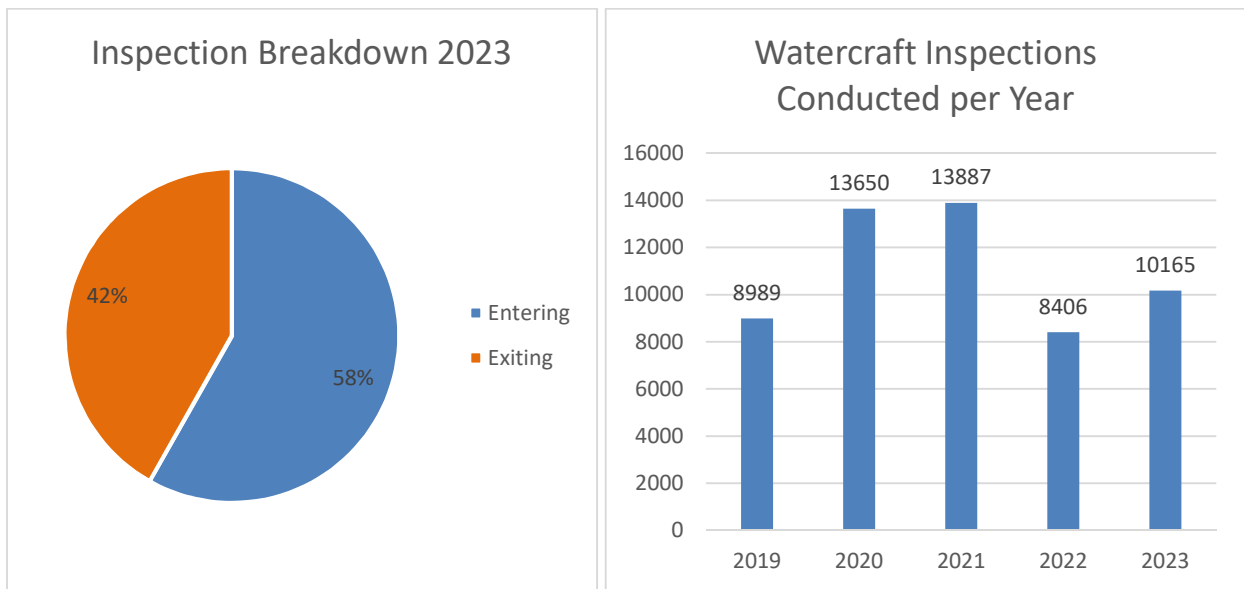


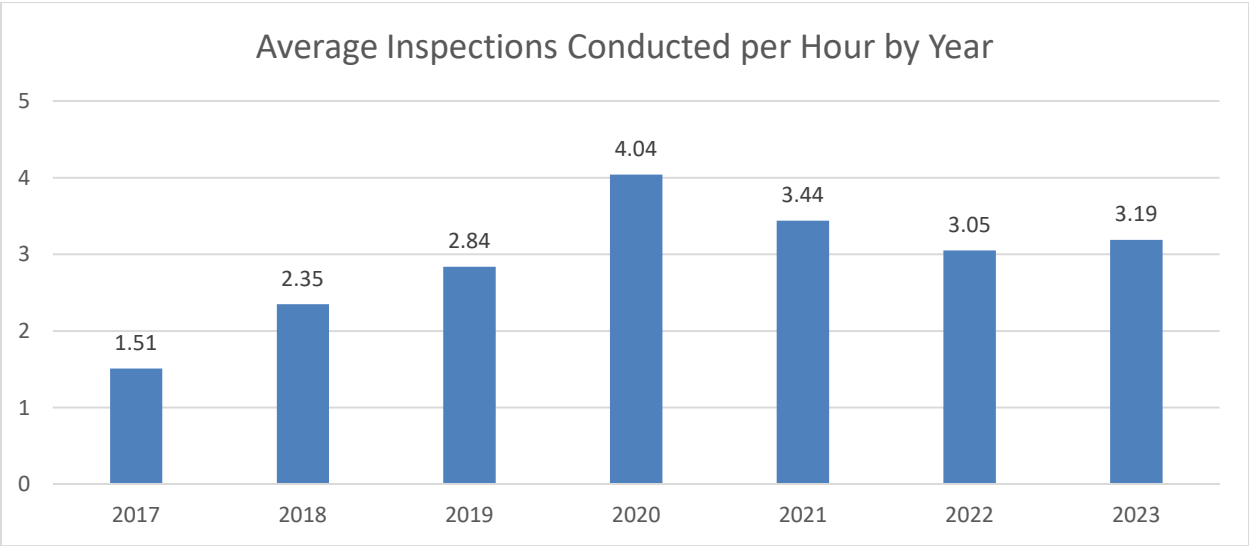
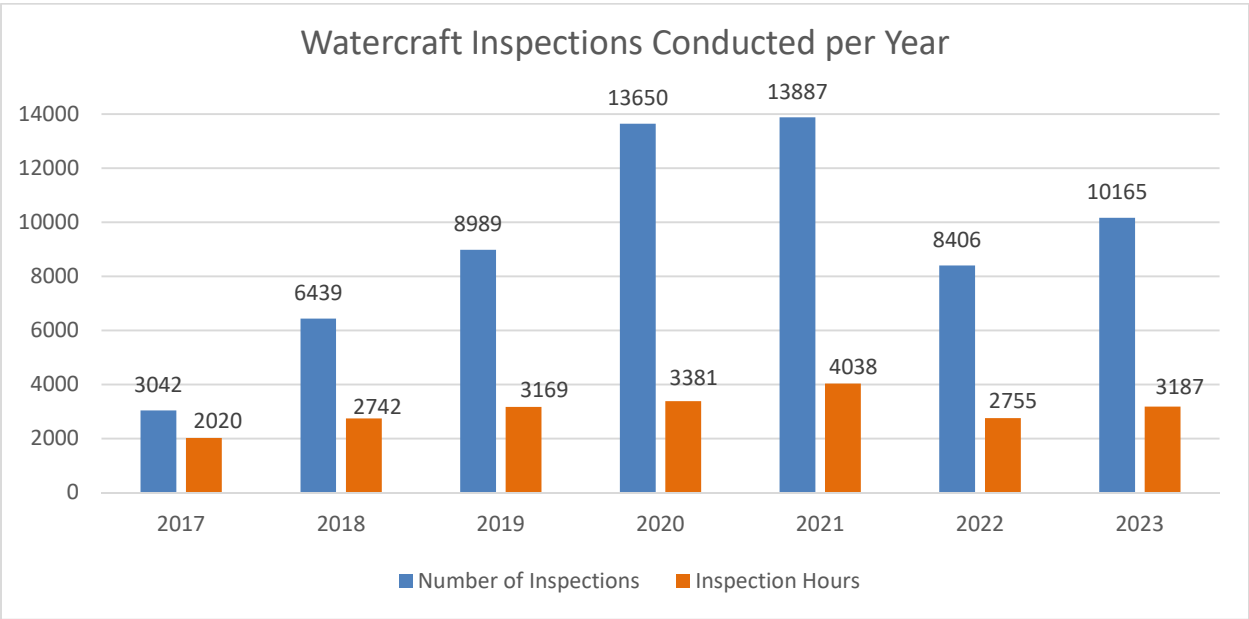


Washington County AIS Inspection Summary Points 2023

The WCD supervised six DNR authorized Level 1 Watercraft Inspectors for the 2023 season. Funding was received from Washington County, Carnelian Marine St. Croix Watershed District (CMSCWD), Big Marine Lake Association (BMLA), Square Lake Association (SLA), the City of Scandia, Ramsey County Soil and Water Division (RCSWCD), Bald Eagle Lake Association (BELA), Valley Branch Watershed District (VBWD), Lake DeMontreville Olson Association (LDOA), and Clear Lake Association (CLA). These inspectors were present at 18 water access locations starting May 11th through October 25th. During the inspection season, 3,187 hours of inspections occurred resulting in 10,165 inspections. Compared to 2022, 432 more hours of inspections occurred, and 1,759 more inspections were performed. The increase in inspection hours was possible due to increased availability of inspectors as more were able to work full time for a larger portion of the season compared to 2022. Two inspectors were able to work full time throughout all of September and until October 25th also. The number of inspections conducted increased as well with the increased hours, though boating activity still seemed low compared to 2020-2021 seasons.



The number of inspections performed in 2023 was higher than the number completed in 2022. Compared to 2022, there was a 2% increase in the number of exiting inspections conducted versus entering inspections. As with previous years, emphasis has been placed on entering inspections to prevent new infestations. However, exiting inspections are equally important at already infested lakes to prevent infestations from spreading.



Inspection numbers and inspection hours were both increased in 2023 from 2022. The average number of inspections per hour increased as well, up to 3.19 inspections per hour. Continued high number of average inspections per hour is a result of years of observing boater use patterns and an emphasis placed on staffing at lakes during daily high use times. A large number of inspections conducted on the weekends at Bald Eagle consistently throughout the season is also a contributor to these averages in recent years. Inspection numbers from 2020 and 2021 are likely outliers due to pandemic conditions where outdoor activity levels were very high amongst the public, including watercraft related activities. Average inspection numbers from 2022 and 2023 are very similar to those seen in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic. As in 2022, not all funding dollars were spent due to low staff numbers. The increase in hours of inspections performed despite lower staff numbers than 2022 is thanks to more inspectors working full-time hours, rather than a larger number of inspectors working part-time hours. Additionally, two inspectors were able to continue inspecting through September and October.

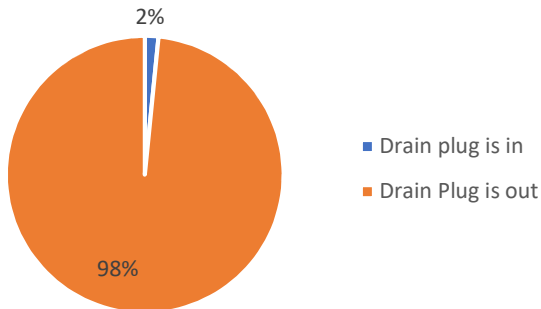


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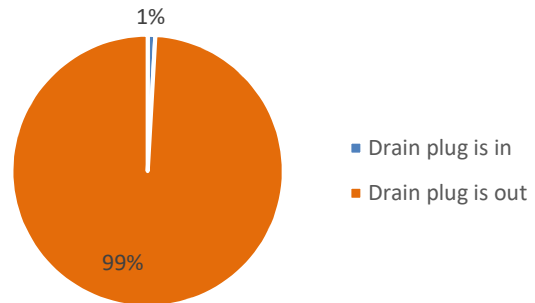
455 HAYWARD AVE N
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Drain Plug Violations 2022
(Incoming Inspections)

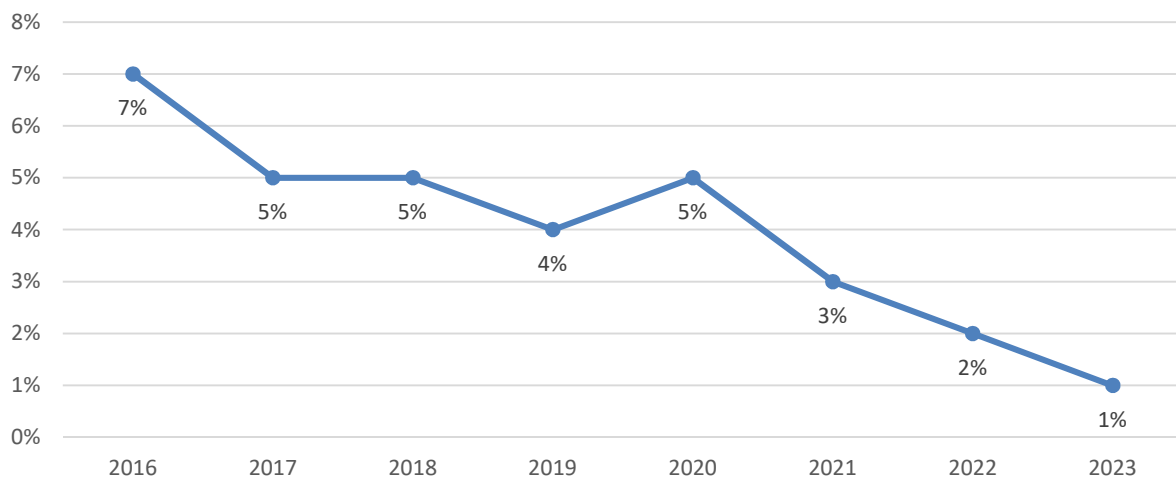


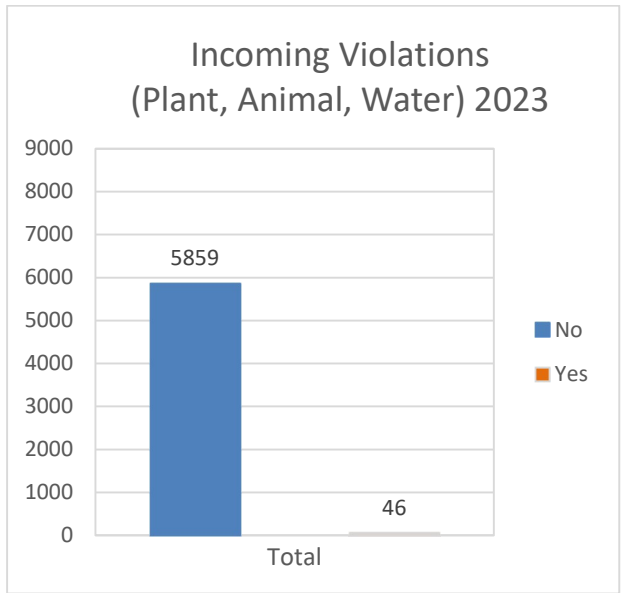
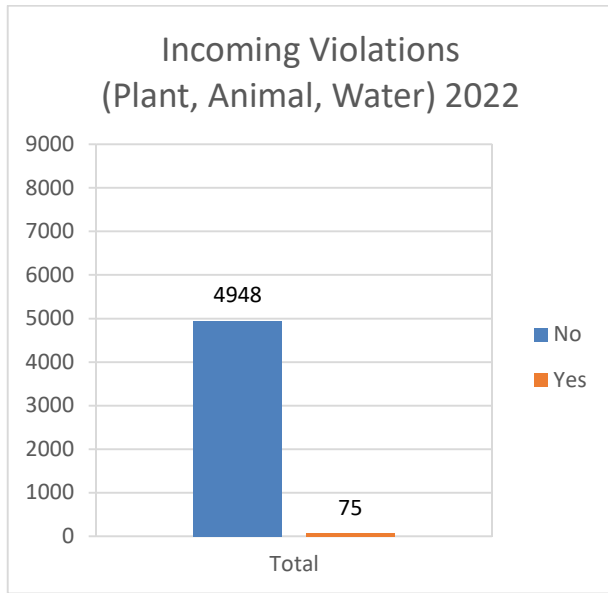
Drain Plug Violations 2023
(Incoming Inspections)



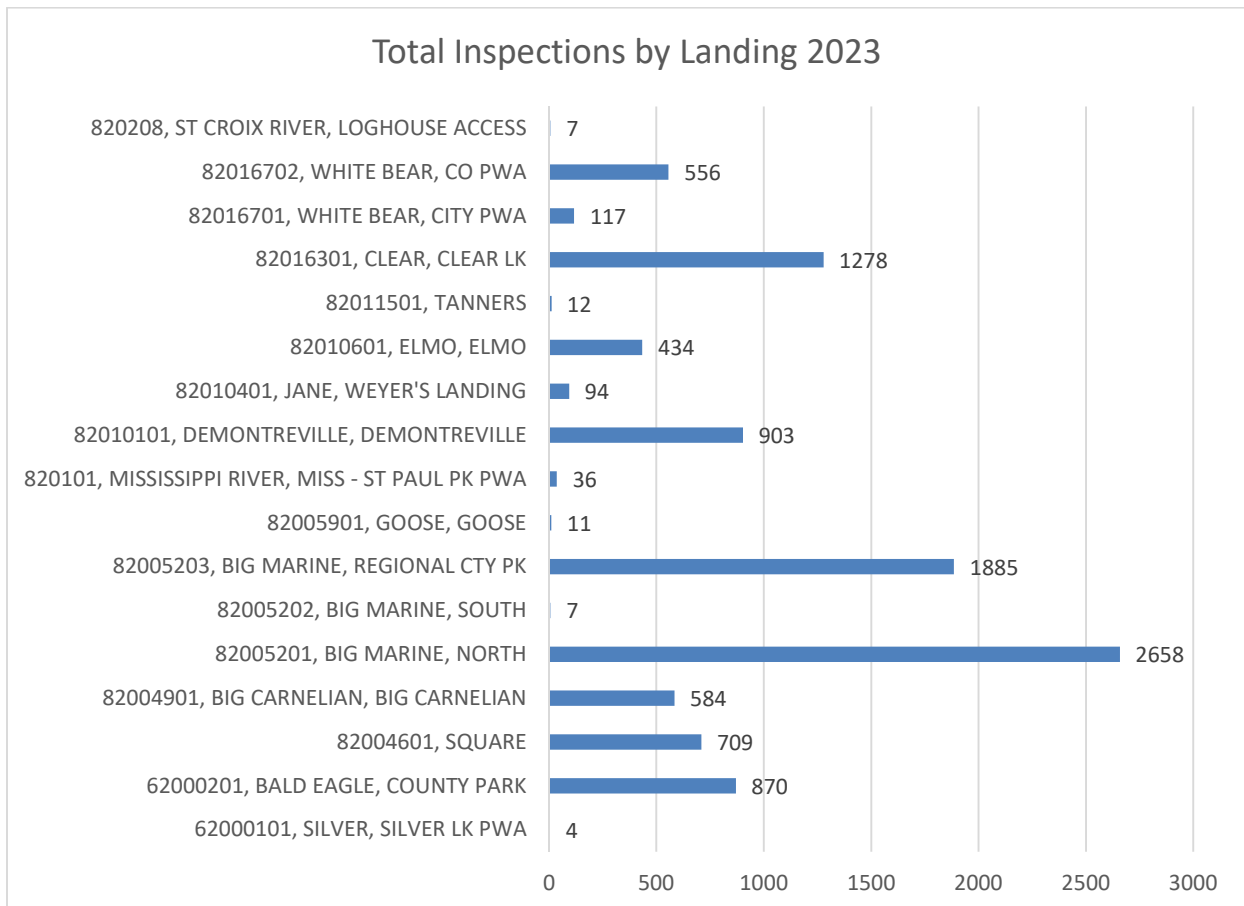
There was a decrease in drain plug violations from 2% in 2022 to 1% in 2023. Of the 54 instances where the plug was found to be in when the boater arrived in 2023, only one instance resulted in the boater being sent away to drain their watercraft due to the discovery of water in the hull. In these instances, a boater is sent away from the ramp and may return when the water has been drained. Over the years there has been a reduced number of drain plug violations found by WCD inspectors. The continued goal of the Watercraft Inspection Program is to educate boaters on AIS laws and decrease violations like these.

Incoming Drain Plug Violation Percentage by Year





Of the 5,905 incoming inspections performed in 2023, 46 violations were observed. As in previous years, by far the most common violation was the presence of aquatic plants, either attached to the trailer or the watercraft. Aquatic plants were found in 38 of the 46 inspections with violations. One zebra mussel violation was observed by WCD watercraft inspectors in 2023. When zebra mussels are found, boaters are denied launch and directed to decontamination sites. Additionally, all zebra mussel violations are forwarded to the DNR for enforcement.





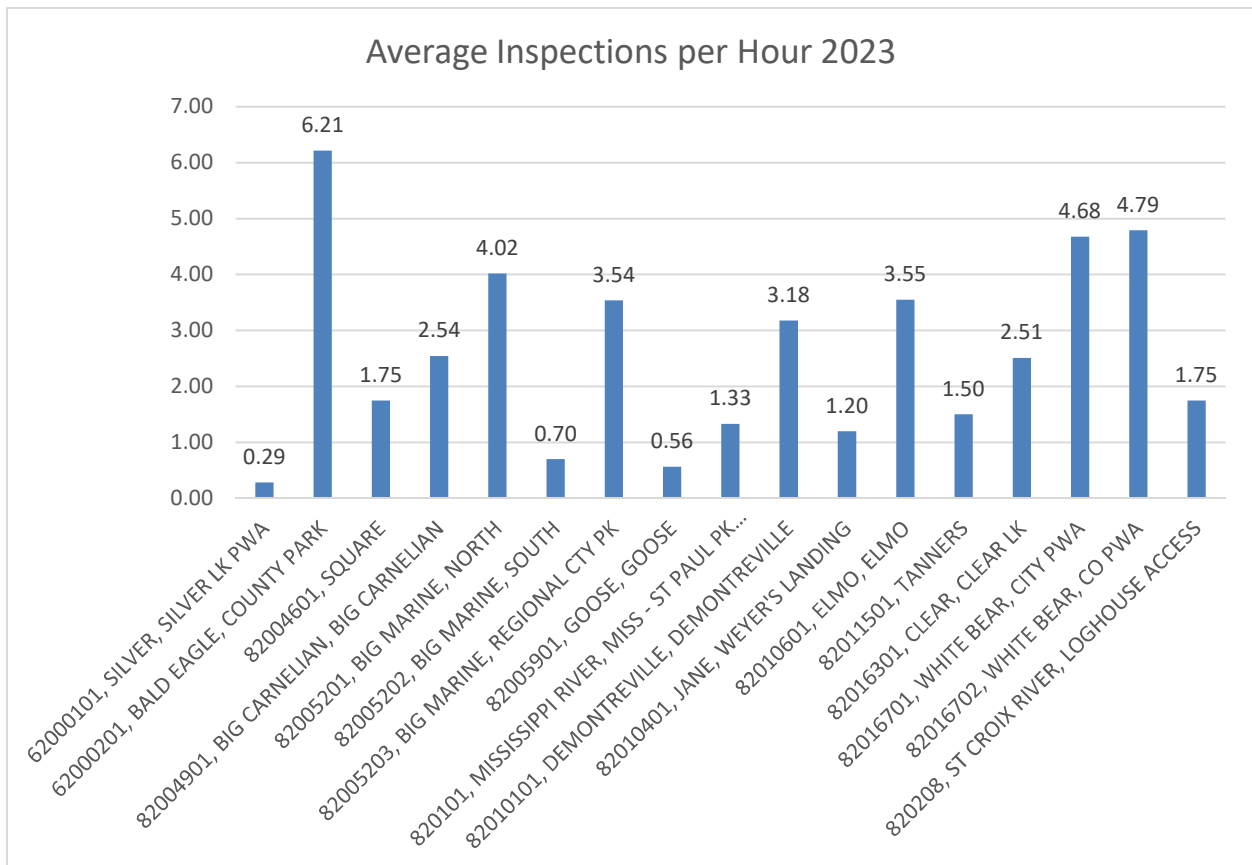
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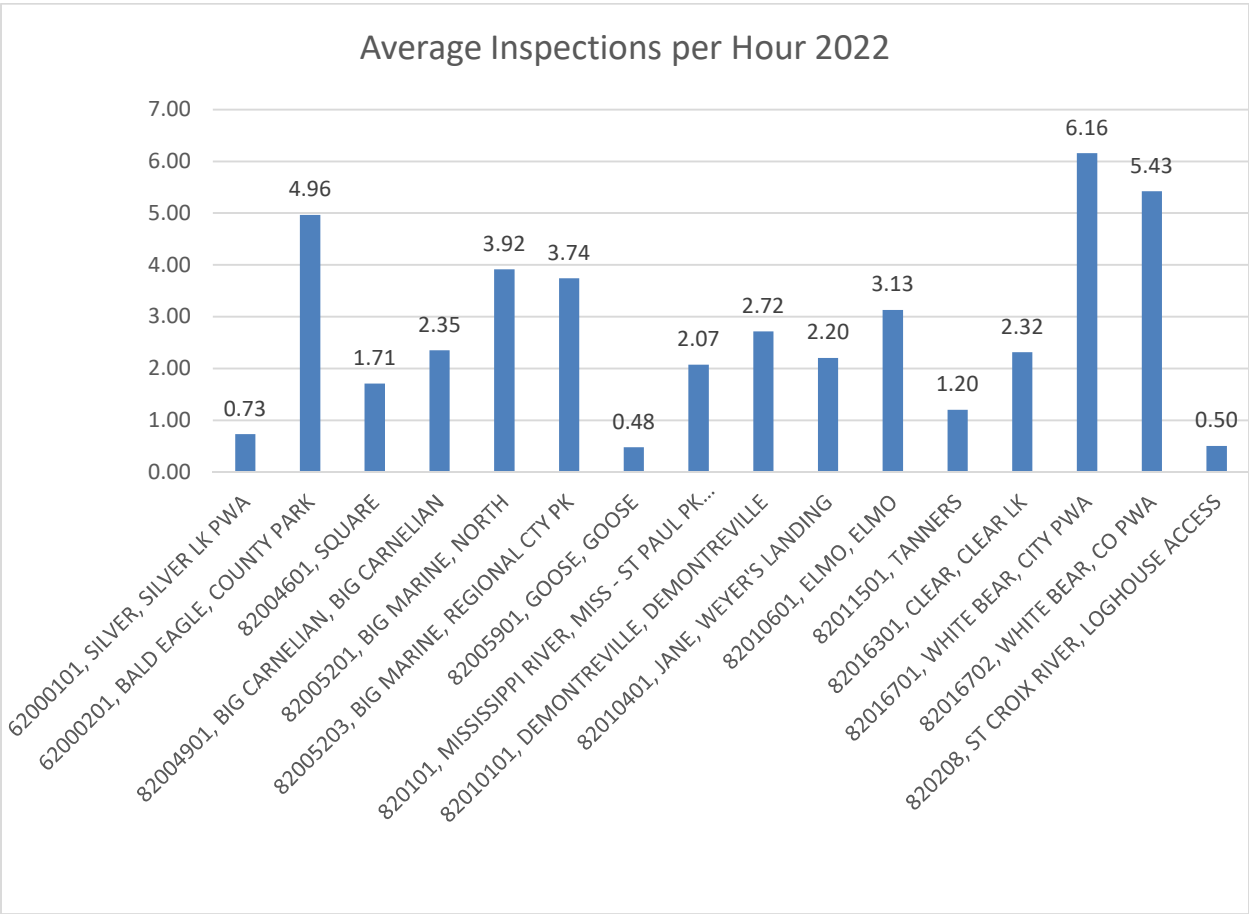
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As in 2022, staff were present at 18 boat landings throughout the season. The highest number of inspection hours were conducted at Big Marine. Clear lake received additional inspection hours this year thanks to additional funding from CLA and was the lake with the second-most inspection hours. Historic boater patterns played a part in the distribution of hours, as well as water levels due to drought conditions. Big Marine was the most inspected lake, consistent with previous years. Clear Lake was the second-most inspected lake, followed by DeMontreville and Bald Eagle. Most lakes saw an increase in inspections conducted in 2023 when compared to 2022 due to additional inspection hours.

Average inspections conducted per hour in 2023 when compared to 2022 are overall very similar, though some lakes saw changes in efficiency. Of most interesting note is Bald Eagle, which averaged 6.65 inspections per hour in 2021, 4.96 inspections per hour in 2022, and 6.21 inspections per hour in 2023. In all three years inspectors were present Saturday and Sunday from approximately 5am to 10am. The change in average could suggest a change in boater use patterns at Bald Eagle specifically, or a decrease in boating in the 2022 season in general.





Please note: although this summary addresses trends and data for Washington County lakes, it references only those that are serviced by the Washington Conservation District. All the lakes located in CLFLWD have inspections performed by CLFLWD or Chisago County staff. Also note that the MNDNR performs inspections on many of the high use landings in Washington County, as well as being primarily responsible for the access points on the Saint Croix River. Lakes in Ramsey County are also staffed by inspectors from Ramsey County.