

2024 Long Lake Inspection Summary

Background:

In 2017, Long Lake was added to the state Infested Waters List with the confirmation of faucet snails. Several adult zebra mussels were discovered in 2020, prompting their inclusion to the infested list. Though first reported at the south access four years ago, widespread infestation has not yet occurred. The Hubbard County AIS program encourages lakeshore owners to be vigilant and inspect their lake equipment for attached zebra mussels upon removing docks and platforms in the fall.

In 2023, a small patch of starry stonewort was discovered, again at the south access. Starry stonewort is known to spread through the growth of rhizomes, seed-like bubils, and fragmentation. DNR treatment efforts to contain, and perhaps reverse the spread, are ongoing. Watercraft users are strongly encouraged to refrain from using anchors within the south bay. If anchors are used, ensure they are promptly cleaned prior to any cross-lake travel. At this time, the known distribution of the starry stonewort patch is generally outside the reach of anglers using the fishing pier, however extra care should be taken if using these facilities.

Long Lake inspection efforts have been focused at the two primary public accesses at the DNR-owned and administered north access (County 107) and the township-owned, and county-administered south access (Beachview Rd). The north access has historically experienced a seasonal average of 1.0 inspections per hour, while the south access is averaging around 1.5 inspections per hour. Inspections per hour have been seeing small, incremental decreases at each access every year since all-time highs during the Covid-19 influenced summer of 2020, which saw inspections per hour of 1.17 and 2.22 inspections per hour for the north and south accesses respectively. When comparing three-year averages, the south access ranks fifth in the county with 1.55 insp/hr, just ahead of and very similar to Big Sand and Big Mantrap lakes, and falling under Garfield lake (1.71).

When comparing the three-year average number of “risk-events”, Long Lake ranks 11th and 14th in the county with the south access experiencing .73 risk-events per hour, and the north access experiencing .60 risk-events per hour. Accesses experiencing comparable risk events per hour are Kabekona (.74), 6th Crow Wing (.68) and 11th Crow Wing (.67). For reference, the access experiencing the highest risk events per hour in the county is Plantagenet (2.4 risk events/hr).

Risk events per hour are determined by calculating the sum of five separate risk categories divided by the total inspection hours. A single inspection can present risk events from multiple categories. The five risk categories are:

1. Watercraft attempting to enter with plants, animals, water or mud (PAWM)
2. Watercraft attempting to exit with PAWM
3. Watercraft entering from a known infested waterbody (adjusted not to include “same lake” returning watercraft, if applicable)
4. Exiting watercraft intending to enter another waterbody prior to the state-recommended five-day drying period.
5. Watercraft entering within 4 days of exiting the last waterbody

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Year in review:

Thanks in large part to the continuing outreach efforts spearheaded by the Long Lake Area Association Foundation and the extensive watercraft inspection efforts, Long Lake watercraft users have proven to be highly knowledgeable and “AIS-aware”. For 2024, 98% of incoming boaters were found to be following AIS laws. Two thousand and forty-three inspections were conducted, with 1,133 entering and 910 exiting inspections.

For the north access, watercraft inspections were well-distributed throughout the day, with slightly more traffic occurring in the mid-morning hours. The south access however experiences considerably more boat traffic during the later hours of the day. Predictably, peak periods of activity occurred early in the year leading up to the Memorial Day weekend, and again during the Fourth of July.

The north and south access are used as on-duty locations for our on-call watercraft decontamination operators (particularly the north access). As can be seen in the hour distribution graph, hours which are spent at the off-site decontamination unit are redistributed to later in the year. The DNR will also periodically staff the south access with their portable decontamination unit. In 2024, DNR watercraft inspectors committed 130 hours to the south access.

Notable events:

Friday, July 5th, was the busiest day of the season with 41 inspections performed at the south access. The Friday through Monday of each of the three main summer holiday weekends accounted for 467 of the 2,043 inspections – nearly one fourth of the total boat traffic.

On June 29th, a used boat lift with zebra mussels found attached attempted to enter the north access. The lift had originated from a lake near Monticello. It was claimed to have been out of the water for the mandatory 21 day drying period, however some of the mussels still retained their color and remained in the “closed” position, indicators they could potentially still be alive. The lift was denied launch and the operator left to get decontaminated.

Looking ahead:

Due to the presence of three species of prohibited AIS, Long Lake continues to be a high-priority lake for the county-wide AIS program efforts. Now with the presence of starry stonewort at the south access, increased public awareness and knowledge of the tools available at the access are of the utmost importance. Continuing to work with the state watercraft inspection program and local groups to provide maximum coverage at both public accesses is an integral part of the 2025 inspection plan.

This being said, the upcoming road construction along State Hwy 87, and the dam replacement scheduled to occur in May and June 2025 will strongly impact local boat traffic. In anticipation of this occurring, more hours will be directed to the north public access, with the understanding that inspection shifts will be flexed in response to progress in construction activities. We encourage locals affected by these activities to relay up-to-date road construction information to our office.

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Tables and charts:

North Access Watercraft Types with Plants, Animals, Water, or Mud (PAWM)									
Watercraft Types	Entering			Exiting			Totals		
	Quantity	PAWM	Percent	Quantity	PAWM	Percent	Quantity	PAWM	Percent
Cabin Cruiser	0	0		0	0		0	0	
Canoe/Kayak	9	0	0%	7	0	0%	16	0	0%
Fishing Boat	177	0	0%	173	59	34%	350	59	17%
Jon Boat	4	0	0%	4	2	50%	8	2	25%
LSP Transport	3	0	0%	2	0	0%	5	0	0%
Personal Watercraft	53	0	0%	43	15	35%	96	15	16%
Pontoon	52	0	0%	29	10	34%	81	10	12%
Runabout	72	0	0%	49	11	22%	121	11	9%
Sailboat	0	0		0	0		0	0	
Lift/Dock	8	1	13%	3	0	0%	11	1	9%
Wakesport Boat	5	0	0%	1	0	0%	6	0	0%
Total	383	1	0%	311	97	31%	694	98	14%

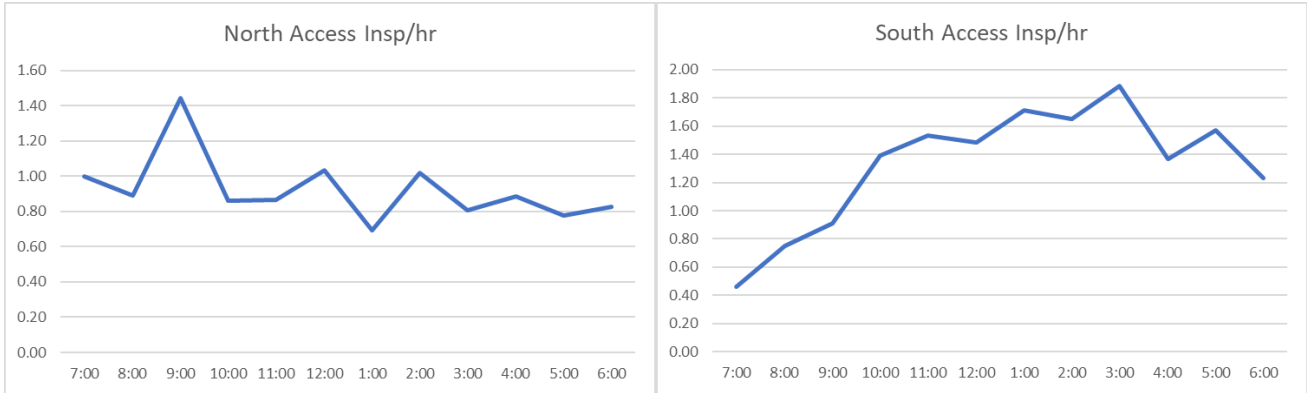
The north access sees high rates of compliance with AIS laws for entering watercraft. However, the access does generate extensive weed growth, particularly late in the year. Thirty-one percent of exiting watercraft contained either plants, animals, water or mud. This is a point of concern if/when zebra mussels were to infest the north regions of the lake.

South Access Watercraft Types with Plants, Animals, Water, or Mud (PAWM)									
Watercraft Types	Entering			Exiting			Totals		
	Quantity	PAWM	Percent	Quantity	PAWM	Percent	Quantity	PAWM	Percent
Cabin Cruiser	6	0		4	1	25%	10	1	10%
Canoe/Kayak	13	0	0%	11	0	0%	24	0	0%
Fishing Boat	350	7	2%	287	14	5%	637	21	3%
Jon Boat	7	0	0%	6	1	17%	13	1	8%
LSP Transport	9	0	0%	13	6	46%	22	6	27%
Personal Watercraft	74	1	1%	62	2	3%	136	3	2%
Pontoon	155	2	1%	101	5	5%	256	7	3%
Runabout	114	0	0%	91	7	8%	205	7	3%
Sailboat	1	0		3	0	0%	4	0	0%
Lift/Dock	2	0	0%	9	0	0%	11	0	0%
Wakesport Boat	19	0	0%	12	0	0%	31	0	0%
Total	750	10	1%	599	36	6%	1349	46	3%

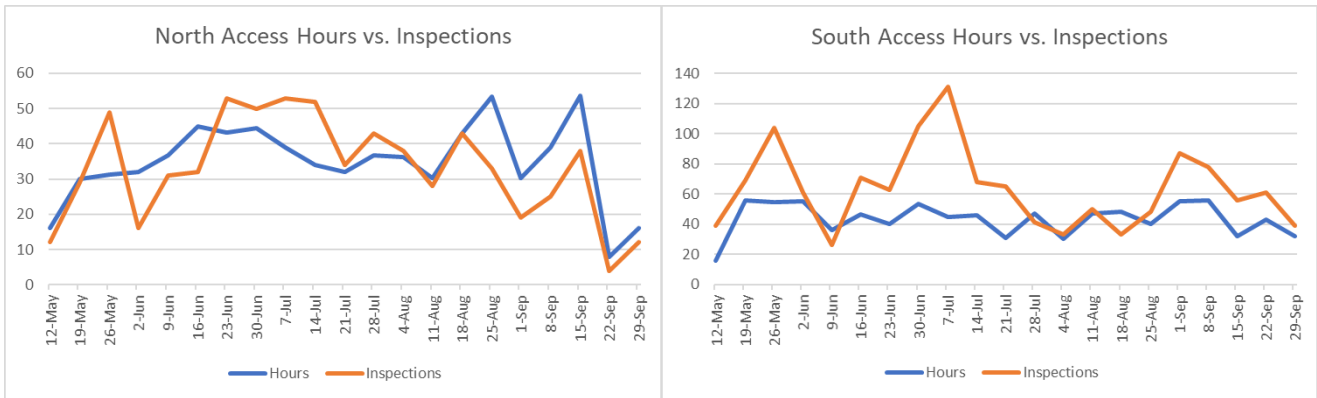
The south access, by comparison, has thus far seen encouragingly low percentages of watercraft exiting with plants, animals, water or mud. By continuing our work to keep these numbers near zero, we can prevent the spread of AIS to other areas of the county.

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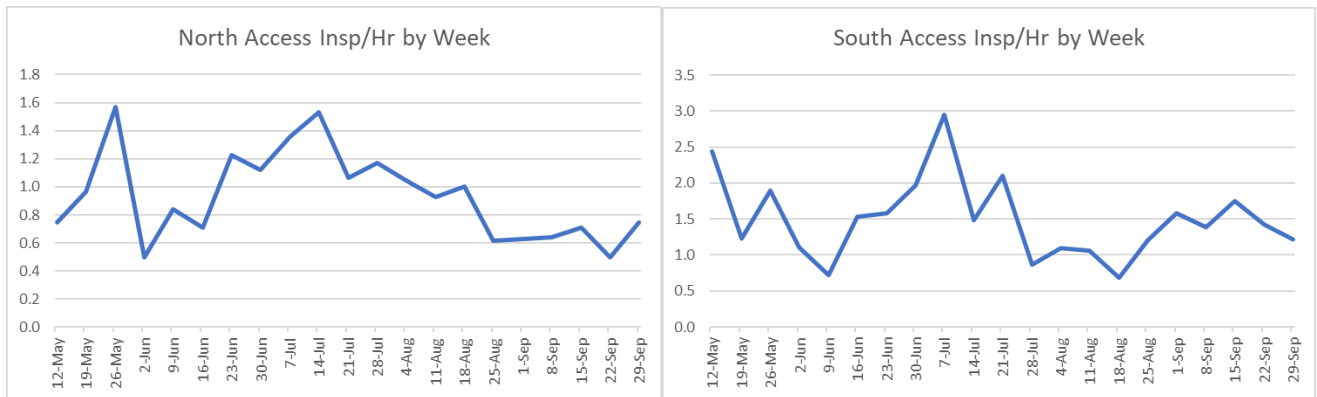
Comparison between accesses in inspections per hour over the course of a day:



Comparison between accesses in hours vrs. inspections over the course of the season:



Comparison between accesses in inspections per hour over the course of the season:



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2024 inspection season risk assessment results, top 20 lakes:

Top 20 Lake Accesses / 2024 Risk Assessment								
(per 100 inspection hours; bold = #1 rank in each category)								
Rank	Access	AIS Present	Exiting w/Pawm	Entering w/PAWM	Entering from Infested	High Risk Entering Boats	High Risk Exiting Boats	Sum
1	Plantagenet	ZM	50.89	3.15	37.07	81.94	63.06	236.11
2	Belle Taine	-	11.95	3.31	27.60	68.20	46.17	157.22
3	Garfield	ZM	32.17	6.17	24.83	49.67	41.50	154.33
4	Mantrap South	EWM	10.35	3.24	17.97	46.66	61.68	139.90
5	8th Crow Wing	-	38.24	2.94	11.76	38.24	37.50	128.68
6	Fish Hook West	-	26.24	2.31	23.10	38.45	28.71	118.81
7	Big Sand	-	1.84	2.21	18.93	48.16	38.60	109.74
8	Benedict	ZM	31.85	9.68	16.53	25.00	19.35	102.42
9	11th Crow Wing	-	3.60	1.69	17.37	39.62	30.30	92.58
10	Pickerel		6.25	0.00	6.25	37.50	31.25	81.25
11	Kabekona	-	6.77	1.32	14.10	34.40	17.29	73.87
12	1st Crow Wing	FS	24.17	0.00	11.67	20.00	15.00	70.83
13	Blue	-	2.08	0.00	12.50	27.78	26.39	68.75
14	6th Crow Wing	-	2.23	0.45	12.95	25.45	25.89	66.96
15	Duck	FS	8.17	2.88	8.17	27.40	20.19	66.83
16	Long South	ZM, SSW, FS	3.96	1.10	11.65	31.76	18.13	66.59
17	10th Crow Wing	-	3.13	0.00	15.63	15.63	28.13	62.50
18	Long North	ZM, SSW, FS	13.27	0.14	8.89	24.49	15.60	62.38
19	Boulder	FS	6.25	1.25	5.63	23.75	17.50	54.38
20	Island	-	8.33	1.04	10.94	20.83	13.02	54.17

Watercraft inspection program funding sources overview:

2024			2025		
Source	Amount	Hours	Source	Amount	Hours
State of Minnesota	\$ 16,692.00	642	State of Minnesota	\$ 16,744.00	644
Henrietta Twp	\$ 500.00	20	Henrietta Twp	\$ 500.00	19
Hubbard Twp	\$ 648.00	26	Hubbard Twp	\$ 648.00	25
Long Lake Association	\$ 25,000.00	1,000	Long Lake Association	\$ 26,208.00	1,008
Total:	\$ 42,840.00	1,688	Total	\$ 44,100.00	1,696

Questions or comments regarding any of the above information?

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