



**FINGER LAKES PARTNERSHIP FOR REGIONAL
INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT**

2025 WATERCRAFT INSPECTION STEWARD PROGRAM



Submitted to:

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Introduction

At the Finger Lakes Institute (FLI), the Finger Lakes Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) has operated a Watercraft Inspection Steward Program (WISP) at boat launches across the Finger Lakes region since 2012. Watercraft inspection stewards conduct visual examinations of incoming and outgoing watercraft for aquatic invasive species (AIS) while also collecting survey data, educating boaters and community members on the negative impacts of invasive species, and instructing boaters on strategies to prevent the spread of AIS. The following report provides a comprehensive summary of the Finger Lakes PRISM 2025 WISP and in-depth perspectives on the program.

Background

The Finger Lakes PRISM is hosted by the FLI at Hobart and William Smith Colleges in Geneva, NY through funding from the NYS Environmental Protection Fund with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC). Authorized under Title 17, Environmental Conservation Law 9-1705(5)(g), NYS DEC formed and now funds eight PRISMs across New York state. The PRISM network is intended to coordinate invasive species management including coordinating partner efforts, recruiting and training citizen volunteers, identifying and delivering education and outreach, establishing early detection monitoring networks, and implementing direct eradication and control efforts.

Finger Lakes PRISM coordinates an annual WISP as part of a statewide initiative with NYS DEC, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), and other partner organizations. Additional funding for the FLI WISP in 2025 was provided by partner organizations including Canandaigua Lake Watershed Council, Canandaigua Lake Watershed Association, Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District, and Seneca Lake Pure Waters Association. FLI watercraft stewards are stationed at State Parks, NYSDEC launches, and municipal boat launches throughout the Finger Lakes, the Erie Canal, and Lake Ontario. WISP data is used to analyze characteristics and trends of inspections, species data, boat launch traffic, vector paths, launch user compositions, outreach and engagement, and more. These analytics are used in annual reporting in addition to helping evaluate the program and adapt management strategies. In 2025, the Finger Lakes PRISM staffed 23 stewards at 20 regional boat launches on 14 waterbodies across the Finger Lakes region, including nine of the eleven Finger Lakes (Map 1, Table 1).

The 2025 FLI WISP season began on Monday, May 19 with three days of training. Steward training includes sharing information on program history and background, invasive species ecology, regional macrophytes, and instruction on WISP protocols. In total, 19 people attended the training, including FLI watercraft stewards, FLI AIS Technicians, and several members of external organizations. Stewards began on-site boat inspections on Friday, May 23, coinciding with Memorial Day weekend, a historically high-traffic boating holiday. The program moved to part-time after September 1 and all coverage concluded by October 26. During the 2025 season, FLI stewards completed 22,706 inspections resulting in 26,803 watercraft inspected total.

Prevention & Inspections

The Finger Lakes PRISM stewards were positioned at 20 regional boat launches on 14 waterbodies across the Finger Lakes region (Map 1). Boating traffic varied at launch sites across the region (Figure 1, Table

2). Boaters generally allowed stewards to complete a watercraft inspection with an overall 98% inspection agreement rate across the region (Figure 2). Agreement rates were variable across the region depending on the launch site (Figure 3). Inspections and surveys initiated by FLI stewards are voluntary, so boaters can choose to refuse. There are many circumstances when an inspection or survey cannot be completed, as noted by stewards during the 2025 season. Steward surveys indicated the most common reason for lack of an inspection was the boater avoiding the steward (Table 3).

Per NYS WISP protocol, FLI stewards conducted visual examinations on both launching and retrieving watercraft and any associated trailers and recorded observations of attached organisms or debris found during the inspection. Most inspections yielded no detections (80%, n=18,139) while 20% of inspections found an attached organism or debris (n=4,568). Of the inspected watercraft with a detection, 27% of those inspections found an invasive species, 56% found a species native to our region, 13% found debris or an unidentifiable species, and 4% found other species. Other species are native species that are uncommon. In 2025, the most detected AIS on inspected watercraft recorded by FLI stewards was Eurasian watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*). Native pondweeds (*Potamogeton spp.*) were the most observed native species (Table 4). In total, 2,059 invasive organisms were intercepted by FLI stewards during watercraft inspections. The most AIS interceptions occurred at the Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park on Canandaigua Lake (Figure 4).

In 2025, the FLI WISP team had one hydrilla (*Hydrilla verticillata*) detection. Hydrilla is a highly invasive submerged macrophyte that spreads quickly, and once established, forms dense stands that crowd out native species and disrupt aquatic ecosystems. The hydrilla detection occurred on August 15th at Long Point State Park boat launch on Cayuga Lake (Photo 1). The FLI steward intercepted a hydrilla fragment on a retrieving motorboat whose primary activity was recreation. Several considerable hydrilla populations are located near Long Point State Park. Stewards are trained to collect a sample and contact WISP managers when a high-priority AIS is detected. These samples are collected by the WISP leadership as soon as possible so the specimen can be more closely examined off-site and accurately identified. Once retrieved, FLI staff confirmed the interception was hydrilla via magnified examination of characteristics such as leaf arrangement and leaf margins or shape. The sample was not sent for DNA testing. The specimen was kept at the FLI office for educational purposes and disposed of appropriately.

This season the decontamination station at Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park was staffed by a trained decon steward for 50 work days from May through August. In total, 221 decontaminations were completed (Figure 5). Thirty of those were courtesy washes, meaning the decontamination was not necessary but the boater requested it. The remaining 191 decontaminations were recommended by the decon steward due to reasons such as visible AIS or a recent trip to another waterbody. August had the highest number of decontaminations at 109 (Figure 6).

Education & Outreach

During watercraft inspections and surveys, stewards collected information on boater experience, launch use, and traffic trends. Understanding these trends allowed stewards and managers to better adapt their approach to educating the public on the harmful impacts of AIS and how to prevent their spread. During the 2025 season, FLI stewards had 23,919 interactions with Finger Lakes region boating community members. Many new impressions were made as 2,931 boaters indicated no previous contact with a watercraft steward. Most boaters in the region were visiting launch sites for recreational activity (n=13,518, 56%), or fishing, including fishing tournaments (n=9,258, 39%). Launch use varied across the region, though all launches had many recreators or anglers (Table 5). Stewards noted what AIS spread prevention measures were taken by launch users. This year, 81% of boaters took at least one prevention measure. Boaters' most common prevention measure was washing and drying their watercraft; around

half of boaters took this prevention measure. Each inspection culminated with the steward asking the boater to pledge to take AIS prevention measures such as *Clean, Drain, Dry* (stopaquaticinvasives.org). The majority of launch users took the pledge (73% or n=17,519), others had previously committed (19% or n=4,446), some boaters would not commit (1% or n=219) or refused to answer (1% or n=139), and a portion of launch users were not asked or responded noncommittally (6% or n=1,540) (Figure 7, Table 6). Boater responses to the pledge varied across all FLI-staffed launch sites. These outcomes help demonstrate the impact of watercraft stewards as the program continues to influence the boating community towards taking AIS prevention measures.

During the 2025 season, the FLI WISP team participated in two MARSH! (Montezuma Alliance for the Restoration of Species & Habitats) workdays at the Montezuma Wetlands Complex in Seneca Falls, NY. These workdays were focused on hand-pulling invasive water chestnut (*Trapa natans*) from the Knox Marsellus marsh unit in the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge as part of an integrated management plan from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The FLI WISP team also participated in a water chestnut pull at Keuka Outlet in Penn Yan, where they contributed to pulling 150lbs of water chestnut, and another in the Finger Lakes National Forest, where they contributed to pulling 290lbs of water chestnut. Finally, stewards also attended a water chestnut and European frogbit pull at the south end of Canandaigua Lake, where they helped to pull over 490lbs of frogbit. By participating in these community workdays, stewards were afforded unique field experiences in one of the region's most ecologically significant landscapes alongside numerous environmental conservation professionals, mentors, and community members (Table 7, Photo 6).

Perspectives

The extensive FLI WISP dataset provides numerous opportunities to analyze boater and ecosystem trends. FLI staff have interpreted these data using descriptive and inferential statistical analyses.

The proportion of macrophytes found on retrieving watercraft was significantly higher than those found on launching watercraft (Figure 8). Cayuga Lake State Park, Frontenac Park, and Honeoye Lake Boat Launch State Park had the highest rates of macrophyte detections on retrieving boats. Ayrault Road Erie Canal Site had almost identical detection rates on launching and retrieving watercraft. Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park had the highest rate of detections on launching watercraft. This variability in detecting macrophytes across the Finger Lakes region is an important consideration when prioritizing regional WISP coverage for future seasons.

Our analysis noted differing seasonal growth patterns that make steward detections seasonally unique (Figure 9). Additionally, individual species and launches could have different characteristics that make them more likely to be detected by stewards. A new survey was implemented this season to determine floating plant cover within the launches. Every day at noon the steward on duty would estimate the percentage of the launch area covered by floating plants. Understanding which species drive visual cover and when peak conditions occur can help describe detections, refine survey collection, and inform management decisions.

Analysis of detection data from 2021-2025 indicates that species detection fluctuates from year to year (Figure 10). Biases such as programmatic priorities, staff coverage, sampling methodology, and

macrophyte phenotypic differences might influence the variability of detection rates. *Elodea* spp. has seen a significant drop in 2025.

Macrophyte encounter rates from WISP data were compared with encounter rates from the FLI AIS field team for the 2025 field season. A total of 6,396 rake tosses were conducted by FLI staff in 2025 on Cayuga and Seneca Lakes. Watercraft inspection stewards conducted 4,019 inspections in 2025 on the same waterbodies. A comparison of macrophyte encounter rates on these waterbodies between rake toss and WISP methodologies was conducted with a Chi-squared permutation test to identify sampling biases associated with those methods. Significant differences in encounter rates occurred among the six species most detected by WISP and AIS field team (Figure 11), highlighting the need to further understand differences in macrophyte encounter rates between these methods. In general, species such as starry stonewort (*Nitellopsis obtusa*) that are commonly found growing along the bottom of waterbodies or in deeper waters of the littoral zone were rarely detected by watercraft inspection stewards. According to the 2025 WISP data, approximately 0.2% of 1,274 watercraft and trailer inspections at the Frontenac Park boat launch on Cayuga Lake revealed starry stonewort, and approximately 62% of the 643 rake tosses conducted by the AIS field team near Frontenac Park contained starry stonewort. This indicates that if any starry stonewort is encountered by stewards, it is likely that a healthy, established population already exists in the associated waterbody. These results also revealed that macrophyte detections from one method cannot be directly substituted for occurrences detected with the other method.

Studies show that movement of watercraft between waterbodies is a primary vector for the spread of aquatic invasive species. FLI stewards record macrophyte detections at launches during their voluntary watercraft inspections. Building on prior work showing higher macrophyte detections associated with retrieving (vs. launching) watercraft, our stewards recorded simple site-level measures of floating plant abundance (standardized percent-cover estimates) during normal WISP sampling days. By explicitly linking field observations of floating-plant abundance with steward macrophyte detections, we are looking to inform practical frameworks to inform steward training and responsibilities, prioritize inspections, allocate steward staffing, and target outreach and cleaning efforts. This includes updating our piloted macrophyte skimming program, where stewards at select launches were asked to skim floating macrophytes out of the launch lanes and creating a more cohesive data collection method for our stewards.

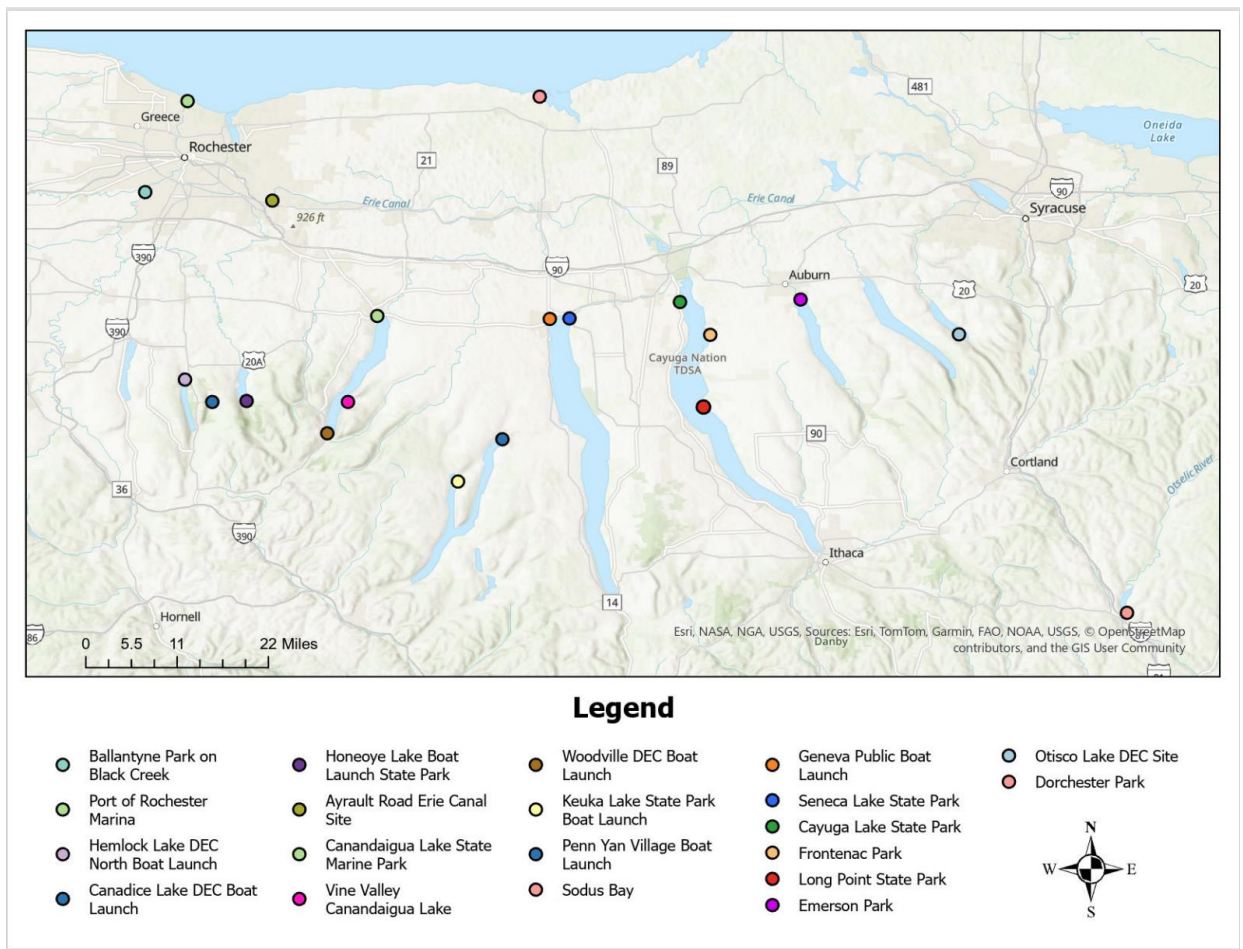
Eleven boat launches were selected for evaluating the effect of removing plants from a ramp on the rate of plant detections by stewards. Stewards at these launches would skim the boat launch area daily at noon and record the species found and volume (Figure 12). Five common species were recorded, although a quarter of species found were designated as “other”. The most common species found was Eurasian watermilfoil (21%) followed closely by curly-leaf pondweed (18%) and American eelgrass (17%) (Figure 13). Frontenac Park and Cayuga Lake State Park had the highest average volume of macrophytes recorded per day, 8,350 ml and 7,233 ml, respectively. For the smallest average volume recorded, Otisco Lake DEC Launch had zero plants and Emerson Park had an average volume of 8.7 ml. Seneca Lake State Park and Long Point State Park had the highest percentages of Eurasian watermilfoil skimmed while Canandaigua Lake State Park and Otisco DEC launch were the only skimming sites with no Eurasian watermilfoil skimmed (Figure 14).

Opportunities & Conclusion

Reflecting on the WISP analyses and outcomes is essential to determining program objectives, identifying regional trends and subsequent implications, and responding with adapted management strategies for the future. Below is a list of potential actionable items based on the learned outcomes of the program.

1. Consider adding decontamination stations at launches with high percentages of macrophyte detections to reduce the spread of aquatic invasive species.
2. Observe long-term trends in the "Agree to Inspect" and the commitment to "Clean, Drain, Dry" data to inform more impactful outreach techniques and approaches for stewards.
3. Continue monitoring the spread of high priority aquatic invasive species throughout the Finger Lakes region.
4. Determine how to best implement skimming and floating macrophyte surveys for the 2026 season.
5. Allocate time to understanding the relationship between floating macrophyte cover and macrophyte detections on trailers and watercraft.
6. Continue analyzing decontamination data and procedures to find ways to increase the number of boaters agreeing to and expressing interest in watercraft decontamination.
7. Review previous steward data to identify sites that should be staffed for the 2026 season.

In conclusion, the FL-PRISM Watercraft Inspection Steward Program provides an important line of defense against the spread of aquatic invasive species. This includes monitoring regional boat launches by watercraft inspection stewards while teaching AIS spread prevention measures; collecting real-time data at priority sites allowing for insightful analysis and responsive, adaptive management strategies; and the education and engagement of the community around critical conservation initiatives. These objectives help support the mission of preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species throughout our region and help protect our natural resources. The Finger Lakes Institute and Finger Lakes PRISM are grateful for the support and collaborative spirit of many regional partners, without whom such impactful programming would not be feasible.



Map 1. 2025 FLI Watercraft Inspection Steward Program (WISP) sites.

Additional coverage is provided throughout the region by state agencies and lake associations.

Tables

Table 1. List of launches covered by FLI stewards, and their associated waterbodies. Waterbodies are organized from West to East, and launches are organized alphabetically.

Waterbody	Launch
Black Creek	Ballantyne Park on Black Creek
Genesee River/Lake Ontario	Port of Rochester Marina
Hemlock Lake	Hemlock Lake DEC North Boat Launch
Canadice Lake	Canadice Lake DEC Boat Launch
Honeoye Lake	Honeoye Lake State Park
Erie Canal	Ayrault Road Erie Canal Site
Canandaigua Lake	Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park
Canandaigua Lake	Vine Valley
Canandaigua Lake	Woodville DEC Boat Launch
Keuka Lake	Keuka Lake State Park
Keuka Lake	Penn Yan Village Boat Launch
Sodus Bay	Sodus Town Launch
Seneca Lake	Geneva Public Boat Launch
Seneca Lake	Seneca Lake State Park
Cayuga Lake	Cayuga Lake State Park
Cayuga Lake	Frontenac Park
Cayuga Lake	Long Point State Park
Owasco Lake	Emerson Park
Otisco Lake	Otisco Lake DEC Site
Whitney Point Reservoir	Dorchester Park

Table 2. The average number of inspections per day at each launch covered by an FLI steward. There is inherent bias in daily inspection rate values that come from variations in coverage. Daily and seasonal variations in steward coverage were dictated by funding, staffing limitations, and coordination with other regional WISPS. Despite bias, these values help better understand how “busy” a launch can be

Waterbody	Launch	Number of Inspections	Days of Coverage	Average Inspections/Day
Black Creek	Ballantyne Park on Black Creek (n=186)	551	28	20
Genesee River/Lake Ontario	Port of Rochester Marina (n=66)	863	44	20
Hemlock Lake	Hemlock Lake DEC North Boat Launch (n=16)	453	24	19
Canadice Lake	Canadice Lake DEC Boat Launch (n=14)	1182	31	38
Honeoye Lake	Honeoye Lake Boat Launch State Park (n=16)	505	20	25
Erie Canal	Ayrault Road Erie Canal (n=73)	552	37	15
Canandaigua Lake	Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park (n=211)	4478	121	37
Canandaigua Lake	Vine Valley Canandaigua Lake (n=0)	41	9	5
Canandaigua Lake	Woodville DEC Boat Launch (n=208)	4282	115	37
Keuka Lake	Keuka Lake State Park (n=10)	965	32	30
Keuka Lake	Penn Yan Village Boat Launch (n=13)	1015	35	29
Sodus Bay	Sodus Bay (n=74)	1073	31	35
Seneca Lake	Geneva Public Boat Launch (n=23)	188	13	14
Seneca Lake	Seneca Lake State Park (n=34)	765	35	22
Cayuga Lake	Cayuga Lake State Park (n=19)	690	21	33
Cayuga Lake	Frontenac Park (n=127)	1274	20	64
Cayuga Lake	Long Point State Park (n=44)	997	40	25
Owasco Lake	Emerson Park (n=28)	1057	37	29
Otisco Lake	Otisco Lake DEC Site (n=18)	955	38	25
Whitney Point Reservoir	Dorchester Park (n=32)	2032	66	31

Table 3. Reasons why watercraft inspections could not be made during the 2025 season by FLI launch site. The percentage of each response is relative to the total responses at the respective launch. Note the steward only answers this survey question when an inspection cannot be completed. Stewards select “Other” when there is a specific circumstantial reason for a refused or missed inspection, and the details are entered in a comment field.

Waterbody	Launch	Avoidant Boater	Boater Busy	Boater Refused	Other
Black Creek	Ballantyne Park on Black Creek (n=186)	30%	0%	51%	20%
Genesee River/Lake Ontario	Port of Rochester Marina (n=66)	68%	24%	8%	0%
Hemlock Lake	Hemlock Lake DEC North Boat Launch (n=16)	56%	6%	13%	25%
Canadice Lake	Canadice Lake DEC Boat Launch (n=14)	43%	7%	0%	50%
Honeoye Lake	Honeoye Lake Boat Launch State Park (n=16)	56%	19%	0%	25%
Erie Canal	Ayrault Road Erie Canal (n=73)	27%	1%	53%	18%
Canandaigua Lake	Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park (n=211)	81%	12%	4%	2%
Canandaigua Lake	Vine Valley Canandaigua Lake (n=0)	0%	0%	0%	0%
Canandaigua Lake	Woodville DEC Boat Launch (n=208)	59%	18%	8%	14%
Keuka Lake	Keuka Lake State Park (n=10)	80%	0%	20%	0%
Keuka Lake	Penn Yan Village Boat Launch (n=13)	46%	23%	31%	0%
Sodus Bay	Sodus Bay (n=74)	22%	51%	19%	8%
Seneca Lake	Geneva Public Boat Launch (n=23)	74%	17%	4%	4%
Seneca Lake	Seneca Lake State Park (n=34)	76%	12%	12%	0%
Cayuga Lake	Cayuga Lake State Park (n=19)	89%	0%	5%	5%
Cayuga Lake	Frontenac Park (n=127)	65%	19%	9%	7%
Cayuga Lake	Long Point State Park (n=44)	14%	73%	14%	0%
Owasco Lake	Emerson Park (n=28)	11%	54%	32%	4%
Otisco Lake	Otisco Lake DEC Site (n=18)	28%	22%	39%	11%
Whitney Point Reservoir	Dorchester Park (n=32)	3%	9%	19%	69%
	TOTAL	52% (625)	18% (213)	19% (232)	12% (142)

n = 1,212 (total survey responses)

Table 4. Summary of the most observed aquatic species in 2025. The percentage of each species is relative to the total detections (n) at its respective launch site. Red highlights the most common invasive while green highlights the most common native species observed regionally.

Waterbody	Launch	Dreissenid Mussels	Coontail	Curly-leaf Pondweed	Elodea	Eurasian Watermilfoil	Eel Grass	Native Pondweeds
Black Creek	Ballantyne Park on Black Creek (n=72)	0%	36%	4%	4%	32%	4%	17%
Genesee River/Lake Ontario	Port of Rochester Marina (n=96)	13%	14%	4%	1%	13%	26%	19%
Hemlock Lake	Hemlock Lake DEC North Boat Launch (n=77)	17%	25%	12%	8%	6%	42%	57%
Canadice Lake	Canadice Lake DEC Boat Launch (n=96)	8%	6%	11%	5%	51%	0%	9%
Honeoye Lake	Honeoye Lake Boat Launch State Park (n=196)	18%	27%	56%	2%	35%	30%	34%
Erie Canal	Ayrault Road Erie Canal (n=48)	6%	6%	0%	0%	6%	10%	2%
Canandaigua Lake	Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park (n=1580)	7%	9%	2%	2%	15%	51%	28%
Canandaigua Lake	Vine Valley Canandaigua Lake (n=1)	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%
Canandaigua Lake	Woodville DEC Boat Launch (n=758)	11%	5%	15%	2%	11%	37%	35%
Keuka Lake	Keuka Lake State Park (n=88)	7%	5%	48%	6%	31%	22%	36%
Keuka Lake	Penn Yan Village Boat Launch (n=65)	2%	5%	15%	15%	17%	26%	49%
Sodus Bay	Sodus Bay (n=187)	1%	29%	30%	6%	22%	57%	36%
Seneca Lake	Geneva Public Boat Launch (n=8)	13%	0%	0%	0%	0%	63%	13%
Seneca Lake	Seneca Lake State Park (n=77)	9%	13%	1%	1%	86%	31%	10%
Cayuga Lake	Cayuga Lake State Park (n=324)	5%	2%	7%	2%	40%	30%	91%
Cayuga Lake	Frontenac Park (n=452)	8%	3%	42%	0%	12%	27%	92%
Cayuga Lake	Long Point State Park (n=34)	6%	9%	12%	6%	24%	41%	44%
Owasco Lake	Emerson Park (n=153)	8%	13%	7%	20%	21%	46%	30%
Otisco Lake	Otisco Lake DEC Site (n=54)	7%	24%	19%	4%	11%	17%	43%
Whitney Point Reservoir	Dorchester Park (n=202)	0%	10%	2%	4%	41%	5%	39%
	Total Inspections (n=22,706)	2%	2%	3%	1%	4%	8%	8%

Table 5. Boat launch user activity types during the 2025 season (includes launching and retrieving watercraft). The percentage of each activity is relative to its respective launch sites. While activity types vary across launch sites, blue highlights the most common regional launch uses (recreation at 56% and angling including fishing tournaments at 36%).

Waterbody	Launch	Comm.	Fishing	Fishing Tournament	Gov't.	Maint.	Recreation	Research
Black Creek	Ballantyne Park on Black Creek (n=551)	1%	31%	0%	1%	0%	67%	0%
Genesee River/Lake Ontario	Port of Rochester Marina (n=863)	0%	23%	0%	2%	2%	71%	2%
Hemlock Lake	Hemlock Lake DEC North Boat Launch (n=453)	0%	62%	0%	2%	0%	35%	2%
Canadice Lake	Canadice Lake DEC Boat Launch (n=1182)	0%	44%	0%	0%	0%	56%	0%
Honeoye Lake	Honeoye Lake Boat Launch State Park (n=505)	0%	78%	6%	0%	0%	15%	0%
Erie Canal	Ayrault Road Erie Canal (n=552)	0%	20%	0%	1%	2%	78%	0%
Canandaigua Lake	Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park (n=4478)	2%	16%	1%	0%	7%	74%	0%
Canandaigua Lake	Vine Valley Canandaigua Lake (n=41)	0%	20%	0%	0%	0%	80%	0%
Canandaigua Lake	Woodville DEC Boat Launch (n=4282)	2%	38%	3%	0%	1%	56%	1%
Keuka Lake	Keuka Lake State Park (n=965)	2%	32%	8%	2%	0%	56%	0%
Keuka Lake	Penn Yan Village Boat Launch (n=1015)	1%	35%	1%	1%	0%	62%	0%
Sodus Bay	Sodus Bay (n=1073)	0%	32%	4%	1%	5%	57%	1%
Seneca Lake	Geneva Public Boat Launch (n=188)	2%	18%	4%	0%	2%	74%	0%
Seneca Lake	Seneca Lake State Park (n=765)	1%	21%	10%	0%	0%	69%	0%
Cayuga Lake	Cayuga Lake State Park (n=690)	0%	67%	3%	1%	9%	19%	1%
Cayuga Lake	Frontenac Park (n=1274)	0%	33%	13%	0%	14%	41%	0%
Cayuga Lake	Long Point State Park (n=997)	0%	30%	3%	0%	0%	66%	0%
Owasco Lake	Emerson Park (n=1057)	1%	27%	3%	0%	0%	68%	0%
Otisco Lake	Otisco Lake DEC Site (n=955)	1%	58%	8%	0%	1%	32%	0%
Whitney Point Reservoir	Dorchester Park (n=2032)	0%	65%	0%	0%	1%	33%	0%
	TOTAL	1% (231)	36% (8,527)	3% (731)	<1% (95)	3% (729)	56% (13,518)	<1% (87)

n = 22,706 (total inspections)

Table 6. Boater responses to the commitment question “Can we count on you to clean, drain, and dry when there is no boat steward present?” during the 2025 season by FLI launch site. The percentage of each response is relative to its respective launch sites.

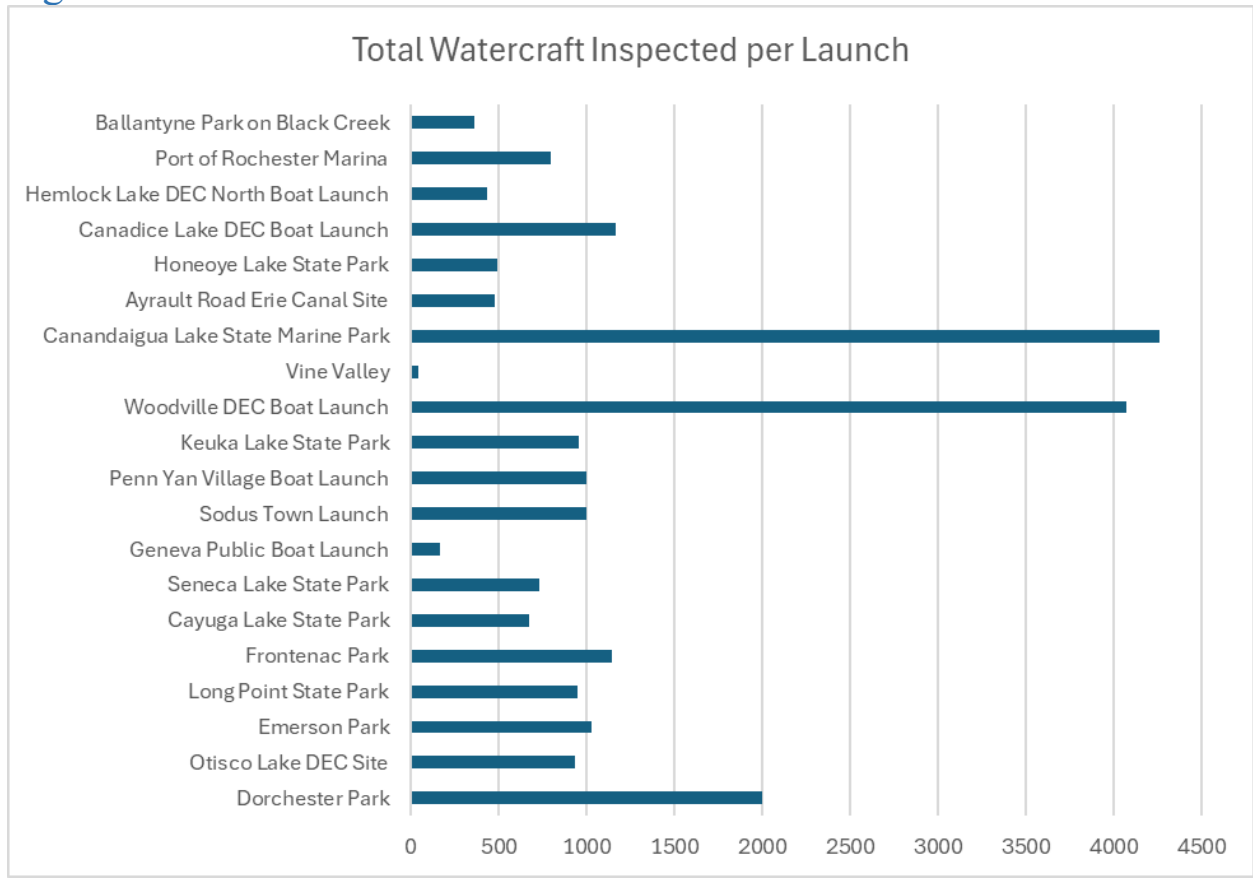
Waterbody	Launch	No	Not Asked	Refused	Maybe	Previously Committed	Yes
Black Creek	Ballantyne Park on Black Creek (n=551)	0%	6%	3%	4%	7%	80%
Genesee River/Lake Ontario	Port of Rochester Marina (n=861)	1%	10%	0%	2%	34%	53%
Hemlock Lake	Hemlock Lake DEC North Boat Launch (n=453)	1%	2%	0%	7%	28%	61%
Canadice Lake	Canadice Lake DEC Boat Launch (n=1177)	0%	1%	0%	6%	20%	73%
Honeoye Lake	Honeoye Lake Boat Launch State Park (n=503)	0%	3%	0%	3%	10%	83%
Erie Canal	Ayrault Road Erie Canal (n=552)	0%	3%	2%	1%	27%	68%
Canandaigua Lake	Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park (n=4475)	2%	5%	1%	4%	14%	74%
Canandaigua Lake	Vine Valley Canandaigua Lake (n=41)	0%	2%	0%	0%	10%	88%
Canandaigua Lake	Woodville DEC Boat Launch (n=4264)	1%	2%	0%	2%	16%	79%
Keuka Lake	Keuka Lake State Park (n=964)	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	98%
Keuka Lake	Penn Yan Village Boat Launch (n=1015)	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	98%
Sodus Bay	Sodus Bay (n=1055)	1%	5%	1%	5%	0%	89%
Seneca Lake	Geneva Public Boat Launch (n=188)	0%	7%	3%	6%	4%	79%
Seneca Lake	Seneca Lake State Park (n=765)	0%	4%	0%	4%	22%	70%
Cayuga Lake	Cayuga Lake State Park (n=690)	0%	2%	1%	3%	46%	49%
Cayuga Lake	Frontenac Park (n=1274)	0%	7%	1%	3%	31%	58%
Cayuga Lake	Long Point State Park (n=994)	2%	4%	1%	1%	0%	92%
Owasco Lake	Emerson Park (n=1055)	2%	1%	1%	8%	0%	89%
Otisco Lake	Otisco Lake DEC Site (n=955)	3%	0%	1%	6%	0%	90%
Whitney Point Reservoir	Dorchester Park (n=2031)	0%	1%	0%	1%	65%	34%
	TOTAL	1% (219)	3% (785)	1% (139)	3% (755)	19% (4,446)	73% (17,519)

n = 23,863 (total surveys)

Table 7. Education and outreach events staffed by the FLI WISP team in 2025.

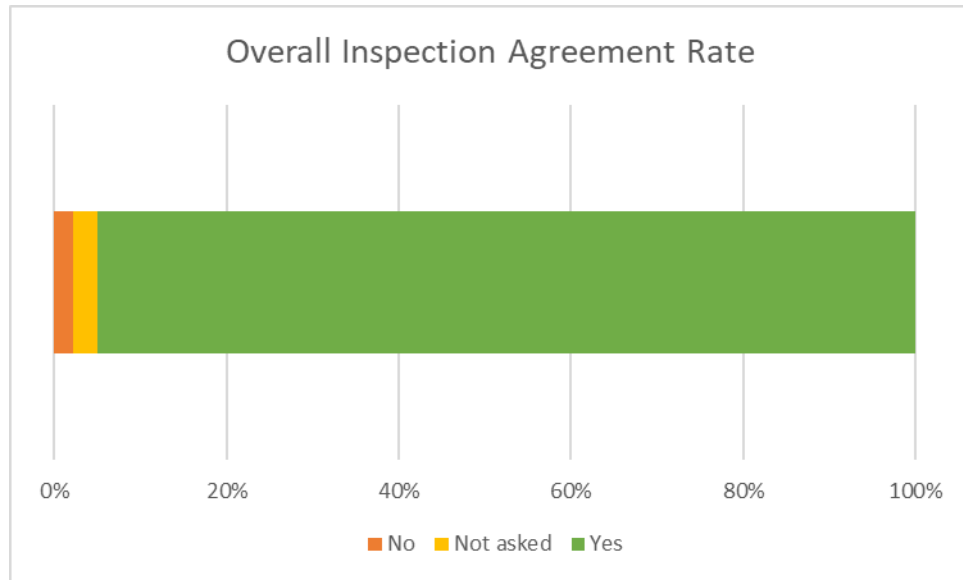
Outreach Event	Date	Location
Keuka Lake Water Chestnut Pull	June 26, 2025	Penn Yan, NY
Finger Lakes National Forest Water Chestnut Pull	July 17, 2025	Burdett, NY
MARSH (Montezuma Alliance for the Restoration of Species and Habitats) Work Day	July 12 and 23, 2025	Seneca Falls, NY
Canandaigua Lake Water Chestnut and Frogbit Pull	July 29, 2025	Naples, NY

Figures



n = 26,803 (total watercraft inspected)

Figure 1. Total number of watercraft inspections in 2025 by launch site. These outcomes depend on variables such as coverage priorities as well as staff availability and efficacy. Inherently, there is not equal effort distributed amongst all FLI-staffed launch sites.



n = 23,918 (total surveys)

Figure 2. Overall inspection agreement rate across all FLI-staffed boat launches in 2025. On average, most boaters approached by FLI stewards agree to an inspection.

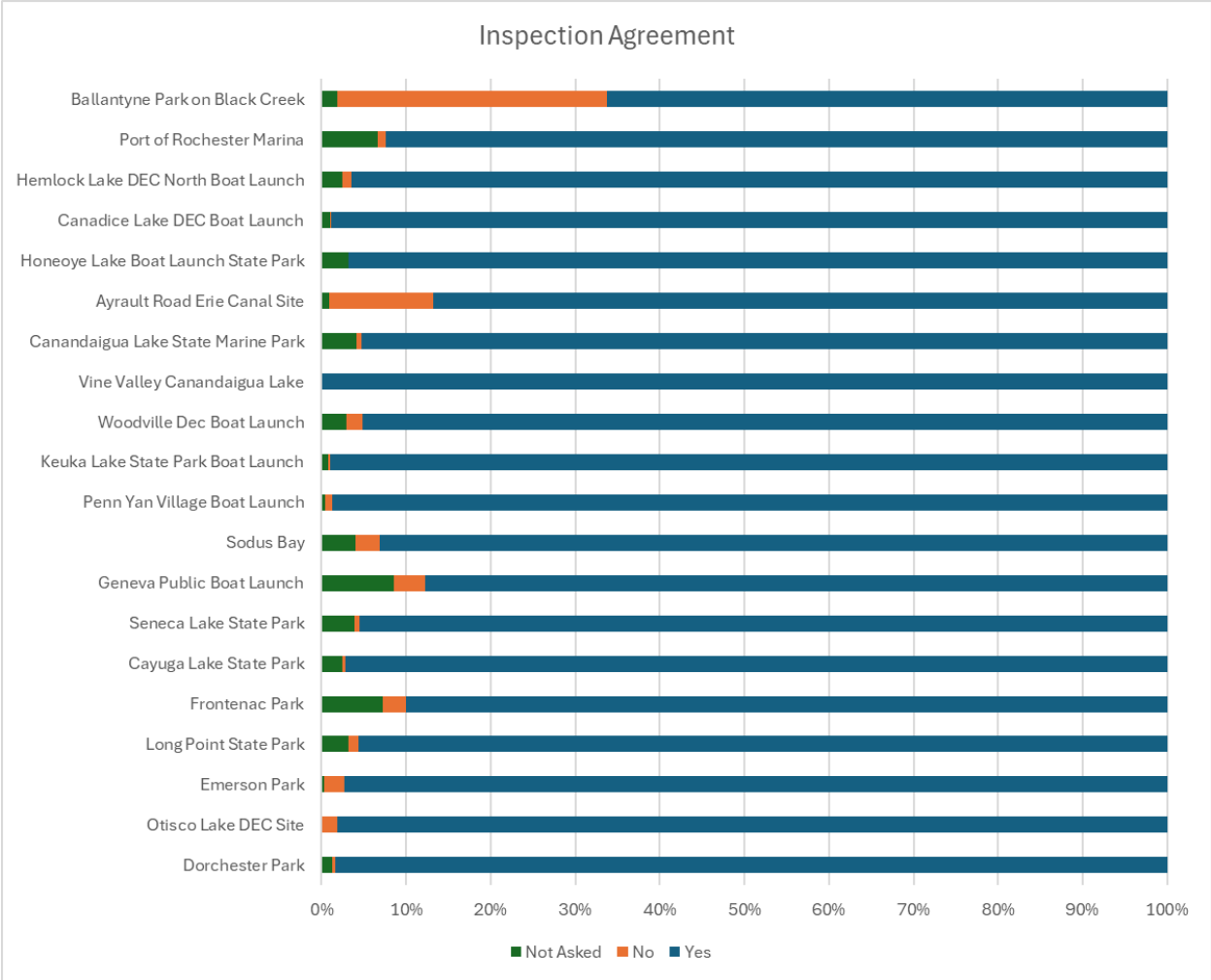
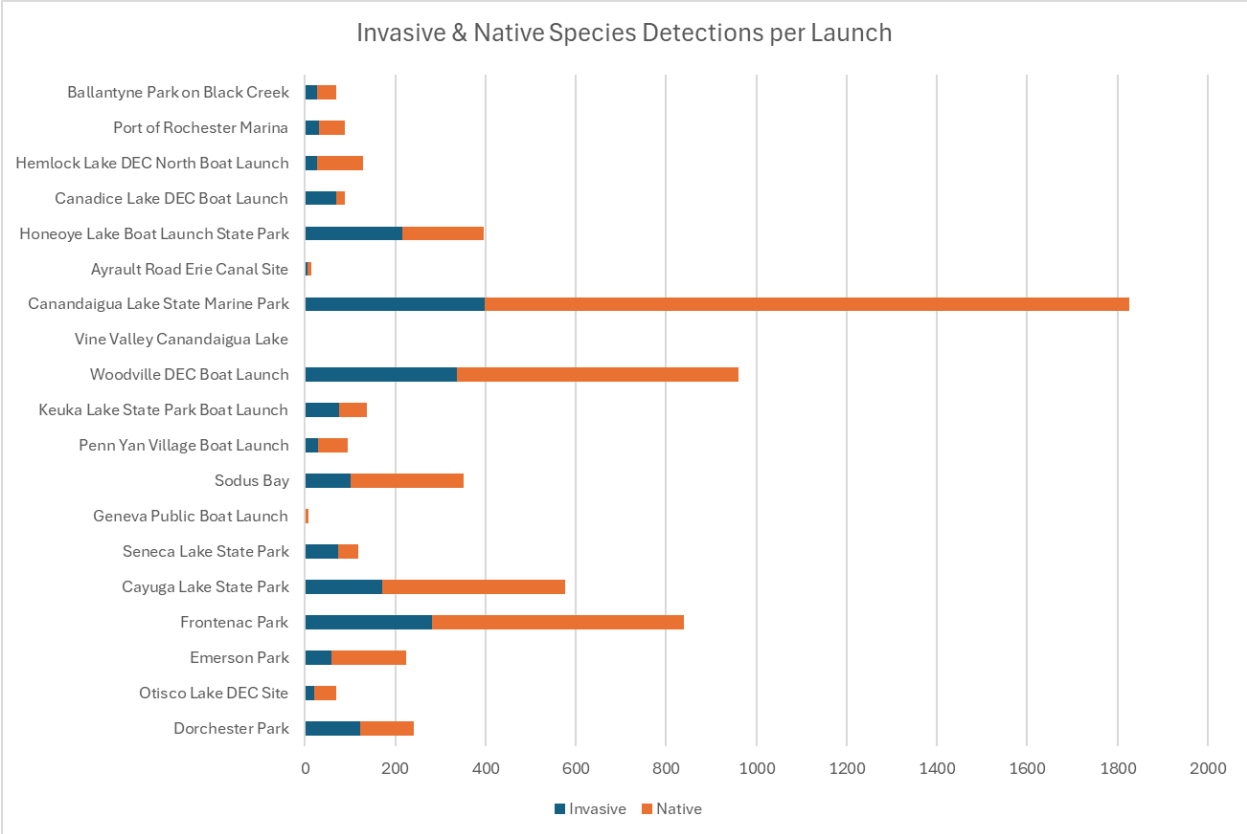


Figure 3. Inspection agreement rates in 2025 by launch site. In many instances, launches with higher traffic rates had high inspection agreement rates. One notable outlier is Ballantyne Park with less than 70% agreement. This is the first year FLI stewards covered this launch.



n = 6,282 (total detections)

Figure 4. Total count of invasive and native species detections in 2025 by FLI-staffed launch site.

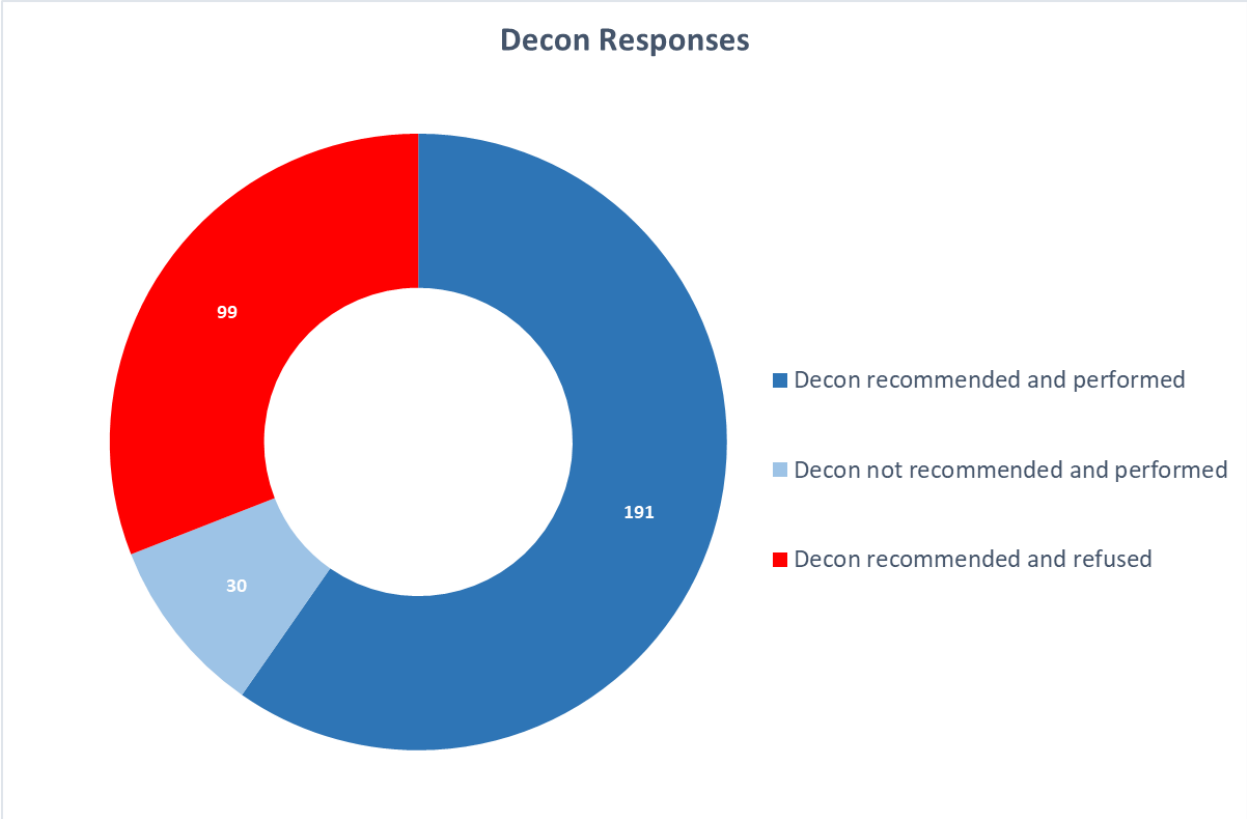


Figure 5. Responses to decontamination inquiry and prompts during the 2025 field season. Most of the decontaminations that were recommended were performed. The decontaminations performed that were not recommended were courtesy washes.

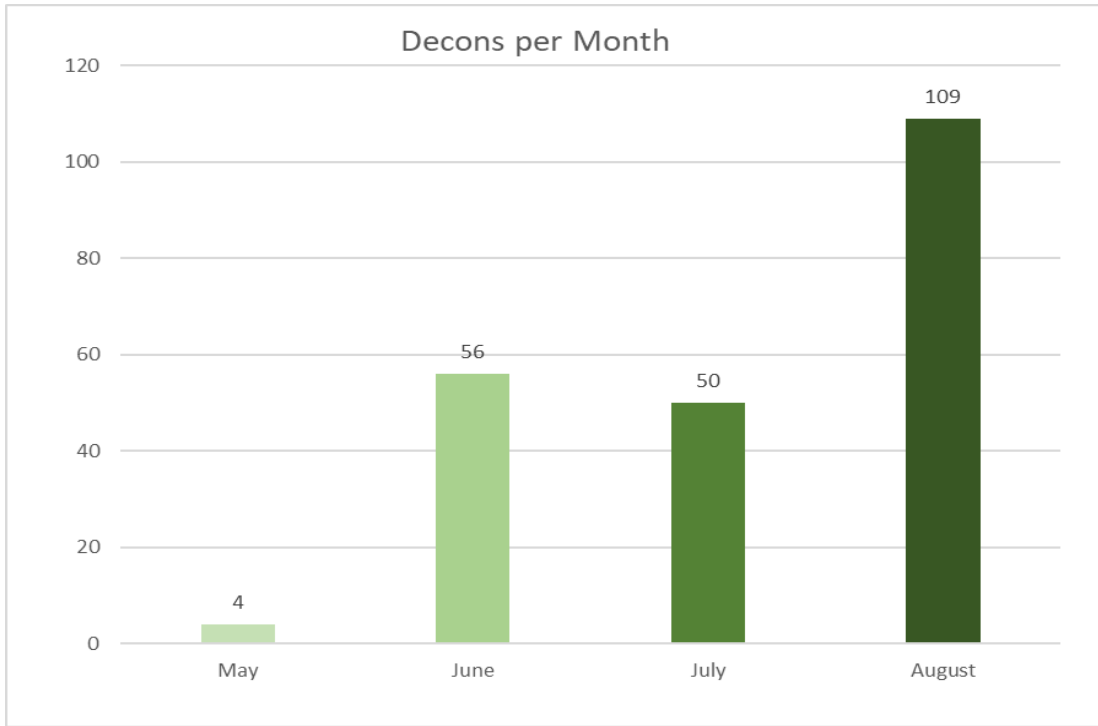
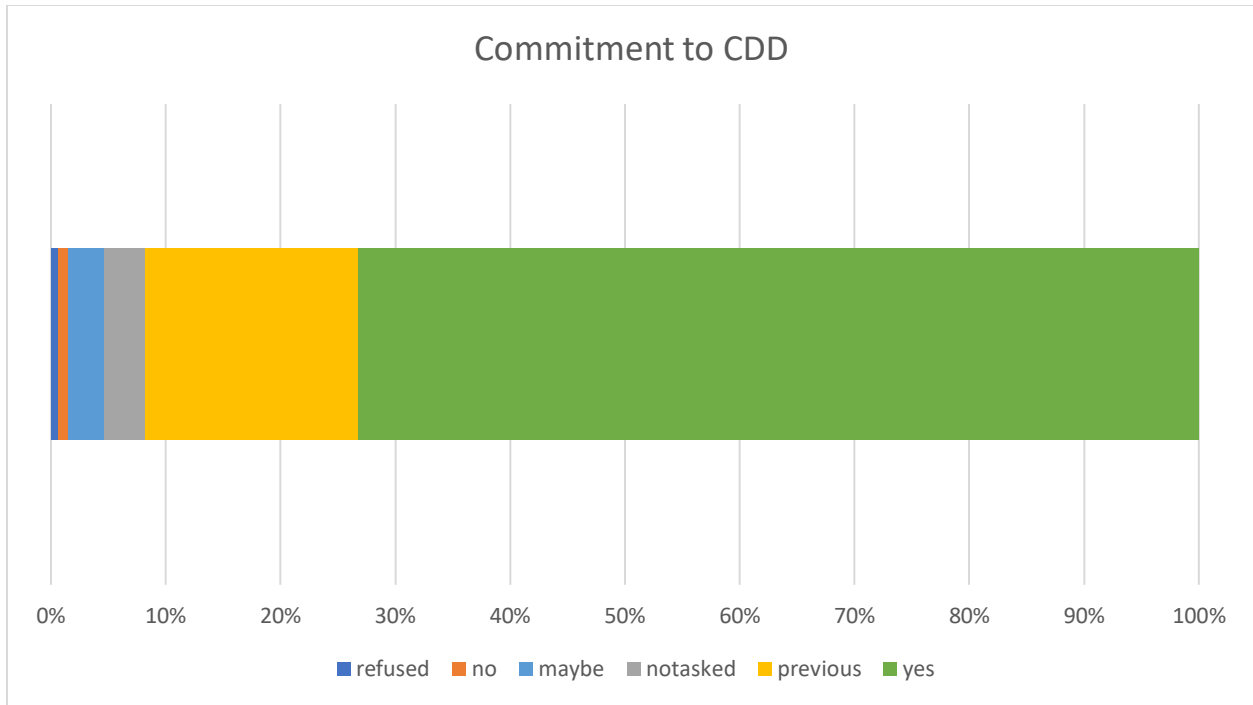


Figure 6. The number of decontaminations completed each month by the decontamination steward at Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park during the 2025 field season. Generally, decontaminations increased over the 2025 field season.



n = 22,706 (total inspections)

Figure 7. Boater responses to the commitment question “Can we count on you to clean, drain, and dry when there is no boat steward present?” across all launch sites during the 2025 season. Most launch users took the pledge (n=17,519), others had previously committed (n=4,446), some boaters would not commit (n=219) or refused to answer (n=139), and a portion of launch users were not asked or responded noncommittally (n=840).

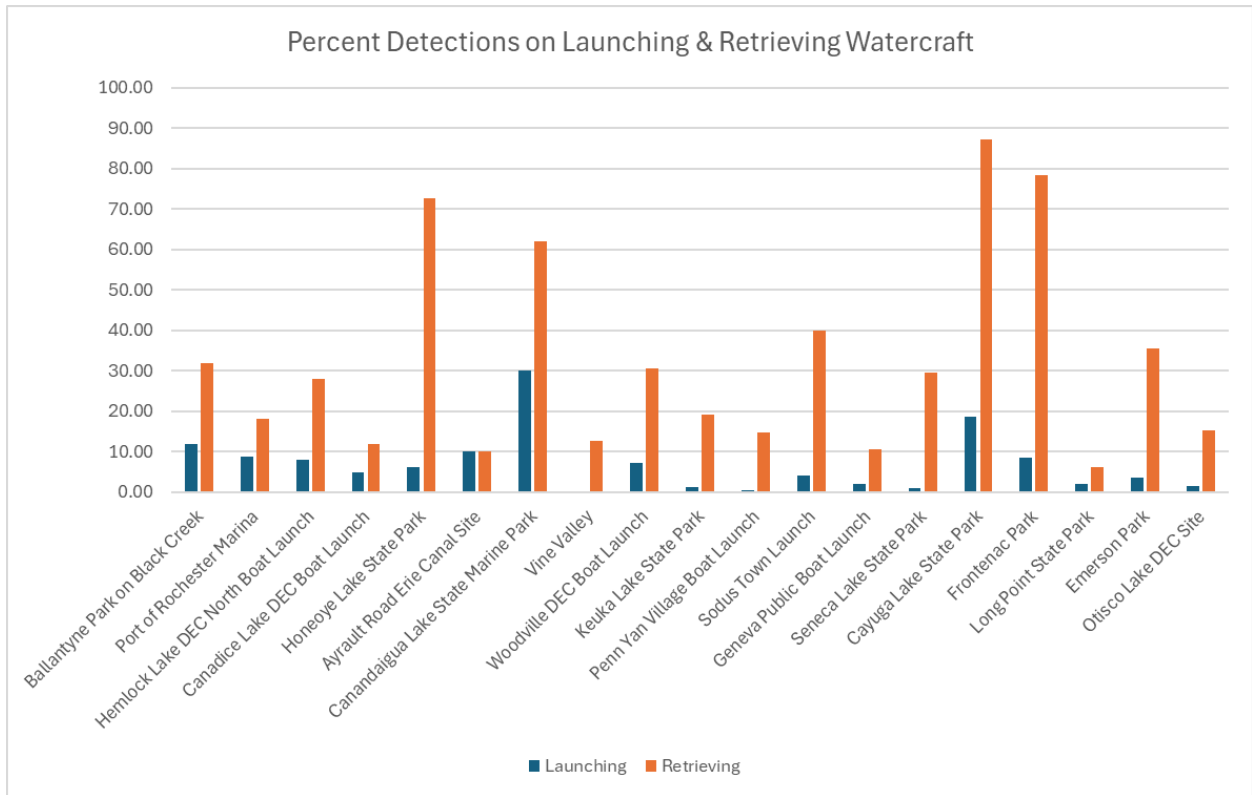


Figure 8. The rate of macrophyte detections by stewards during launching and retrieval of watercraft at each launch. Cayuga Lake State Park, Frontenac Park, and Honeoye Lake Boat Launch State Park had the highest rates of macrophyte detections on retrieving boats. Ayrault Road Erie Canal Site had almost identical detection rates on launching and retrieving watercraft.

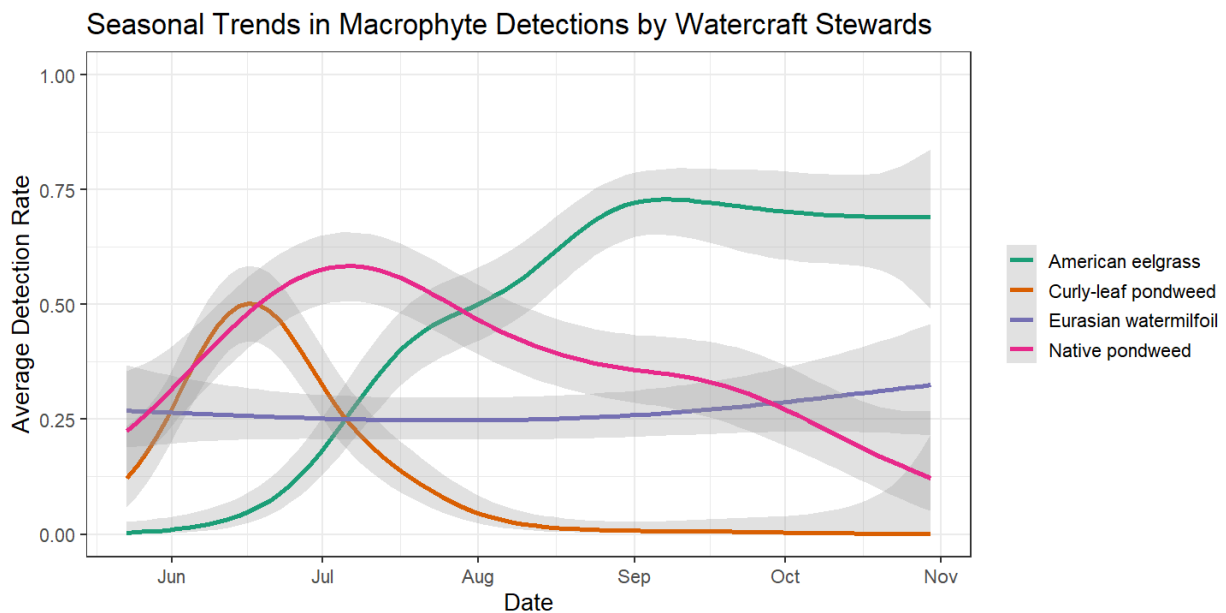


Figure 9. Seasonal detection rates of the four most detected macrophytes and AIS of 2025 on retrieving watercraft. Shaded areas indicate 95% confidence intervals.

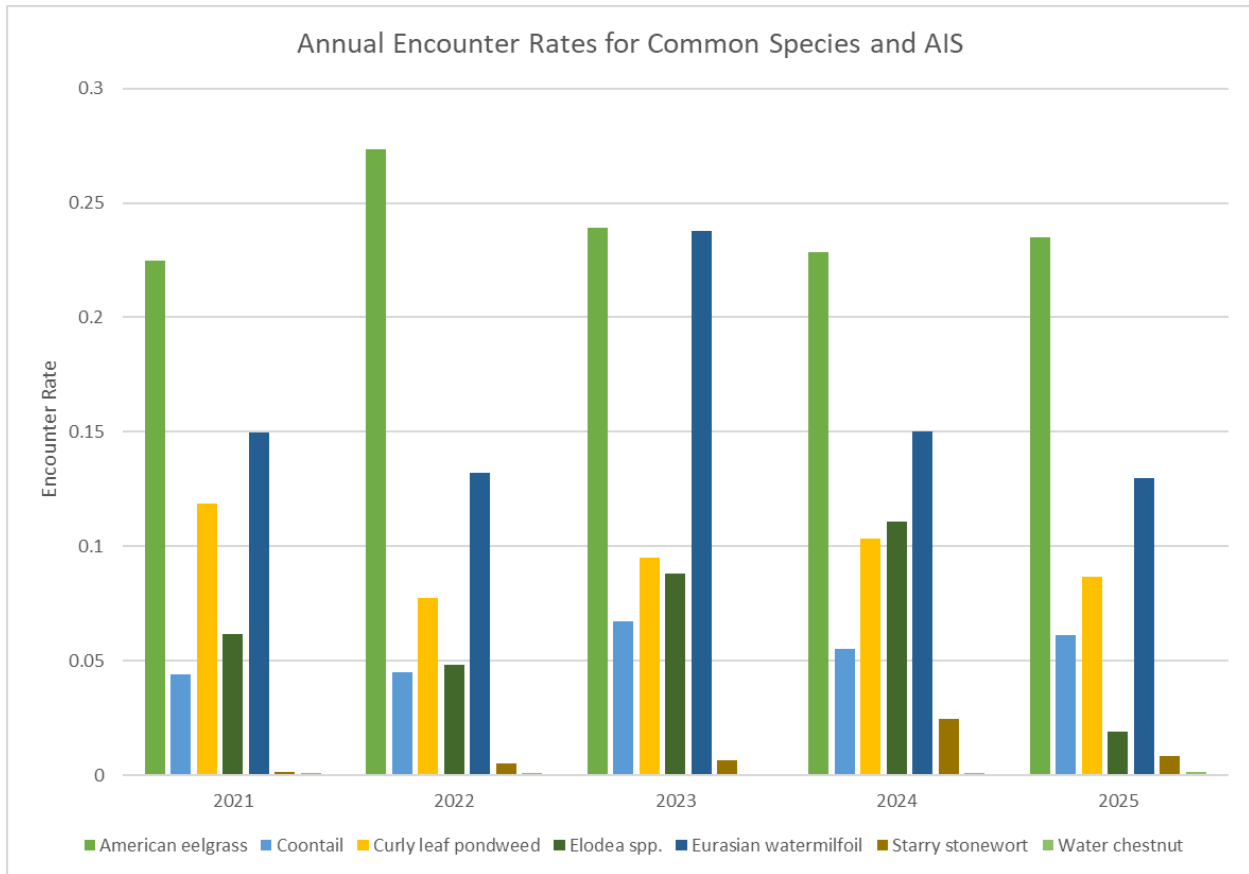


Figure 10. Annual encounter rates of common macrophytes and AIS. This analysis combines data from all FLI-staffed launch sites between 2021 – 2025. We see changes in encounter rates annually. This is valuable because it provides insight into regional macrophyte community trends.

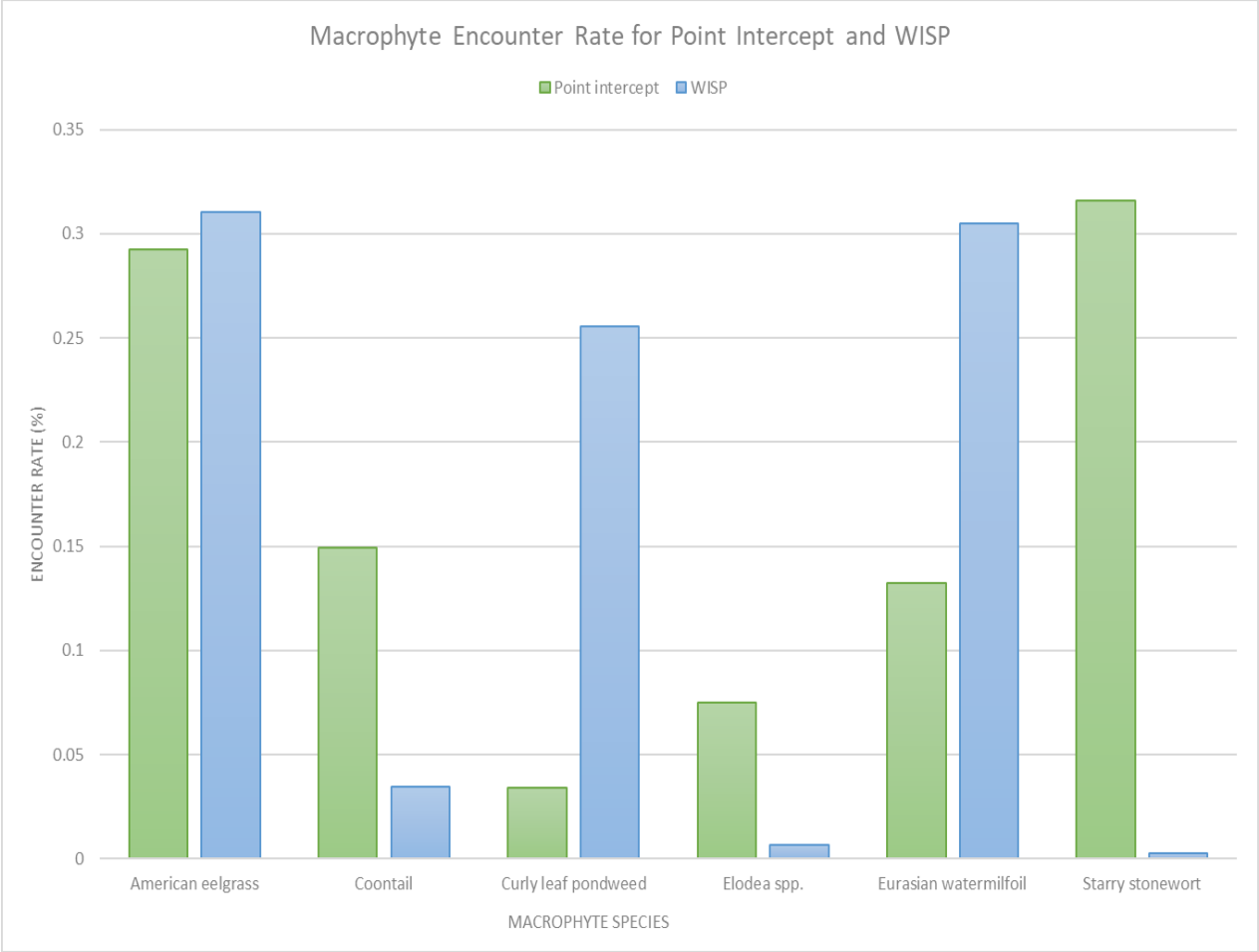


Figure 11. There was a difference in macrophyte encounter rates per rake toss (point intercept methodology) and per watercraft/trailer inspection based on data collected from Cayuga and Seneca Lakes from the 2025 field season. Starry stonewort was rarely detected by watercraft inspection stewards at launches even when this species was commonly found in corresponding waterbodies surveyed with point intercept methodology.

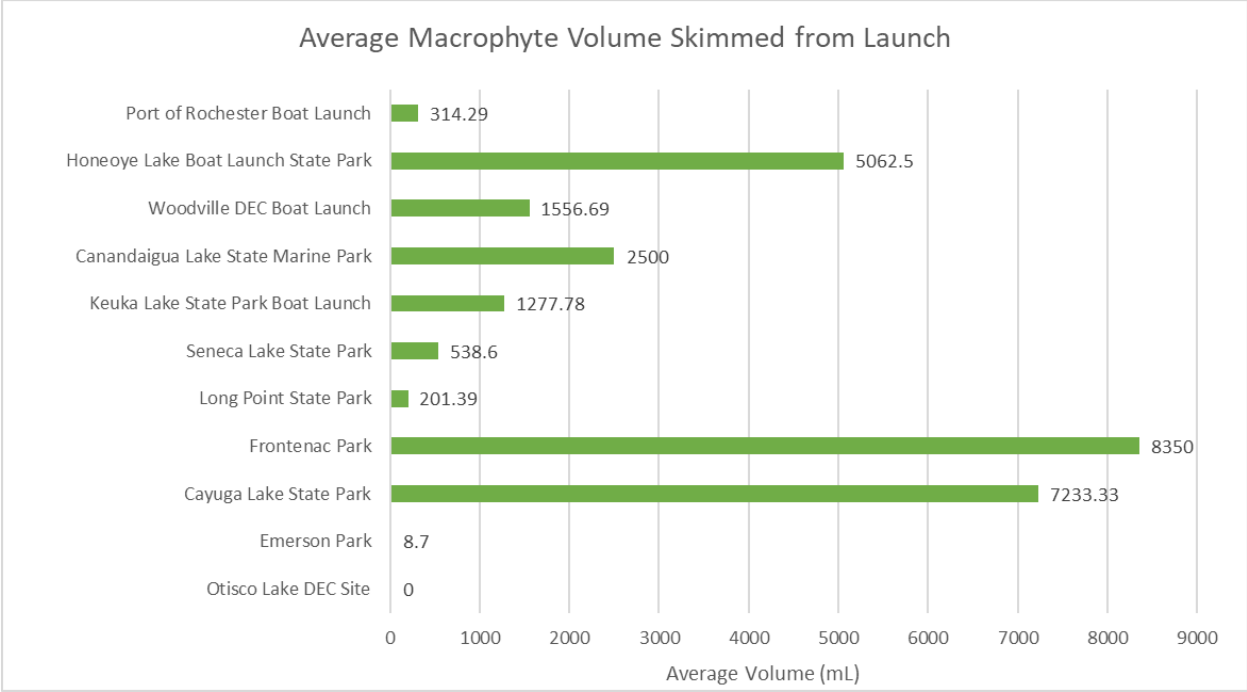


Figure 12. The average macrophyte volume (ml) skimmed by FLI watercraft inspection stewards at each of the 11 skim designated launches during the 2025 field season.

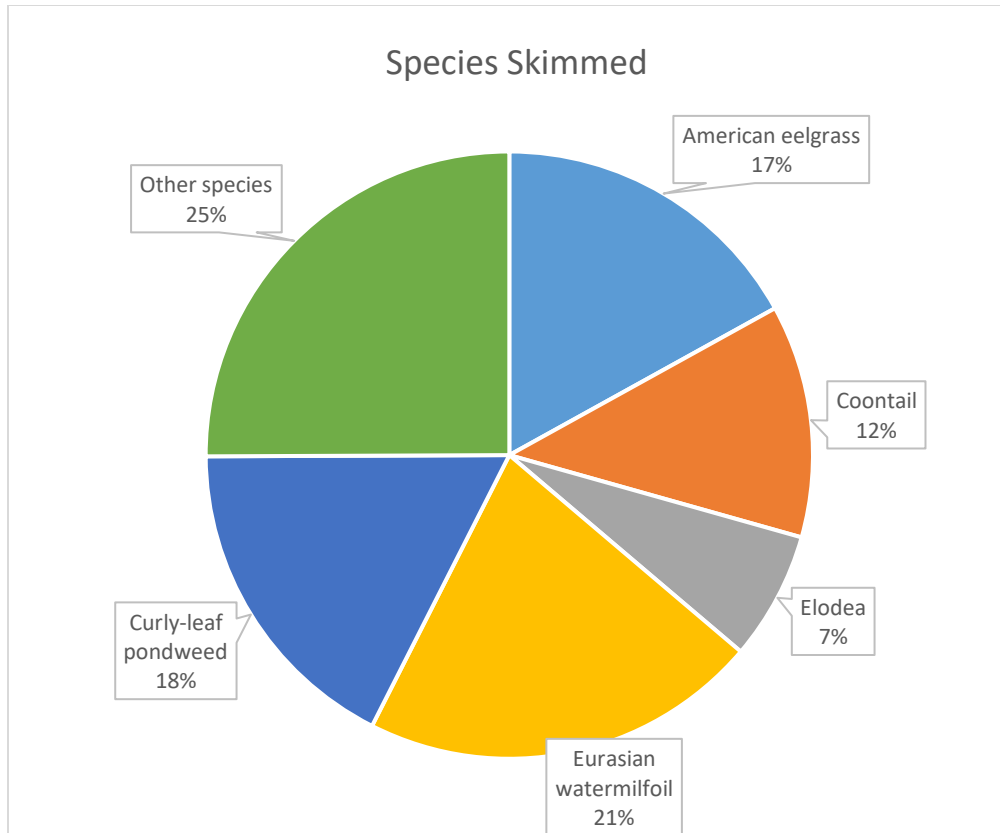


Figure 13. The percentage of species skimmed by FLI stewards across all sites selected for skimming during the 2025 field season.

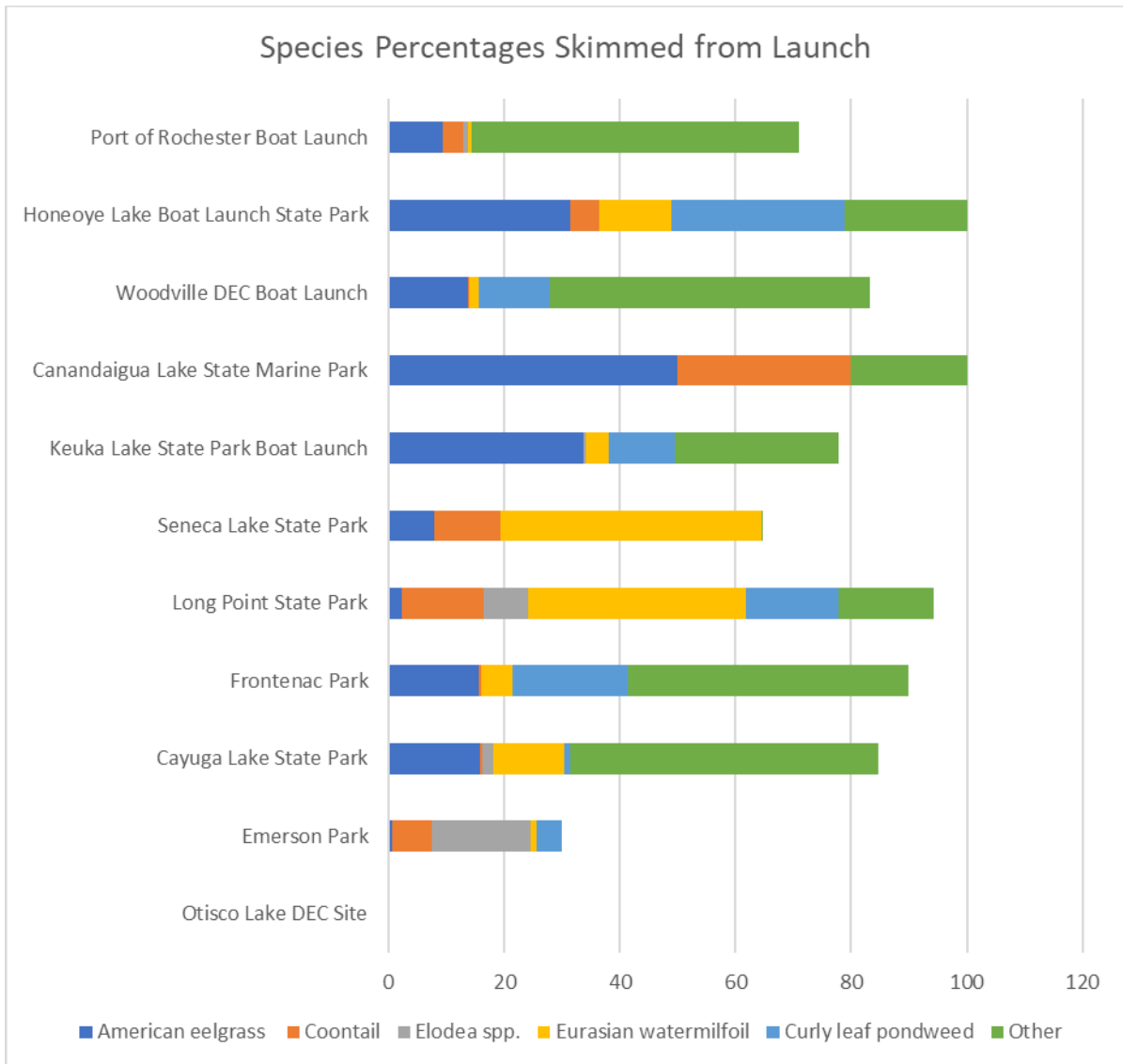


Figure 14. The average percentage of each species skimmed by FLI watercraft inspection stewards at each of the 11 skim designated launches during the 2025 field season.

Photos



Photo 1. Fragment of hydrilla collected on July 28 at Long Point State Park boat launch by an FLI watercraft steward.



Photo 2. Rusty crayfish found on September 6 at Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park by a watercraft inspection steward.



Photo 3. Decon steward decontaminating a boat at Canandaigua Lake State Marine Park.



Photo 4. FLI stewards pulling water chestnut in the Montezuma Audubon area of the Montezuma Wetland Complex, July 23.



Photo 5. Watercraft inspection steward participating in the macrophyte survey program (MSP) at Penn Yan village boat launch.