Wright County Aquatic Invasive Species Report 2025

Report Prepared by:
Alicia O'Hare
Wright Soil and Water Conservation District
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Wright County Inspection Team for 2025

Inspection Program

In 2025, Wright County had a typical year of the inspection program. We continued the priority hour system we started in 2022. About 68% of inspection hours occurred during priority hours. Which are: Sunday: dawn to dusk, Monday-: 12pm to dusk, Tuesday-Thursday: 4pm to dusk,
Friday: 9am to dusk, Saturday: dawn to dusk.

There were a few relevant changes to the program. Wright Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) directed more state-funded hours to the Lake Pulaski access. Prices increased from $24 per inspection hour to $25 per inspection hour. Due to this change overall hours decreased. The Greater Lake Sylvia Association also decreased their inspection budget by 10%, the busiest access in Wright County.

The majority of state-funded inspector time (88%) was allocated to only 12accesses. At the same time the remaining 12% of state funded hours was spent on 32 other accesses (Figure 1). The goal was to visit as many accesses that allow motorized traffic as possible but to concentrate the majority of hours on accesses of lakes with known invasive species. Lake associations also contributed funds for inspections at particular accesses (Table 1)

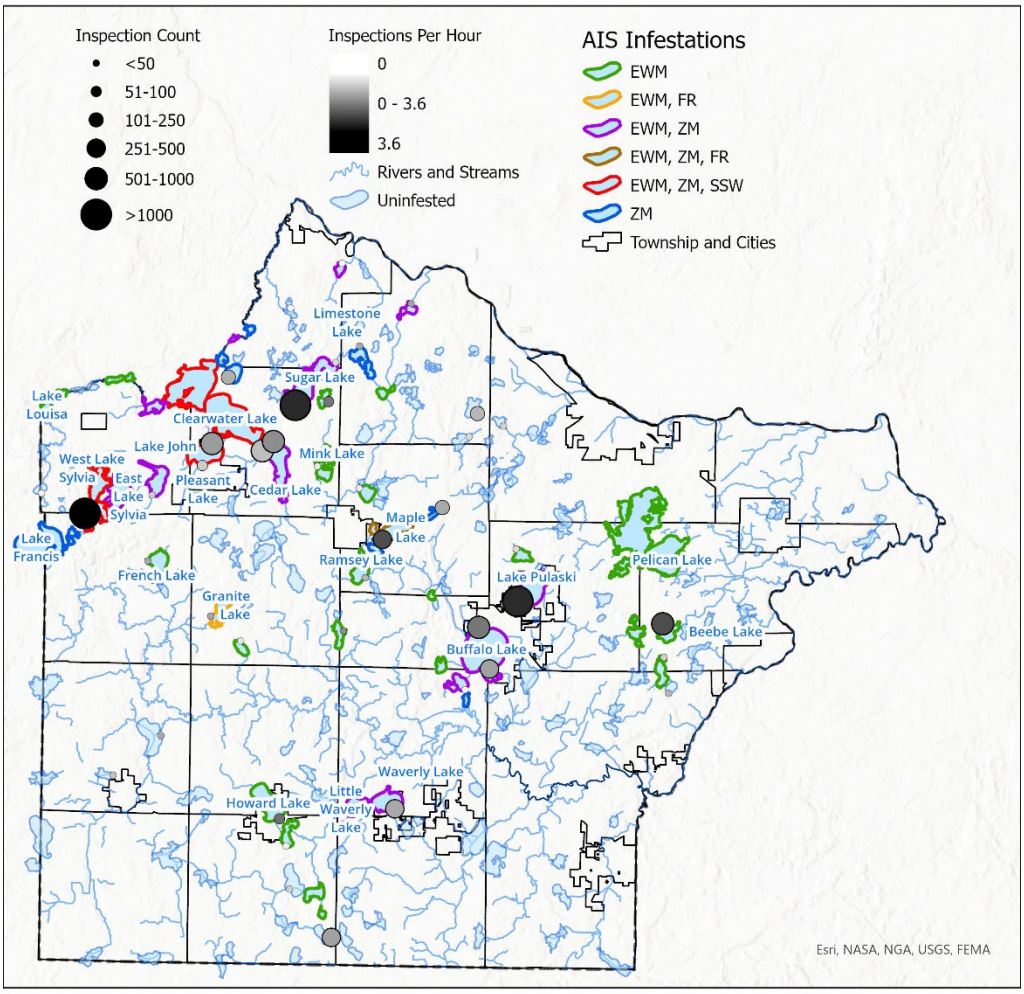

Figure 1. Locations of inspections by Wright SWCD in 2025. A large circle indicates more inspections were done; a darker circle indicates a higher number of inspections per hour. ZM = zebra mussels, EWM= Eurasian watermilfoil, SSW=starry stonewort

*Table 1. Inspections, hours and inspections per hour (IPH) by ramp in 2025. *Ramps that were partially funded by local dollars*

Ramp	Inspections	Hours	IPH	License Plates
Ann	19	30	0.6	15
Bass*	250	230	1.1	158
Beebe	635	250	2.5	428
Birch	5	8.25	0.6	5
Brooks	4	5	0.8	3
Buffalo N*	872	467.25	1.9	520
Buffalo S*	256	204.75	1.3	179
Camp	3	7.75	0.4	3
Cedar DNR*	911	1004.25	0.9	537
Cedar Schroeder*	619	385.75	1.6	416
Charlotte	3	5.25	0.6	2
Cokato	35	29.5	1.2	26
Constance	5	10	0.5	2
Deer	0	5	0.0	0
Dutch	1	5	0.2	1
Eagle	5	10	0.5	4
Fish	0	5	0.0	0
French	12	10	1.2	10
Granite	43	35.25	1.2	36
Howard	61	30.5	2.0	45
Ida	135	130	1.0	100
Indian	55	28.5	1.9	48
John	24	33	0.7	20
Limestone	38	31	1.2	30
Locke	20	15	1.3	15
Maple E	180	147.75	1.2	133
Maple W	383	152.25	2.5	283
Martha	5	5	1.0	5
Mary (Winsted)	445	349.75	1.3	262
Mary (Ney)	11	37	0.3	9
Mink	1	4	0.3	1
Moose	0	3	0.0	0
Nixon	1	10	0.1	1
Pleasant N	839	600.25	1.4	459
Pleasant S	60	89.75	0.7	45
Pulaski	2018	673	3.0	1008
Ramsey	31	32	1.0	23
Rock	16	10	1.6	11
Sugar N	38	75.58	0.5	33
Sugar S	2847	949.42	3.0	1481
Sullivan	0	5	0.0	0
Sylvia	5464	1522.25	3.6	2232
Union	1	10	0.2	1
Waverly	358	300	1.6	231
Total	**16,709**	**7,952**	**2.1**	**7692**

Inspection 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 2. Inspection program spending by category

Category	Cost
Contractor Admin	$6,000.00
Coach	$7,066.52
Training	$6,135.98
Locally Funded Inspections	$110,112.50
State Funded Inspections	$91,115.63
Earned Sick and Safe Time	$7,748.99
Other Agency Inspections	$3,000.00
Outreach	$744.88
Decon Labor	$19,067.50
Decon Consumables/Maintenance	$1,956.01
Decon Utilities	$1,456.63
Total	$255,466.34

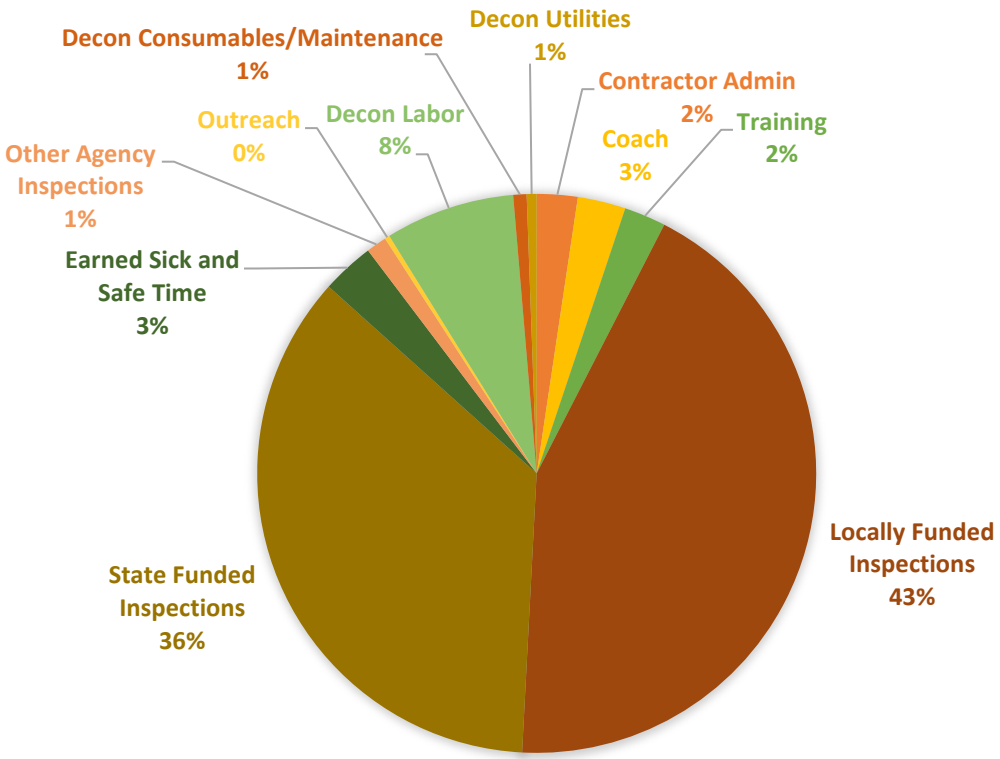

Figure 2. Inspection program spending by category in 2025

Inspection Count

Wright County's inspection season runs from early May to late September. The majority of inspections take place between Memorial Day and mid-August (Figure 3). Inspections in 2025 peaked in early July as is typical with the most inspections near the 4th of July. 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 local entities.

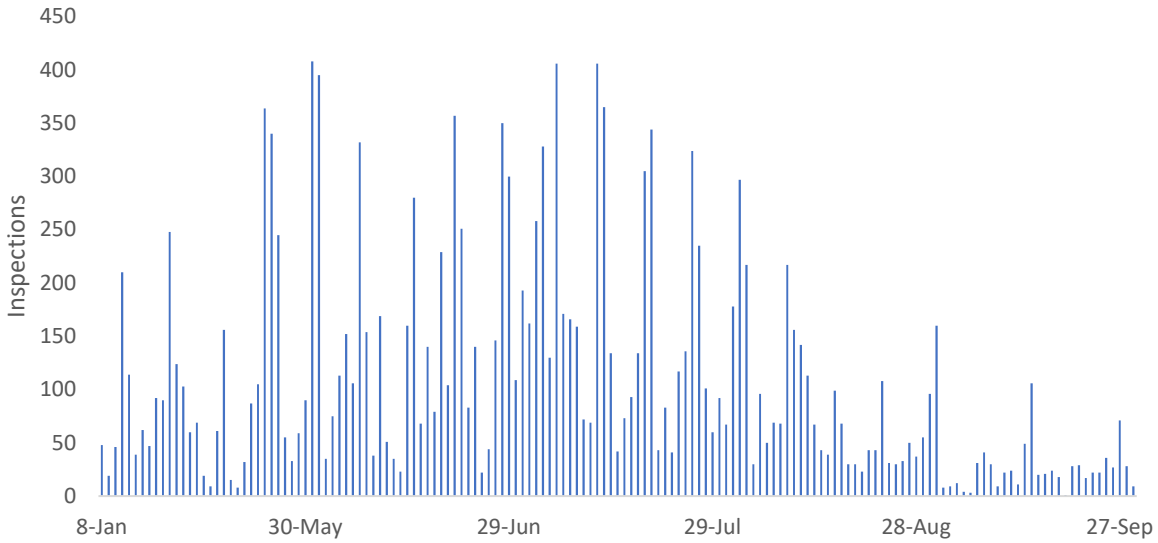

Figure 3. Inspections by date in 2024

The total number of inspections vary from year to year (Table 3 and Figure 4) based on a variety of reasons. Everything from weather, staffing levels, or the economy can affect inspections numbers. Despite a drop in hours, inspections in 2025 appear typical for the priority hours model.

Table 3. Inspection count, hours, and inspections per hour (IPH) each year from 2016-2025

Year	Inspections	Hours	IPH
2016	13,157	n/a	n/a
2017	17,332	8971.00	1.9
2018	16,864	10,274.75	1.6
2019	20,576	12,333.50	1.7
2020	16,570	9,205.75	1.8
2021	12,539	8,216.25	1.5
2022	15,990	8,063.25	2.0
2023	16,584	8,008.00	2.1
2024	18,002	8,366.50	2.2
2025	16,709	7,952.00	2.1

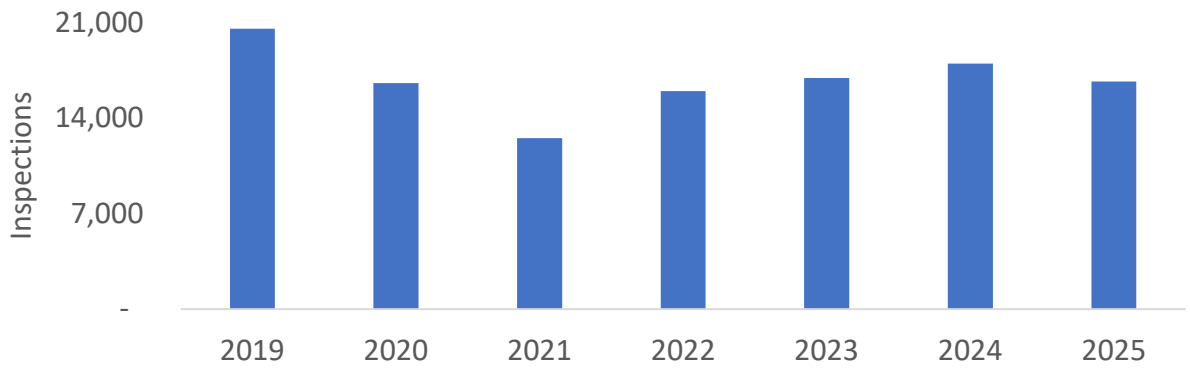

Figure 4. Inspection counts each year from 2019-2024

Inspector Placement

Placement of inspectors is an important aspect of this program. Certain accesses are very busy while others may not have any traffic depending on the day and the weather. Part of our strategy of concentrating the inspection time to just 12 accesses was to improve inspections per hour (IPH). The accesses chosen had a high degree of risk from either incoming boats and/or outgoing boats. The remaining hours are placed on other accesses during priority hours. Some accesses only get 5-10 hours per season.

In 2022, we changed the time of day that our inspectors were scheduled to expand hours to the early morning to until dusk. In 2023, we decreased the hours in the morning and increased the hours in the evening especially during the week. This resulted in the highest inspections per hour in the history of the Wright County inspection program (Table 4). We continued this pattern for 2025.

Table 4. Inspections per hour by the hour of the day for each day of the week.

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Grand Total
6 AM	1.1	2.3	0.5	1.4	0.2	0.9	1.1	1.0
7 AM	1.4	0.6	0.3	0.6	0.7	0.6	1.4	0.9
8 AM	1.5	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.9	1.0	1.6	1.1
9 AM	2.5	1.0	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.4	2.1	1.6
10 AM	2.9	1.1	1.1	0.8	1.5	1.4	2.7	1.8
11 AM	3.8	1.3	1.4	1.2	1.6	1.7	3.1	2.1
12 PM	3.7	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.6	1.7	3.6	2.3
1 PM	4.1	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.6	1.7	3.3	2.3
2 PM	4.1	1.5	1.5	1.2	1.9	2.1	3.6	2.4
3 PM	3.9	1.4	1.6	1.3	1.8	1.9	3.6	2.3
4 PM	4.2	1.7	1.8	2.1	2.0	2.2	3.4	2.6
5 PM	4.5	2.0	2.8	3.1	2.9	2.6	3.1	3.0
6 PM	3.6	1.4	1.6	1.5	1.9	2.2	3.8	2.2
7 PM	2.5	1.2	0.6	0.7	1.9	2.1	4.0	1.9
8 PM	1.4	0.1	0.2	1.4	0.8	3.6	6.0	1.3
Total	3.5	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.7	1.8	2.9	2.1

Encounters

The number of unique license plates is used as a proxy for the number of individuals encountered by the inspectors (Table 5). Our goal is to maximize the number of license plates encountered so we are reaching as many boaters as possible during each season. In 2025, we observed 6% fewer plates compared to 2024. However, due to the decrease in hours this is consistent with the past few years.

Table 5. License plates encountered by year from 2016-2025

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
2022	7,089	0.88
2023	7,442	0.95
2024	8,062	0.96
2025	7,572	0.95

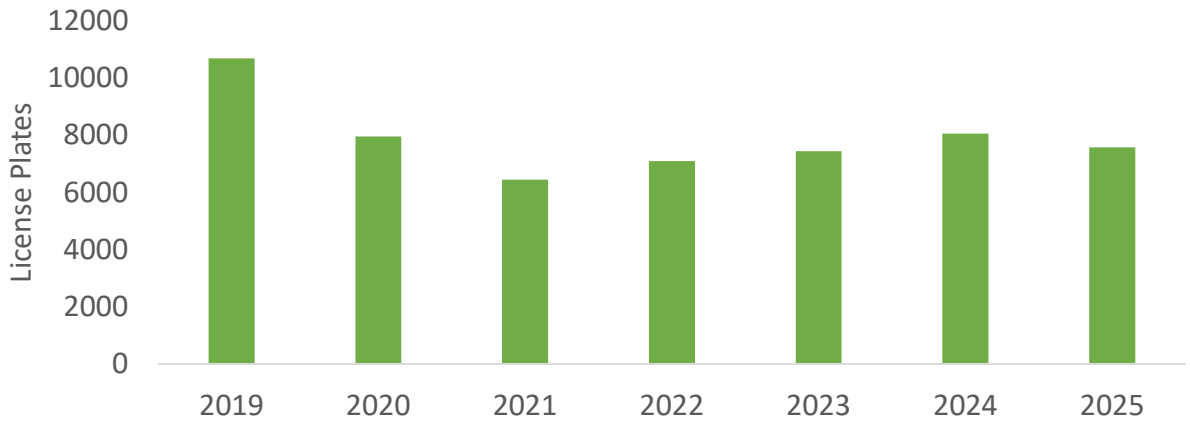

Figure 5. License plates encountered by year from 2019-2025

Each boater has different habits. We want to make sure inspectors are available in all cases to maximize the number of license plates encountered. Some take their boat out on weekends, others go out weekdays after work, lake service providers sometime operate six or seven days a week. Out of the total 7,600 license plates we encountered, 3,713 (49%) were weekend only boaters, 2,707 (36%) were weekday boaters and 1,180 (15%) were encountered both during the weekdays and weekends (Figure 7).

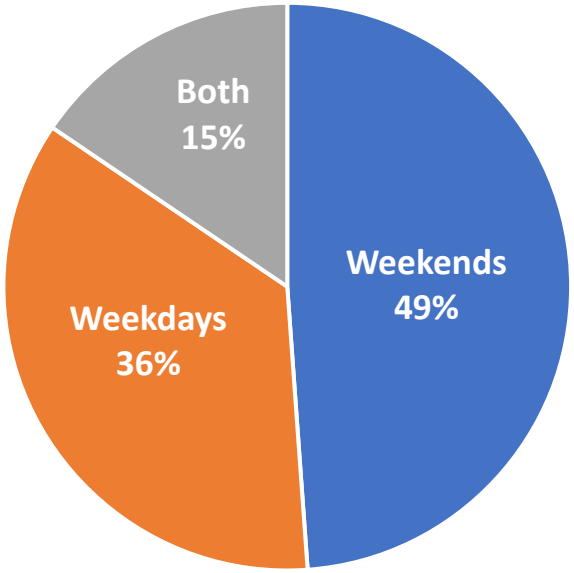

Figure 6. Timeframes of boater encounters in 2025 based on license plates.

Repetition is important to help reinforce the educational aspect of the inspection program. Inspectors are not only trying to find AIS on water-related equipment, but also to teach boaters what actions to take and some of the common places that AIS hide on equipment. In some cases, one person is inspected twice in the same day both upon entering and exiting a lake. Other times they are encountered during several trips throughout the boating season.

However, if we are only encountering the same boater over and over again, the message may lose value. One plate was encountered 76 times, likely belonging to a lake service provider vehicle who is constantly moving equipment around. Therefore, we consider how many license plates we continuingly interact with and how many of our inspections those interactions account for (Table 6).

Table 6. License plates encountered multiple times and the percent of inspections they account for in 2024.

Number of Encounters	Total Plates	Percent of Plates	Percent of Inspections
>25	11	0.1%	2.8%
>10	117	1.5%	12.0%
>5	447	5.9%	26.2%
>2	1613	21.2%	51.7%
>1	3720	48.9%	76.8%
Total	**7,592**		

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 7. Inspections by type in 2024

Inspection Type	Count
Courtesy	4
Entering	9,509
Exiting	7,150
Lift	46
Total	16,709

Violations

During an entering inspection the equipment is checked for water, mud, plants, animal, etc. Inspectors also check if the drain plug is in. Table 8 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. Only 0.6% of all inspections recorded the boater that self-reported the drain-plug being in when they arrived a the access. 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 were no instances of zebra mussels being found on equipment attempting to enter an uninfested lake.

Table 8. Findings during entering inspections

Entering n	Drain plug In	Species Found	ZM Found
9,509	15.0%	7.2%	0.3%

Violations also vary slightly by the day of the week. This may be due to the methods of inspectors and their typical schedule.

Table 9. Variation of if the drain plug was in during an entering inspection

Row Labels	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thrus	Fri	Sat	Grand Total
Drain plug is in	15.4%	12.9%	9.6%	17.4%	22.7%	13.0%	14.5%	15.0%

Table 10. Variation of if something was found during an entering inspection by the day of the week

Row Labels	Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thrus	Fri	Sat	Grand Total
Yes	7.0%	8.5%	8.9%	4.4%	8.5%	7.4%	6.7%	7.22%

Lake Connections

During entering inspections, lake users reported they came from 588 different Minnesota lakes and 14 different states (and Canada) in addition to Minnesota and 52 lakes in Wright County. Just over 4.7% of inspections came from lakes they did not know or preferred not the answer the last lake in which the equipment was used.

Decontaminations

In 2025 we offered decontaminations from Memorial Day to Labor Day, 6 days per week. The station was closed on Sundays. Decontaminations sharply decreased, however Hwy 55, the main road to the station was closed for construction during the entire season. Thus, boaters had to go significantly out of their way to get to the station.

Table 11. Decontaminations by years in Wright County

Year	Decons
2016	155
2017	340
2018	242
2019	221
2020	140
2021	176
2022	190
2023	141
2024	107
2025	47

Figure 7. A level 2 inspector decontaminating a barge with high pressure

Tool Stations

Tool stations are available throughout the county to provide tools for boaters to help clean their equipment as they exit the water. There are two types of stations, a basic tool station and a CD3 system. The basic station is just a sign with tools on hooks. (Figure 8). The CD3 stations are internet connected for information tracking, and have solar panels to power an air compressor and a wet/dry vacuum.

Figure 8. Basic tool station at Lake John with a plug wrench, grabber, weed stick and a brush

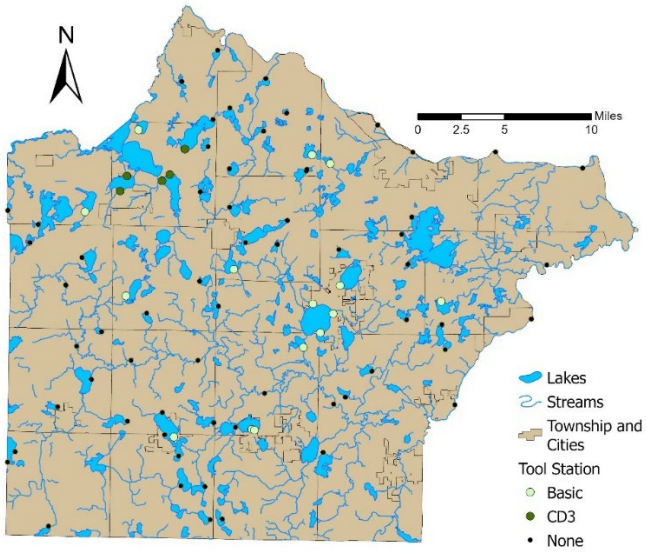

Figure 9. Locations of the AIS tool stations in Wright County

CD3-Waterless Cleaning Stations

CD3 waterless cleaning stations are self-service tools for boaters to remove water, plants, and mud from their equipment at the access. The units are solar powered and equipped with lights, so they are available 24/7 during the boating season. Other tools available include a wet/dry vacuum, compressed air, brush, drain plug wrench, and a reach grabber. There are five CD3 units in Wright County including Sugar South, Cedar-DNR, Pleasant North, Pleasant South, and Cedar Schroeder.

In 2024, the Sugar South unit was removed at the end of May due to construction occurring at the access. Additionally, at the end of season we discovered the vacuums at Pleasant North and Cedar-DNR units require repair. The air hose at Pleasant North also requires some repair. These repairs will be made in early 2025.

The tools are connected to the internet and track which tools are used and when. The most commonly used tools are the air compressors and the vacuums. The brush was the least commonly used tool (Figure 9). Tool use also peaked in July and tapered off through the remainder of the boating season.

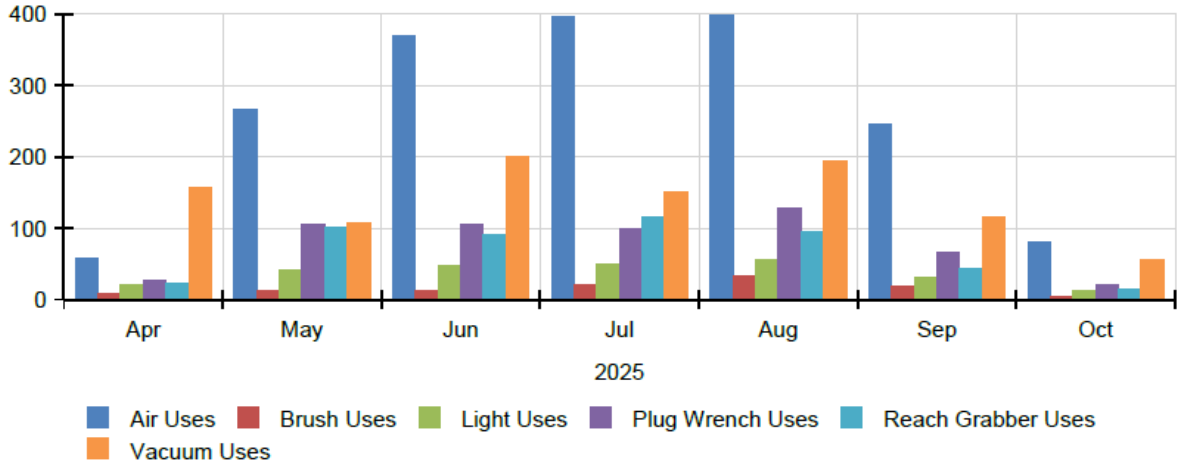

Figure 10. Tool uses across all CD3 stations by month in 2025. Image credit CD3 Systems.