

Lake Superior (LKS) NERR Nutrient Metadata
January to December, 2024
Latest Update: 6/16/2025

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@baruch.sc.edu) or reserve with any additional questions.

I. Data Set and Research Descriptors

1) Principal investigator(s) and contact persons –

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2) Research objectives –

The Lake Superior NERR is situated on the freshwater estuary at the confluence of the St. Louis River and Lake Superior, the largest and most pristine of the Great Lakes. The Reserve is a diverse, 16,697-acre complex that contains a variety of representative terrestrial and aquatic habitats allowing for extensive research and educational opportunities. The Reserve provides opportunities for research and monitoring, experiential learning, and training, while continuing to contribute to the protection of the ecological health of the St. Louis River Estuary and Lake Superior coastal habitats.

The Lake Superior NERR implements the NERR System-Wide Monitoring Program (SWMP) along a river-to-Lake gradient. SWMP includes a continuous meteorological station, four continuous water quality monitoring stations, and monthly nutrient/pigment sampling at those same four stations. The nutrient sampling has two programmatic parts:

- a) Monthly Grab Sampling Program: Identifies nutrient difference along the river-to-Lake gradient throughout the ice-free season. Samples are collected at the four long-term SWMP water quality stations.
- b) Diel Sampling Program: Lake Superior does not experience strong tides, therefore 12 diel samples are simply collected with an auto-sampler every two hours, beginning the day before or day of grab sample collections. Diel samples are collected at the same SWMP station, every month.

3) Research methods –

a) Monthly Grab Sampling Program

Grab samples (sequential replicates) were collected from a boat or canoe once a month at the depth of the sonde deployment (~1.5 meters beneath the surface, except at Pokegama which is shallower) using a horizontal sampler. Sample bottles are acid-washed amber one-liter poly bottles. Ambient water quality data was collected concurrent with sampling, with a YSI EXO datasonde calibrated at the LKS NERR laboratory. At each station, seasonal depth profiles (bottom, middle, and top of water column) were recorded on a field sheet. Depth profile data are only available by contacting the Reserve directly.

b) Diel Sampling Program

Diel samples were taken from the dock located at Barker's Island SWMP station, at the same depth as the water quality datasonde, with an ISCO autosampler. The sampler was set to sample twelve times, with pre-reverse, every

two hours for 24 hours beginning either the day before, or the day of monthly grab samples. Sample bottles are acid washed one-liter translucent poly bottles. Ice was added to the ISCO sample bottle container for the duration of sampling during warm summer months. Cold months inhibit use of the ISCO sampler because of ice buildup in the tubing.

Both monthly grab and diel samples were transported from the field to the laboratory in a cooler, then filtered within a few hours of arrival in the LKS NERR laboratory and at the latest 24 hours from collection. Samples were filtered in low light to prevent chlorophyll *a* degradation. Samples were frozen at $\leq -20^{\circ}\text{C}$. Chlorophyll *a* filters were folded and enclosed in aluminum wrapped centrifuge tubes and kept in the freezer at $\leq -20^{\circ}\text{C}$ until extraction within 28 days. The LKS NERR laboratory conducted all Chlorophyll *a* and Total Suspended Solid analysis for all grab and diel samples every month in 2023.

The University of Minnesota-Duluth's Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI) Central Analytical Laboratory conducted nutrient analysis for all sampling in 2024. Samples were filtered at the LKS NERR then either transported via cooler to NRRI (30-minute drive) the same day and placed in a freezer at NRRI, or frozen at the LKS NERR then transported within 3 days to NRRI.

4) Site location and character –

Site name	Oliver Bridge (OL)
Latitude and longitude	46.65685, -92.20166
Tidal range (<i>meters</i>)	None – experiences seiche effects of up to 0.2 m
Salinity range (<i>psu</i>)	0.08 – 0.2 PPT
Type and amount of freshwater input	Entirely freshwater from St. Louis River
Water depth (<i>meters, MLW</i>)	<i>approximately 8m deep</i>
Sonde distance from bottom (<i>meters</i>)	<i>the sonde is deployed at a depth of ~1.5 m from the surface at this site</i>
Bottom habitat or type	<i>soft sediment</i>
Pollutants in area	Site is approximately 5.5 miles downstream of the Fond du Lac dam, there were historically paper mills above the site and there is current mining in the upper watershed
Description of watershed	<i>this site is the furthest upstream site monitored in the St. Louis River Estuary by LKS, approximately 11 miles upstream from the mouth at Lake Superior. The watershed is primarily composed of woody wetlands and mixed forest.</i>

Site name	Blatnik Bridge (BL)
Latitude and longitude	46.748649, -92.10027
Tidal range (<i>meters</i>)	None – experiences seiche effects of up to 0.3 m
Salinity range (<i>psu</i>)	0.08 – 0.25 PPT
Type and amount of freshwater input	Entirely freshwater from St. Louis River, Lake Superior, some urban tributaries, and discharge from the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District Wastewater Treatment Plant

Water depth (<i>meters, MLW</i>)	<i>approximately 7m deep</i>
Sonde distance from bottom (<i>meters</i>)	<i>the sonde is deployed at a depth of ~1.5 m from the surface at this site</i>
Bottom habitat or type	<i>soft sediment</i>
Pollutants in area	site is located within the urban area of Superior, WI, and Duluth, MN; site is immediately downstream of the Western Lake Superior Sanitary District Wastewater Treatment Plant discharge. It is also downstream of several impaired tributaries.
Description of watershed	<i>Watershed is mostly woody wetlands and mixed forest, however this site is adjacent to areas of high intensity developed land.</i>

Site name	Barker's Island (BA)
Latitude and longitude	46.721772, -92.06352
Tidal range (<i>meters</i>)	None – experiences seiche effects of up to 0.3 m
Salinity range (<i>psu</i>)	0.08 – 0.25 PPT
Type and amount of freshwater input	Entirely freshwater from St. Louis River, Lake Superior, some urban tributaries, and discharge from the Superior Wastewater Treatment Facility. Just downstream of Faxon Creek.
Water depth (<i>meters, MLW</i>)	<i>approximately 2m deep</i>
Sonde distance from bottom (<i>meters</i>)	<i>the sonde is deployed at a depth of ~1.5 m from the surface, about 0.5m from the bottom</i>
Bottom habitat or type	<i>soft sediment</i>
Pollutants in area	site is downstream of Superior and Duluth's wastewater treatment facilities, and near several storm water outfalls and Faxon Creek (an entirely urban stream) it is also adjacent to a public beach which has been closed occasionally due to E. coli standard exceedances and harmful algal blooms
Description of watershed	<i>Watershed is mostly woody wetlands and mixed forest; however this site is adjacent to areas of high intensity developed land.</i>

Site name	Pokegama Bay (PO)
Latitude and longitude	46.672360, -92.135614
Tidal range (<i>meters</i>)	None – experiences seiche effects of up to 0.2 m
Salinity range (<i>psu</i>)	0.06 – 0.21 PPT
Type and amount of freshwater input	Entirely freshwater from the Pokagama River
Water depth (<i>meters, MLW</i>)	<i>approximately 1m deep</i>

Sonde distance from bottom (<i>meters</i>)	<i>the sonde is deployed 0.5m from the bottom</i>
Bottom habitat or type	<i>Soft bottom of glacial red clay</i>
Pollutants in area	this site is downstream of Village of Superior's wastewater lagoons and is impaired due to Total Phosphorus exceedances
Description of watershed	<i>the Pokegama River is a tributary to the St. Louis River, entering the estuary on the Wisconsin side of Clough Island. The Pokegama River watershed measures approximately 20,144 acres, 51% of which is wetland, 37% forested, 4% developed and 6% agricultural use (the remainder is open water or bare land). This site is on a red clay tributary to the St. Louis River</i>

All LKS NERR historical nutrient/pigment monitoring stations:

Station Code	SWMP Status	Station Name	Location	Active Dates	Reason Decommissioned	Notes
BA	P	LKSBAWQ	46° 43' 18.38 N, 92° 03' 48.67 W	05/05/2012 00:00 - current	NA	NA
BL	P	LKSBLWQ	46° 44' 55.14 N, 92° 06' 0.97 W	05/08/2012 00:00 - current	NA	NA
OL	P	LKSOLWQ	46° 39' 24.66 N, 92° 12' 5.98 W	05/08/2012 00:00 - current	NA	NA
PO	P	LKSPOWQ	46° 40' 20.50 N, 92° 8' 8.21 W	05/28/2013 00:00 - current	NA	NA

5) Coded variable definitions –

lksbanut = Lake Superior NERR Barker's Island nutrients
lksponut = Lake Superior NERR Pokegama River nutrients
lksolnut = Lake Superior NERR Oliver Bridge nutrients
lksblnut = Lake Superior NERR Blatnik Bridge nutrients
monthly grab sample program = 1
diel grab sample program = 2

6) Data collection period –

SITE	Barker's Island	Blatnik Bridge	Oliver Bridge	Pokegama Bay	Barker's Island
First Year Sampled	2014	2012	2012	2013	2014
Monitoring Program	Grab	Grab	Grab	Grab	Diel
Jan – April	Not collected (ice)	Not collected (ice)	Not collected (ice)	Not collected (ice)	Not collected (ice)
May	05/23/24 12:52	05/23/24 12:25	05/23/24 9:25	05/23/24 10:31	05/23/24 8:00 to 05/23/24 6:00

June	06/20/24 14:09	06/20/24 7:50	06/20/24 10:51	06/20/24 13:22	06/20/24 8:00 to 06/20/24 6:00
July	07/16/24 11:54	07/16/24 7:37	07/16/24 10:00	07/16/24 13:19	07/16/24 8:00 to 07/17/24 6:00
August	08/13/24 10:49	08/13/24 7:20	08/13/24 9:30	08/13/24 12:44	08/13/24 10:00 to 8/14/24 8:00
September	09/10/24 10:30	09/10/24 8:15	09/10/24 9:30	09/10/24 12:15	09/10/24 8:00 to 09/11/24 6:00
October	10/08/24 12:15	10/08/24 8:15	10/08/24 8:57	10/08/24 10:44	10/08/24 8:00 to 10/09/24 6:00
November	11/06/24 11:33	11/06/24 10:51	11/06/24 10:09	11/06/24 12:21	11/6/24 8:00 to 11/07/24 6:00

7) Associated researchers and projects–

As part of the SWMP long-term monitoring program, LKS NERR also monitors 15-minute meteorological and water quality data which may be correlated with this nutrient/pigment dataset. These data are available at www.nerrsdata.org.

In 2023-2024 the LKS NERR collected phytoplankton samples and associated environmental parameters (nutrients, pigment, light etc.) as a part of a NERRS Science Collaborative funded project. Sampling sites overlap with lksbanut and lksponut and were collected on the same dates at 6 other sites in the estuary. Data is available at: <https://doi.org/10.6073/pasta/cf58e8c6af8a79077bf4330d60a6032c>

The St. Louis River Estuary is listed as an Area of Concern under the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement. One of the impairments for which it was listed is “Excessive Loading of sediment and nutrients”. Other agencies working in the St. Louis River Estuary to remove impairments include the Wisconsin and Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, the United States Environmental Protection Agency Mid-Continent Ecology Lab, United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the United State Geological Survey. The LKS NERR participates with partnerships in the area with these agencies as well as with the City of Superior, Douglas County, and several non-profits. More information can be found at - <https://www.pca.state.mn.us/watershed-information/st-louis-river/>

8) Distribution –

NOAA retains the right to analyze, synthesize and publish summaries of the NERRS System-wide Monitoring Program data. The NERRS retains the right to be fully credited for having collected and processed the data. Following academic courtesy standards, the NERR site where the data were collected should be contacted and fully acknowledged in any subsequent publications in which any part of the data are used. 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.

Requested citation format:

NOAA National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS). System-wide Monitoring Program. Data accessed from the NOAA NERRS Centralized Data Management Office website: www.nerrsdata.org; *accessed* 12 October 2024.

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 www.nerrsdata.org. Data are available in comma separated version format.

II. Physical Structure Descriptors

9) Entry verification –

Raw results for chlorophyll-a (ug/L) and total suspended solids (mg/L) are hand recorded in laboratory notebooks or bench sheets. These results are later entered digitally into an excel spreadsheet. All data transfers from hand recorded datasheets, bench sheets, or notebooks were independently checked by a second person for copy errors.

Nutrient data from the NRRI Central Analytical laboratory are provided in an excel spreadsheet over email. These data undergo a unit conversion then are copied over to the NutrientQAQC Excel macro (see below).

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.

The NRRI Central Analytical Laboratory calculates, and reports results in ppb (parts per billion). For purposes of consistency in the NERR System, Lake Superior NERR calculates the concentrations as mg/l. Therefore, Lake Superior NERR staff divides the concentrations reported by the NRRI Central Analytical Laboratory by 1000 to yield mg/l.

Hannah Nicklay was responsible for these data management tasks.

10) Parameter titles and variable names by category –

Required NOAA NERRS System-wide Monitoring Program nutrient parameters are denoted by an asterisk “*”.

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 + Nitrate, Filtered	NO23F	mg/L as N
	Total Nitrogen	TN	mg/L as N
	Total Phosphorus	TP	mg/L as P
Plant Pigments:	*Chlorophyll a	CHLA_N	µg/L
Other Lab Parameters:	Total Suspended Solids	TSS	mg/L

Notes:

1. Time is coded based on a 2400 clock and is referenced to Standard Time.
2. LKS NERR only reports NO23F because NO2F is a small fraction of NO23F. LKS NERR processed NO2F from 2013 – 2023 and in an analysis of those 625 data points, 48.5% were below detection limits. For all values above detection, the average proportion NO2F:NO3F was 0.08. For more information, please contact the Reserve directly.

11) Measured or calculated laboratory parameters –

a) Parameters measured directly

Nitrogen species:	NH4F, NO23F, TN
Phosphorus species:	PO4F, TP
Other:	CHLA_N, TSS

b) Calculated parameters

DIN	NO23F+NH4F
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12) Limits of detection –

The Method Detection Limit (MDL) is defined as the minimum measured concentration of a substance that can be reported with 99% confidence that the measured concentration is distinguishable from method blank results. The LKS NERR Laboratory revisits MDLs annually using EPA 821-R-16-006 procedures for CHLA_N. MDLs for TSS are calculated only using blanks processed throughout the entire year. NRRI Central Analytical Laboratory, a Minnesota state certified laboratory, revisits MDL values for every parameter annually, and reports a single value for each parameter for the year. The LKS NERR calculated

Parameter	Start Date	End Date	MDL	Revisited
CHLA_N	01/01/24	12/31/24	0.09	06/13/24 for with spikes and blanks throughout the year
NH4F	01/01/24	12/31/24	0.008	Annually
NO23F	01/01/24	12/31/24	0.005	Annually
PO4F	01/01/24	12/31/24	0.003	Annually
TN	01/01/24	12/31/24	0.020	Annually
TP	01/01/24	12/31/24	0.004	Annually
TSS	01/01/24	12/31/24	2	Annually – blanks throughout the year

13) Laboratory methods –

a) **Parameter: NH4F**

NRRI Central Analytical Laboratory

Method Reference: *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Methods for Chemical Analysis of Water and Wastes, Method 351.2. EPA-600/4-79-020, Revised March 1983.*

Method Descriptor: *When ammonium is heated with salicylate and hypochlorite in an alkaline phosphate buffer. An emerald green color is produced which is proportional to the ammonium concentration. The presence of EDTA in the buffer prevents precipitation of calcium and magnesium. The color is intensified by adding sodium nitroprusside.*

Preservation Method: *Samples filtered (0.45 µm membrane filter) and stored at 4 °C for up to 24 hours or filtered and stored at -20 °C for up to 28 days.*

b) **Parameter: NO23F**

NRRI Central Analytical Laboratory

Method Reference: *U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Methods for Chemical Analysis of Water and Wastes. Method 353.2. EPA 600 4-79-020, Revised 1983.*

Method Descriptor: *Nitrate is quantitatively reduced to nitrite by passage of the sample through a copperized cadmium column. The nitrite (reduced nitrate plus original nitrite) is then determined by diazotizing with sulfanilamide followed by coupling with N-(1-naphthyl) ethylenediamine dihydrochloride. The resulting water soluble dye has a magenta color which is read at 520 nm. Nitrite alone also can be determined by removing the cadmium column.*

Preservation Method: *Samples filtered (0.45 µm membrane filter) and stored at 4 °C for up to 24 hours or filtered and stored at -20 °C for up to 28 days.*

c) **Parameter: PO4F**

NRRI Central Analytical Laboratory

Method Reference: *Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, Method 4500-P E. 18th Ed. 1992. American Public Health Association, Washington, D.C.*

Method Descriptor: *Ammonium molybdate and potassium antimonyl tartrate react in acid medium with orthophosphate to form a heteropoly acid (phosphomolybdic acid) that is reduced to intensely colored molybdenum blue by ascorbic acid.*

Preservation Method: *Samples filtered (0.45 µm membrane filter) and stored at 4 °C for up to 24 hours or filtered and stored at -20 °C for up to 28 days.*

d) **Parameter: CHLA_N**

LKS NERR Laboratory Method: *SOP Chlorophyll a Non-acidification Method Rev 1 (based on EPA Method 445.0)*

Method Reference: *US EPA 1997. Method 445.0, In Vitro Determination of Chlorophyll a and Pheophytin a in Marine and Freshwater Algae by Fluorescence, Revision 1.2, September, 1997. Arar, E.J. and Collins, G.B., National Exposure Research Laboratory, Office of Research and Development, United States Environmental Protection Agency, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45268.*

Method Descriptor: *Chlorophyll a containing phytoplankton in surface water are concentrated by filtering through a glass fiber filter (Whatman GF/F, 0.7 µm). Pigments are extracted in 90% acetone for 24 hours. The filter slurry is centrifuged for clarification and fluorescence is measured. The Turner Design Trilogy fluorimeter provides a set of very narrow bandpass excitation and emission filters that nearly eliminate the spectral interference caused by the presence of pheophytin a and chlorophyll b.*

Preservation Method: *Samples filtered (0.7 Glass Fiber) and stored at -20 °C for up to 30 days, filters are placed in a foil wrapped centrifuge tube to prevent light interference.*

e) **Parameter: TSS**

LKS NERR Method: *SOP Solids: Total Dissolved Solids and Total Suspended Solids Rev 1 (based on Standard Methods 2540)*

Method Reference: *Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 22nd Edition, Method 2540, APHA, AWWA, WEF, Port City Press, Baltimore, Maryland, 2012.*

Method Descriptor: *A well-mixed sample is filtered through a weighed standard glass fiber filter (1.5 μ m). The filter and residue retained is dried to a constant weight at 103 to 105°C. The increase in weight of the filter represents the total suspended solids.*

Preservation Method: *Refrigerate sample at 4°C for no more than 7 days. Analyzed as soon as possible due to the impracticality of preservation.*

f) **Parameter: TP and TN**

NRRI Central Analytical Laboratory

Method References:

Ameel, J. R. Axler, and C. Owen. 1993. Persulfate digestion for determination of total nitrogen and phosphorus in low-nutrient waters. American Environmental Laboratory. Oct. 1993.

Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, Method 4500-Norg D. (proposed). 19th Ed. 1995. American Public Health Association, Washington, D.C.

Method Descriptor: *An alkaline persulfate digestion simultaneously oxidizes ammonia and organic N to nitrate, and liberates phosphorus compounds as ortho-phosphate. Methods for the determination of NO₃F and PO₄F are then performed.*

Preservation Method: *Digestion best performed within 12 hours of collection, otherwise, samples are preserved by freezing up to 6 months.*

14) **Field and Laboratory QAQC programs –**

a) **Precision**

i) **Field variability** – True field replicates (successive grab samples taken within 4 minutes of one another) were collected at every SWMP station for the Monthly Grab Sampling Program. Field replicates were not collected for the Diel Sampling Program. In total, 28 replicates, so 20% of samples were collected in replicate for both programs combined. Variability between replicates is analyzed using Relative Percent Difference (RPD) and is summarized in the table below.

ii)

all sites combined	TP	PO ₄ F	TN	NH ₄ F	NO ₃ F	CHLA_N	TSS
min	0	0	0	0	0	0.260078	0
average	9.495809	12.73164	3.036348	12.23916	10.3744	13.71944	24.46843
max	9.495809	78.78788	24.23813	75.86207	69.93865	60.96794	100
lksbanut							
min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
average	14.33085	13.96933	3.858131	9.090335	2.276219	11.62004	25.53968
max	37.28814	50	18.2151	30.76923	5.291005	29.33985	51.85185
lksblnut							
min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
average	3.788147	9.621368	2.108721	9.948559	2.293663	15.40588	27.61285
max	8.695652	22.22222	4.651163	25.64103	6.043165	60.96794	100
lksolnut							
min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
average	5.298136	4.675325	1.379587	7.659827	7.525745	9.40331	25.51465
max	18.18182	13.33333	4.376013	17.14286	21.05263	31.83673	59.64912
lksponut							

min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
average	14.5661	22.66055	4.798953	22.2579	29.40197	18.44853	19.20653
max	44.81605	78.78788	24.23813	75.86207	69.93865	41.17647	33.96226

i) **Laboratory variability** – Laboratory replicates are evaluated for CHLA_N, TSS and all dissolved nutrient parameters. In 2024, the LKS NERR laboratory analyzed 29 CHLA-N samples in duplicate (14% of samples) and 33 TSS samples in duplicate (15% of samples). These values are for all samples analyzed in the laboratory from all research projects, including SWMP. Laboratory variability (RPD) was calculated for each and is one QC parameter that determines whether data is flagged as suspect or rejected. For all nutrient parameters, the NRRI Central Analytical Laboratory performed at 3-4 laboratory replicates per sample batch. SWMP samples are processed alongside other samples in an analytical run so exact calculations of the percent of LKS NERR samples that were run in duplicate cannot be directly assessed.

ii) **Inter-organizational splits** – None

b) **Accuracy**

i) **Sample spikes** – The NRRI, Central Analytical Laboratory reports a quality control standard, up to ten check standard values, and at least three sample spike recoveries per sample run. These are evaluated to assess whether data should be flagged. In 2024, all quality control standards were within 90 – 105 % recovery. All check standards were with 92 -118% recovery. All sample spike recoveries were within 83 – 127 %.

ii) **Standard reference material analysis** – None

iii) **Cross calibration exercises** – participated in the inter-NERR nutrient comparison

iv) **Blanks** - Each month at least 1 filter blank and matrix blank is assessed for contamination during the filtration or analysis process. In 2024, no blanks exceeded method detection limits for any parameter analyzed in the LKS NERR laboratory or sent for analysis to the NRRI Central Analytical Laboratory.

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 –

[Instructions/Remove: This section details the secondary QAQC Code definitions used in combination with the flags above and requires no additional information. Include the following excerpt.]

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
GSM	See metadata

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
<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 NERR 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 NO₂F 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.

Sample hold times for 2024: NERRS SOP allows nutrient samples to be held for up to 28 days (CHLA for 30) at -20°C, plus allows for up to 5 days for collecting, processing, and shipping samples. TN and TP may be held at any temp for up to 6 months. Samples held beyond that time period are flagged suspect <1> and coded (CHB). If measured values were below MDL, this resulted in <-4> [SBL] (CHB) flagging/coding.

NERRS SOP allows nutrient samples to be held for up to 24 hours if held at 4°C with no preservation, for NH4F and NO23F up to 28 days if acidified and held at 4°C, and up to 28 days (CHLA for 30 days) if held at -20°C. It is standard practice at LKS NERR to freeze all samples at -20°C (TN and TP included) as soon as possible after collection and filtration. Samples are then transported by cooler to NRRI (30-minute drive) to be stored in their --20°C freezer until analysis.

Sample Descriptor	TP	PO4F	TN	NH4F	NO23F	CHLa_ N	TSS
5/23 – 5/24/24 all grab and diel	6/8	5/30- 5/31	6/18	6/14	6/18	6/16	5/30
6/20 -6/21/24 all grab and diel	6/24	6/26	7/15	7/11	7/8	7/16	6/24
7/16 – 7/17 all grab and diel	8/6	8/1	8/5	8/6	8/2	8/5	7/22
8/13 – 8/14 all grab and diel	9/3	9/10	9/1	9/4	8/27	9/11	8/20
9/10 – 9/11 all grab and diel	9/23	10/7	10/11	10/2	*10/15	9/20	9/23
10/8 – 10/9 all grab and diel	10/31	10/22	10/24	10/23	10/29	10/18	10/10
11/6 – 11/7 all grab and diel	11/25	11/15	12/9	12/11	12/10	11/14	11/7

*samples held longer than allowed by NERRS protocols