



**enhanced**watercraft

decontamination and inspection program

# **Doing it Wright: Regional watercraft inspection as a strategy to fight AIS**

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**enhanced**watercraft

decontamination and inspection program

- Overview of program
- Pilot costs and results
- 2018 Plans
- Other counties have tried, how did Wright County succeed?



# Project Partners

Wright SWCD

Wright County

Greater Lake Sylvia Association

Lake John Association

Pleasant Lake Association

Wright County Sheriff

Annandale Police Department

City of Annandale

Initiative Foundation

University of Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

## Special Thanks

Blaine Barkley, Russ Fortner, Kathy Jonsrud, Jim Gray,  
David Boie, Elaine Fleskes, Doug Flatz, Ron Elsner, Pete  
Pesheck, Steve Benzchawel,  
Dr. John Rogers, Dr. Amit Pradhananga,

# A bit of background Wright County



- About 60-90 minutes from most locations in metro
- Premier lakes for recreation and fishing
- Though close to the metro, west Wright County extensive agriculture
  - Energy vibe is “out in the country” and “at the lake”

# At the Ramp Trends

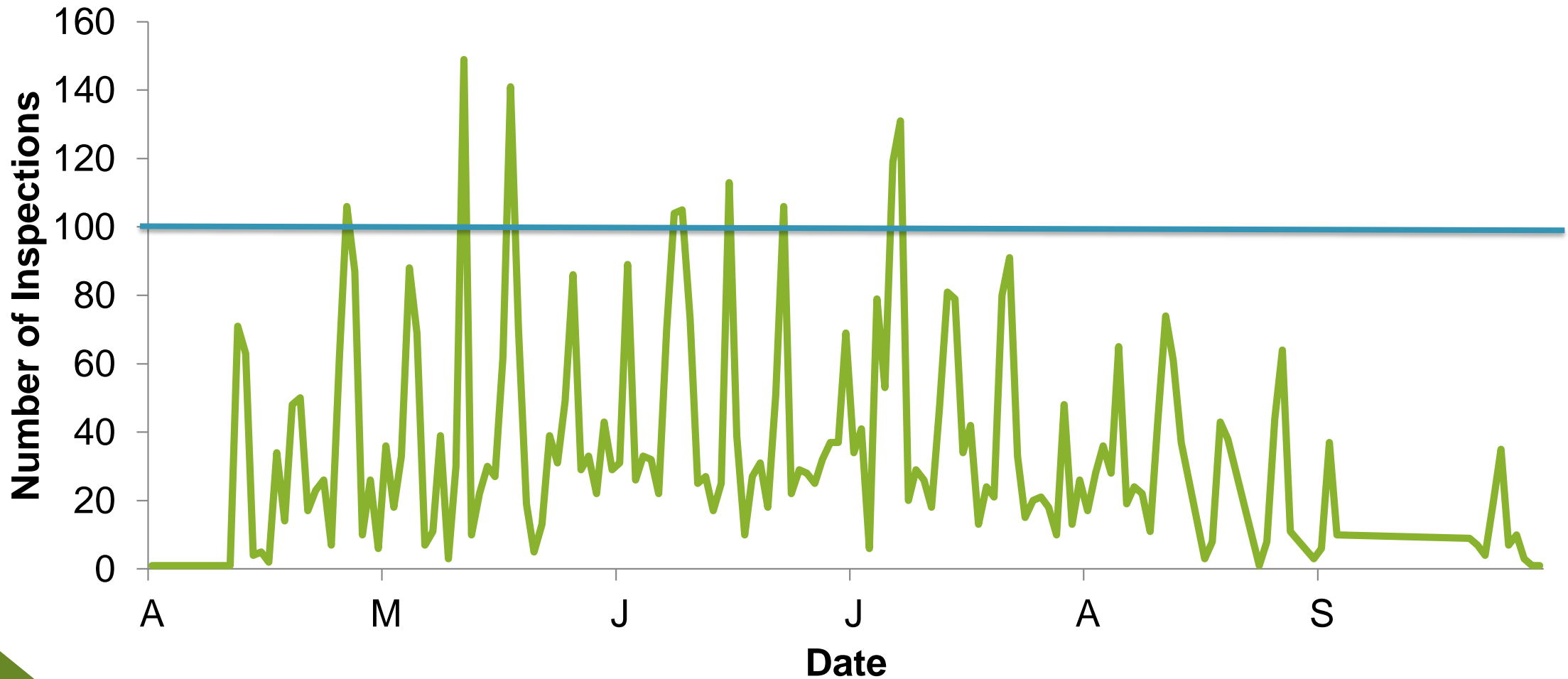
	2015	2016	2017
Statewide-All	343,973	418,847	452,977
Statewide-Entering	204,580	243,106	263,011
Wright County-All	Unknown	14,125	17,344
Wright County-Entering	Unknown	9,045	10,348
Wright County Decontaminations	None	190	344
Statewide Drain Plug Violation Percent	4.4%	3.5%	1.7%
Wright County Drain Plug Violation Percent	Unknown	2.2%	1.5%
Statewide-Transportations Violation Percent	2.6%	2.1%	2.2%
Wright County- Transportation Violation Percent	Unknown	1.1%	1.8%

# Cost of At the Ramp Monitoring

Per Landing Cost	\$27,854
Number of Landings	49
Required Funding	\$1,364,846
Available Funding	\$164,640
Shortfall	(\$1,200,206)

# Underutilized Resources

## 2016 Lake Sylvia DNR Access Inspection Data





# Why Regional Inspections?

- Invasive species can alter a lake's ecology
- We know inspections help limit the spread
- But we can't inspect every boat when inspectors are stationed at the access
- Therefore we are trying a off site approach



Starry stonewort on Lake Koronis 2016



# 2017 Start-up Timeline

- January 2017
  - GLSA submits grant to Initiative Foundation
- February 2017
  - GLSA submits first draft of plan to DNR
- June 2017
  - Wright County passes ordinance
  - Wright SWCD submits third draft of plan to DNR
- August 2017
  - Open house meeting held
  - Wright SWCD submits 4<sup>th</sup> draft to DNR
- September 2017
  - DNR commissioner sends official letter to SWCD with comments
  - Wright County Board approves plan
  - DNR approves plan
- October 2017
  - WRIP begins operations

# 2018 Start-up Timeline

- January 2018
  - Report of 2017 activities published
- February 2018
  - 2018 Plan approved by SWCD Board
  - 2018 Plan approved by County Commissioners
  - 2018 Plan submitted to DNR
- April 2018
  - Operations to open after ice out
- July 2018
  - Mid-season review to DNR
- October 2018
  - Operations end

# How it works?

1. Lake User goes to Regional Inspection station BEFORE the access
2. Their equipment is inspected as normal
  - A decontamination unit is available if necessary or desired





4. A zip-tie seal is placed on the equipment





# How it works?

4. Users place a seal in a drop box once they get to the lake
5. Rovers checked accesses for compliance
6. Law enforcement follow up with violators





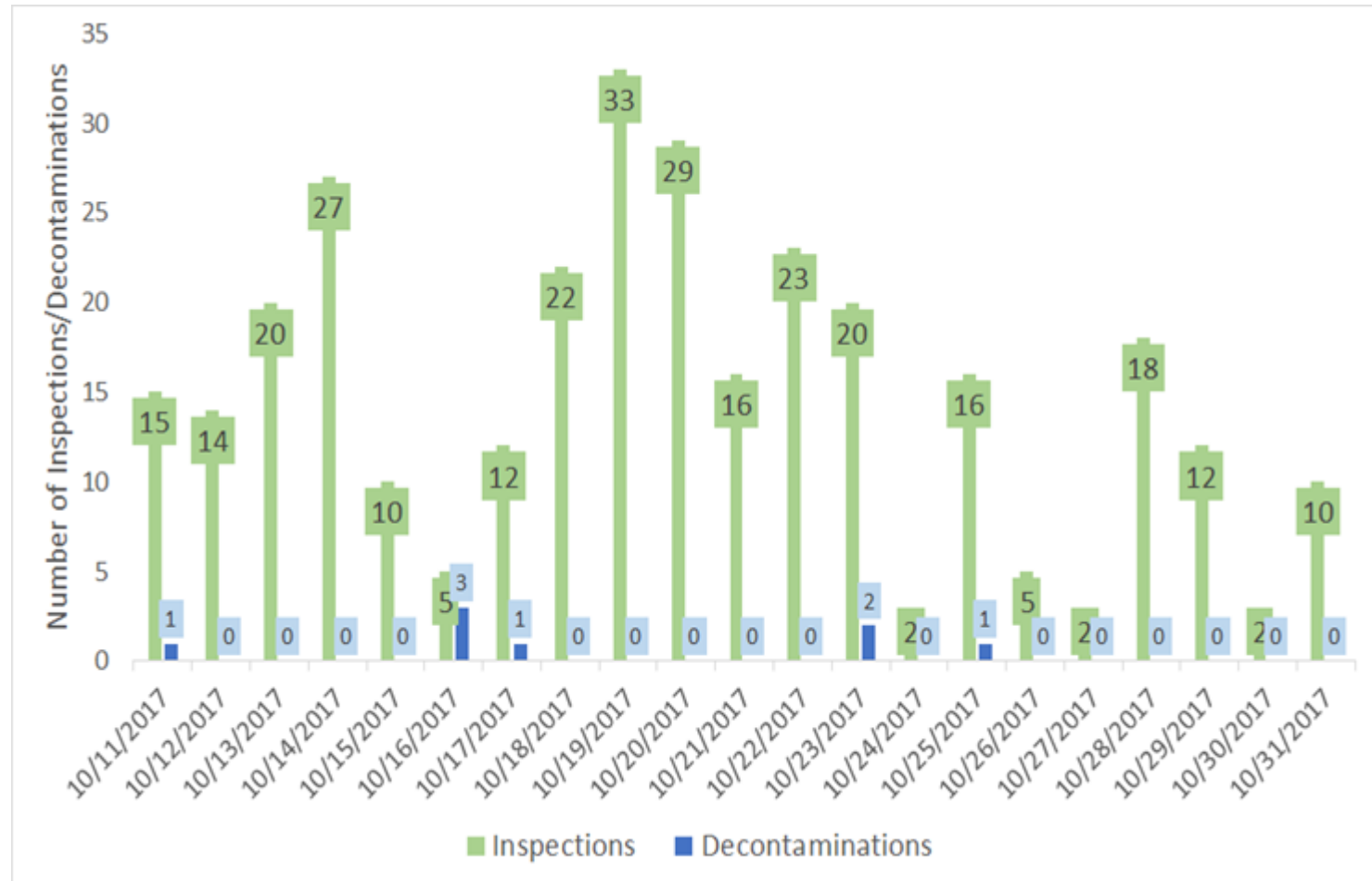
# Results

- 254 hours of operation
- 313 Inspections
- 8 Decontaminations
- 237 Seals Returned
- Life of returned seals < 1 day
- Ordinance violation rate 20%



# What happened in 2017?

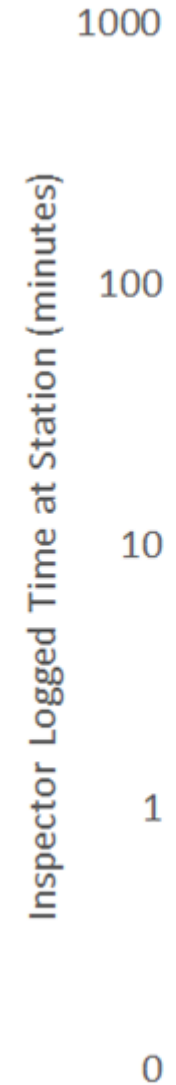
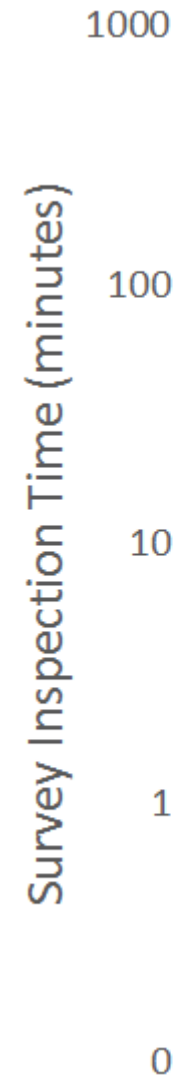
- Operated for 20 days
  - Oct 11-31
- 313 inspections
- 8 decontaminations





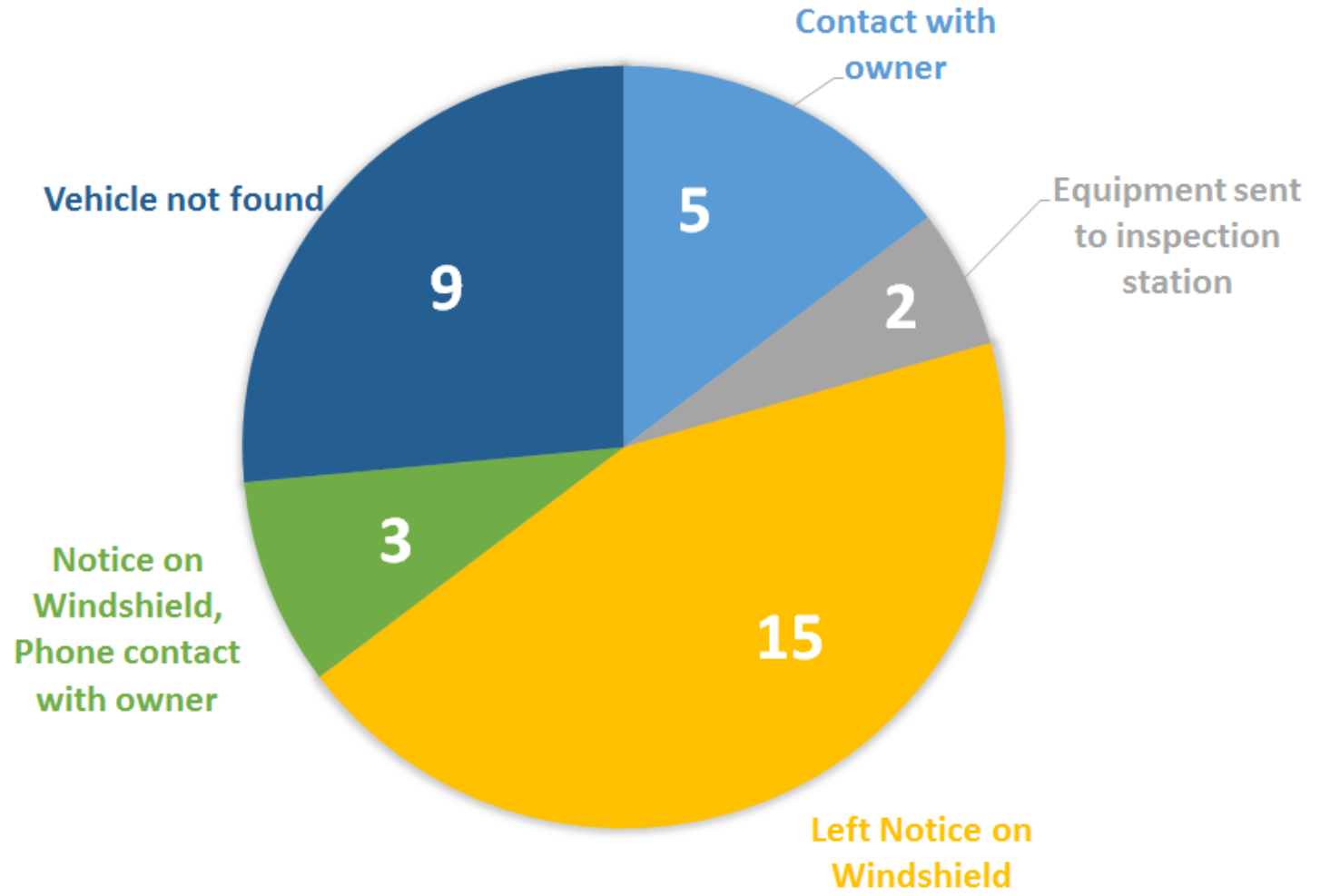
# 2017 Wait Time

Item	Result
Median Inspector calculated time at station	3 minutes
Median Survey calculated inspection time	2 minutes
Average decontamination time	17.75 minutes



# Enforcement Results

- 66 observed violations
- 35 calls
  - 1 duplicate
- Zero citations



# What did the 2017 pilot cost?

## Inspection

Budget Item	Cost
Inspection Supplies	\$630.75
Labor-Inspection	\$6317.75
Rover	\$3,192.00
Utilities and Rental	\$965.62
Inspection Total	\$11,106.12

## Decontamination

Budget Item	Cost
Decon Supplies	\$351.45
Labor-Decon	\$6317.75
Utilities and Rental	\$965.62
Decon Total	\$7,634.81

<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$18,740.93</b>
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# Projected Cost 2018 Full Season

## Inspections

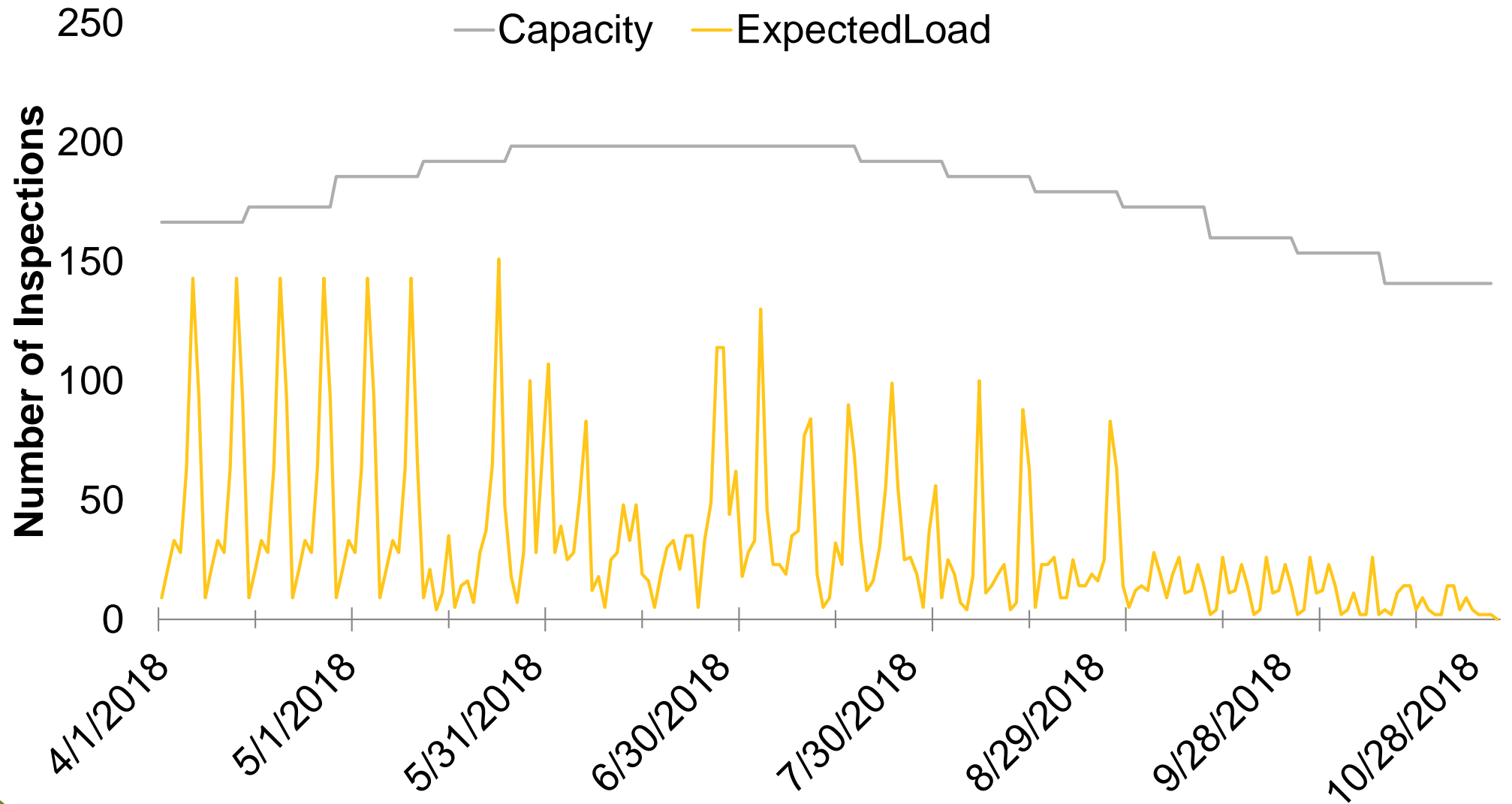
Budget Item	Cost
Inspector Training	\$3,000
Inspection Supplies	\$8,000
Labor-Inspection	\$74,000
Labor-Rover	\$34,000
Rover Mileage	\$13,000
Utilities and Rental	\$2,500
<b>Inspection Total</b>	<b>\$134,500</b>

## Decontamination

Budget Item	Cost
Annual Startup	\$3,000
Inspector Training	\$3,000
Decon Supplies	\$3,200
Labor-Decon	\$62,000
Utilities and Rental	\$2,500
<b>Decon Total</b>	<b>\$73,700</b>

<b>Contingency</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$228,200</b>

# 2018 Capacity/Expected Load





# Looking toward 2018 and beyond

- Having electronic survey
- Starting with 3 pilot lakes
- Staffing Efficiency
  - Bulk Inspections (fishing leagues & LSP)
- Explore special needs of lake service providers



# Water Organizations in Wright County

- Well established lake associations
- Wright Soil and Water Conservation District
  - Decades of managing volunteer water quality monitoring
  - Water quality improvement projects
- Clearwater River Watershed District (established 1975)
- Wright County Coalition of Lake Associations
- Crow River Organization of Water
- Close ties with Stearns and Meeker Counties






# Secret Sauce to Success

- Substantial Initiative Foundation Grant (up to \$623,000)
- County Commissioners—ordinance for 5 year pilot
- Land for regional site from City of Annandale donated
- Support from townships (letter of support)
- Minnesota Lakes and Rivers Advocates
- Legislative connections





*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."* Margaret Mead



# Take Aways

- Provide proof that regional inspection sites deliver expanded coverage and greater cost efficiency.
- Compile data which will be valuable to understand if this model is leverageable for other counties.
- Expand activities to broaden community representatives and understanding of program.

Questions?

