

Lake Minnewashta

What the Monitoring Tells Us

Inspections, aquatic plants, and the health of the lake

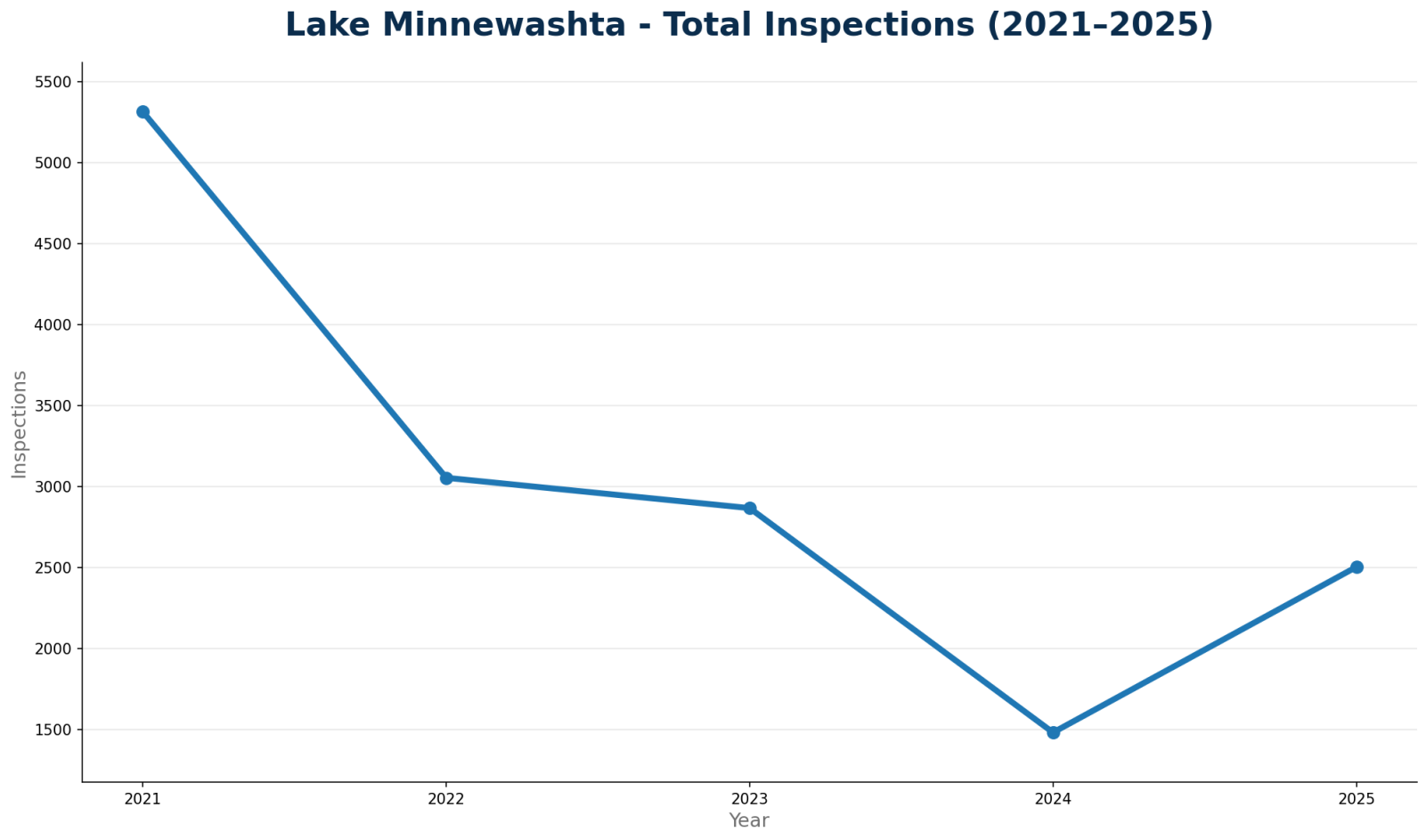
Watercraft inspections • Native vegetation • Aquatic invasive species

Andrew Dickhart | Carver County Planning & Water Management

Lake Minnewashta Preservation Association | Oct. 11, 2026

Watercraft inspections | Overall activity

2021–2025 | Public access inspection records

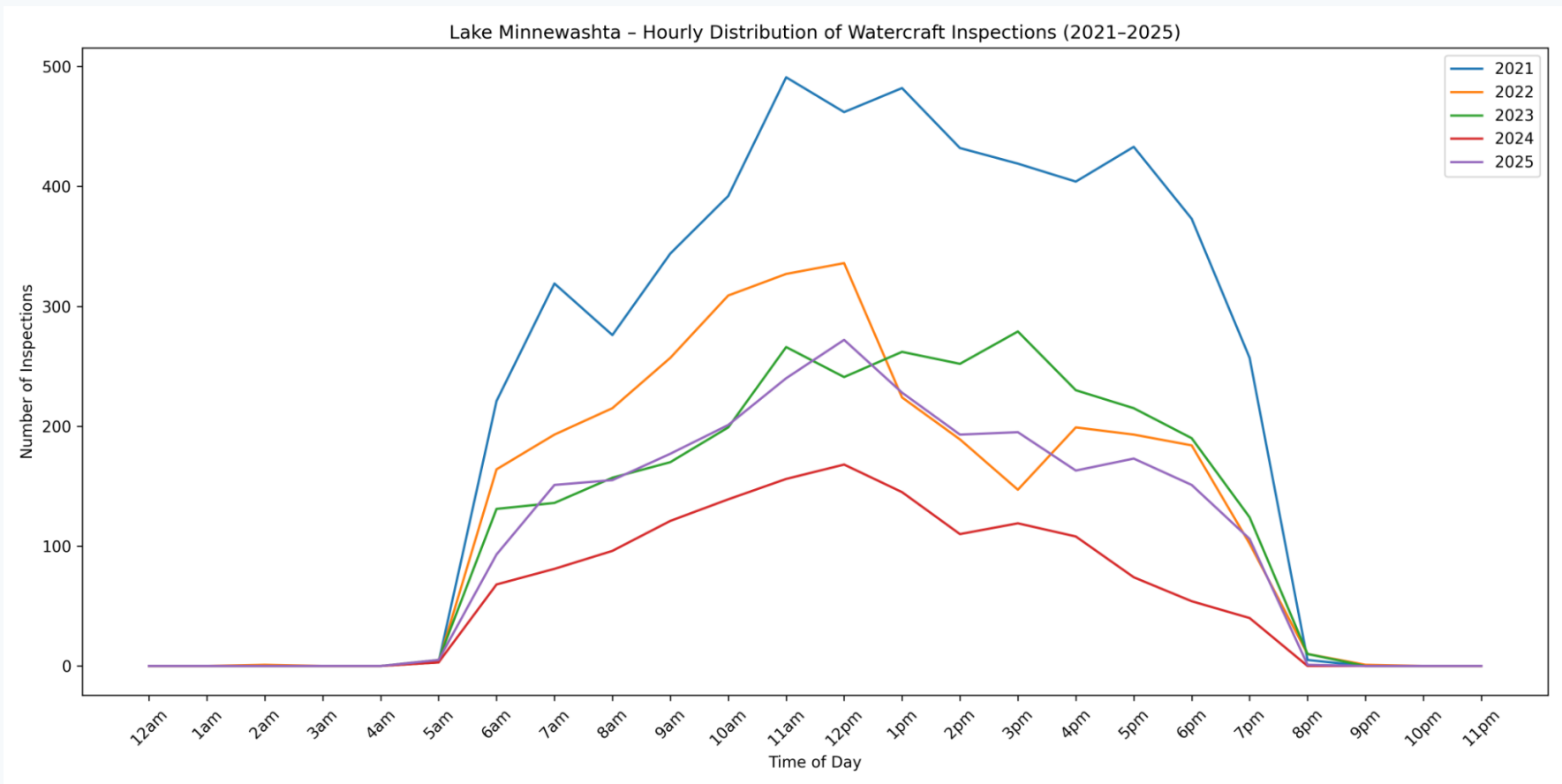


Activity fell through 2024 and partially recovered in 2025.

Source: Carver County watercraft inspection records, 2021–2025.

Watercraft inspections | When boats arrive

2021–2025 | Hourly distribution of recorded inspections

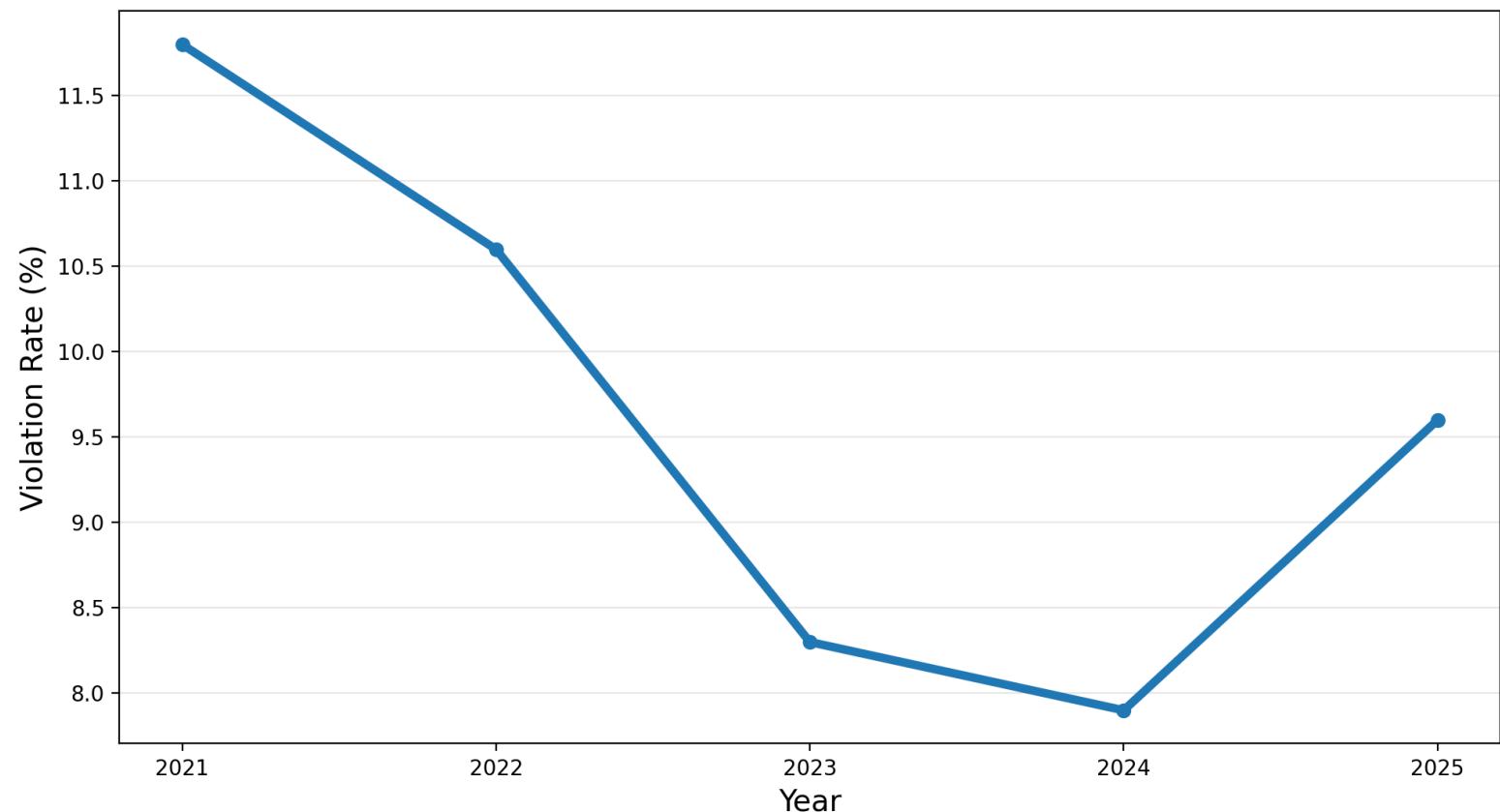


Source: Carver County watercraft inspection records, 2021–2025.

Watercraft inspections | Incoming AIS risk

2021–2025 | Percentage of entering inspections with an AIS-related violation

Minnewashta Lake – AIS Violation Rate on Entering Inspections (2021–2025)



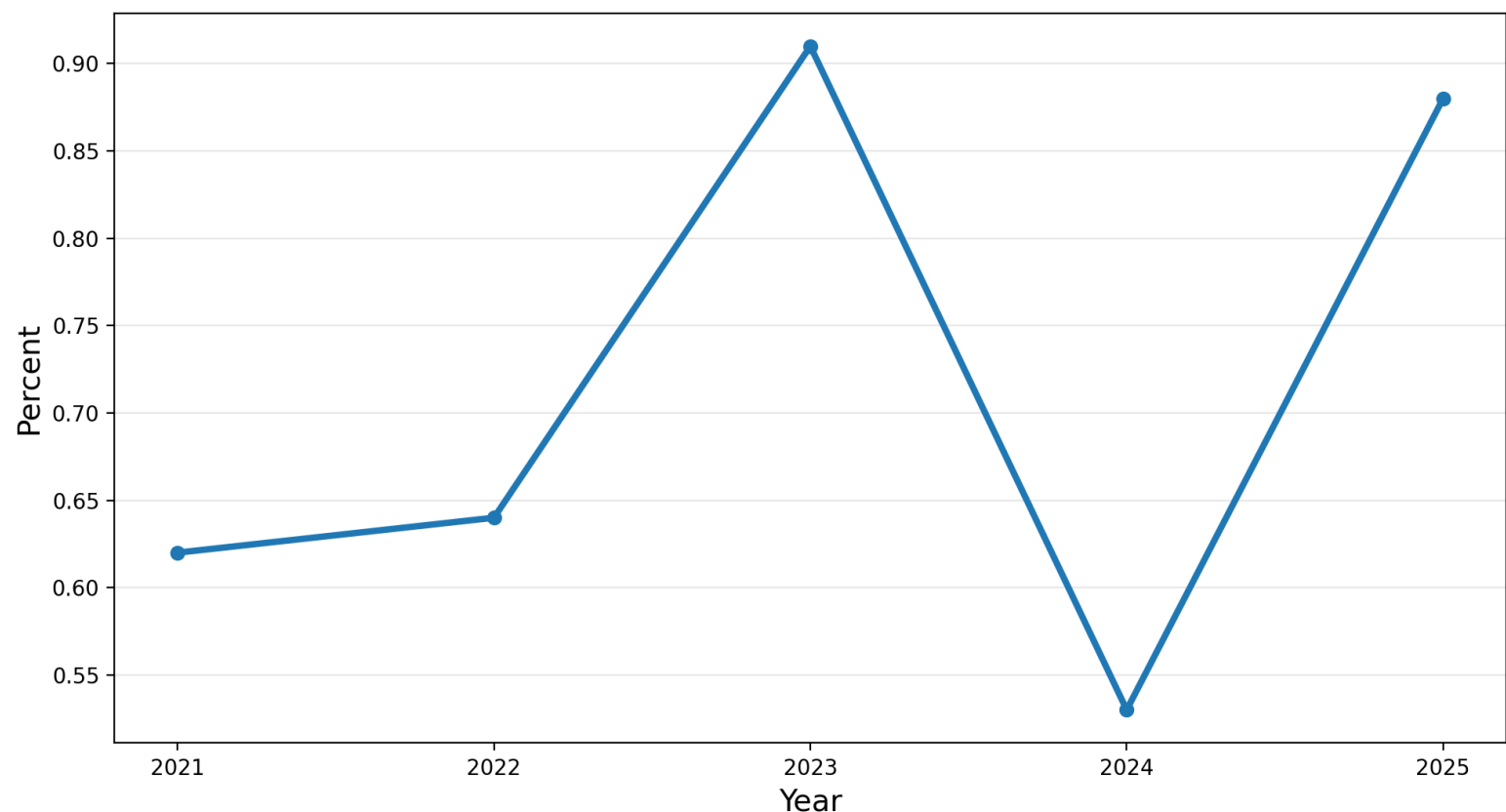
AIS-related issues continue to be found on incoming watercraft.

Source: Carver County entering-watercraft inspection records, 2021–2025.

Watercraft inspections | Drain plugs

2021–2025 | Drain-plug violation rate

Lake Minnewashta - Drain Plug Violation Rate (%) (2021-2025)



Drain-plug violations remained below 1% in each of these five seasons.

Source: Carver County watercraft inspection records, 2021–2025.

How we monitor the aquatic plant community

Three complementary approaches — and why timing matters

Spring delineations

Curly-leaf pondweed

Map curly-leaf pondweed during its early growing season.

Summer point-intercept

Native + invasive plants

Describe which native and invasive plants are present in summer.

AIS monitoring

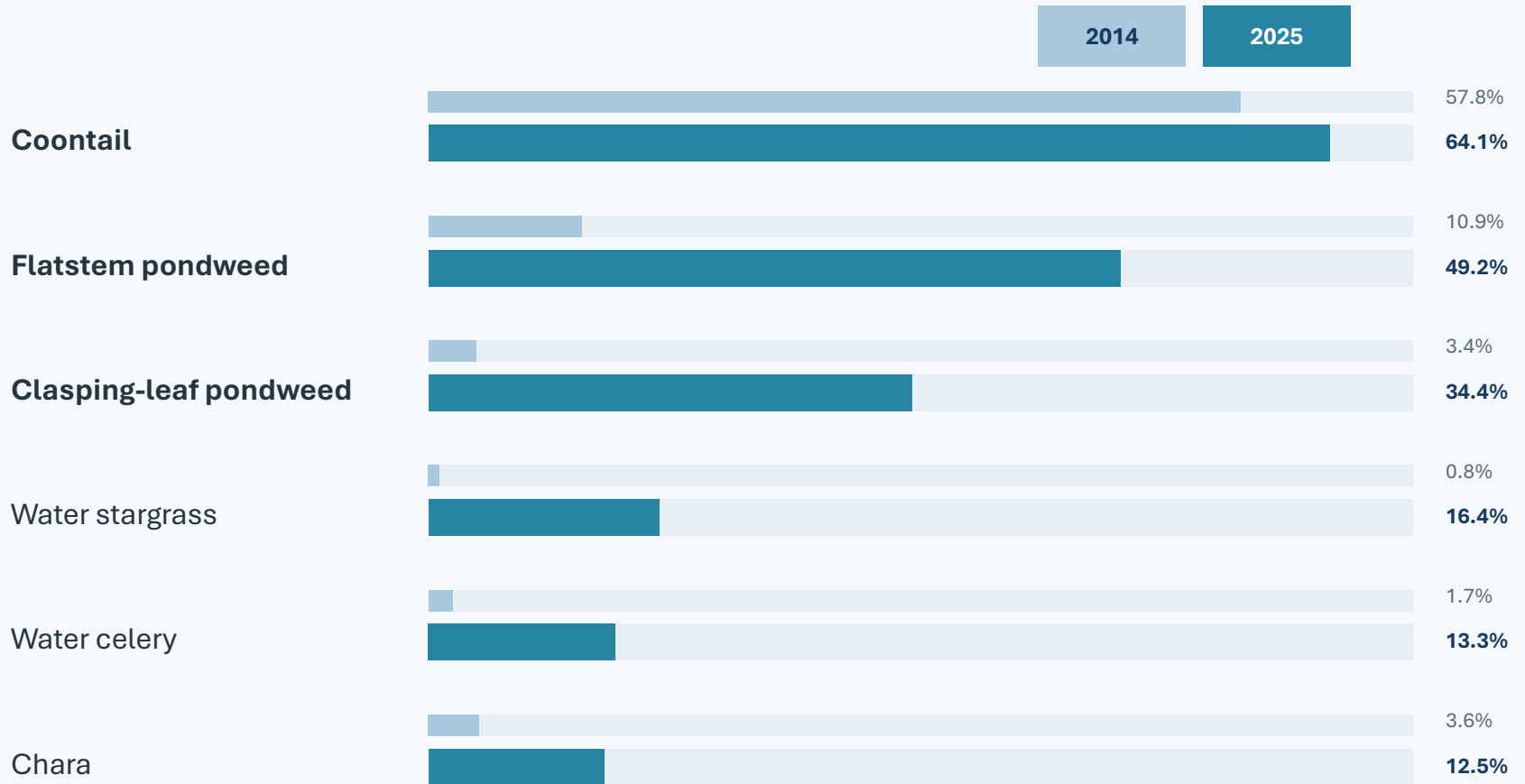
Milfoil and new species

Document localized milfoil and other AIS detections.

Same lake, different survey purposes: timing and sampling design affect comparisons.

Native vegetation | Encouraging observations

Selected species: frequency at sampled stations ≤15 ft, 2014 vs. July 2025

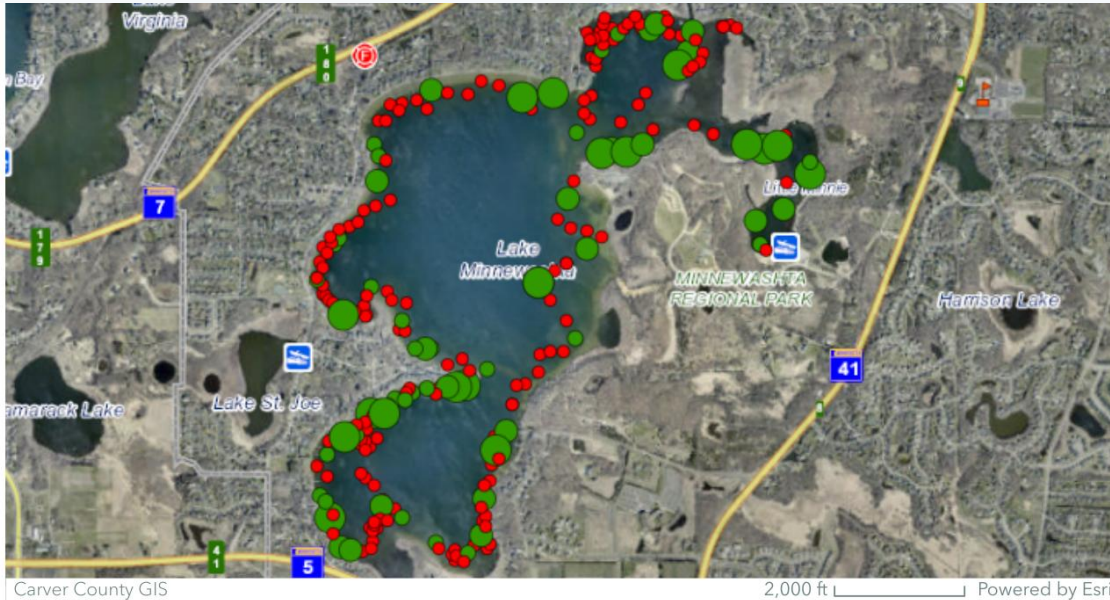


Several native species were found much more often in the 2025 survey.

Source: 2014 and July 2025 Lake Minnewashta point-intercept survey comparison; see methodology note.

The native plant community is worth protecting

Coontail remains widespread; many native pondweeds and other species were documented in 2025



2025 Minnewashta Native Distribution and Abundance

Spring snapshot

68

of 240 sites with native plants

April is early for many native species.

A healthy lake includes native plants — not just an absence of invasives.

Source: Carver County, April 2025 CLP delineation (native vegetation map); July 2025 PI survey.

Eurasian watermilfoil | A much smaller problem today

Comparison of shallow-water point-intercept observations, 2014 vs. July 2025

2014

14.0%

of shallow survey points

2025

2.3%

of shallow survey points

Years of targeted management have kept Eurasian watermilfoil from becoming a major nuisance.

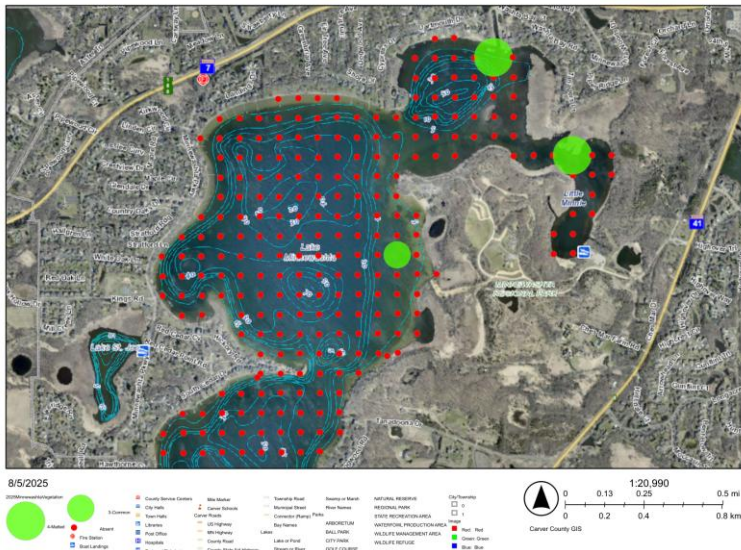
Source: 2014 and 2025 Lake Minnewashta point-intercept survey comparison.

Where milfoil was observed in 2025

Mapped detections were limited rather than lake-wide

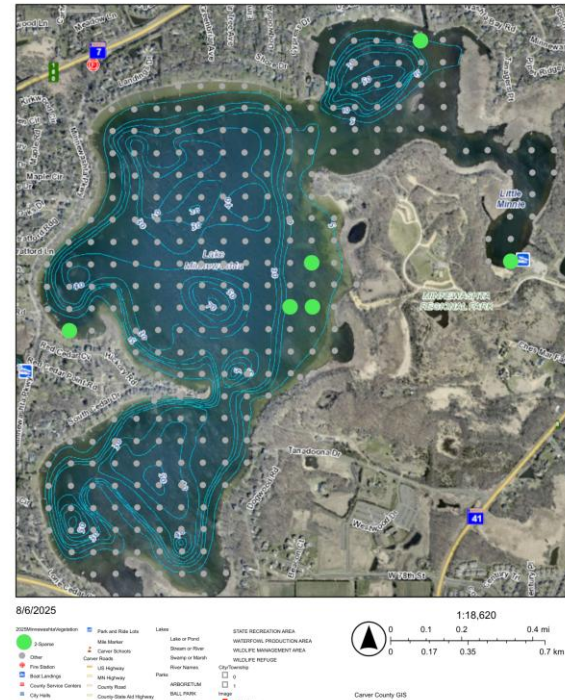
Eurasian watermilfoil

2025 Minnewashta-Eurasian Watermilfoil



Suspected hybrid watermilfoil

2025 Minnewashta- Hybrid watermilfoil

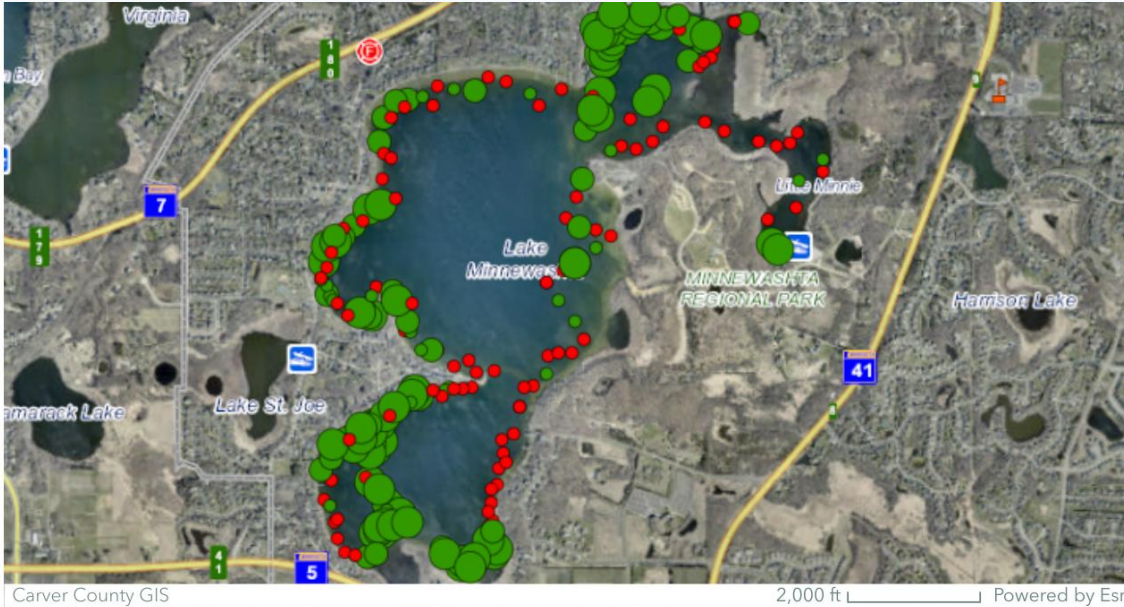


Hybrid labels here are field identifications, not genetic confirmation.

Source: Carver County 2025 GIS maps, August 5–6, 2025.

Curly-leaf pondweed | Still widespread

Spring delineation, April 25, 2025



2025 Minnewashta CLP Distribution and Abundance

141 / 240

sampling sites with CLP

59%

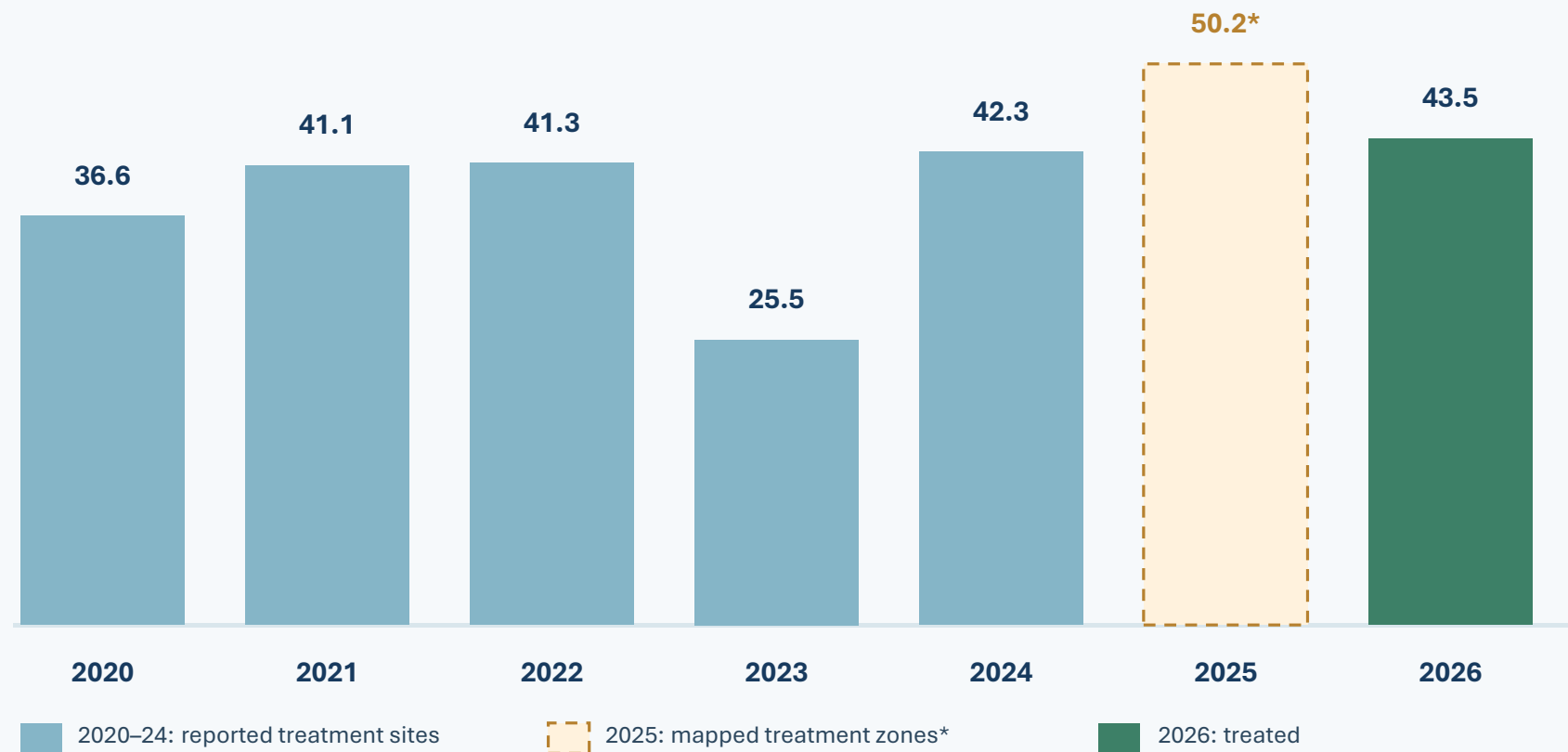
Detected to 11 ft; most abundant shallower than 6 ft.

Spring delineations capture curly-leaf before its typical summer decline.

Source: Carver County 2025 curly-leaf pondweed delineation, April 29 report.

Curly-leaf pondweed | Management history

2020–2026 | Reported management areas (acres)



* 2025: 50.18 acres mapped for treatment; actual treated acreage has not been verified.

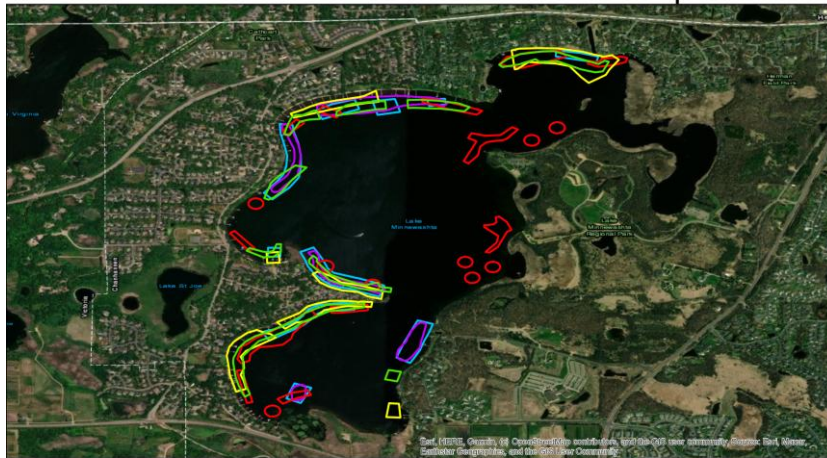
Sources: Lake Restoration CLP five-year recap (2020–24); 2025 treatment-zone map; 2026 AIS management review.

CLP management locations | 2020–2025

Treatment footprints are persistent, but locations and acreage can change

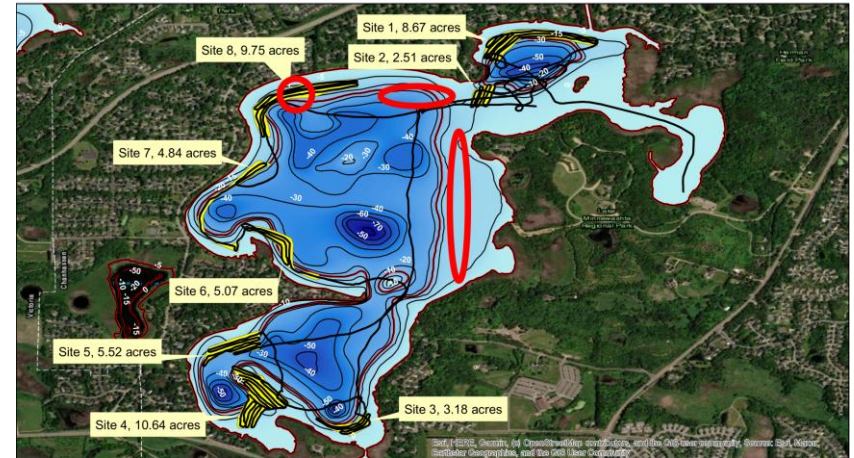
2020–2024 treatment-site overlay

Lake Minnewashta 5 Year CLP Recap



2025 treatment zones — 50.18 ac

Minnewashta CLP 2025

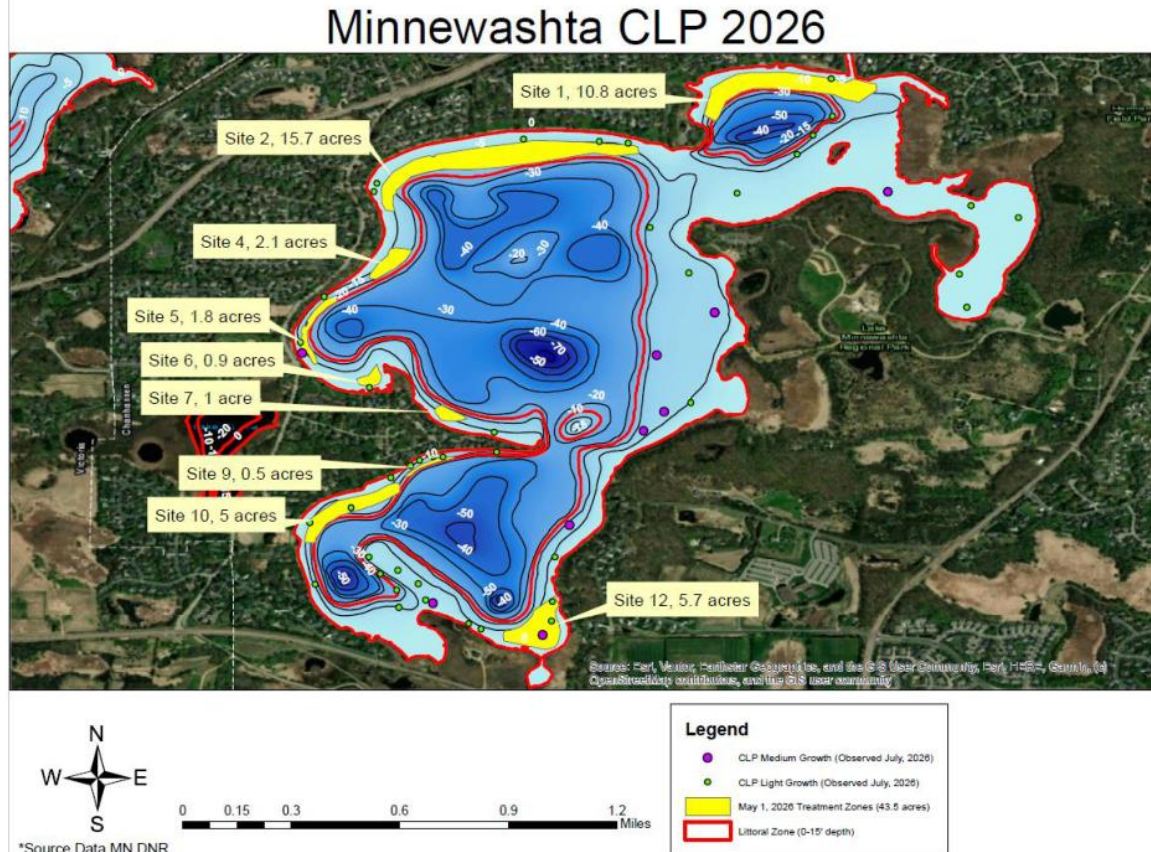


These are management maps — not directly comparable maps of total CLP distribution.

Sources: Lake Restoration five-year CLP recap (2020–2024) and 2025 CLP treatment-zone map.

Curly-leaf pondweed | 2026 update

Lake Restoration reports 43.5 acres treated in 2026



43.5 ac

reported treated

11.7%

of 371-acre littoral area

Source: Lake Restoration, "2026 AIS Management Overview & 2027 Recommendations," pp. 2-3.

Why curly-leaf pondweed is so persistent

Life history and lake conditions make long-term control challenging

1

Early-season advantage

Starts growing in fall and under ice; grows rapidly before many native plants.

2

Turions in sediment

Hardy overwintering buds can sprout in future years, even after successful treatment.

3

Variable conditions

Ice and snow, clarity, nutrients, and survey timing can change what we observe.

The challenge: suppress nuisance growth while protecting the native plant community.

Sources: MN DNR invasive aquatic plant guidance; Verhoeven et al. (2020), Minnesota lake study.

Curly-leaf management | How much is enough?

Lake Minnewashta 2026: a choice between targeted control and a broader LVMP approach

371 ac

littoral area

80–100 ac

estimated CLP extent

43.5 ac

treated in 2026

Targeted annual management

Prioritize dense stands and recreation areas. Smaller treatment footprint; recurring work likely remains.

Lake Vegetation Management Plan

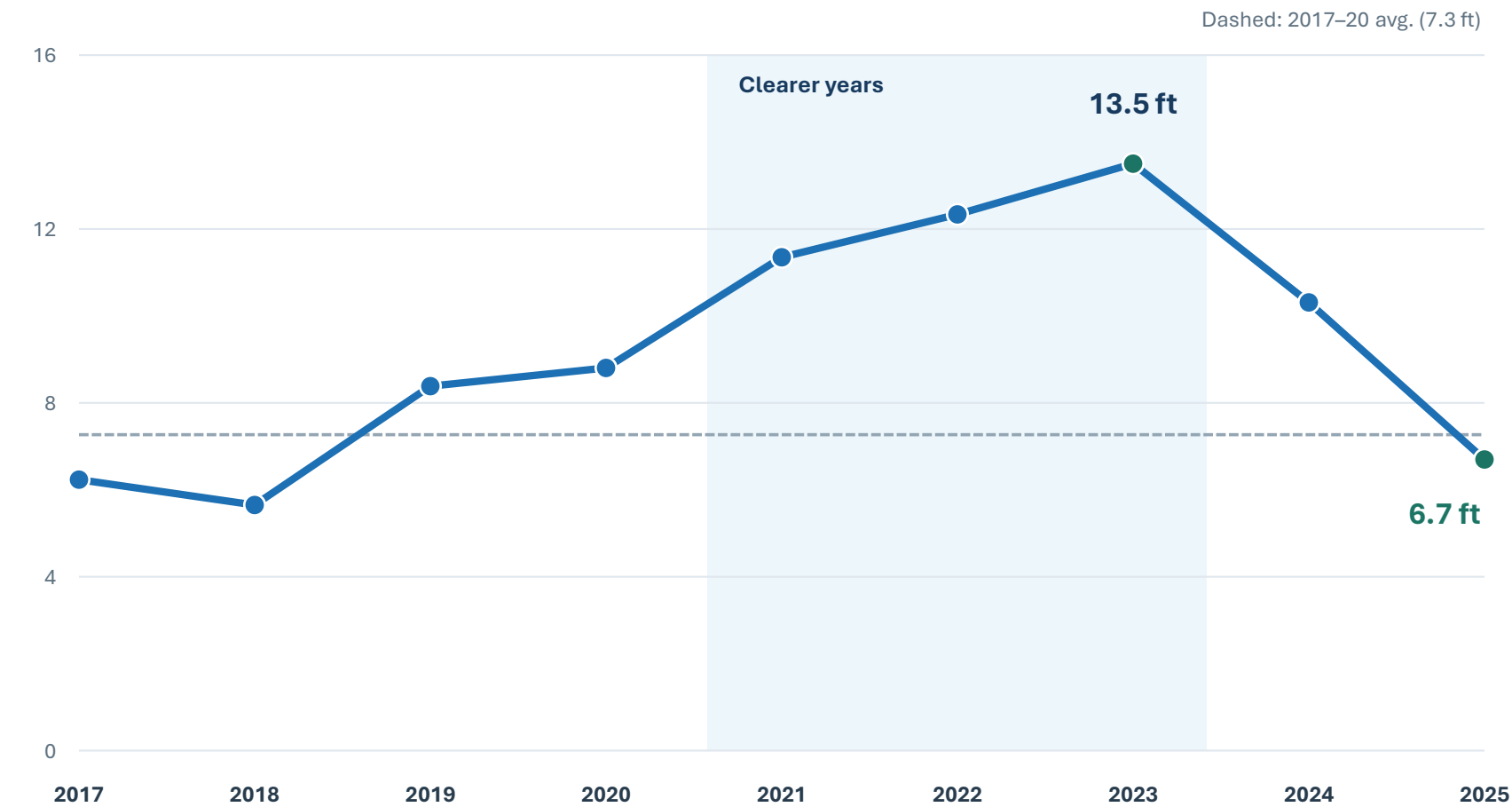
Consider a larger, monitored treatment program with DNR review. More acreage alone is not proof of ecological benefit.

Before expanding treatment: define success — navigation, CLP suppression, native plants, or water quality?

Sources: Lake Restoration 2026 AIS review, pp. 2–5; Minnesota DNR variance guidance.

Water clarity has returned near earlier levels

Average summer Secchi depth (feet), 2017–2025

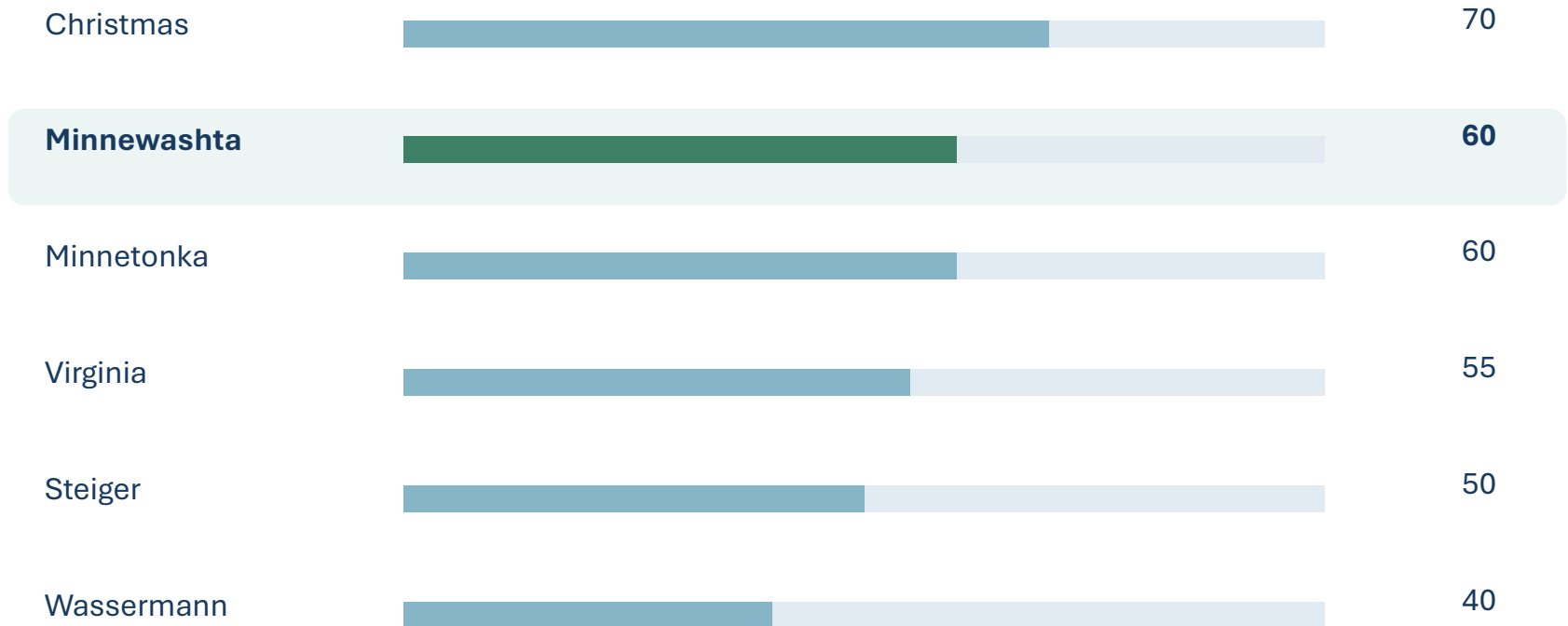


2025 clarity was similar to 2017–2020, after much clearer conditions in 2021–2023.

Source: MPCA Lake Minnewashta, station 10-0009-00-205. June–September mean of 5–10 Secchi observations per year.

How does Minnewashta compare locally?

DNR overall lake-health scores (0–100) | Familiar west metro / Carver area lakes



Minnewashta: 60/100 (C+) • Water quality: 52 • Biology: 53 • Hydrology: 79

Source: MN DNR WHAF: Lakes, Mississippi River–Twin Cities watershed. Nearby examples, not a size/depth-matched study.

What the monitoring tells us

Three takeaways for the Lake Minnewashta Preservation Association

1

Prevention still matters

Incoming watercraft continue to arrive with AIS-related issues.

2

Native vegetation is a strength

Several native species are much more frequently detected in the 2025 shallow-water survey.

3

Manage what remains

Milfoil remains limited; curly-leaf is a recurring challenge, and biological indicators deserve continued attention.

Continue consistent surveys so changes in extent, density, and the native community can be evaluated over time.

Sources: Carver County inspections and vegetation surveys; Lake Restoration treatment maps.

Disclaimer: This presentation was prepared for informational purposes and summarizes data from multiple sources. Some information has not been independently verified, and minor inaccuracies or inconsistencies may be present. Readers are encouraged to consult original data sources before citing or relying on specific findings.