

**Elkhorn Slough (ELK) NERR Nutrient Metadata**  
**(January - December 2011)**  
Latest Update: May 8, 2012

Note: This is a provisional metadata document; it has not been authenticated as of its download date. Contents of this document are subject to change throughout the QAQC process and it should not be considered a final record of data documentation until that process is complete. Contact the CDMO ([cdmosupport@belle.baruch.sc.edu](mailto:cdmosupport@belle.baruch.sc.edu)) or Reserve with any additional questions.

**I). Data Set and Research Descriptors**

**1) Principal investigator(s) and contact persons –**

**a) Reserve Contact**

John Haskins  
Elkhorn Slough NERR  
1700 Elkhorn Rd  
Watsonville, California 95076  
Phone: 831-728-2822  
E-mail: [john@elkhornslough.org](mailto:john@elkhornslough.org)

**b) Laboratory Contact**

Rikke Kvist Preisler  
Elkhorn Slough NERR  
1700 Elkhorn Rd  
Watsonville, California 95076  
Phone: 831-728-2822 Ext. 326  
Cell: 408-981-7447  
E-mail: [rikke@elkhornslough.org](mailto:rikke@elkhornslough.org)

**c) Other Contacts and Programs**

Sara Tanner  
Moss Landing Marine Labs  
8272 Moss Landing Rd.  
Moss Landing, California 94939

- 2) Research objectives** – Elkhorn Slough (ESNERR) is a unique estuary along the central Californian coast. ESNERR has fresh water inputs during the wet season (October through May) causing a brackish environment, while during the dry season (June through September) there is very little freshwater input resulting in a much more saline environment. The surrounding area is mostly farmlands, which causes concern, as farms may be a considerable source of large amounts of nutrients entering the slough possibly causing eutrophication. With the monthly monitoring program we are able to quantify the variability of nutrients in different areas of the slough and possibly correlate any changes in land use with changes in nutrient concentrations.

**a) Monthly Grab Sampling Program**

To quantify the spatial variability of nutrient concentrations in Elkhorn Slough we collect monthly grab samples in the water column. The sampled sites represent the estuarine endpoints from the head to the mouth of Elkhorn Slough estuary and sites throughout the estuary.

**b) Diel Sampling Program**

To quantify the temporal variability of important nutrients in the water column as a function of tidal forcing we collect 13 water samples through a 24-hour tidal cycle once per month, at a permanent water quality station, South Marsh.

**3) Research methods**

**a) Monthly Grab Sampling Program**

Monthly grab samples were taken at four stations within the Elkhorn Slough estuary. Samples were taken at the four principle ESNERR data sonde stations (Azevedo Pond, North Marsh, South Marsh and Vierra Mouth). All grab samples were taken on the same day in the time window of -3 to 0 hours before low tide. At each station either replicate samples were taken ( $n = 2$ ) or at one of the four stations, a triplicate samples was taken ( $n = 3$ ) and then only a single sample was taken at one of the other four stations. Each month, we grabbed a total of  $n = 8$  samples at the four stations collectively. If we arrived at a station after low tide, no sample was grabbed. No distinction was made between neap and spring tide conditions. Grab samples were collected by hand at an approximate depth of 10 cm. At the time of sample collection, water temperature, salinity, specific conductivity, pH, chlorophyll, and dissolved oxygen was measured with a YSI V2 6600 sonde and a hand held YSI 650 unit. These field data are not included in this dataset, but are available directly through the Reserve if you contact John Haskins or Rikke Preisler. All samples were collected in amber, narrow-mouth, 250 mL nalgene sample bottles that were previously acid washed (10%), rinsed (3x) with distilled-deionized water, dried, and followed by rinsing (3x) with ambient water prior to collection of the sample. Samples were immediately placed on ice in the dark and returned to the laboratory. Once in the laboratory, samples were shaken, filtered and processed for nutrient and Chl-a analysis.

**b) Diel Sampling Program**

Within the same 24-hour period of grab sample collection, we deploy an ISCO water sampler from the bank of the marsh at South Marsh. This device automatically samples 500 ml of water every 2 hrs 4 min (Jan.-Dec). All samples are pumped into polyethylene sample bottles that were previously acid washed (10% HCL), rinsed (3x) with distilled-deionized water and dried. Samples are kept cold with ice until the end of the 24 hr period; the 24 samples are kept in the dark and returned to the laboratory for immediate processing. From January to December, samples were collected every other hour through a 24-hour tidal cycle.

**4) Site location and character**

Elkhorn Slough is located on the West Coast of the United States in Central California. The estuarine water of Elkhorn Slough enters the Pacific Ocean in central Monterey Bay near Moss Landing, California. There are four NERR sampling sites in Elkhorn Slough:

Azevedo Pond (AP)(36°50'44.64"N, 121°45'13.24"W) is in a pond that receives fertilizer and pesticide run-off from a strawberry field in year-round production. The sample station is located about 10m from a tidal control structure in front of a culvert connecting the pond to the slough. The tide ranges from 0.12 to 1.38 meters and salinity ranges from 3.6 ppt during heavy run-off to 40.3 ppt during strong evaporation during the summer. Depth at mean low tide is approximately 1.5 meters. The YSI sonde associated with this site (collecting readings for the water quality dataset) is located approximately 30 cm off the bottom, which is composed of silty mud.

North Marsh (NM)(36°50'04.75"N, 121°44'18.33"W) is located in-between South Marsh and Azevedo Pond. This site is impacted by both agricultural and urban run-off. The tide ranges from approximately 0.09 to 0.51 meters. Salinity ranges between 17.8 and 42.2 ppt and is affected by freshwater run-off from agriculture and upland run-off. Depth at mean low tide is approximately 1 meter. The YSI sonde associated with this site (WQ dataset) is approximately 30 cm off the bottom, which is composed of silty mud.

South Marsh (SM)(36°49'05.00"N, 121°44'21.83"W) which is located approximately 3 km south of NM and is surrounded by mostly reserve land, is in a side channel of the slough and is relatively free from impact by anthropogenic influence. This site receives run-off mostly from uplands with some run-off coming from cattle ranches. This site receives the least amount of pollution. The tidal range is from 0.28 to 2.89 meters and the salinity range is from 16.8 to 35.3 ppt. Depth at mean low tide is approximately 3 meters. The YSI sonde associated with this site (collecting readings for the water quality dataset) is approximately 30 cm off the bottom, which is composed of compacted silty mud.

The fourth site Vierra Mouth (VM) (36°48'39.95"N, 121°46'45.22"W) is located at the mouth of the slough and is used to identify oceanic influence. The tidal range is from 1.43 to 4.04 meters and salinity ranges from 16.2 to 34.8 ppt. Depth at mean low water is approximately 4 meters. The YSI sonde associated with this site (collecting readings for the water quality dataset) is located approximately 30 cm off the bottom which is composed of compacted mud and sand due to strong tidal currents. This site receives drainage from the entire watershed due to its location at the mouth. There are several auto wrecking yards located approximately 2 km east of this site.

##### 5) Code variable definitions

elkapnut = Elkhorn Slough Reserve Azevedo Pond Site nutrient data  
 elknmnut = Elkhorn Slough Reserve North Marsh Site nutrient data  
 elksmnut = Elkhorn Slough Reserve South Marsh Site nutrient data  
 elkvmnut = Elkhorn Slough Reserve Vierra Mouth Site nutrient data  
 Monthly grab sample program= 1  
 Diel grab sample program= 2

##### 6) Data Collection Period

Sampling occurred between 06:00 January 11, 2011 and 12:57 December 6, 2011.

##### Diel Sampling

| Site  | Start Date | Start Time | End Date  | End Time |
|-------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| Elksm | 1/11/2011  | 06:00      | 1/12/2011 | 06:48    |
| Elksm | 2/1/2011   | 07:00      | 2/2/2011  | 07:48    |
| Elksm | 3/1/2011   | 07:00      | 3/2/2011  | 07:48    |
| Elksm | 4/5/2011   | 07:00      | 4/6/2011  | 07:48    |
| Elksm | 5/3/2011   | 06:00      | 5/4/2011  | 06:48    |
| Elksm | 6/7/2011   | 06:00      | 6/8/2011  | 06:48    |
| Elksm | 7/12/2011  | 07:00      | 7/13/2011 | 07:48    |
| Elksm | 8/9/2011   | 07:00      | 8/10/2011 | 07:48    |
| Elksm | 9/13/2011  | 07:00      | 9/14/2011 | 05:44    |
| Elksm | 10/4/2011  | 07:00      | 10/5/2011 | 07:48    |
| Elksm | 11/8/2011  | 06:00      | 11/9/2011 | 06:48    |

|       |           |       |           |       |
|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Elksm | 12/6/2011 | 06:00 | 12/7/2011 | 06:48 |
|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|

**Grab Sampling**

| Site  | Start Date | Start Time | End Date  | End Time |
|-------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| Elkap | 1/11/2011  | 10:00      | 1/11/2011 | 10:01    |
| Elkap | 2/1/2011   | 14:50      | 2/1/2011  | 14:51    |
| Elkap | 3/1/2011   | 14:10      | 3/1/2011  | 14:11    |
| Elkap | 4/5/2011   | 16:37      | 4/5/2011  | 16:39    |
| Elkap | 5/3/2011   | 15:42      | 5/3/2011  | 15:43    |
| Elkap | 6/7/2011   | 08:20      | 6/7/2011  | 08:21    |
| Elkap | 7/12/2011  | 12:30      | 7/12/2011 | 12:31    |
| Elkap | 8/9/2011   | 11:16      | 8/9/2011  | 11:18    |
| Elkap | 9/13/2011  | 15:00      | 9/13/2011 | 15:01    |
| Elkap | 10/4/2011  | 10:16      | 10/4/2011 | 10:17    |
| Elkap | 11/8/2011  | 14:21      | 11/8/2011 | 14:22    |
| Elkap | 12/6/2011  | 12:55      | 12/6/2011 | 12:57    |

| Site  | Start Date | Start Time | End Date  | End Time |
|-------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| Elknm | 1/11/2011  | 08:50      | 1/11/2011 | 08:50    |
| Elknm | 2/1/2011   | 13:50      | 2/1/2011  | 13:51    |
| Elknm | 3/1/2011   | 13:25      | 3/1/2011  | 13:27    |
| Elknm | 4/5/2011   | 15:26      | 4/5/2011  | 15:26    |
| Elknm | 5/3/2011   | 14:37      | 5/3/2011  | 14:37    |
| Elknm | 6/7/2011   | 07:02      | 6/7/2011  | 07:03    |
| Elknm | 7/12/2011  | 11:48      | 7/12/2011 | 11:50    |
| Elknm | 8/9/2011   | 10:23      | 8/9/2011  | 10:23    |
| Elknm | 9/13/2011  | 14:04      | 9/13/2011 | 14:04    |
| Elknm | 10/4/2011  | 09:13      | 10/4/2011 | 09:14    |
| Elknm | 11/8/2011  | 13:30      | 11/8/2011 | 13:32    |
| Elknm | 12/6/2011  | 12:05      | 12/6/2011 | 12:05    |

| Site  | Start Date | Start Time | End Date  | End Time |
|-------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| Elksm | 1/11/2011  | 08:00      | 1/11/2011 | 08:01    |
| Elksm | 2/1/2011   | 13:40      | 2/1/2011  | 13:42    |
| Elksm | 3/1/2011   | 12:55      | 3/1/2011  | 12:56    |
| Elksm | 4/5/2011   | 15:00      | 4/5/2011  | 15:01    |
| Elksm | 5/3/2011   | 14:16      | 5/3/2011  | 14:17    |
| Elksm | 6/7/2011   | 05:49      | 6/7/2011  | 05:51    |
| Elksm | 7/12/2011  | 10:46      | 7/12/2011 | 10:47    |
| Elksm | 8/9/2011   | 09:38      | 8/9/2011  | 09:39    |
| Elksm | 9/13/2011  | 13:10      | 9/13/2011 | 13:11    |
| Elksm | 10/4/2011  | 08:20      | 10/4/2011 | 08:22    |
| Elksm | 11/8/2011  | 12:21      | 11/8/2011 | 12:22    |
| Elksm | 12/6/2011  | 11:20      | 12/6/2011 | 11:21    |

| Site  | Start Date | Start Time | End Date  | End Time |
|-------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| Elkvm | 1/11/2011  | 09:48      | 1/11/2011 | 09:50    |

|       |           |       |           |       |
|-------|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|
| Elkvm | 2/1/2011  | 15:07 | 2/1/2011  | 15:07 |
| Elkvm | 3/1/2011  | 14:13 | 3/1/2011  | 14:13 |
| Elkvm | 4/5/2011  | 15:05 | 4/5/2011  | 15:06 |
| Elkvm | 5/3/2011  | 15:09 | 5/3/2011  | 15:11 |
| Elkvm | 6/7/2011  | 07:40 | 6/7/2011  | 07:40 |
| Elkvm | 7/12/2011 | 12:30 | 7/12/2011 | 12:30 |
| Elkvm | 8/9/2011  | 11:23 | 8/9/2011  | 11:24 |
| Elkvm | 9/13/2011 | 14:31 | 9/13/2011 | 14:33 |
| Elkvm | 10/4/2011 | 09:46 | 10/4/2011 | 09:46 |
| Elkvm | 11/8/2011 | 14:10 | 11/8/2011 | 14:10 |
| Elkvm | 12/6/2011 | 12:28 | 12/6/2011 | 12:29 |

## 7) Associated researchers and projects

As part of the SWMP long-term monitoring program, ELK NERR also monitors Meteorological and Water Quality data which may be correlated with this Nutrient dataset. These data are available from the Research Coordinator or online at <http://cdmo.baruch.sc.edu/>.

### **The following researchers are working directly with us here at the Elkhorn Slough NERR**

Monique Fountain conducts fish surveys in order to determine short- and long-term changes in fish populations and fish communities.

Susie Fork conducts field survey monitoring of shorebirds; egret and heron rookery, bird nestboxes, raptors, and invertebrate populations.

Rikke Preisler and Susie Fork conduct annual crab trapping in order to track crab populations, particularly invasions by non-native European crabs.

Eric Van Dyke works on remote-sensing using GIS to analyze habitat change and NERR biomonitoring pilot studies for Tier 1, emergent vegetation.

Kerstin Wasson monitors oyster recruitment and conducts experiments to determine the status and trajectory of native oyster populations.

Antonia D'Amore and Valentine Hemingway in affiliation with the University of California, Santa Cruz conduct frog surveys and measurement of pond attributes by tracking threatened amphibian populations, incl. their diseases, predators, and movements.

John Haskins, Brent Hughes, and Rikke Preisler conduct water quality research currently focusing on eutrophication in the slough and are managing the SWMP weather monitoring and the SWMP nutrient programs that are used in conjunction with eutrophication research.

### **The following researchers are affiliated with other institutions.**

Anderson, Brian; UC Davis, seine for topsmelt - study pesticide levels in indicator fish.

Carlisle, Aron; Litvin, Steve; Stanford University conducted fish seines in order to determine short- and long-term changes in fish populations and fish communities. Additionally, voucher specimens are used for stable isotope analysis in order to determine allochthonous input in food resources.

DeRivera, Catherine; Koetke, Seth: deploy and retrieve crab traps in order to compare invasive green crab abundance at sites with (Bodega Bay) and a site without (Elkhorn) eradication efforts.

Fabian, Rachael: collects *Batillaria* snails to assess effects of ocean acidification on *Batillaria*. *Batillaria* is used as proxy for other snails.

Fresquez, Carla; UC Santa Cruz, assess high marsh, collect soil cores, clear small areas of bare ground - investigate invasions of upland weeds into the high marsh.

Fuller, Timothy; California State University Monterey Bay, collect specimens of invasive orange sponge elucidate genetics and potential hybridization of *Hymeniacidon sinapium*, the orange sponge.

Hammerstrom, Kamille; Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, deploy eelgrass seeds and transplants by diving; coffee-can cores and sieving of mud; from shore and boat (for subtidal)-eelgrass restoration science project

Hemingway, Valentine; UC Santa Cruz, collect snails and water samples from ponds, survey amphibians - examine threats posed by chytrid disease and trematode malformations to amphibians.

Hughes, Brent; UC Santa Cruz, conducts surveys and experiments with algal biomass and seagrass populations and additionally quantifies eutrophication indicators.

Johnson, Andrew: tracks sea otter movements; assesses rehabilitated animals; studies otters

Kvitek, Rikk; Spear, Brian; California State University Monterey Bay, use small boat in Parson's complex - map Slough bathymetry to monitor changes resulting from tidal scour

Paytan, Adina; Bard, Don; UC Santa Cruz, aerial deposition sampling; rainwater sampling; mud and channel water sampling in order to understand atmospheric deposition of nitrogen, and mercury exchange from groundwater.

Spies, Brenton; University of New York Stony Brook, examines latitudinal gradients in temperature and salinity and their effect on genetic differentiation among populations of tide water gobies.

Beth Watson; EPA, uses sediment cores and paleo-ecological analysis to determine the marsh plant communities historically found at Elkhorn Slough.

Weiss, Peter; Cook, Daniel: Use an air sampler with the goal of determining role of atmospheric deposition of mercury

Zabin, Chela; Chang, Andy; Deck, Anna, check recruitment plates and maintain temperature loggers in order to characterize oyster recruitment and physical conditions in comparative study with SF Bay

**Frequent docent researchers:** Shirley Murphy (various bird monitoring programs). Ron Eby (marsh, bird, otter monitoring)

**Frequent interns:** Miguel Rodriguez (water quality intern), Jenna Van Parys (water quality intern), Dan Flanagan (water quality assistant), Celeste Stanik (water quality assistant), Andrew Wighton (water quality assistant), Joey Sawyer (water quality assistant).

## 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 nutrient data and metadata can be obtained from the Research Coordinator at the individual NERR site (please see 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 –

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.

Monthly nutrient data are obtained by filtering grab and diel samples at Moss Landing Marine Laboratory, Moss Landing, CA. John Haskins and Rikke Preisler are responsible for measuring nitrite, ammonia, and chlorophyll concentrations. Sara Tanner is responsible for measuring nitrite+nitrate, and phosphate concentrations. All data are entered in an Excel spread sheet while processing the samples of nitrite, ammonia, and chlorophyll. Sara Tanner e-mails the remaining results monthly, and Tanner's results are then entered into the same monthly nutrient Excel sheet by Rikke Preisler. The Excel file contains information of sampling station ID, date and time, and parameter values expressed in unit concentrations. Rikke Preisler verify all parameter values in the excel file by cross comparison with laboratory data sheets and by graphing the data and identifying anomalous data points or other problems. Monthly excel files were compiled into a yearly excel file. Missing data are verified through inspection of fields.

All parameter values at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories (MLML) are calculated and reported in  $\mu\text{M}$ . For purposes of consistency in the NERR System, Elkhorn Slough NERR calculates the concentrations as  $\text{mg/l}$  based on atomic weights of 14.01, 30.97 for N and P respectively. Therefore, Elkhorn Slough NERR staff multiplies the concentrations reported by MLML by 0.01401, 0.03097 to yield concentrations in  $\text{mg/L}$  as N and P respectively. Chlorophyll a is measured in RFU and ESNERR staff converts RFU to  $\mu\text{g/L}$  by using the following conversion from January to September:

$(7.05 \times 10^{-5} \mu\text{g Chla/mL/RFU}) \times \text{RFU}_{\text{measured}} \times \text{dilution factor} \times (\text{extraction volume}/\text{filtered volume}) \times 1000 \text{mL/L}$

From October to December, the following conversion was used, as the fluorometer needed calibration:

$(1.45 \times 10^{-4} \mu\text{g Chla/mL/RFU}) \times \text{RFU}_{\text{measured}} \times \text{dilution factor} \times (\text{extraction volume}/\text{filtered volume}) \times 1000 \text{mL/L}$

#### 10) Parameter Titles and Variable Names by Data Category

Required NOAA/NERRS System-wide Monitoring Program nutrient parameters are denoted by an asterisks "\*". Only list those parameters that are reported in the data. See Table 2 in the "Nutrient and Chlorophyll Monitoring Program and Database Design" SOP version 1.5 (January 2011) for a full list of available parameters.

| Data Category            | Parameter                    | Variable Name | Units of Measure |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|------------------|
| Phosphorus and Nitrogen: | *Orthophosphate              | PO4F          | mg/L as P        |
|                          | *Ammonium, Filtered          | NH4F          | mg/L as N        |
|                          | *Nitrite, Filtered           | NO2F          | mg/L as N        |
|                          | *Nitrate, Filtered           | NO3F          | mg/L as N        |
|                          | *Nitrite + Nitrate, Filtered | NO23F         | mg/L as N        |
|                          | Dissolved Inorganic Nitrogen | DIN           | mg/L as N        |
| Plant Pigments:          | *Chlorophyll a               | CHLA_N        | $\mu\text{g/L}$  |
|                          | Phaeophytin                  | PHEA          | $\mu\text{g/L}$  |
| Carbon:                  |                              |               |                  |

|                   |                    |        |            |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------|------------|
| Microbial:        | Silicate, Filtered | SiO4F  | mg/L as SI |
| Field Parameters: | Water Temperature  | WTEM_N | °C         |

1. Time is coded based on a 2400 clock and is referenced to Standard Time.
2. Reserves have the option of measuring either NO<sub>2</sub> and NO<sub>3</sub> or they may substitute NO<sub>2</sub> for individual analyses if they can show that NO<sub>2</sub> is a minor component relative to NO<sub>3</sub>.

|                     |                                                     |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| Nitrogen species:   | NH <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>2</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> |
| Phosphorus species: | PO <sub>4</sub> F                                   |
| Other:              | CHLA                                                |

|     |          |
|-----|----------|
| NO3 | NO23-NO2 |
| DIN | NO23+NH4 |

The Moss Landing Marine Lab (MLML) Nutrient Analytical Laboratory has established Method Detection Limits (MDL), the lowest concentration of a parameter that an analytical procedure can reliably detect. The MDL is determined as 3 times the standard deviation of a minimum of five replicates of a single low concentration sample. The overall annual MDL is calculated as the average of the monthly MDLs. The following chart presents the current average MDL's; these values are reviewed and revised periodically. The MDL for each individual month are listed in the submitted raw metadata spreadsheet.

| Parameter   | Start date | End date   | MDL    |
|-------------|------------|------------|--------|
| <b>NO2F</b> | 1/1/2011   | 1/31/2011  | 0.0016 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 2/1/2011   | 2/28/2011  | 0.0004 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 3/1/2011   | 3/31/2011  | 0.0098 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 4/1/2011   | 4/30/2011  | 0.0002 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 5/1/2011   | 5/31/2011  | 0.0004 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 6/1/2011   | 6/30/2011  | 0.0004 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 7/1/2011   | 7/31/2011  | 0.0002 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 8/1/2011   | 8/31/2011  | 0.0002 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 9/1/2011   | 9/30/2011  | 0.0002 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 10/1/2011  | 10/31/2011 | 0.0002 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 11/1/2011  | 11/30/2011 | 0.0003 |
| <b>NO2F</b> | 12/1/2011  | 12/31/2011 | 0.0001 |
| <b>NO3F</b> | 1/1/2011   | 1/31/2011  | 0.0045 |
| <b>NO3F</b> | 2/1/2011   | 2/28/2011  | 0.0033 |
| <b>NO3F</b> | 3/1/2011   | 3/31/2011  | 0.0030 |

|        |           |            |        |
|--------|-----------|------------|--------|
| NO3F   | 4/1/2011  | 4/30/2011  | 0.0079 |
| NO3F   | 5/1/2011  | 5/31/2011  | 0.0030 |
| NO3F   | 6/1/2011  | 6/30/2011  | 0.0036 |
| NO3F   | 7/1/2011  | 7/31/2011  | 0.0063 |
| NO3F   | 8/1/2011  | 8/31/2011  | 0.0020 |
| NO3F   | 9/1/2011  | 9/30/2011  | 0.0045 |
| NO3F   | 10/1/2011 | 10/31/2011 | 0.0039 |
| NO3F   | 11/1/2011 | 11/30/2011 | 0.0059 |
| NO3F   | 12/1/2011 | 12/31/2011 | 0.0043 |
| PO4F   | 1/1/2011  | 1/31/2011  | 0.0022 |
| PO4F   | 2/1/2011  | 2/28/2011  | 0.0007 |
| PO4F   | 3/1/2011  | 3/31/2011  | 0.0013 |
| PO4F   | 4/1/2011  | 4/30/2011  | 0.0010 |
| PO4F   | 5/1/2011  | 5/31/2011  | 0.0014 |
| PO4F   | 6/1/2011  | 6/30/2011  | 0.0008 |
| PO4F   | 7/1/2011  | 7/31/2011  | 0.0019 |
| PO4F   | 8/1/2011  | 8/31/2011  | 0.0004 |
| PO4F   | 9/1/2011  | 9/30/2011  | 0.0011 |
| PO4F   | 10/1/2011 | 10/31/2011 | 0.0011 |
| PO4F   | 11/1/2011 | 11/30/2011 | 0.0016 |
| PO4F   | 12/1/2011 | 12/31/2011 | 0.0015 |
| NH4F   | 1/1/2011  | 1/31/2011  | 0.0008 |
| NH4F   | 2/1/2011  | 2/28/2011  | 0.0032 |
| NH4F   | 3/1/2011  | 3/31/2011  | 0.0011 |
| NH4F   | 4/1/2011  | 4/30/2011  | 0.0016 |
| NH4F   | 5/1/2011  | 5/31/2011  | 0.0040 |
| NH4F   | 6/1/2011  | 6/30/2011  | 0.0097 |
| NH4F   | 7/1/2011  | 7/31/2011  | 0.0070 |
| NH4F   | 8/1/2011  | 8/31/2011  | 0.0049 |
| NH4F   | 9/1/2011  | 9/30/2011  | 0.0009 |
| NH4F   | 10/1/2011 | 10/31/2011 | 0.0018 |
| NH4F   | 11/1/2011 | 11/30/2011 | 0.0012 |
| NH4F   | 12/1/2011 | 12/31/2011 | 0.0000 |
| CHLA_N | 1/1/2011  | 12/31/2011 | 0.0450 |

### 13) Laboratory Methods –

#### a) Parameter: NH4F

- i) Method Reference: Stricklin and Parsons Determination of Ammonia.
- ii) Method Descriptor: Samples collected and stored on ice in amber bottles prior to being filtered with a 0.45 µm GFF filter and subsequently subjected to hypochlorite-phenol in the presence of NH<sub>3</sub>. Sodium nitroprusside is then used as a catalyst in the reaction. An oxidizing solution is then added (a mixture of sodium hypochlorite and

alkaline reagent). The sample is then allowed to stand at a temperature between 20 and 27 °C for at least 1 hour and then placed in a 1 cm cuvette and absorbance is measured at 640 nm.

iii) Preservation Method: Samples filtered and stored at 4 °C up to 24 hours.

**b) Parameter: NO<sub>2</sub>3F, NO<sub>3</sub>F, and NO<sub>2</sub>F**

i) Method Reference: Stricklin and Parsons Determination of Nitrite.

ii) Method Descriptor: The water sample is first filtered then is passed through a cadmium column where the nitrate is reduced to nitrite. When only analyzing for nitrite the sample is not exposed to cadmium and thus the nitrite in the water is quantified. The nitrite is then exposed to sulfanilamide solution and allowed to react for 2 minutes then is exposed to N-(1-naphthyl)-ethylenediamine dihydrochloride solution and allowed to react for at least 10 minutes. The sample is then placed in a 10 cm cuvette where the absorbance is measured at 543 nm. Nitrate concentration equals the NO<sub>2</sub>3F (nitrate + nitrite) concentration minus the nitrite concentration. Thus NO<sub>3</sub> is calculated by subtracting NO<sub>2</sub>3F - NO<sub>2</sub>F.

iii) Preservation Method: Sample is filtered through a 0.45 µm filter and analyzed the same day.

**c) Parameter: PO<sub>4</sub>F**

i. Method Reference. Same as Nitrite with Alpkem analyzer.

ii. Method Descriptor: Ammonium molybdate is added to a water sample to produce phosphomolybdic acid, which is then reduced to phosphomolybdous acid (a blue compound) following the addition of dihydrazine (or hydrazine) sulfate. The sample is passed through a 50 mm flow cell and absorbance is measured at 820 nm.

iii. Preservation Method: Sample is filtered through a 0.45 µm filter and analyzed the same day.

**d) Parameter: ChlA**

i) Method Reference. EPA method 445.0 *UNESCO* (1994) Protocols for the joint global ocean flux study (JGOFS) core measurements. pp. 97-100.

ii) Method Descriptor: ChlA is extracted in 8 ml 90% acetone for 24 hrs and then fluorescence is measured and recorded (Fo).

iii) Preservation Method: A known volume of sample is filtered onto a 25 mm GF/F filter, folded in half and placed in a known volume of 90% acetone and then stored at -4°C until analysis 24 hrs later.

**14) Field and Laboratory QA/QC Programs –**

**a. Precision**

- i. **Field Variability** – ELKNERR collects two or three successive grab samples for the determination of water mass variability within each site.
- ii. **Laboratory Variability** – In determining laboratory variability, replicates are split from a single diel sample. Three laboratory replicates are done for ammonium, nitrite, nitrate and phosphate standards on a regular basis. Variability was found to be less than 11% for nitrite, 10% for nitrite+nitrate, 6% for phosphate, and 25% for ammonia.

Average percent difference

Nitrite 2.6%

Ammonia 7.6.3%

Nitrate 3.5%  
Phosphate 3.3%

iii. **Inter-organizational splits** – None

b. **Accuracy**

- i. **Sample Spikes** – Sample spikes were split from a single diel sample. Sample spikes were always from the sample diel sample as lab replicate 3. Sample spikes are done for nitrite and ammonium on a monthly basis. Average percent recovery was found to be 101% for nitrite and 101% for ammonia.
- ii. **Standard Reference Material Analysis** – Standard reference materials are diluted from a single concentrated stock sample. Standard reference analysis is conducted for nitrite and ammonium on a regular basis. Average percent difference was found to be 8.8% for nitrite and 4.5% for ammonia.
- iii. **Cross Calibration Exercises** – An inter-comparison study is conducted annually of a known concentration of nutrients in seawater as part of the NOAA National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program. Our analyses of all the nutrients have been within one standard deviation of all nutrients analyzed among all labs in the program.

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)                           |
| <i>Precipitation</i>  |                                                 |
| PNP                   | none                                            |
| PDR                   | drizzle                                         |
| PLR                   | light rain                                      |
| PHR                   | heavy rain                                      |
| PSQ                   | squally                                         |
| PFQ                   | frozen precipitation (sleet/snow/freezing rain) |
| PSR                   | mixed rain and snow                             |
| <i>Tide stage</i>     |                                                 |
| TSE                   | ebb tide                                        |
| TSF                   | flood tide                                      |
| TSH                   | high tide                                       |
| TSL                   | low tide                                        |
| <i>Wave height</i>    |                                                 |
| 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                           |
| <i>Wind direction</i> |                                                 |
| 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                        |
| <i>Wind speed</i>     |                                                 |
| 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 –**

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 NO<sub>2</sub>3F 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.