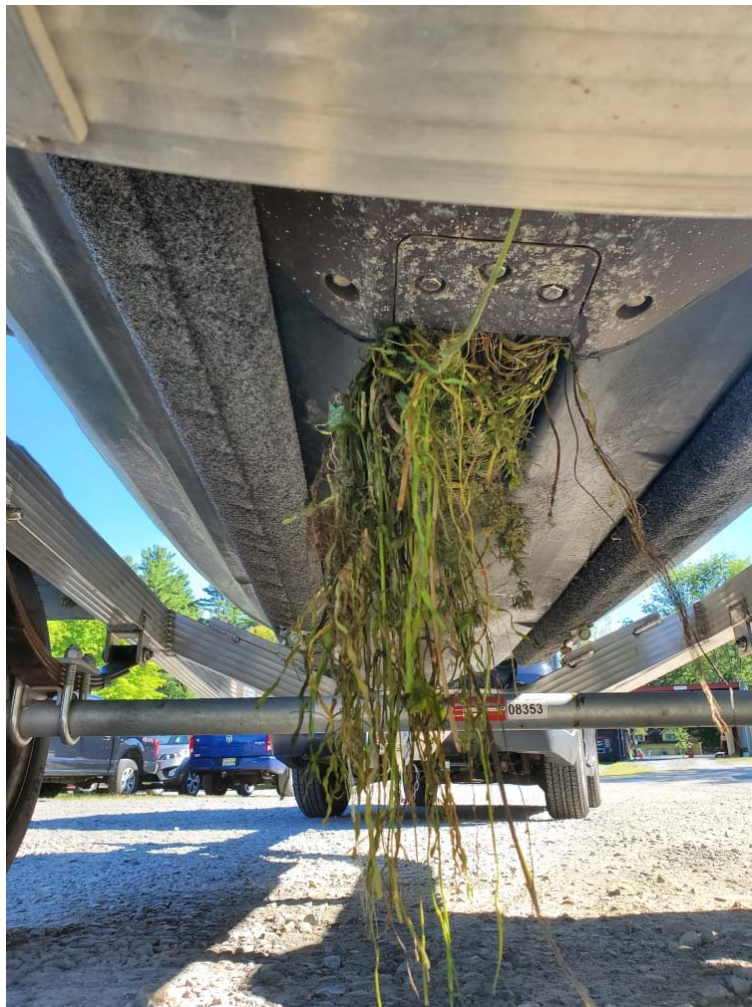


# 2023 Lake George Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program

A Trailered Boat Inspection Program

## Final Report



**Lake George  
Park Commission**

## Table of Contents

Executive Summary.....	3
Table 1: Boat Inspection Program Summary - By the Numbers .....	4
2023 Program Description .....	5
COVID-19 Impacts on Boat Inspection Operations.....	5
Inspection Site Staffing .....	6
Launch Management and Controls.....	6
Operations at DEC launches.....	6
South Bay Inspection Station .....	7
Management Efficiencies: “Lake George Only” Boats.....	8
Trout Lake .....	8
Program Cost, Funding, and Partners .....	9
<i>Program Expenses</i> .....	9
<i>Program Funding</i> .....	11
2023 Inspection Program Results .....	11
Program Compliance.....	12
Conclusions .....	13
Additional Acknowledgements .....	14
In Memoriam .....	14
Appendices.....	15

## Executive Summary

The primary way that aquatic invasive species get introduced to waterbodies like Lake George is from boating activities. These aquatic plants, mussels and other creatures can attach to boat hulls, get caught on trailer bunks, or even in the bilge area. Boats coming from lakes with invasive species in it can be transferred to another lake if close attention isn't paid to that boat being clean, drained and dry.

To address this threat, the Lake George Park Commission created a Mandatory Boat Inspection Program in 2014, in response to recent introductions of two new invasive species (Asian clam in 2010 and Spiny waterflea in 2012). While this program is operated and administered by the Park Commission, it exists thanks to an extraordinary alliance between State and local partners who fund 100% of the cost of the program, eliminating any cost to the boaters coming to Lake George.

After ten years and more than a third of a million boat inspections conducted (319,225 to be exact), no new aquatic invasive species have been discovered in Lake George. More than thirteen hundred boats with visible invasive species on them have been discovered by the Commission's inspectors in this time period, all stopped prior to launch into Lake George and decontaminated at no charge to the owner of the vessel. The program is working.

The 2023 boat inspection season on Lake George began April 15<sup>th</sup> and continued through December 1<sup>st</sup>. The season was extended from the usual May 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup> to provide added spread prevention protection through the early and late seasons. During 2023, vessel inspection technicians performed 34,464 boat inspections through the six regional inspection stations. Of that number, 10,073 were full entrance inspections, 14,393 inspections were of boats on retrieval (to ensure that no invasives from Lake George are exported to other waterbodies), and 9,998 boats arrived at the inspection stations with an inspection seal already in place (mostly boats returning to Lake George after getting an exit seal).



In the 2023 season, 113 boats transported visible invasive species to Lake George. Fourteen of these 113 boats were found to have two or more different invasive species on them during inspection. The invasive species found were primarily Eurasian watermilfoil, Zebra mussels and Water Chestnut, and those boats were cleaned prior to their launch into the lake. Other very concerning invasives found during the inspections this year include Quagga Mussels which are not currently found in Lake George and could massively alter the lake's ecology if introduced and established.

Approximately 7.5 percent of boats receiving an inspection in year 2023 did not meet the "clean, drained, and dry" (CDD) standard of the program and required decontamination prior to launch into Lake George. This is the lowest percentage of decontaminations required in any year since the program began. This is encouraging, as boaters seem to be taking more care in ensuring that their vessels are clean prior to arriving in Lake George to launch

We are continually grateful to our state and local partners who provide the funding for the cost of this program, including the State of New York, the Warren County Board of Supervisors, the Village of Lake George, the Towns of Bolton, Queensbury and Lake George, and the Lake George Association.

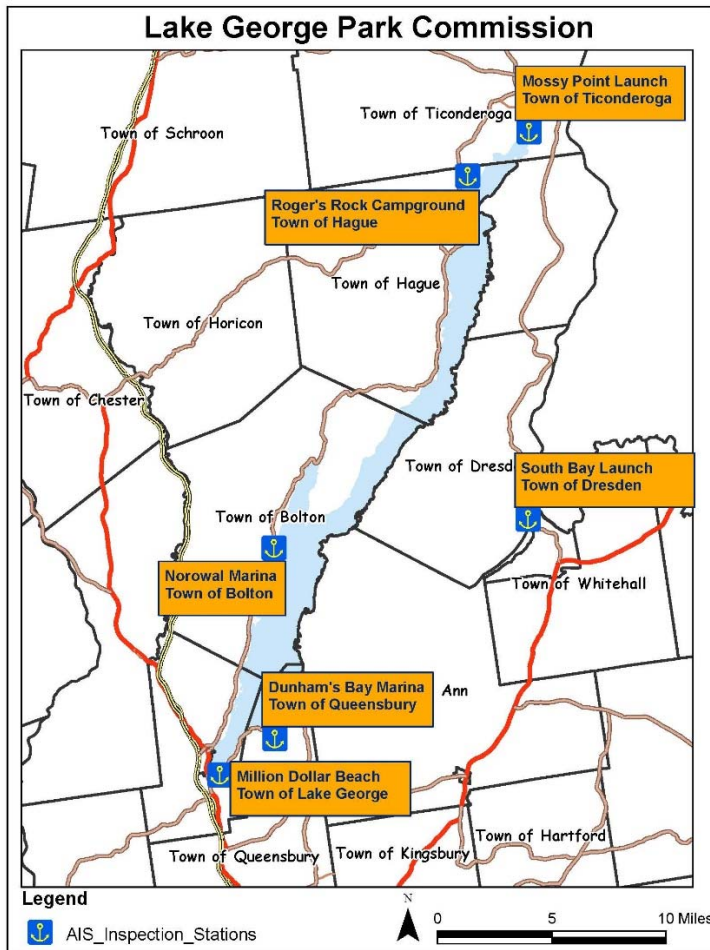
For a full overview of the program's creation, planning and logistics please refer to the Lake George Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan / Environmental Impact Statement on the Commission's website at [lgpc.ny.gov/lake-george-boat-inspections](https://lgpc.ny.gov/lake-george-boat-inspections).

**Table 1: Boat Inspection Program Summary - By the Numbers**

Year	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Total inspection sites	7	7	6	6	6	6	6	6
Total boater contacts (entrance, exit)	31,335	32,019	33,146	37,150	34,953	36,949	34,464	319,225
Entrance inspections without VICCS seal	10,869	10,617	9,223	10,638	9,988	10,777	10,073	103,289
Exit inspections	12,588	13,447	13,639	15,049	13,916	15,498	14,393	126,698
Returning boats with seals	7,878	7,955	10,280	11,463	11,049	10,674	9,998	89,234
Number of boats decontaminated	1,869	1,601	1,438	1,185	1,004	982	759	13,653
Highest total number of inspections conducted in one week	2,287	2,692	2,598	2,774	2,425	2,511	2,648	N / A
Highest # of decons conducted in one week	182	148	133	109	87	89	65	N / A
Percentage of inspections requiring decontamination	17.3%	15.0%	15.6%	11.1%	10.1%	9.10%	7.53%	13.17%
Number of boats with visible plant matter present	244	328	287	315	223	216	191	2317
Number of boats with visible invasive species present	110	149	146	171	113	131	113	1313
Percentage of boats with visible invasive species present	1.01%	1.40%	1.58%	1.61%	1.13%	1.22%	1.12%	1.27%
Number of distinct waterbodies boaters came from prior to Lake George	449	N/A	390	379	555	479	472	N / A
Total number of staff at peak season	48	43	50	50	55	52	54	N / A
Total number of decontamination units	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
Number of public and commercial launches on Lake George	47	47	47	47	47	47	47	47
Total operational cost	\$555,884	\$539,587	\$574,461	\$550,050	\$642,371	\$711,045	\$672,875	\$6,058,211
Total cost of seasonal staff	\$441,162	\$422,846	\$467,907	\$429,217	\$504,862	\$563,316	\$536,240	\$4,830,929
Staffing cost savings compared to previous year (negative numbers indicate increased costs)	-\$6,304	\$18,316	-\$45,061	\$38,691	-\$75,646	-\$58,454	\$27,076	\$11,838

## 2023 Program Description

The Lake George boat inspection program is administered by regulation from May 1<sup>st</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup> of each year, at six regional inspection stations located around the lake in locations convenient to boaters. Decontamination of boats not meeting the required “Clean, Drained, Dry” standard is performed by using high pressure, hot water. No chemicals are used in the decontamination process. Inspection data is collected on paper logs and then uploaded electronically for review. Any visible plant or animal materials found during an inspection are collected and sent to the Lake George Association for identification.



This year, the Lake George Park Commission continued its partnership with the NYSDEC, Adirondack Watershed Institute, and other boat inspection programs in the use of the Watercraft Inspection Steward Program Application (WISPA) database, created and managed by the NYS Natural Heritage Program. This software application is used to collect the information recorded during the boat inspection process and store it for later processing and reporting. Using this program allows the LGPC to easily share the data recorded on Lake George with other aquatic invasive species spread prevention program partners. The Commission also benefits by gaining access, at no cost, to a more powerful data collection and processing system than the simpler SNAP Mobile software we previously utilized for this program.

For more details on the inspection, decontamination, and boat sealing processes, please refer to the “Lake George Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Plan and Generic Environmental Impact Statement” on the Commission website. ([lgpc.ny.gov/invasive-species-prevention](http://lgpc.ny.gov/invasive-species-prevention))

## COVID-19 Impacts on Boat Inspection Operations

COVID-19 continued to present challenges in 2023, however fewer of them. The Commission already had protocols in place and had supplies of PPE and sanitizer on-hand.

The Commission spent roughly \$7,300 on COVID-19 related purchases. This includes PPE, sanitation equipment, and outhouse and hand wash station rentals for all sites that were not for public use. See Table 2 for detailed program expense information. Fortunately, there were only a few COVID-19 infections among the inspection staff, none of them serious.

## **Inspection Site Staffing**

All inspection stations were open 7 days a week during the peak boating season, except for the Dunham's Bay site which was open weekends only. Hours of operation were adjusted in the shoulder seasons (May 1<sup>st</sup> - June 24<sup>th</sup>, September 5<sup>th</sup> – October 31<sup>st</sup>) based on launch activity from 2014-2022, weather conditions, and local events such as fishing tournaments and regattas. As expected, Fridays through Sundays were the busiest days requiring at least three or more Inspectors on duty at most sites (Figure 5). Days of operation were reduced at the Dunham's Bay site after Labor Day because of decreased activity. The Commission staffed Mossy Point, Roger's Rock, Norowal, and the Million Dollar Beach sites from April 15<sup>th</sup> to December 1<sup>st</sup> (the regulatory season begins May 1<sup>st</sup> and ends November 1<sup>st</sup>). These sites were staffed with a single inspector in April, November, and December to perform visual inspections of vessels coming through the popular launches. Due to freezing temperatures, the decontamination equipment was not available for use after November 10<sup>th</sup>.

## **Staffing Services Provider**

Laine Federal Solutions, Inc. (LFS) was awarded the new contract to provide staffing and payroll services this year for the Commission's boat inspection program. This firm is responsible for providing staffing of all Vessel Inspection Technician positions, liability, and worker's compensation insurance. Commission staff worked directly with LFS management on the selection and hiring of program personnel. Operational oversight of all seasonal staff falls under the direction of the Commission's Operations Supervisor III and Trades Generalist. The Commission's contracted staffing provider is selected through an open competitive bidding process at the end of each contract period.

## **Launch Management and Controls**

There are three types of launches on Lake George: Public (State and Municipal), Commercial (marinas and motels), and Private (Homeowners Associations and individual homeowners). In total there are more than eighty locations on Lake George where a trailered boat can be launched, all of which require oversight and control. The Commission has executed Launch Agreements with each of these facilities to ensure compliance with the regulatory program. Each Launch Agreement requires the recording of all launches and retrievals of vessels, and the securing of the launch during off hours.

## **Operations at DEC launches**

Historically, Rogers Rock and Mossy Point state-owned launches on Lake George have always been open to the public 24 hours per day. The Million Dollar Beach is administered as a day-use site and closes at night during the peak boating season. During the off hours when the Commission's inspection facilities were closed, boaters could demonstrate compliance with the regulations by signing into a launch register, removing their VICS and placing it into a secure lockbox provided at the inspection site. When inspection technicians arrived at the launch in the morning, the seals were recovered from the night drop box, and these seals were compared with the number of vessel trailers in the parking lot. Any discrepancies between seals and trailers in the lot were researched to ensure compliance.

Beginning after the Labor Day weekend, 2019, the DEC began closing gates installed at the Mossy Point and Roger's Rock launches to secure those launches and reduce the risk of AIS introduction by a watercraft launched without having been

inspected. The Commission continued this practice at all three State launches since and worked with the DEC to develop a schedule for Inspection Station operations at those sites to allow for early opening and later closing. This allowed for continued access to the lake while increasing launch security. This increase in hours of operations also increased total staffing costs.



*Early morning fishing tournament at Mossy Point launch in Ticonderoga. LGPC staff inspected all vessels before launch.*

## [South Bay Inspection Station](#)

While the Commission strives to provide the best protection to Lake George, it is also cognizant of program costs. The Commission reviewed its years of historical activity data and determined that full-time operations at Dunham’s Bay and Hulett’s Landing Marina sites are no longer an efficient use of program resources.

The Commission established a new regional boat inspection station at the Lake Champlain South Bay State Boat launch in May of 2022. This location was previously occupied by the Adirondack Watershed Institute (AWI). The Commission relocated equipment from the Hulett’s Landing Marina location to operate at South Bay. There are several benefits to moving from Hulett’s Landing to South Bay, including:

- Establishment of a regional inspection station on State land secures long-term operations on the east side of Lake George and reduces program reliance on private land use. Both Dunham’s Bay and Hulett’s Landing inspection stations operate with permission on private property, subject to change of agreement.
- Inspection staff at South Bay would be under the direct supervision of LGPC as opposed to private marina staff administering State regulations.
- South Bay Launch is more accessible to boaters travelling the NY Route 22 corridor, not headed to Hulett’s Landing, and is directly accessible to those who are.
- LGPC operation of an inspection station will provide better coverage than the AWI/DEC program that has operated there in the past with limited hours of operation.
- LGPC operation allows the AWI to relocate staff and equipment to another location in the Adirondack Park to expand AIS spread prevention efforts and increase buffer protection for Lake George.

- Ending the current agreement between the Commission and Hulett’s Landing Marina would eliminate any question of impropriety of the Commission by giving regulatory authority to a regulated entity.
- Current agreements with the marinas place the Commission in an untenable position at odds with its regulatory responsibility regarding enforcement of its Dock and Marina regulations and assessment of commercial fees.

The Commission reduced hours of operations at the Dunham’s Bay inspection station in 2023 due to reduced inspection activity annually, since 2014. By reducing operations to weekends only from Memorial Day to Columbus Day, the Commission saved considerably on staffing expenses. These savings, combined with the \$9,000 the Commission has historically paid to Hulett’s Landing Marina for their inspection operations provided funds to offset the additional cost of the South Bay operations.

## **Management Efficiencies: “Lake George Only” Boats**

In preparation for the Lake George AIS regulations, it was recognized that a significant portion of the regulated constituency are boats that are stored locally and only used on Lake George. In consideration of this, the Commission organized programs that would allow these boats to forego the inspection process knowing that they were not a threat to bring new AIS to Lake George.

The Commission continued the management of Residential and Homeowner Association (HOA) launches and local marine services professionals through the use of Launch Agreements and Hauler Agreements, respectively. These agreements are updated, and Haulers provide new manifests of the vessels under their care, custody and control each season.

When a boat listed within a launch agreement or a hauler manifest travels to another waterbody, it may only be launched into Lake George once it has passed a Commission-sanctioned Cleaned-Drained-Dry inspection and/or decontamination and received a vessel inspection control seal.

## **Trout Lake**

Trout Lake is a small lake in the Town of Bolton which is navigable by trailered vessels, and it is tributary to Lake George. As such, it has been included in the Commission’s boat inspection program requirements. Trout Lake currently has no known aquatic invasive species. Including Trout Lake in the AIS program serves to protect both waterbodies from potential ecological and economic damage.

There are no public launches on Trout Lake, but there are several private and HOA trailer launches. The Commission has executed Launch Agreements with Trout Lake launch owners as was done with launch owners/operators on Lake George. These Launch Agreements allow vessels owned by the launch owner and listed in the agreement to be launched into Trout Lake. If the vessel was launched anywhere other than Trout Lake, it must be taken to an Inspection Station, inspected, and if necessary, decontaminated prior to its launch into Trout Lake.



## Program Cost, Funding, and Partners

This program exists through generous funding provided through a cost-sharing between the NYS Environmental Protection Fund and through local municipal and nonprofit contributions. Expenses and income are detailed in the tables in this section. To get a better understanding of the program expenses, below are the itemized costs and contributions of the program since 2016. To see the 2014 through 2016 program expenses please visit our website and review previous years' final reports.

### Program Expenses

Table 2: Direct costs associated with staffing and program administration:

Expense Type	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount	Amount
One Time Expenses	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Decontamination units (9, see Table 1)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$204,000.00
Site Work and Signage	\$55.00	\$425.00	\$1,257.00	\$250.00	\$0.00	\$3,781.90	\$2,906.90	\$60,015.21
Safety/Security (fire extinguishers, lock boxes)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$108.54	\$0.00	\$1,825.13
Radios, Cellphones, tablets, credit card terminals	\$437.76	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$422.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,439.50	\$12,154.32
Inspection site offices	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$13,995.00	\$0.00	\$53,322.00
Secure Storage Unit Delivery/Set up	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,178.62
Covers for Landas (2 in 2014, 4 in 2015, 2 in 2019)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,860.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$6,360.00
Cloud Setup for Data Reporting	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$251.27
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$492.76</b>	<b>\$425.00</b>	<b>\$3,117.00</b>	<b>\$672.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$17,885.44</b>	<b>\$4,346.40</b>	<b>\$340,106.55</b>
<b>Recurring Expenses</b>								
Wash Unit Maintenance & Misc. Parts	\$2,321.50	\$3,950.31	\$408.95	\$521.00	\$10,912.00	\$ 195.00	\$3,028.00	\$33,124.95
Training Facility Rental	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$ -	\$0.00	\$1,093.48
Seals and Wire	\$5,663.00	\$6,625.00	\$8,346.00	\$8,856.35	\$7,168.00	\$ 8,630.41	\$5,178.00	\$76,267.61
Fuel & Truck Maintenance	\$2,794.52	\$2,317.55	\$2,155.69	\$1,708.59	\$2,450.59	\$ 2,580.30	\$2,478.65	\$28,091.62
Advertising/Rack Cards	\$0.00	\$1,420.00	\$4,038.00	\$1,188.00	\$1,336.50	\$ 1,433.25	\$594.00	\$13,371.89
Hardware/Supplies	\$5,241.47	\$2,797.81	\$2,131.95	\$3,814.43	\$4,300.22	\$ 7,007.83	\$11,214.41	\$46,650.68

Hulett's Landa Parking Rental	\$8,900.00	\$8,900.00	\$8,900.00	\$8,900.00	\$9,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$55,100.00
Uniforms	\$0.00	\$1,978.90	\$1,688.45	\$4,996.80	\$0.00	\$ 1,032.00	\$0.00	\$20,012.44
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$24,920.49</b>	<b>\$27,989.57</b>	<b>\$27,669.04</b>	<b>\$29,985.17</b>	<b>\$35,167.31</b>	<b>\$ 20,878.79</b>	<b>\$22,493.06</b>	\$273,712.67
<b>Monthly Expenses</b>								
Utilities (season total: electrical service, outhouses, landlines, water)	\$3,865.23	\$2,744.73	\$2,787.50	\$8,037.30	\$10,708.67	\$ 10,630.58	\$ 9,487.64	\$58,820.79
Secure Storage (Annual total)	\$3,831.24	\$3,202.25	\$3,202.26	\$4,743.00	\$4,743.00	\$5,327.52	\$5,124.56	\$39,990.44
Cellular Phones (2014: season total; 2015 & 2016: through Nov.)	\$941.00	\$1,073.59	\$1,679.52	\$1,958.04	\$1,970.64	\$ 1,970.64	\$ 1,970.64	\$20,897.80
Cloud Services	\$269.91	\$269.91	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$1,349.55
SnapSurvey WebHost Service (annual subscription)	\$4,124.00	\$4,124.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$18,651.00
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$13,031.38</b>	<b>\$11,414.48</b>	<b>\$7,669.28</b>	<b>\$14,738.34</b>	<b>\$17,422.31</b>	<b>\$17,928.74</b>	<b>\$16,582.84</b>	\$139,709.58
<b>Staffing</b>								
Seasonal Staff Labor Cost	\$441,751.04	\$422,846.33	\$467,907.27	\$423,087.53	\$504,862.06	\$563,315.72	\$536,239.60	\$4,825,379.47
Background Checks	\$1,342.18	\$900.18	\$950.07	\$600.03	\$535.23	\$1,255.04	\$0.00	\$16,402.54
Marina Liability Insurance	\$15,500.00	\$15,500.00	\$5,266.00	\$5,529.00	\$5,319.00	\$5,319.00	\$5,319.00	\$99,593.40
Finance charges	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$501.94
Full time Trades Generalist w/ Benefits	\$58,846.00	\$60,511.74	\$61,881.95	\$75,437.91	\$79,064.82	\$84,462.77	\$87,894.24	\$666,421.43
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$517,439.22</b>	<b>\$499,758.25</b>	<b>\$536,005.29</b>	<b>\$504,654.47</b>	<b>\$589,781.11</b>	<b>\$654,352.52</b>	<b>\$629,452.84</b>	<b>\$5,608,298.78</b>
<i>Summary: Program Annually Recurring Expense</i>	<i>\$555,391.09</i>	<i>\$539,162.30</i>	<i>\$571,343.61</i>	<i>\$549,377.98</i>	<i>\$642,370.73</i>	<i>\$693,160.05</i>	<i>\$668,528.74</i>	<i>\$6,021,721.03</i>
<i>Summary: Program One-Time Up-Front Expense</i>	<i>\$492.76</i>	<i>\$425.00</i>	<i>\$3,117.00</i>	<i>\$672.00</i>	<i>\$0.00</i>	<i>\$17,885.44</i>	<i>\$4,346.40</i>	<i>\$340,106.55</i>
<b>TOTAL Program Cost to Date</b>	<b>\$555,883.85</b>	<b>\$539,587.30</b>	<b>\$574,460.61</b>	<b>\$550,049.98</b>	<b>\$642,370.73</b>	<b>\$711,045.49</b>	<b>\$672,875.14</b>	<b>\$6,361,827.58</b>

\* In 2016, Park Ranger salary and benefits were paid for out of the Commission budget, not Inspection Program funding.

\*\* In 2021 and 2022, the Commission extended its inspection season at the request of project partners, increasing program costs.

## Program Funding

Table 3: Staffing and program administration costs incurred by the Commission were shared by New York State and locally based municipal and nonprofit entities:

Source	Funding (For 2023 Annual Program Cost)
Warren County	\$100,000
Village of Lake George	\$37,000
Town of Lake George	\$30,000
Town of Bolton	\$37,000
Town of Queensbury	\$37,000
Lake George Association	\$79,000
NYS Environmental Protection Fund	\$352,875
Total	\$672,875

## 2023 Inspection Program Results

The Lake George Park Commission boat inspection program had a total of 34,464 boater contacts in 2023 (Figure 1, see Appendices for all figures and tables referenced henceforth). Approximately twenty-nine percent of these (10,073) were boats arriving at Lake George without a Vessel Inspection Control Seal (VICS), requiring a full inspection (Figure 2). Of those 10,073 trailered boats, 759 vessels or 7.5% posed a threat of aquatic invasive species transport and received onsite decontamination (Figures 3a and 3b).

Almost 29 percent of all boater contacts were boats returning to Lake George with a Vessel Inspection Control Seal (Figure 4), meaning they had either already been inspected from a previous visit or they were returning to Lake George following a previous exit inspection. The exit inspection of trailered boats being retrieved from Lake George represents roughly 42% of all boater contacts. This 'exit seal' portion of the program is a tremendous efficiency for the program and for boaters, keeping costs down while ensuring protection of the lake.

During the 2023 season, 198 vessels arrived at inspection stations with visible organisms (plant and/or animal) attached to the vessel or trailer, down 8% from last year. A total of 113 of those vessels were confirmed to have one or more aquatic invasive species present, equating to approximately 1.12% of boats arriving at Lake George. (Table 4)

Table 4: Vessels with visible AIS retrieved during entrance inspections since 2014. Note that some vessels have more than one confirmed AIS present.



Visible AIS retrieved during entrance inspections by year											
Species	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Eurasian watermilfoil	119	67	69	70	67	71	81	52	59	43	698
Zebra mussels	23	20	11	29	48	54	72	48	37	43	385
Curly leaf pondweed	13	12	17	5	6	7	8	7	16	13	104
Water chestnut	8	7	11	12	28	26	13	17	39	29	190
Fanwort	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
Quagga mussels	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	5	4	11
Hydrilla	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Variable leaf milfoil	0	0	0	1	0	5	0	0	1	0	7
Snail	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
Spiny Waterflea	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Rusty Crayfish	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Brittle Naiad	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
<b>Total Collected</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>157</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>1405</b>

In 2023, boats arriving at Lake George had previously visited 472 unique waterbodies across the United States and Canada. The three most common waterbodies visited prior to coming to Lake George include the Hudson River, Saratoga Lake, and Lake Champlain (Table 6).

As expected, inspection activity is significantly greater during the short “peak” summer season (June 25<sup>th</sup>-September 4<sup>th</sup>) compared to the longer shoulder seasons (May 1<sup>st</sup>-June 24<sup>th</sup>, September 5<sup>th</sup> – October 31<sup>st</sup>). Staffing levels were adjusted in accordance with these trends in activity.

Activity at the South Bay Inspection Station was higher than anticipated. Inspectors had a total of 2,804 interactions with boaters this season. Of those, 253 stopped in for inspection prior to going to Lake George and 31 of them required decontamination. More noteworthy are the 14 decontaminations of boats leaving Lake Champlain with visible AIS attached to the boat or trailer. These are boats that could have gone on to visit Lake George, or other water bodies throughout the region. Lake Champlain has 51 confirmed AIS and is a serious export risk to uninvaded waters.

## [Program Compliance](#)

Program compliance checks are conducted primarily by the Commission’s Marine Patrol. The patrol devoted considerable time to the aquatic invasive species programs in 2023.

The patrol checks ninety-six private launches daily throughout the boating season. This amounts to approximately 5,760 checks on the private launches from July 1<sup>st</sup> to Labor Day. The Patrol also watches the launches closely during the preseason and postseason to make sure boats are not launched without an inspection. If the patrol finds that a boat is being launched or retrieved from a private launch, the officer stops and checks to make sure it is an authorized launch per Commission Regulations. During the 2023 season one vessel was caught launching without an inspection. The operator of that vessel was stopped and ticketed. Members of the Patrol also regularly check in with the staff at the inspection stations around the lake to make sure everything is running smoothly at the launches.

<b>Marine Patrol Support Activities</b>	<b>Patrol Support Hours</b>
Time at Inspection Sites	51
Time Checking Public & Private Launches	497
<b>Total AIS Time</b>	<b>548</b>

## Conclusions

Boating activity decreased over last season, likely a result of higher-than-average rainfall. That said, it was indeed a busy boating summer on Lake George, with total inspection activity peaking at 2,648 boater contacts in a single week (July 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 28<sup>th</sup>). The Million Dollar Beach (MDB) site continues to be the busiest inspection station on Lake George with about 38% of all boater interactions occurring at this one site due to its low launch cost, accessibility, and parking availability.

This year, the Lake George Park Commission’s Boat Inspection Program succeeded in preventing 113 vessels from entering the lake with visible invasive species, and many others that arrived at the lake not clean, drained, and dry, potentially carrying invasives not easily detected through visual inspection. This year there were multiple noteworthy AIS interceptions including 4 vessels with quagga mussels. These aggressive invaders could have caused serious, negative ecological and economic impacts had they been successfully introduced to Lake George.

NYS DEC continued to secure their launches (MDB, Mossy Point and Rogers Rock) during off-hours to help prevent uninspected launches. This strengthens the Commission’s invasives prevention program and increases protection of the lake. The increase of inspection station hours at the DEC launch sites to manage the DEC gates added slightly to this year’s staffing costs.

LGPC inspection operations at South Bay Launch on Lake Champlain provided convenient service to boaters travelling the NY Route 22 corridor and prevented the possible export of aquatic invasive plants from Lake Champlain.

The Adirondack Watershed Institute-operated inspection and decontamination station at the Exit 18 northbound rest area on the NY I-87 Northway did not significantly reduce the number of uninspected boats arriving in the Lake George region. This year the Lake George program saw a total of 451 vessels arrive with ADK Clean seals from all the various Adirondack sites. That is roughly 4.5% of sealed vessels arriving at LGPC inspection stations. However, the Commission is optimistic that as time passes more boaters will become familiar with the Adirondack Welcome Center site and take advantage of its easy access and convenience.

This aquatic invasive species prevention / mandatory boat inspection program is successful because of the incredible support for it. The Commission gives special thanks to Governor Kathy Hochul, the Warren County Board of Supervisors, the municipalities of Queensbury, Lake George, the Village of LG, Bolton, Hague, and Putnam, and the Lake George Association. These entities provide the combined funding necessary to allow the Commission to operate this critical program every year. The Commission strives to make the program as cost-effective and public-friendly as possible. Lake

George still has the enviable position of having only a few invasive species in its crystal-clear waters, and with public support and community partnerships, we endeavor to keep it that way for generations to come.

## Additional Acknowledgements

The Commission would like to recognize the considerable work the Vessel Inspection Technicians have done. These dedicated individuals are the backbone of this program and the face of the Lake George Park Commission for many of the visitors to this area. They deserve acknowledgement and the gratitude of all those who value a healthy Lake George.

The Commission would like to thank the Lake George Association for their help identifying the hundreds of samples collected by our inspectors. A special thanks to the NYS Natural Heritage Program's iMap Invasives team for its continued support of the Lake George Park Commission's integration with the WISPA Survey system. This system allows the Commission to participate in the New York statewide spread prevention efforts more actively.

## In Memoriam

The Commission would like to pay respects to Joan Stanilka, one of our dedicated Vessel Inspection Technicians who passed away this season. Joan was a force to be reckoned with, as anyone who ever had the opportunity to work a shift with her or got an inspection from her at the Mossy Point Inspection Station can attest. Joan was devoted, determined, and enthusiastic in her efforts to protect Lake George. She will be missed.



## Appendices

Figure 1: Total boater interactions by inspection station in 2023 including boats arriving without seals (not yet inspected), boats returning to Lake George with seals (from an exit inspection), and exit inspections of boats leaving the lake.

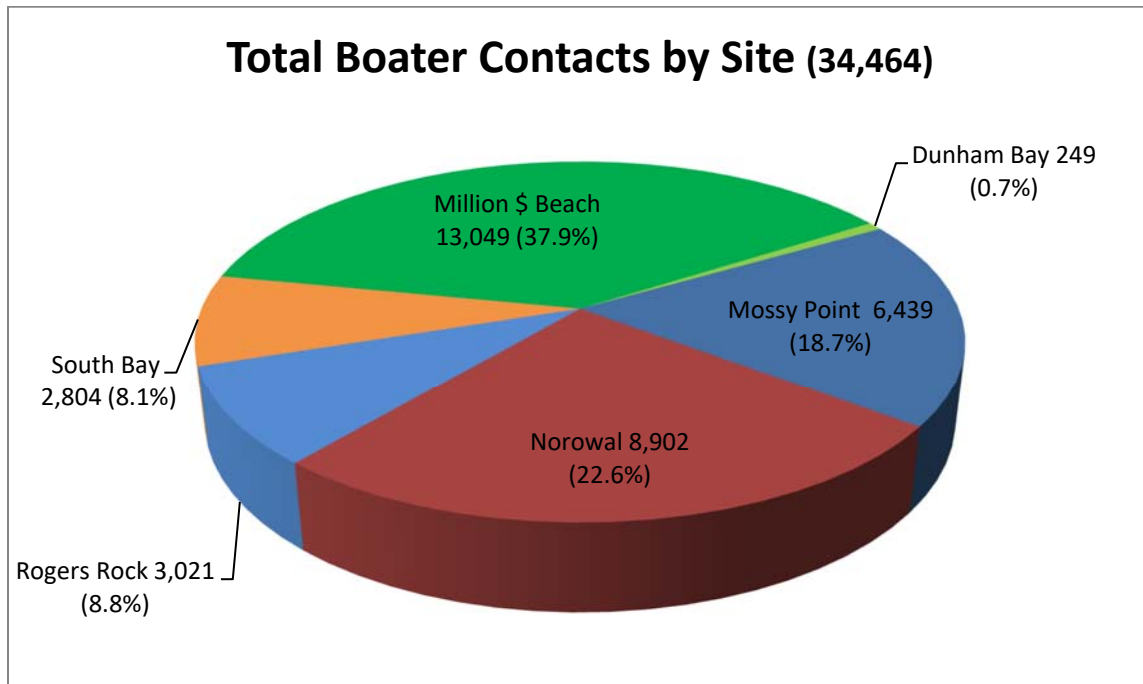


Figure 2: Total number of inspections for boats arriving without seals (full inspection needed)

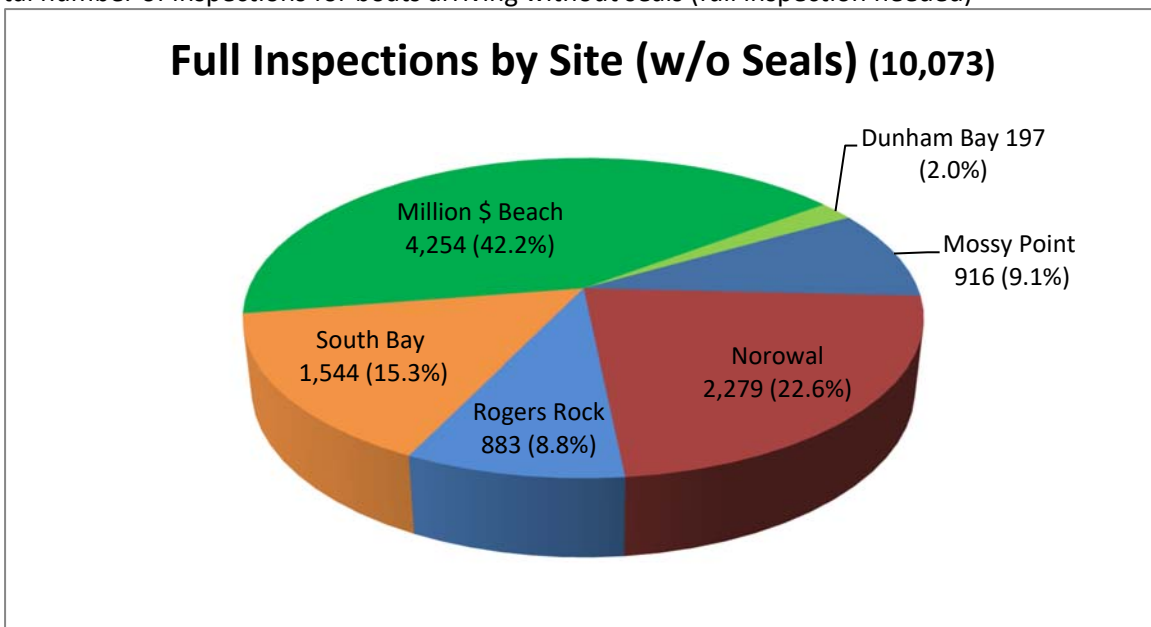


Figure 3a: Total number of vessel decontaminations performed each year

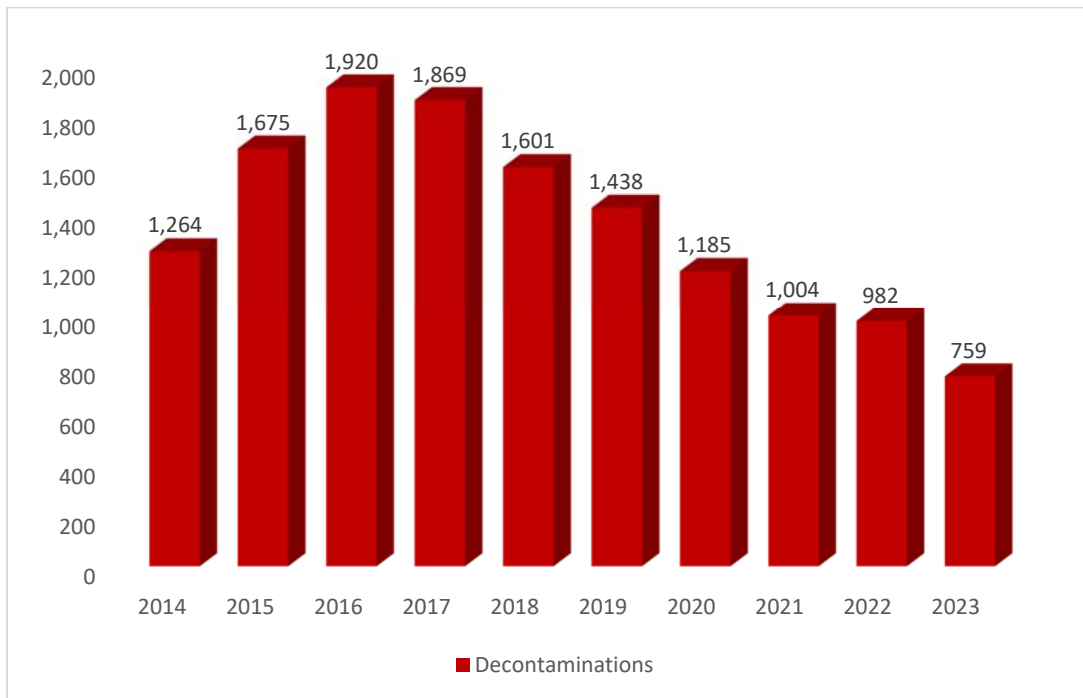


Figure 3b: Decontaminations performed at each site in 2023

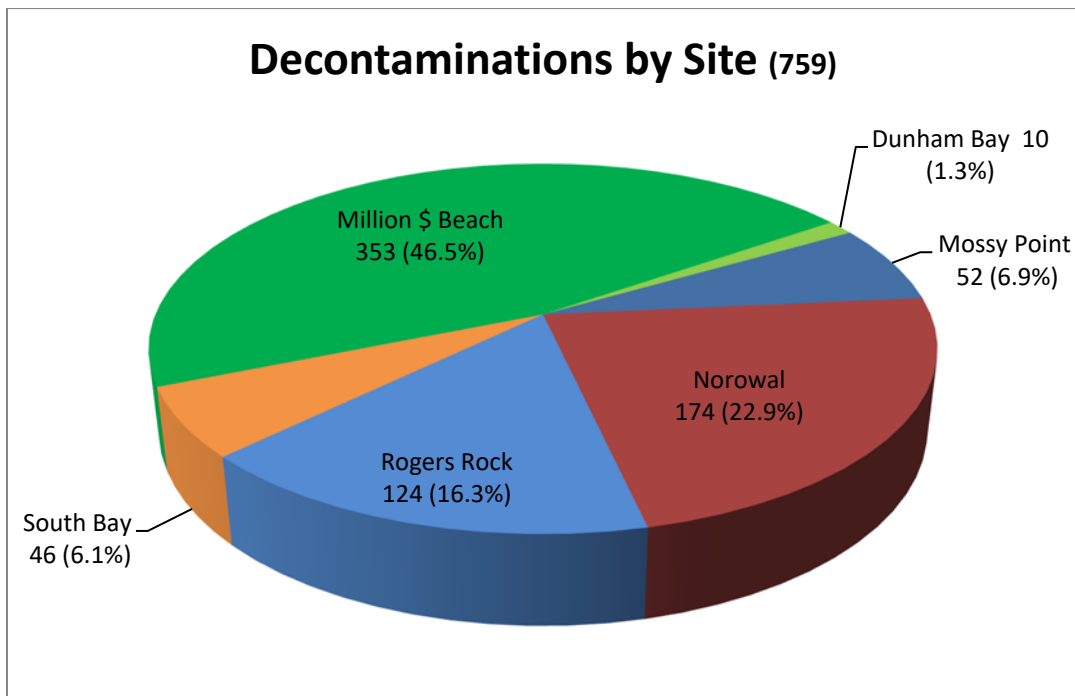




Figure 4: Total number of boats arriving at an inspection/launch site already inspected and sealed.

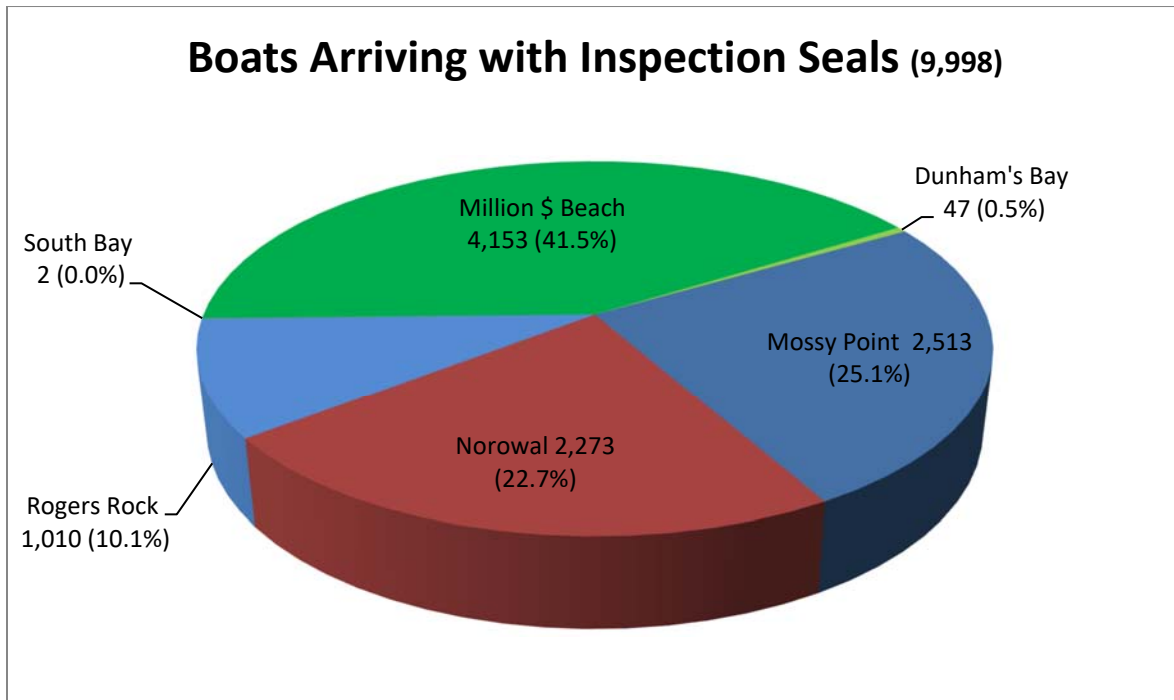


Table 6: Top ten waterbodies visited prior to arriving at Lake George in 2023

Water Body	Number of AIS	Number of Watercraft									
		2023	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
1 Hudson River	122	468	302	620	708	476	520	542	602	515	379
2 Saratoga Lake	4	345	203	406	493	294	429	371	386	375	279
3 Lake Champlain	51	322	203	347	323	290	284	320	281	251	203
4 Great Sacandaga Lake	3	229	185	242	308	227	242	270	272	263	196
5 Schroon Lake	3	197	139	236	257	179	196	204	196	204	114
6 Long Island Sound	Salt Water	155	124	198	220	313	320	311	253	246	124
7 Lake Hopatcong	3	158	133	224	214	110	211	222	216	197	185
8 Candlewood Lake	3	127	75	173	157	103	139	147	146	141	125
9 Connecticut River	4	86	69	151	141	121	109	129	124	127	91
10 Greenwood Lake	2	126	79	118	141	115	133	167	157	127	122

Figure 5: Shows peak season Inspection activity by day for all inspection stations combined. Peaks coincide with weekends and holidays.

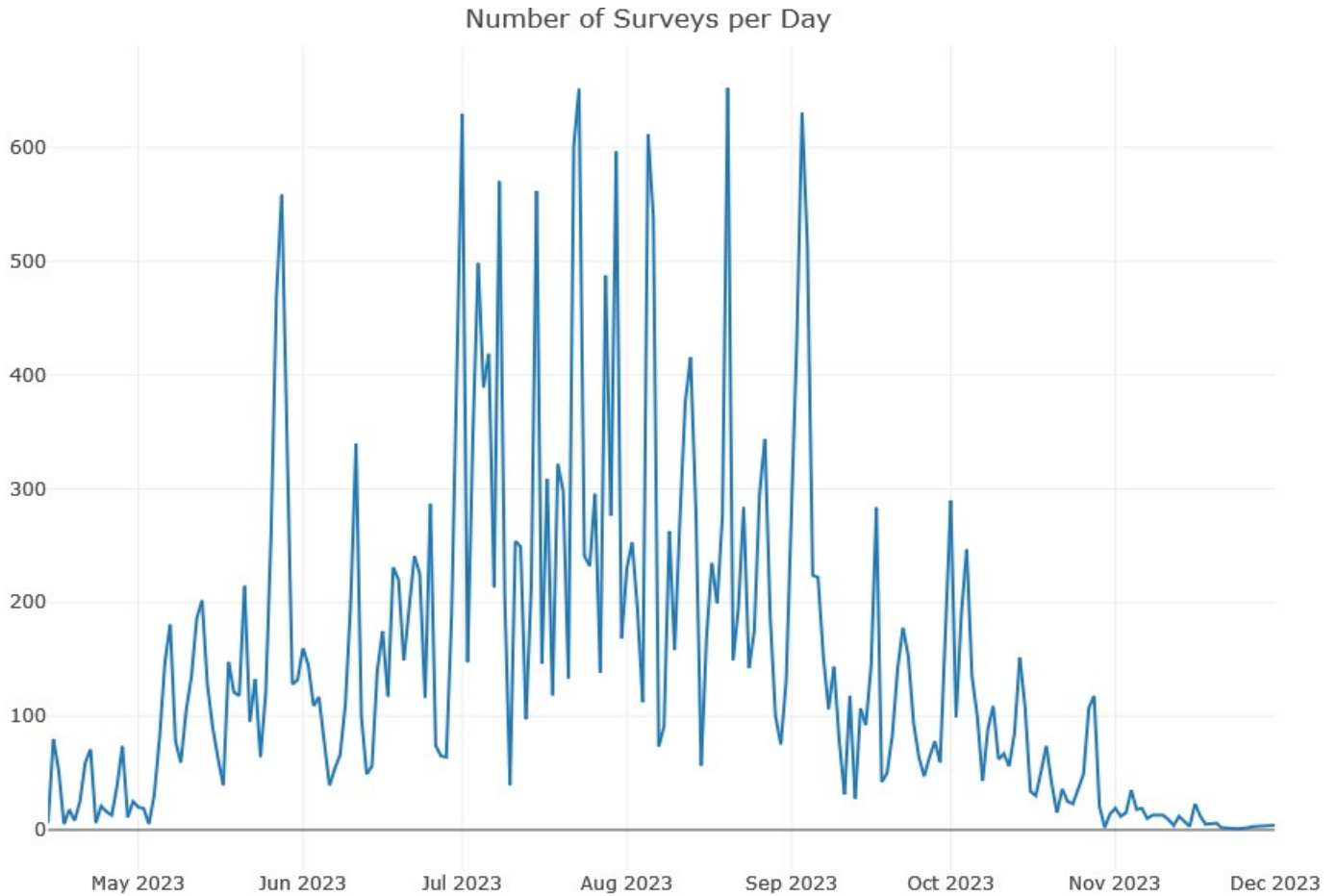


Figure 6a: Pre-Season Inspection Activity at Mossy Point, Million Dollar Beach, Rogers Rock, and Norowal launches between April 15<sup>th</sup> and May 1<sup>st</sup>. (Decontamination was not available in November). MDB = Million Dollar Beach

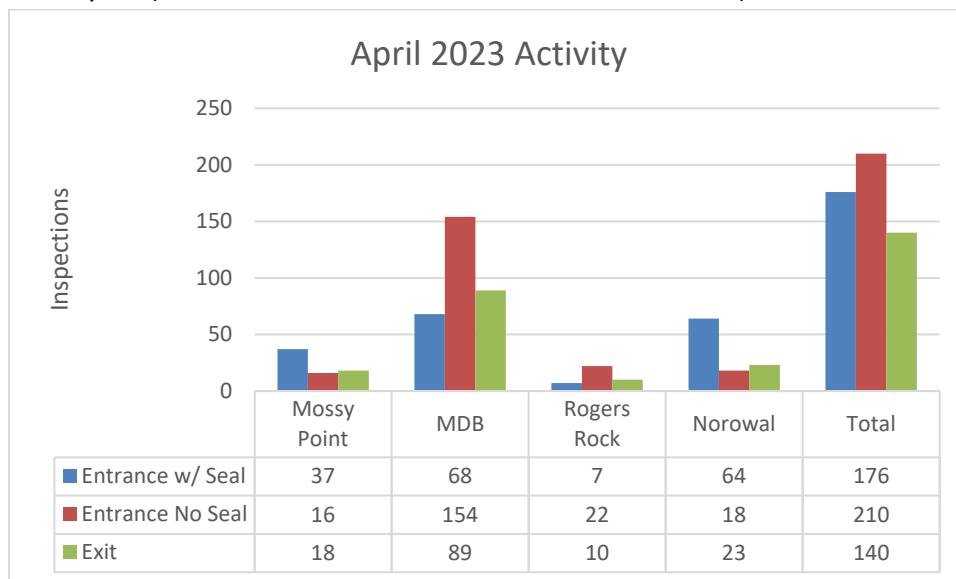
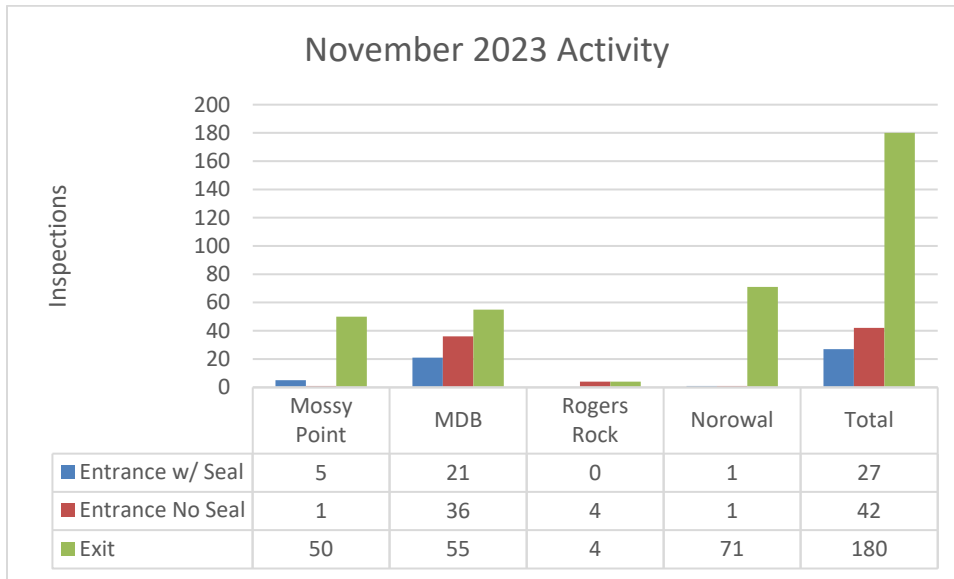


Figure 6b: Post-Season Inspection activity at Mossy Point, Million Dollar Beach, Rogers Rock, and Norowal launches between November 1<sup>st</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup>. (Decontamination was not available after November 10<sup>th</sup>). MDB = Million Dollar Beach



### **END OF 2023 BOAT INSPECTION REPORT** ###