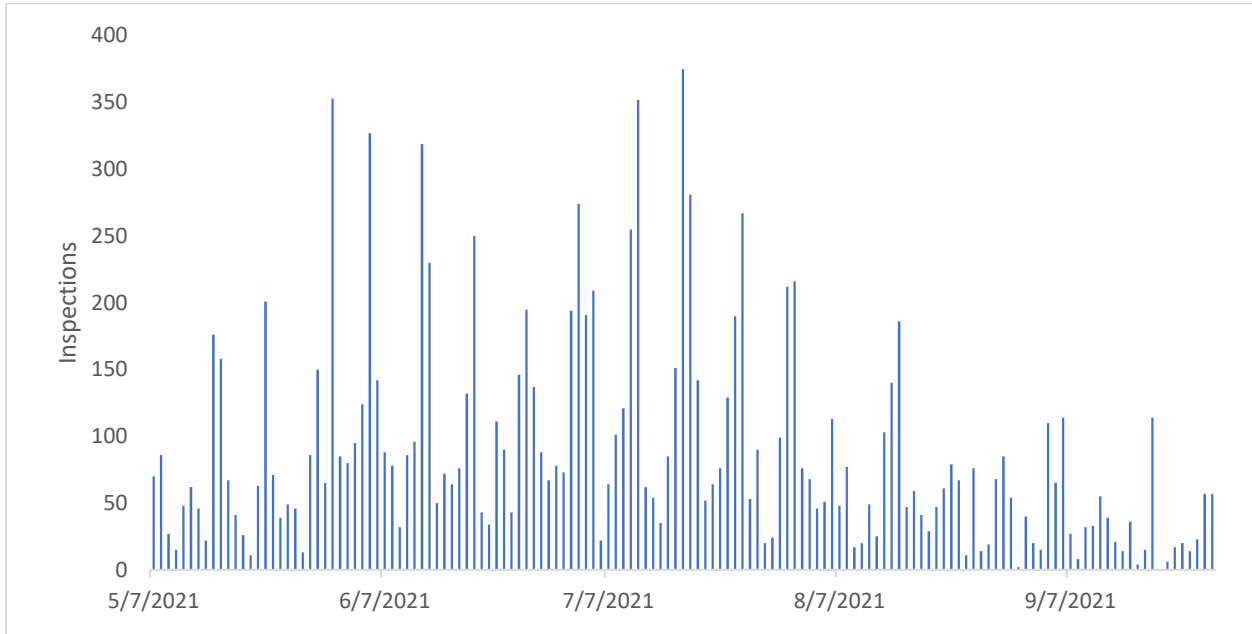


Figure 4. Inspections by date in 2021

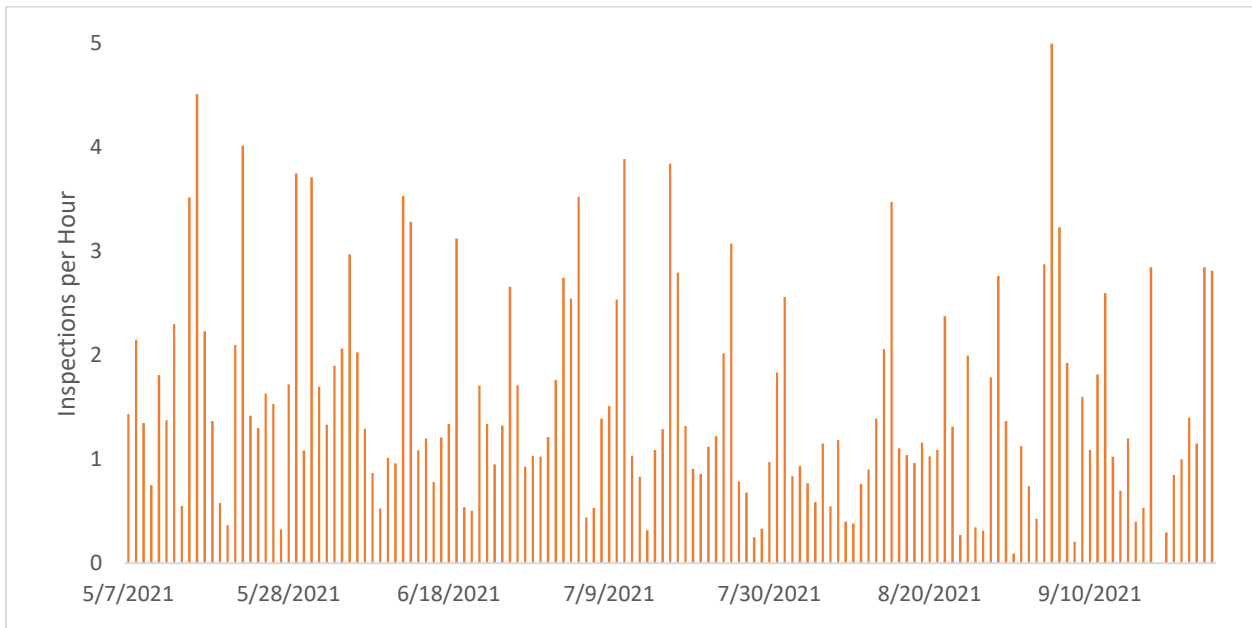


Figure 5. Inspections per hour by date in 2021

## License plates

The number of unique license plates is used as a proxy for the number of individuals encountered by the inspectors. Similar to the overall inspections the number of license plates observed was lower than in previous year even when normalized by hours worked (Table 4 and Figure 6). Some license plates are observed multiple times. One plate was encountered 114 times, likely belonging to a lake service provider. Multiple encounters reinforce the educational aspect of an inspection. Since a license plate can be encountered twice in the same day (enter and exit) a minimum of three encounters guarantees the license plate was observed on multiple days.

Table 4. License plates encountered by year from 2016-2021

| Year | License Plates | Plates per Hour |
|------|----------------|-----------------|
| 2016 | 7,471          | N/A             |
| 2017 | 8,404          | 0.93            |
| 2018 | 7,433          | 0.72            |
| 2019 | 10,688         | 0.87            |
| 2020 | 7,957          | 0.86            |
| 2021 | 6,445          | 0.78            |

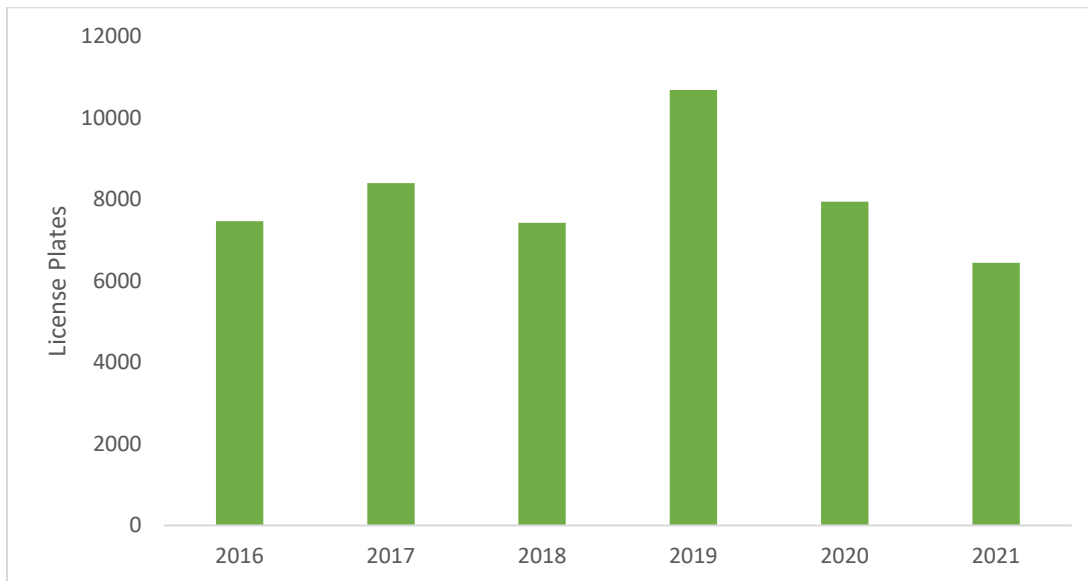


Figure 6. License plates encountered by year from 2016-2021

Table 5. License plates encountered multiple times and the percent of inspections they account for.

| Number of Encounters | Total Plates | Percent of Inspections |
|----------------------|--------------|------------------------|
| >25                  | 12           | 5%                     |
| >10                  | 59           | 10%                    |
| >5                   | 234          | 20%                    |
| >2                   | 1061         | 44%                    |
| >1                   | 2,894        | 73%                    |

## Entering vs Exiting

There are several different inspection types. An entering or exiting inspection occurs when the boat is coming or going from the water. Lifts are inspected slightly differently so they are given a different category. A courtesy inspection occurs when the equipment will not enter or exit the water. The majority of courtesy inspections occur at the decontamination site.

Table 6. Inspections by type in 2021

| Inspection Type | Count |
|-----------------|-------|
| <b>Courtesy</b> | 172   |
| <b>Entering</b> | 7496  |
| <b>Exiting</b>  | 4950  |
| <b>Lift</b>     | 98    |
| <b>Total</b>    | 12716 |

During an entering inspection the equipment is checked for water, mud, plants, animal, etc. Inspectors also check if the drain plug is in. Table 7 has the percentage of equipment that didn't comply with regulations. It is worth noting that lake users often put the drain plug in during staging but prior to the inspection, these instances are recorded as the drain plug being in. Zebra mussels (zm) were found on equipment a few times, usually on equipment from an infested lake returning to the same lake following storage. There was only one instance of zebra mussels being found on equipment attempting to enter an uninfested lake.

Table 7. Findings during entering inspections

| Entering n  | Drain plug In | Species Found | ZM Found |
|-------------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| <b>7496</b> | 5.46%         | 7.68%         | 0.09%    |

During exit inspections the equipment is checked for the same regulations. However, since the inspection often occurs in tandem with staging, these numbers don't necessarily correlate with would be violations. Rather they inform the likelihood of equipment having material prior to removal by lake users or inspectors. Zebra mussels were only found on equipment coming from known infested waters.

Table 8. Findings during exiting inspections

| Exiting n   | Drain plug | Species Found | ZM Found |
|-------------|------------|---------------|----------|
| <b>4950</b> | 7.88%      | 33.98%        | 0.91%    |

## Lake Connections

During entering inspections, lake users reported they came from 588 different Minnesota lakes and 12 different states in addition to Minnesota. Of the 600 lakes users last visited 54 lakes of the lakes in Wright County. Just over 9% of users reported they did not know or preferred not the answer the last lake the equipment was used in. They also reported they will go to 351 different lakes for their next trip including 43 different lakes in Wright County.

## Decontaminations

There was only one staff member available for decontamination services in 2021 severely limiting the number of hours the service was available. Despite that decontaminations were up from 2020 which had a similar lack of staff. Users reported coming from 45 different lakes (including 18 different Wright County lakes). Prior to decontamination 50% of equipment had visible water, plants, animals, etc.

| Year | Decons |
|------|--------|
| 2016 | 155    |
| 2017 | 340    |
| 2018 | 242    |
| 2019 | 221    |
| 2020 | 140    |
| 2021 | 176    |