

Apalachicola (APA) NERR Nutrient Metadata
January – December 2008
Latest Update: July 11, 2013

I. Data Set and Research Descriptors

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2) Research objectives

Previous studies have shown the importance of river flow and flushing rates on nutrients and primary productivity in the bay. Similar studies have determined nitrogen and phosphorus budgets for Apalachicola Bay as well as nutrient limitations related to seasonality and riverflow. There has been an ongoing controversy between the States of Florida, Georgia, and Alabama over the upstream diversion of water for 19 years. Approximately 88% of the drainage basin for the Apalachicola River and Bay is located in Georgia and Alabama and historical flows are being threatened by upstream development. A tri-state compact, between the states and approved by the US Congress, required negotiations between the states to develop a water allocation formula. The states were unable to come to an agreement, the compact has expired, and legal proceedings, which could end up in the US Supreme Court, are underway. This study is one of many looking at short-term variability, long-term change, and the relationship of other environmental factors to the productivity of the Apalachicola Bay system as well as trying to separate natural from man-made variability.

a) Monthly Grab

Monthly grab samples are collected at 11 sites located across Apalachicola Bay to monitor spatial and temporal fluctuations in nutrient/chlorophyll *a* concentrations occurring in diverse sections of the bay. The stations have been chosen to help determine the influence of the river, local rainfall, adjacent habitats and man's impact on these parameters. Sampling sites are located in the lower Apalachicola River, in the coastal area, offshore of the barrier islands, at the SWMP datalogger locations, and throughout the bay. Seasonal, climatic, and anthropogenic factors all impact riverflow, which in turn affects nutrient/ chlorophyll *a* concentrations in the bay. Nutrient/chlorophyll *a* concentrations are also influenced by tidal action, wind direction and speed, and the hydrodynamics of the system.

b) Diel Sampling Program

Diel sampling is performed once a month in conjunction with grab sampling for nutrients/ chlorophyll *a*. The East Bay Surface water quality datalogger site (apaesnut) is utilized each month for placement of the sampler so that temporal water quality data may be compared with the spatial nutrient/ chlorophyll *a* data collected at this site. Studies by the Reserve and others have shown the influence of tidal action and runoff on other physical parameters in the bay.

3) Research methods

a) Monthly Grab Sampling Program

Monthly grab samples are collected at eleven stations (see Table 1) within and adjacent to Apalachicola Bay. Weather permitting, all grab samples are collected on the same day. Due to the distance between the stations it is not always possible to collect all the samples several hours prior to low tide. Tidal condition, wind direction, speed, and cloud cover are recorded for each station at the time of sampling but are not included in this dataset and are available upon request. Climatic data from the ANERR weather station is available online at <http://cdmo.baruch.sc.edu/QueryPages/googlemap.cfm>. Sampling after heavy rains is avoided if at all possible. Water temperature, salinity, and dissolved oxygen are measured at surface and bottom for each station with a YSI 85 handheld meter. Surface measurements only are included in this dataset for temperature, salinity and dissolved oxygen, with the exception of the East Bay Bottom (apaebnut), Cat Point (apacpnut), and Dry Bar (apadbnut) stations which report bottom measurements. Bottom measurements not contained in this dataset for temperature, salinity, and dissolved oxygen are available on request. pH is also measured and is available on request. Turbidity samples are collected at each site and are tested in the ANERR lab with a DRT-15CE Turbidimeter.

i) Grab sample collection:

A horizontal Van Dorn-style sampler is used to collect 2.2 liters of water from a depth of 0.5 meters at all stations not associated with a SWMP datalogger site. At the Cat Point and Dry Bar SWMP datalogger stations, water samples are collected at a depth of approximately 2 and 1.5 meters (one-half meter from the bottom) respectively, a depth equivalent to the probes of the data loggers deployed at these sites. At the East Bay datalogger station water samples are collected from surface (0.5 meters) and bottom (1.5 meters) depths, equivalent to the depths of the two dataloggers deployed at this site. Triplicate samples are collected each month at one station, rotating through all station locations. The triplicate samples are collected with subsequent dips of the horizontal sampler.

ii) Grab sample filtration and handling:

Water from the Van Dorn sampler is delivered into a polyethylene graduated cylinder. A preliminary discard rinse is performed to flush the sampler spigot and also to rinse the graduated cylinder. The water sample is then filtered through a GFF filter. The GFF filter for chlorophyll *a* analysis is wrapped in aluminum foil and frozen in the dark until delivered to the UF laboratory. The filtrate is split between two acid washed and rinsed polyethylene bottles, provided by the UF laboratory. One bottle contains unpreserved filtrate, the other bottle contains 5N H₂SO₄ as preservative. Both bottles are placed on ice in the dark until delivery to the UF laboratory. All filtration funnels and containers are rinsed with DI water at

least 3 times in between samples. A field blank is also run each month, using DI water for sample blank. The field blank is filtered as described above. From January through May 2008 all grab samples were delivered on ice to UF laboratory via overnight courier. From June through December 2008 all grab samples were delivered to UF laboratory via UF staff on the same day as collection.

b) Diel Sampling Program

Diel sampling is performed with an ISCO 3700 Portable Automated Sampler at the East Bay surface (apaesnut) station. Whenever possible, the ISCO is deployed on the same day that the bay-wide grab samples are collected. The sampler is programmed to collect one 1000 ml water sample every 2.5 hours, over a 25-hour period at the same depth as the East Bay surface datalogger probes (1.7 m above the bottom sediment). This captures a complete 24 hr: 48min lunar-tidal cycle. The ISCO sampler is programmed to purge the suction line before and after each sample collection. The center of the ISCO sampler is filled with ice to aid in sample preservation. All samples are placed in coolers of ice upon retrieval of the ISCO sampler at the end of the sampling period. When conditions permit diel samples are filtered in the field following the same procedure as described above for grab samples. Otherwise all diel samples are stored on ice in the dark and are filtered at ANERR laboratory within 3 hours of retrieval from the ISCO sampler. GFF filters are stored frozen in the dark. Filtrate samples are held on ice in the dark. From January through May 2008 all diel samples were delivered on ice to UF laboratory via overnight courier. From June through December 2008 all diel samples were delivered to UF laboratory via UF staff on the same day as collection.

c) Equipment QAQC and maintenance – Grab and Diel Sampling Program:

The horizontal Varn Dorn sampler is thoroughly rinsed with tap water after each sampling trip. Spare parts for the sampler are kept on hand and replaced as needed. Filtration funnels, receivers, and graduated cylinders are acid washed with 10% HCl and rinsed at least 3 times with DI water after each sampling trip. Diel sample collection bottles used in the ISCO automated sampler are acid washed and rinsed at least 3 times with DI water after each sampling trip. The ISCO automated sampler is flushed with tap water after each monthly sampling event. The overall condition of the pump and tubing is checked each month prior to deployment, tubing is replaced as needed. Bottles used to hold sample filtrate, both preserved and unpreserved, are supplied and cleaned by UF laboratory. The YSI 85, pH meter, and Turbidimeter are calibrated each day of use.

4) Site location and character

The Apalachicola Drainage Basin encompasses over 19,600 square miles and includes parts of three states (Alabama, Georgia, and Florida). Apalachicola Bay lies at the terminus of the Apalachicola River, which originates at the northern border of Florida at the confluence of the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers. The Apalachicola River is the largest in Florida in terms of flow. The amount of river discharge has been shown to be highly significant to the ecology of the estuary, which acts as a buffer between the Gulf of Mexico and fresh water input from upland areas. The nutrient rich plume of "green water" moving out of Apalachicola Bay is also important to the productivity of the northeastern Gulf of Mexico. The Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve is located in the northwestern part of Florida, generally called the panhandle. It is located adjacent to the City of Apalachicola, and encompasses most of the Apalachicola Bay system, including 52 miles of the lower Apalachicola River. Passes, both natural and manmade, connect Apalachicola Bay to the northeastern Gulf of Mexico.

Urban and suburban areas account for only about five percent of the entire Apalachicola watershed, less than two percent within the Florida portion of the basin. Approximately 29% of the watershed is agricultural lands, primarily in Georgia and Alabama. In the Apalachicola basin nutrient concentrations typically decrease as surface water flows downstream due to settling of sediments and detritus, dilution from tributaries, and uptake by phytoplankton and SAV in reservoirs in the Georgia portion of the basin.

112,000 acres within Apalachicola Bay are Class II Shellfish Harvesting Waters. Typically the bay is affected only by non-point source sources of pollution resulting in harvesting closures related to runoff during rainfall events and high river flow.

The communities of Apalachicola and Eastpoint, located adjacent to Apalachicola Bay, each maintain municipal sewage treatment facilities. County residents located outside these communities, including all residences on St George Island, utilize on-site aerobic or anaerobic disposal systems.

Information on SWMP and secondary SWMP nutrient monitoring stations is included below and in Table 1. A map of station locations is give in Figure 1.

a) East Bay datalogger and nutrient station

East Bay is separated from Apalachicola Bay by two bridges and a causeway and is located to the north of the bay proper. The bay is 8.2 km long, has an average depth of approximately 1.0 m MHW, and an average width of 1.8 km. The tides in East Bay are mixed and range from 0.3 m to 1.0 m (average 0.5 m). The datalogger and nutrient sampling site is located in the upper reaches of East Bay. The piling location for the two East Bay dataloggers (ES and EB) is latitude 29°47.15' N and longitude 84°52.52' W (29.7858 N, 84.8752 W). At the sampling site, the depth is 2.2 m MHW and the width of the bay is 1 km. The tides in the system are mixed, meaning the number of tides can range from one to five tides during a 24 hour period and are not evenly distributed throughout the day. At the East Bay bottom site the datalogger probes are 0.3 m above the bottom sediment. Salinity ranges from 0 to 30 ppt and the long-term average salinity is approximately 8 ppt. At the East Bay surface site the meter probes are 1.7 m above the bottom sediment and salinity ranges from 0 ppt to 30 ppt with a long term average salinity of 6.3 ppt. The freshwater input is very tannic and usually dark colored. Flows vary with local rainfall and are not quantified due to the diverse sources of the runoff. The bottom habitat at this bay site is soft sediment, primarily silt and clay, with no vegetation present. The dominant marsh vegetation near the sampling site (approximately 300 meters away) is *Juncus roemerianus* and *Cladium jamaicense*. The dominant upland vegetation is primarily pineland forests which includes slash pine, saw palmetto, and sand pine. Upland land use near the sampling site includes conservation and silviculture uses with some single family residential in the lower East Bay area. The sampling site is influenced by local runoff from Tate's Hell Swamp, the East Bay marshes, and distributary flow, some of which comes from the Apalachicola River via the East River. Tate's Hell Swamp was ditched, diked, and altered in the late 1960's and early 1970's by timber companies. These changes shortened the drainage period and allowed increased runoff with a concomitant decrease in pH and increase in color, which had a drastic affect on the biological communities in East Bay. Restoration of Tate's Hell Swamp began in 1995 to reduce non-point source runoff and restore historic sheet flow in the area.

b) Cat Point datalogger and nutrient station

The Cat Point datalogger and nutrient sampling site is located in St. George Sound, approximately 400 meters east of the St. George Island Bridge. The piling location is latitude 29°42.12' N and longitude 84°52.81' W (29.7021 N, 84.8802 W). The tides at Cat Point are mixed and range from 0.3m to 1.0m (average 0.5m). At the sampling site, the depth is 2.5 m MHW. (The site was moved approximately 600 meters south in October 1997) and the width of the bay is 4 miles. At the Cat Point site the meter probes are 0.3 meters above the bottom sediment. This is also the depth where nutrients are collected monthly. Salinity ranges from 0 to 32 ppt with an average salinity of 20.9 ppt.. Flows vary with local rainfall and are not quantified due to the diverse sources of the runoff. The bottom type is oyster bar with no vegetation present except algae growing on the oysters in the summer. The dominant upland vegetation is primarily pineland forests, which include slash pine, saw palmetto, and sand pine. Upland land use near the sampling site, includes single family residential and commercial use in the Eastpoint area. The sampling site is influenced by local runoff from Tate's Hell Swamp and flow from the Apalachicola River. High salinity water comes mainly from the east, through East Pass at the eastern end of St. George Island.

c) Dry Bar datalogger and nutrient station

The Dry Bar datalogger and nutrient sampling site is located near St. Vincent Sound, in the western part of the Apalachicola Bay system, approximately one-half mile east of St. Vincent Island. The piling location is latitude 29°40.48' N and longitude 85°03.50' W (29.6747 N, 85.0583 W). At the sampling site, the depth is 2 meters and the width of the bay is 7 miles. At the Dry Bar site the datalogger probes are located 0.3 meters above the bottom sediment. This is also the depth where nutrients are collected monthly. The tides are mixed and range from 0.3 to 1.0 meters. Salinity ranges from 0 to 34 ppt with an average salinity of 20.2 ppt. The bottom type is oyster bar with no vegetation present, except algae that grows on the oysters during the summer months. The dominant upland vegetation includes slash pine flatwoods with various combinations of gallberry, smooth cordgrass, fetterbush, cabbage palm, saw palmetto, magnolia, and grasses. Upland use near the sampling site includes state owned and managed Cape St. George Island, St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge, as well as, single family residential and commercial use in the Apalachicola area. The sampling site is influenced by the flow of the Apalachicola River and high salinity water coming through West Pass and Sikes Cut.

d) Secondary SWMP stations

West Pass

Salinity ave = 22.5 ppt, range = 1.8-36.0 ppt

This site is located in the pass between two uninhabited barrier islands, the state owned and managed Cape St. George Island and St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge. The sampling site is influenced by the flow of the Apalachicola River and high salinity water coming through West Pass.

Pilots Cove

Salinity ave = 22.9 ppt, range = 1.3-35.5 ppt

This site is located near state owned and managed Cape St. George Island, an uninhabited barrier island. The sampling site is influenced by the flow of the Apalachicola River and high salinity water coming through West Pass.

Mid Bay

Salinity ave = 16.3 ppt, range = 0.2-35.2 ppt

This sampling site is located in central Apalachicola Bay. The site is roughly equidistant from state owned and managed Cape St. George Island (four miles distant), St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge (six miles distant), and single family residential and commercial use in the Apalachicola area (four miles distant). This site is approximately 1.5 miles from the intracoastal waterway channel. The sampling site is influenced by the flow of the Apalachicola River and high salinity water coming through Sikes Cut and West Pass.

East Bay Bridge

Salinity ave = 7.9 ppt, range = 0-30.7 ppt

This site is located near the western section of the US Highway 98 bridge connecting Apalachicola and Eastpoint. The bridge also serves as the boundary line between East Bay and Apalachicola Bay. Nearby upland areas consist of residential and commercial use in Apalachicola and Eastpoint areas. The sampling site is influenced by flows from the Apalachicola River and tributaries including the Little St Marks river, St. Marks river, and East river.

Sikes Cut offshore

Salinity ave = 31.9 ppt, range 21.7-35.8 ppt

This site is selected to characterize true marine water, and is located south of Sikes Cut in the Gulf of Mexico. The site is near the eastern portion of state owned and managed Cape St. George Island and near the western end of St. George Island in an area consisting of single family and vacation homes. Sikes Cut allows tidal exchange of high salinity water from the Gulf of Mexico and lower salinity water from Apalachicola Bay. Sikes Cut is an important pass utilized by commercial and recreational vessels.

Nicks Hole

Salinity ave = 19.0, range = 0.5-35.4 ppt

This site is near single family and vacation home use on St George Island. A small airport utilized by private aircraft is also located near Nicks Hole. The site is tidally influenced by high salinity water from Sikes Cut and by flows from the Apalachicola River.

River

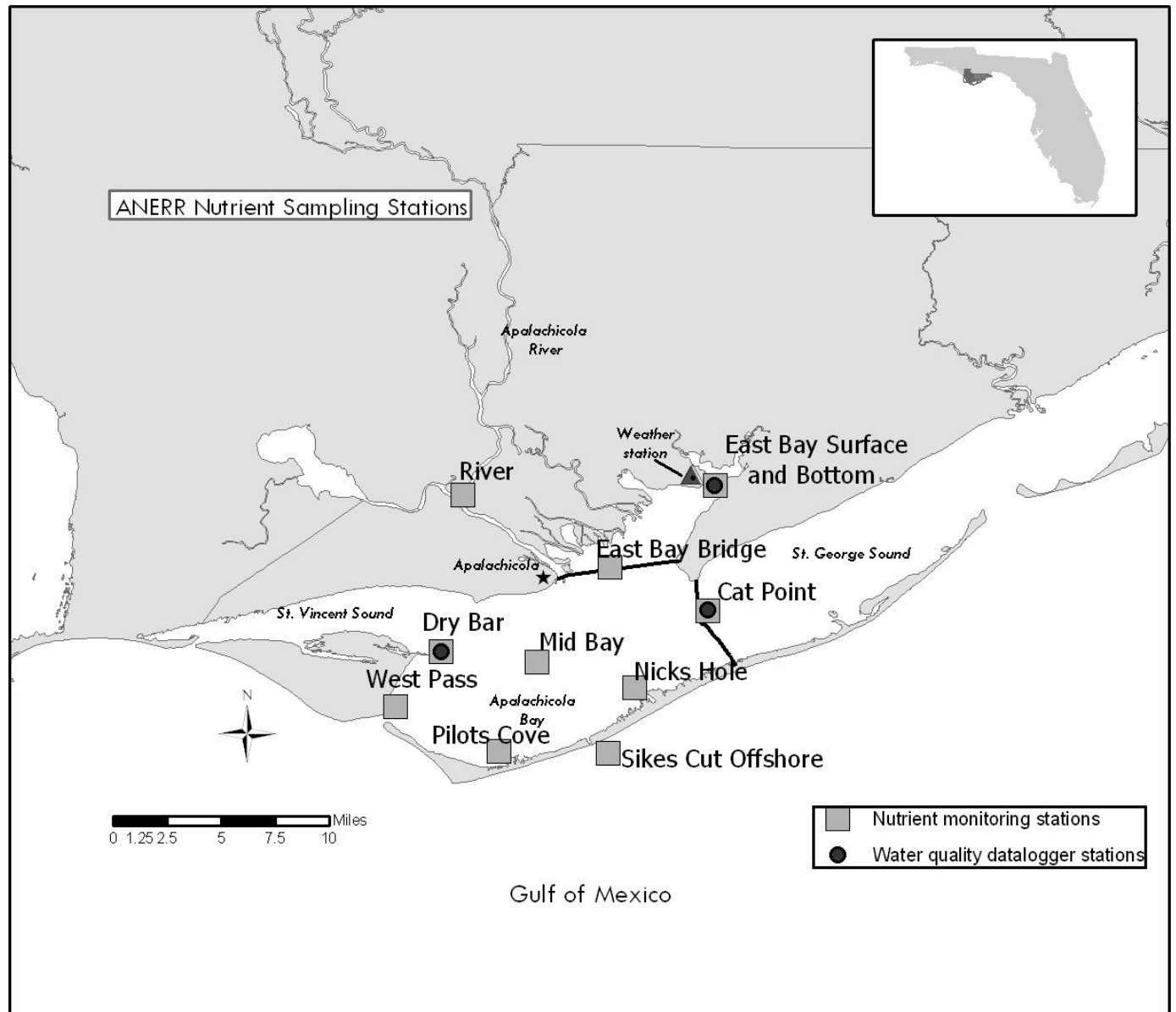
Salinity ave = 0.1, range = 0-0.1 ppt

This site is selected to characterize fresh water in the Apalachicola River. The site is located in the central channel of the river approximately 6 miles north and upstream of the river mouth and the residential and commercial areas of Apalachicola. Adjacent areas are state owned and managed forested floodplain. The site is influenced by Apalachicola River flow.

Table 1. SWMP and Secondary SWMP Nutrient and chlorophyll *a* sampling sites for the Apalachicola NERR.

[illegible]

Figure 1. Station locations.



5) Code variable definitions

Station code names:

apacpnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for Cat Point

apadbnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for Dry Bar

apaebnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for East Bay Bottom

apaegnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for East Bay Bridge

apaesnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for East Bay Surface

apambnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for Mid Bay

apanhnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for Nicks Hole

apapcnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for Pilots Cove

aparvnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for River
 apascnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for Sikes Cut
 apawpnut = Apalachicola Reserve nutrient data for West Pass

Monitoring Programs:

Monthly grab samples (1), Diel grab sampling (2).

6) Data collection period

Nutrient monitoring began in April 2002 at all stations listed. Sampling has been performed monthly at all stations, unless otherwise noted. This table lists collection times for all nutrient and chlorophyll *a* samples in 2008. The below Start and End time reflect the times that the first and last diel samples were collected for each monthly diel sampling event. Grab sample end time is not included as the time required to collect a grab sample is brief, on the order of three minutes from the time the sampler is dipped in the water to the time the sample is placed on ice. Time is coded based on a 2400 hour clock and is referenced to Eastern Standard Time (EST), without Daylight Savings Time adjustments.

a) Start Date and Time for Monitoring Program 1 (Grab Samples)

Site	Start Date/Time		Site	Start Date/Time		Site	Start Date/Time
apacpnut	01/06/2008 11:44		apadbnut	01/06/2008 10:20		apaebnut	01/06/2008 12:20
apacpnut	02/11/2008 11:40		apadbnut	02/11/2008 10:01		apaebnut	02/11/2008 08:17
apacpnut	03/11/2008 10:41		apadbnut	03/11/2008 09:02		apaebnut	03/11/2008 11:27
apacpnut	04/21/2008 08:36		apadbnut	04/21/2008 10:41		apaebnut	04/21/2008 12:11
apacpnut	05/13/2008 11:50		apadbnut	05/13/2008 10:14		apaebnut	05/13/2008 12:47
apacpnut	06/09/2008 08:36		apadbnut	06/09/2008 10:25		apaebnut	06/09/2008 07:44
apacpnut	07/08/2008 13:26		apadbnut	07/08/2008 15:01		apaebnut	07/08/2008 12:48
apacpnut	08/05/2008 07:56		apadbnut	08/05/2008 10:15		apaebnut	08/05/2008 12:34
apacpnut	09/08/2008 08:00		apadbnut	09/08/2008 10:24		apaebnut	09/08/2008 12:16
apacpnut	10/07/2008 11:57		apadbnut	10/07/2008 09:19		apaebnut	10/07/2008 12:55
apacpnut	11/04/2008 08:35		apadbnut	11/04/2008 10:44		apaebnut	11/04/2008 13:28
apacpnut	12/03/2008 11:55		apadbnut	12/03/2008 09:50		apaebnut	12/03/2008 13:10
Site	Start Date/Time		Site	Start Date/Time		Site	Start Date/Time
apaegnut	01/06/2008 11:55		apaesnut	01/06/2008 12:15		apambnut	01/06/2008 09:55
apaegnut	02/11/2008 12:20		apaesnut	02/11/2008 08:15		apambnut	02/11/2008 09:50
apaegnut	03/11/2008 07:46		apaesnut	03/11/2008 11:26		apambnut	03/11/2008 08:52
apaegnut	04/21/2008 11:53		apaesnut	04/21/2008 12:13		apambnut	04/21/2008 11:16
apaegnut	05/13/2008 08:51		apaesnut	05/13/2008 12:44		apambnut	05/13/2008 10:01
apaegnut	06/09/2008 11:55		apaesnut	06/09/2008 07:43		apambnut	06/09/2008 10:46
apaegnut	07/08/2008 09:48		apaesnut	07/08/2008 12:47		apambnut	07/08/2008 15:19
apaegnut	08/05/2008 12:04		apaesnut	08/05/2008 12:32		apambnut	08/05/2008 10:50
apaegnut	09/08/2008 11:56		apaesnut	09/08/2008 12:16		apambnut	09/08/2008 11:08
apaegnut	10/07/2008 12:38		apaesnut	10/07/2008 12:55		apambnut	10/07/2008 09:40
apaegnut	11/04/2008 13:10		apaesnut	11/04/2008 13:26		apambnut	11/04/2008 11:26
apaegnut	12/03/2008 12:30		apaesnut	12/03/2008 13:05		apambnut	12/03/2008 10:55

Site	Start Date/Time		Site	Start Date/Time		Site	Start Date/Time
apanhnut	01/06/2008 11:30		apapcnut	01/06/2008 10:48		aparvnut	01/06/2008 09:40
apanhnut	02/11/2008 11:21		apapcnut	02/11/2008 10:49		aparvnut	02/11/2008 12:45
apanhnut	03/11/2008 10:26		apapcnut	03/11/2008 09:46		aparvnut	03/11/2008 08:33
apanhnut	04/21/2008 09:24		apapcnut	04/21/2008 10:05		aparvnut	04/21/2008 11:39
apanhnut	05/13/2008 11:37		apapcnut	05/13/2008 11:02		aparvnut	05/13/2008 09:38
apanhnut	06/09/2008 09:05		apapcnut	06/09/2008 09:46		aparvnut	06/09/2008 11:25
apanhnut	07/08/2008 13:46		apapcnut	07/08/2008 14:25		aparvnut	07/08/2008 08:20
apanhnut	08/05/2008 08:35		apapcnut	08/05/2008 09:35		aparvnut	08/05/2008 11:33
apanhnut	09/08/2008 08:56		apapcnut	09/08/2008 09:35		aparvnut	09/08/2008 11:35
apanhnut	10/07/2008 11:10		apapcnut	10/07/2008 10:01		aparvnut	10/07/2008 08:11
apanhnut	11/04/2008 09:29		apapcnut	11/04/2008 10:08		aparvnut	11/04/2008 12:20
apanhnut	12/03/2008 11:35		apapcnut	12/03/2008 10:31		aparvnut	12/03/2008 09:05
Site	Start Date/Time		Site	Start Date/Time			
apascnut	01/06/2008 11:10		apawpnut	01/06/2008 10:35			
apascnut	02/11/2008 11:09		apawpnut	02/11/2008 10:29			
apascnut	03/11/2008 10:09		apawpnut	03/11/2008 09:31			
apascnut	04/21/2008 09:42		apawpnut	04/21/2008 10:24			
apascnut	05/13/2008 11:22		apawpnut	05/13/2008 10:44			
apascnut	06/09/2008 09:26		apawpnut	06/09/2008 10:05			
apascnut	07/08/2008 14:07		apawpnut	07/08/2008 14:45			
apascnut	08/05/2008 09:01		apawpnut	08/05/2008 09:54			
apascnut	09/08/2008 09:15		apawpnut	09/08/2008 09:52			
apascnut	10/07/2008 10:50		apawpnut	10/07/2008 10:20			
apascnut	11/04/2008 09:47		apawpnut	11/04/2008 10:24			
apascnut	12/03/2008 11:14		apawpnut	12/03/2008 10:10			

b) Start and End Date/Time for Monitoring Program 2 (Diel Sampling)

Site	Start Date/Time	End Date/Time
apaesnut	01/05/2008 11:30	01/06/2008 12:30
apaesnut	02/11/2008 08:30	02/12/2008 09:30
apaesnut	03/10/2008 09:15	03/11/2008 10:15
apaesnut	04/21/2008 07:30	04/22/2008 08:30
apaesnut	05/12/2008 11:00	05/13/2008 12:00
apaesnut	06/09/2008 07:45	06/10/2008 08:45
apaesnut	07/07/2008 11:15	07/08/2008 12:15
apaesnut	08/04/2008 09:00	08/05/2008 10:00
apaesnut	09/07/2008 11:00	09/08/2008 12:00
apaesnut	10/06/2008 09:30	10/07/2008 10:30
apaesnut	11/03/2008 10:30	11/04/2008 11:30
apaesnut	12/02/2008 12:00	12/03/2008 13:00

7) Associated researchers and projects

The Reserve conducts long-term water quality monitoring and maintains a weather station as part of the NERRS SWMP. These data can be accessed at: www.nerrsdata.org. Other ongoing projects or data that relate to the nutrient monitoring project includes:

Apalachicola River Discharge
U.S. Geological Survey
<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/>

Paula Viveros
NOAA Graduate Research Fellowship
Phytoplankton composition and abundance in relation to salinity, nutrient and light gradients in the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve (ANERR)

Richard Peterson
Florida State University
NOAA Graduate Research Fellowship
Origin and Fate of Suspended Particulates in the Apalachicola River: Impact on Apalachicola Bay

Thomas Gihring
Florida State University
NOAA Graduate Research Fellowship
The Role of Oligohaline Marshes as a Source or Sink of Nitrogen to the Apalachicola Bay

Chris Anderson
Auburn University
School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences
Response of coastal riverine wetlands to water allocations in an urbanizing watershed

Jane Caffrey
University of West Florida
Effect of Diurnal and Weekly Water Column Hypoxic Events on Nitrification and Nitrogen Transformations in Estuarine Sediments

Laura Petes
Florida State University Coastal and Marine Lab
Anthropogenic alterations to freshwater input, and its effect on downstream estuarine oyster reef communities.

Stacy Smith, Ph.D.
Florida A&M University post-doctoral research associate, ECSC/Environmental Sciences Institute
Drought, Reduced River Flow and Sea Level Rise: Exploring Climate Impacts on Carbon and Nitrogen Cycling in the Apalachicola Bay System

Edmiston, H.L., Wanat, J., Levi, L., Lamb, M., Selly, N., Dean, B., Wren, J.
Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve.
Distribution and density of fishes and benthic invertebrates in Apalachicola Bay.

Edmiston, H.L., Dean, B., Lamb, M., Wanat, J., Levi, L., Selly, N., Wren, J.
Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve
System Wide Monitoring Program

Long-Term Water Quality Monitoring

Edmiston, HL., Wren, J., Wanat, J., Levi, L.,
Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve
System Wide Monitoring Program
Long-Term Meteorological Monitoring

Edmiston, HL., Wren, J., Wanat, J., Levi, L., Selly, N.,
Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve
Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Monitoring

Edmiston, HL., Dean, B., Wanat, J., Wren, N., Selly, N., Levi, L., Lamb, M.,
Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve
Apalachicola Bay Oyster Growth Monitoring

8) Distribution

NOAA/ERD retains the right to analyze, synthesize and publish summaries of the NERRS System-wide Monitoring Program data. The PI retains the right to be fully credited for having collected and processed the data. Following academic courtesy standards, the PI and NERR site where the data were collected will be contacted and fully acknowledged in any subsequent publications in which any part of the data are used. Manuscripts resulting from this NOAA/OCRM supported research that are produced for publication in open literature, including refereed scientific journals, will acknowledge that the research was conducted under an award from the Estuarine Reserves Division, Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management, National Ocean Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The data set enclosed within this package/transmission is only as good as the quality assurance and quality control procedures outlined by the enclosed metadata reporting statement. The user bears all responsibility for its subsequent use/misuse in any further analyses or comparisons. The Federal government does not assume liability to the Recipient or third persons, nor will the Federal government reimburse or indemnify the Recipient for its liability due to any losses resulting in any way from the use of this data.

NERR water quality/nutrient data and metadata can be obtained from the Research Coordinator at the individual NERR site (please see Section 1. Principal investigators and contact persons), from the Data Manager at the Centralized Data Management Office (please see personnel directory under the general information link on the CDMO home page) and online at the CDMO home page <http://cdmo.baruch.sc.edu/>. Data are available in text tab-delimited format.

II. Physical Structure Descriptors

9) Entry verification

A hardcopy of the original ANERR Field Sample Collection logsheet accompanies the samples from ANERR to UF laboratory. Results data are entered into excel spreadsheet by UF laboratory staff, reviewed and signed off by the laboratory supervisor (Dr. Ed Philips). Calculations to determine DIN are performed by UF staff but verified as conforming to NERRS calculation protocols before inclusion in the final dataset. The excel data file is then electronically transmitted to ANERR. Lauren Levi, ANERR staff, reviews the data file for completeness and other possible anomalies. Missing data are verified by review of field logs and are denoted by a blank space in the database. The data is then processed with the NutrientQAQC Excel macro.

Nutrient data are entered into a Microsoft Excel worksheet and processed using the NutrientQAQC Excel macro. The NutrientQAQC macro sets up the data worksheet, metadata worksheets, and MDL worksheet; adds chosen parameters and facilitates data entry; allows the user to set the number of significant figures to be reported for each parameter and rounds using banker's rounding rules; allows the user to input MDL values and then automatically flags/codes measured values below MDL and inserts the MDL ; calculates parameters chosen by the user and automatically flags/codes for component values below MDL, negative calculated values, and missing data; allows the user to apply QAQC flags and codes to the data; produces summary statistics; graphs selected parameters for review; and exports the resulting data file to the CDMO for tertiary QAQC and assimilation into the CDMO's authoritative online database.

Flag and code definitions are listed in sections 15 and 16 of this document.

10) Parameter Titles and Variable Names by Data Category

Required NOAA/NERRS System-wide Monitoring Program nutrient parameters are denoted by an asterisks***.

<u>Data Category</u>	<u>Parameter</u>	<u>Variable Name</u>	<u>Units of Measure</u>
i) Phosphorus:			
	*Orthophosphate, filtered	PO4F	mg/L as P
	Total Dissolved Phosphorus	TDP	mg/L as P
ii) Nitrogen:			
	*Nitrite + Nitrate, filtered	NO23F	mg/L as N
	*Ammonium, filtered	NH4F	mg/L as N
	Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen	DIN	mg/L as N
	Total Dissolved Nitrogen	TDN	mg/L as N
iii) Plant Pigments:			
	*Chlorophyll <i>a</i>	CHLA_N	µg/ L
	Uncorrected Chlorophyll <i>a</i>	UncCHLA_N	µg/L
	Phaeophytin	PHEA	µg/ L
iv) Field Parameters:			
	Water temperature	WTEM_N	°C
	Salinity	SALT_N	ppt
	Dissolved oxygen	DO_N	mg/L
	%Saturated dissolved oxygen	DO_S_N	%
	Turbidity	TURB_N	NTU

Notes:

1. Time is coded based on a 2400 hour clock and is referenced to Standard Time.
2. Reserves have the option of measuring either NO2 and NO3 or they may substitute NO23 for individual analyses if they can show that NO2 is a minor component relative to NO3. ANERR has shown NO2 to be a minor component of NO23.

11) Measured and Calculated Laboratory Parameters

Variables Measured Directly

Nitrogen species:	NO23F, NH4F, TDN
Phosphorus species:	PO4F, TDP
Other:	UncCHLA_N, CHLA_N, PHEA
Field:	WTEM_N, SALT_N, DO_N, DO_S_N, TURB_N

Computed Variables

DIN:	NO23F+NH4F
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12) Limits of Detection – UF Laboratory

The information in Table 3 is provided by UF laboratory. Method detection Limits (MDL) are derived from the replicate samples method in APHA (American Public Health Association). 1998. Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 20th edition. United Book Press, Inc. Baltimore, Maryland. MDL will change with the background levels of samples; therefore, there is no constant MDL.

Table 3. Method Detection Limits for UF laboratory

Parameter	Variable	MDL	Dates in use
Ammonium	NH4F	0.0117 mg-N/l	2008
Nitrate + Nitrite	NO23F	0.0062 mg-N/l	2008
Total Dissolved Nitrogen	TDN	0.0185 mg-N/l	2008
Orthophosphate	PO4F	0.002 mg-P/l	2008
Total Dissolved Phosphorus	TDP	0.010 mg-P/l	2008
Chlorophyll a	CHLA_N	0.01 µg/l	2008
Uncorrected Chlorophyll a	UncCHLA_N	0.01 µg/l	2008
Phaeophytin	PHEA	0.01 µg/l	2008

13) Laboratory Methods

UF Laboratory methods

a) Parameter: PO4

- 1) Method Reference: APHA (American Public Health Association). 1998. Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 20th Edition. Method SM 4500-P-E (Ascorbic acid method). United Book Press, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland.
- 2) Method Description: Ammonium molybdate and potassium antimony in acid medium react with orthophosphate to form an acid that is reduced to a bright blue by ascorbic acid. Concentrations are measured on a dual-beam scanning spectrophotometer at 882 nm. The curve is read within 30 minutes.
- 3) Preservation Method: Samples are filtered through 0.7 µm pore size glass-fiber filters and stored at 4°C and run within 48 hours.

b) Parameter: TDP

- 1) Method Reference: APHA (American Public Health Association). 1998. Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 20th Edition. Method SM 4500-P-E+B5 (Ascorbic acid method with persulfate digestion). United Book Press, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland.

- 2) Method Description: Potassium persulfate in DI H₂O is added to sample which is then autoclaved for 30 minutes at 15 psi and cooled to room temperature. Ammonium molybdate and potassium antimony in acid medium are added to sample which reacts with orthophosphate to form an acid that is reduced to a bright blue by ascorbic acid. Concentrations are measured on a dual-beam scanning spectrophotometer at 882 nm. The curve is read within 30 minutes.
- 3) Preservation Method: Samples are filtered through 0.7 µm pore size glass-fiber filters, acidified with 1ml of 5N H₂SO₄ per 125ml sample and stored at 4°C, and run within 28 days.

c) Parameter: NH₄

- 1) Method Reference: Strickland & Parsons. 1972. A Practical Handbook of Seawater Analysis: Determination of Ammonia (Oxidation Method). Fisheries Research Board of Canada. APHA (American Public Health Association). 1998. Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, (SM 4500-N I). 20th Edition. Baltimore, Maryland: United Book Press, Inc.
- 2) Method Description: Photometric determination of ammonia in seawater based on the oxidation reaction with hypochlorite in an alkaline medium. Results are read on a Bran-Luebbe autoanalyzer without the cadmium column. Final ammonium concentrations are corrected for the original nitrite concentrations in the sample.
- 3) Preservation Method: Samples are filtered through 0.7 µm pore size glass-fiber filters in the field, acidified with 1ml of 5N H₂SO₄ per 125ml sample, stored at 4°C, and run within 28 days.

d) Parameter: NO₂

- 1) Method Reference: APHA (American Public Health Association). 1998. Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 20th Edition. Method SM4500-NO₃-F. United Book Press, Inc. Baltimore, Maryland. Bran + Luebbe Autoanalyzer Applications. Method No. US-158-71 D.
- 2) Method Description: A water sample is passed through a cadmium column where the nitrate is reduced to nitrite, which is then diazotized with sulfanilamide and coupled with N-(1-naphthyl)-ethylenediamine to form a colored azo dye that is measured colorimetrically on a Bran-Luebbe autoanalyzer. The procedure is the same for nitrite analysis less the cadmium column.
- 3) Preservation Method: Samples for nitrite + nitrate analysis are filtered through 0.7 µm pore size glass-fiber filters in the field, acidified with 1ml of 5N H₂SO₄ per 125ml sample, stored at 4°C, and run within 28 days.

e) Parameter: TDN

- 1) Method Reference: APHA (American Public Health Association). 1998. Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 20th Edition. Method SM4500-N C. United Book Press, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland. Bran + Luebbe Autoanalyzer Applications. Method No. G-172-96 Rev. 10.
- 2) Method Description: Potassium persulfate in DI H₂O is added to sample which is then autoclaved for 30 minutes at 15 psi and cooled to room temperature. The digested sample is passed through a cadmium column where the nitrate is reduced to nitrite which is then diazotized with sulfanilamide and coupled with N-(1-naphthyl)-ethylenediamine to form a colored azo dye that is measured colorimetrically on a Bran-Luebbe autoanalyzer.

- 3) Preservation Method: Samples are filtered through 0.7 µm pore size glass-fiber filters in the field, acidified with 1ml of 5N H₂SO₄ per 125ml sample, stored at 4°C, and run within 28 days.

f) Parameter: CHLA_N and UncCHLA_N and PHEA

- 1) Method Reference: APHA (American Public Health Association). 1998. Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 20th Edition. Method SM 10200 H.2. United Book Press, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland. Extraction method for chlorophyll from Sartory, D. P. & Grobbelaar, J. U. 1984. *Hydrobiologia* **114**, 177-187.
- 2) Method Description: Filters are thawed, placed in test tubes with 90% ethanol and heated in a water bath at 78°C for 5 minutes. They are subsequently placed in the dark for 24 hours followed by centrifugation to remove particulate material. Absorbances are read on a dual-beam scanning spectrophotometer according to Standard Methods. After the initial reading, 0.2N HCl is added to the sample and re-run for pheophytin a determination. Chlorophyll a (CHLA_N) was determined by correcting chlorophyll for pheophytin content using the method described in Standard Methods. Uncorrected chlorophyll a (UncCHLA_N) represents the chlorophyll a concentration, without correction for pheophytin, using a simplified equation based on the extinction coefficient for chlorophyll a in ethanol solvent.
- 3) Preservation Method: Samples are filtered onto 0.7 µm pore size glass-fiber filters, wrapped in aluminum foil, stored in plastic bags in the dark at –20°C, and run within 28 days.

14) Field and UF Laboratory QAQC programs:

a) Precision

- i) Field Variability** – Field Blanks are included in all runs. ANERR staff collected field triplicate samples from a successive grab sample. Triplicate samples are collected from separate grabs at one sampling station each month, rotating through all stations. There were no field triplicates collected during diel sampling.
- ii) Laboratory Variability** – Method blanks (MB) and duplicate samples are run at least every 20 samples. Precision is measured by Relative Percent Difference (RPD). It is calculated by multiplying the difference between two determinations of the same sample by two, dividing that result by the sum of the same values, and multiplying by 100 [RPD= 2((A-B)/(A+B)) X 100].
- iii) Inter-organizational splits** – None.

b) Accuracy

- i) Sample Spikes** – Samples spike recoveries (SR).
- ii) Standard Reference Material Analysis** – NIST traceable check standards (QC) are included in each run at least every 20 samples. The Florida Department of Health certification process also includes ‘Blind Tests’ of accuracy on a semi-annual basis. Accuracy is measured by percent recovery (% R), the measured value divided by the expected value, multiplied by 100.
- iii) Cross Calibration Exercises** – None.

15) QAQC flag definitions:

QAQC flags provide documentation of the data and are applied to individual data points by insertion into the parameter’s associated flag column (header preceded by an F_). QAQC flags are applied to the nutrient data during secondary QAQC to indicate data that are out of sensor range low (-4), rejected due to QAQC checks (-3), missing (-2), optional and were not collected (-1), suspect (1), and that have been corrected (5). All remaining data are flagged as having passed initial QAQC checks

(0) when the data are uploaded and assimilated into the CDMO ODIS as provisional plus data. The historical data flag (4) is used to indicate data that were submitted to the CDMO prior to the initiation of secondary QAQC flags and codes (and the use of the automated primary QAQC system for WQ and MET data). This flag is only present in historical data that are exported from the CDMO ODIS.

- 4 Outside Low Sensor Range
- 3 Data Rejected due to QAQC
- 2 Missing Data
- 1 Optional SWMP Supported Parameter
- 0 Data Passed Initial QAQC Checks
- 1 Suspect Data
- 4 Historical Data: Pre-Auto QAQC
- 5 Corrected Data

16) QAQC code definitions:

QAQC codes are used in conjunction with QAQC flags to provide further documentation of the data and are also applied by insertion into the associated flag column. There are three (3) different code categories, general, sensor, and comment. General errors document general problems with the sample or sample collection, sensor errors document common sensor or parameter specific problems, and comment codes are used to further document conditions or a problem with the data. Only one general or sensor error and one comment code can be applied to a particular data point. However, a record flag column (F_Record) in the nutrient data allows multiple comment codes to be applied to the entire data record.

General errors

- GCM Calculated value could not be determined due to missing data
- GCR Calculated value could not be determined due to rejected data
- GDM Data missing or sample never collected
- GQD Data rejected due to QA/QC checks
- GQS Data suspect due to QA/QC checks

Sensor errors

- SBL Value below minimum limit of method detection
- SCB Calculated value could not be determined due to a below MDL component
- SCC Calculation with this component resulted in a negative value
- SNV Calculated value is negative
- SRD Replicate values differ substantially
- SUL Value above upper limit of method detection

Parameter Comments

- CAB Algal bloom
- CDR Sample diluted and rerun
- CHB Sample held beyond specified holding time
- CIP Ice present in sample vicinity
- CIF Flotsam present in sample vicinity
- CLE Sample collected later/earlier than scheduled
- CRE Significant rain event
- CSM See metadata
- CUS Lab analysis from unpreserved sample

Record comments

CAB	Algal bloom
CHB	Sample held beyond specified holding time
CIP	Ice present in sample vicinity
CIF	Flotsam present in sample vicinity
CLE	Sample collected later/earlier than scheduled
CRE	Significant rain event
CSM	See metadata
CUS	Lab analysis from unpreserved sample

Cloud cover

CCL	clear (0-10%)
CSP	scattered to partly cloudy (10-50%)
CPB	partly to broken (50-90%)
COC	overcast (>90%)
CFY	foggy
CHY	hazy
CCC	cloud (no percentage)

Precipitation

PNP	none
PDR	drizzle
PLR	light rain
PHR	heavy rain
PSQ	squally
PFQ	frozen precipitation (sleet/snow/freezing rain)
PSR	mixed rain and snow

Tide stage

TSE	ebb tide
TSF	flood tide
TSH	high tide
TSL	low tide

Wave height

WH0	0 to <0.1 meters
WH1	0.1 to 0.3 meters
WH2	0.3 to 0.6 meters
WH3	0.6 to > 1.0 meters
WH4	1.0 to 1.3 meters
WH5	1.3 or greater meters

Wind direction

N	from the north
NNE	from the north northeast
NE	from the northeast
ENE	from the east northeast
E	from the east
ESE	from the east southeast
SE	from the southeast
SSE	from the south southeast
S	from the south
SSW	from the south southwest
SW	from the southwest
WSW	from the west southwest
W	from the west

WNW from the west northwest
 NW from the northwest
 NNW from the north northwest

Wind speed

WS0 0 to 1 knot
 WS1 > 1 to 10 knots
 WS2 > 10 to 20 knots
 WS3 > 20 to 30 knots
 WS4 > 30 to 40 knots
 WS5 > 40 knots

17) Other remarks/notes:

a) Data may be missing due to problems with sample collection or processing. Laboratories in the NERRS System submit data that are censored at a lower detection rate limit, called the Method Detection Limit or MDL. MDLs for specific parameters are listed in the Laboratory Methods and Detection Limits Section (Section II, Part 12) of this document. Concentrations that are less than this limit are censored with the use of a QAQC flag and code, and the reported value is the method detection limit itself rather than a measured value. For example, if the measured concentration of NO23F was 0.0005 mg/l as N (MDL=0.0008), the reported value would be 0.0008 and would be flagged as out of sensor range low (-4) and coded SBL. In addition, if any of the components used to calculate a variable are below the MDL, the calculated variable is removed and flagged/coded -4 SCB. If a calculated value is negative, it is rejected and all measured components are marked suspect. If additional information on MDL's or missing, suspect, or rejected data is needed, contact the Research Coordinator at the Reserve submitting the data.

Note: The way below MDL values are handled in the NERRS SWMP dataset was changed in November of 2011. Previously, below MDL data from 2007-2010 were also flagged/coded, but either reported as the measured value or a blank cell. Any 2007-2011 nutrient/pigment data downloaded from the CDMO prior to November of 2011 will reflect this difference.

b) CHLA_N, uncCHLA_N, and PHEA data for the following dates and times are considered suspect due to failure of a laboratory quality check and are coded as CSM in the dataset.

Station Code	DateTimeStamp	Monitoring Program	Rep
apaesnut	06/09/2008 07:45	2	1
apaesnut	06/09/2008 10:15	2	1
apaesnut	06/09/2008 12:45	2	1
apaesnut	06/09/2008 15:15	2	1
apaesnut	06/09/2008 17:45	2	1
apaesnut	06/09/2008 20:15	2	1
apaesnut	06/09/2008 22:45	2	1
apaesnut	06/10/2008 01:15	2	1
apaesnut	06/10/2008 03:45	2	1
apaesnut	06/10/2008 06:15	2	1
apaesnut	06/10/2008 08:45	2	1

c) DO_N and DO_S_N data for the following dates and times are considered suspect due to calibration error of the handheld YSI 85 meter and are coded CSM in the dataset.

Station Code	DateTimeStamp	Monitoring Program	Rep
apawpnut	08/05/2008 09:54	1	1
apadbnut	08/05/2008 10:15	1	1
apapcnut	08/05/2008 09:35	1	1
apambnut	08/05/2008 10:50	1	1
apaegnut	08/05/2008 12:04	1	1
apaesnut	08/05/2008 12:32	1	1
apaebnut	08/05/2008 12:34	1	1
apascnut	08/05/2008 09:01	1	1
apanhnut	08/05/2008 08:35	1	1
apacpnut	08/05/2008 07:56	1	1
aparvnut	08/05/2008 11:33	1	1

