

# Sediment fluxes of dissolved gasses and nutrients from the coast of North Carolina in 2010.

Website: <https://www.bco-dmo.org/dataset/704346>

Data Type: experimental

Version: 1

Version Date: 2017-06-06

## Project

» [Microbial Regulation of Greenhouse Gas N<sub>2</sub>O Emission from Intertidal Oyster Reefs](#) (Oyster Reef N<sub>2</sub>O Emission)

Contributors	Affiliation	Role
<a href="#">Piehler, Michael F.</a>	University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-Chapel Hill)	Principal Investigator, Contact
<a href="#">Brush, Mark</a>	Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)	Co-Principal Investigator
<a href="#">Song, Bongkeun</a>	Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS)	Co-Principal Investigator
<a href="#">Tobias, Craig</a>	University of Connecticut (UConn - Avery Point)	Co-Principal Investigator
<a href="#">Ake, Hannah</a>	Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI BCO-DMO)	BCO-DMO Data Manager

## Abstract

Sediment fluxes of dissolved gasses and nutrients from the coast of North Carolina in 2010.

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## Coverage

**Spatial Extent:** N:34.6951 E:-76.6081 S:34.6804 W:-76.626

**Temporal Extent:** 2010-06-28

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## Dataset Description

Nutrient flux data from several landscapes in coastal North Carolina.

## Acquisition Description

Methodology from **Smyth, A. R., Piehler, M. F. and Grabowski, J. H. (2015), Habitat context influences nitrogen removal by restored oyster reefs. J Appl Ecol, 52: 716–725.**  
**doi:**[10.1111/1365-2664.12435](https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2664.12435)

Within 4 h of collection, sediment cores were set up in a continuous flow core incubation system to measure steady-state nutrient and dissolved gas fluxes, described in Piehler & Smyth (2011). Briefly, cores were sealed with gas-tight lids, which had an inflow and outflow port. Water from a reservoir was pulled over the cores at a flow rate of 1 mL min<sup>-1</sup>. Triplicate dissolved gases and duplicate dissolved inorganic nitrogen samples were collected from the outflow and inflow periodically over the next 24 h. To examine how sediments from different habitat contexts responded to nitrate pulses, nitrate concentration in the reservoir water was elevated with NaNO<sub>3</sub> (~800 µM) after 48 h of sampling. Dissolved gas and inorganic nitrogen samples were then collected for an additional 48 h. Incubations were conducted in the dark and at ambient temperature (30 °C).

#### **Water Quality Data:**

##### **Data Collected from Site using YSI in the field**

*From YSI*

<b>Date</b>	23-Jun-10
<b>Temp (oC)</b>	30.1
<b>Salinity</b>	34.94
<b>Dissolved Oxygen (mg/l)</b>	6.93
<b>Dissolved Oxygen (%)</b>	100%
<b>Water Column NOx (uM)</b>	0.17
<b>Water Column NH4 (uM)</b>	0.14

#### **Processing Description**

Methodology from **Smyth, A. R., Piehler, M. F. and Grabowski, J. H. (2015), Habitat context influences nitrogen removal by restored oyster reefs. J Appl Ecol, 52: 716–725.**  
**doi:**[10.1111/1365-2664.12435](https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2664.12435)

Fluxes across the sediment–water interface were calculated as  $(C_o - C_i) \times f/a$ , where  $C_o$  is the outflow concentration ( $\mu\text{mol L}^{-1}$ ),  $C_i$  is the inflow concentration,  $f$  is the flow rate ( $0.06 \text{ L h}^{-1}$ ), and  $a$  is the sediment surface area ( $0.0032 \text{ m}^2$ ). Successive measurements from each core (triplicates for dissolved gas and duplicates for dissolved inorganic nutrients) were averaged to give core-specific values. This results in a net  $\text{N}_2$  flux (gross denitrification – gross nitrogen fixation) and does not distinguish between the sources of  $\text{N}_2$ . Consequently, denitrification refers to net  $\text{N}_2$  production. Oxygen fluxes were calculated using the concentrations of  $\text{O}_2$  obtained from the MIMS, presented as sediment oxygen demand (SOD), and serve as an indicator of organic matter quality, such that more labile organic matter is associated with higher SOD (Ferguson, Eyre & Gay 2003). To determine the influence of oyster reefs on sediment  $\text{N}_2$  fluxes, the change in denitrification between the control and reef habitat pair in each zone was calculated (Kellogg et al. 2014). Denitrification efficiency was computed as the percentage of the dissolved inorganic nitrogen efflux that was  $\text{N}_2$  (Piehler & Smyth 2011).

Statistical analyses were performed using R 2.13.1 (R Foundation for Statistical Computing 2011). Linear mixed-effects models (lme in R nlme package), where habitat nested in sampling location was included as a random effect for the intercept, were used to investigate the effects of oyster reef presence, habitat context, nitrate concentration (ambient vs. elevated) and the interaction between these factors on response variables. Fluxes of  $\text{N}_2$ ,  $\text{NO}_x$  ( $[\text{math formula}] + [\text{math formula}]$ )  $[\text{math formula}]$ , denitrification efficiency and SOD were analysed using all three fixed effects. For sediment organic matter, only habitat context and reef presence were included as fixed effects. The effects of ambient vs. elevated nitrate concentration and habitat context on oyster reef-mediated changes in denitrification were also analysed with a mixed-effects model (fixed effects: nitrate concentration  $\times$  habitat context; random effects: habitat nested in location). Relationships between oyster density and habitat context were made using a mixed-effects model (fixed effects: habitat context; random effects: habitat nested in location). Comparisons were conducted using linear contrasts and judged against an alpha level of 0.05. Interactions were assessed using Tukey's HSD (lsmeans in R lsmeans package). Assumptions of homogeneity were tested using Levene's tests. Regression analyses were used to investigate the effect of oyster density on denitrification. Models with the lowest Akaike's information criterion corrected for small sample sizes (AICc) were chosen.

#### **BCO-DMO Processing Notes:**

- column names reformatted to comply with BCO-DMO naming standards.
- lat and lon columns added to correspond with locations.
- nd used to replace all blank cells with no data.

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## **Related Publications**

Smyth, A. R., Piehler, M. F., & Grabowski, J. H. (2015). Habitat context influences nitrogen removal by restored oyster reefs. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 52(3), 716–725.  
doi:[10.1111/1365-2664.12435](https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2664.12435)

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## **Parameters**

Parameter	Description	Units
date	Date of collection; YYYY/MM/DD	unitless
habitat	Type of substrate where oysters were measured	unitless
reefs	Indication of whether or not a reef was present	unitless
location	PI issued location IDs that correspond to specific coordinates and experimental treatments	unitless
lat	Latitude	decimal degrees
lon	Longitude	decimal degrees
nutrients	Indication of whether or not experimental levels of nutrients were used	unitless
N_N2	Nitrogen flux per hour	$\mu\text{mol N m}^{-2} \text{hr}^{-1}$
O2	Oxygen flux per hour	$\mu\text{mol O}_2 \text{m}^{-2} \text{hr}^{-1}$
SOD	Sediment oxygen demand per hour	$\mu\text{mol O}_2 \text{m}^{-2} \text{hr}^{-1}$
NOX	Nitrogen oxide flux per hour	$\mu\text{mol N m}^{-2} \text{hr}^{-1}$
NH4	Ammonium flux per hour [ <a href="#">table of contents</a>   <a href="#">back to top</a> ]	$\mu\text{mol N m}^{-2} \text{hr}^{-1}$
SOM	Sediment organic matter flux per hour; measured in the upper 2 cm	percent
<b>Instruments</b> density	Oyster density	count per square meter
eff	Denitrification efficiency	percent

<b>Dataset-specific Instrument Name</b>	IRMS
<b>Generic Instrument Name</b>	Isotope-ratio Mass Spectrometer
<b>Generic Instrument Description</b>	The Isotope-ratio Mass Spectrometer is a particular type of mass spectrometer used to measure the relative abundance of isotopes in a given sample (e.g. VG Prism II Isotope Ratio Mass-Spectrometer).

<b>Dataset-specific Instrument Name</b>	Lachat Quick-Chem 8000 automated ion analyser
<b>Generic Instrument Name</b>	Nutrient Autoanalyzer
<b>Dataset-specific Description</b>	Used to analyze dissolved inorganic nutrients
<b>Generic Instrument Description</b>	Nutrient Autoanalyzer is a generic term used when specific type, make and model were not specified. In general, a Nutrient Autoanalyzer is an automated flow-thru system for doing nutrient analysis (nitrate, ammonium, orthophosphate, and silicate) on seawater samples.

<b>Dataset-specific Instrument Name</b>	YSI 600 Series Sonde and Model 650 data logger
<b>Generic Instrument Name</b>	Temperature Logger
<b>Dataset-specific Description</b>	Used to collect water quality data
<b>Generic Instrument Description</b>	Records temperature data over a period of time.

## Deployments

## Cheerystone\_Inlet

<b>Website</b>	<a href="https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/700947">https://www.bco-dmo.org/deployment/700947</a>
<b>Platform</b>	shoreside Virginia
<b>Start Date</b>	2013-05-01
<b>End Date</b>	2013-07-31
<b>Description</b>	Cheerystone Inlet of the Eastern Shore of Virginia: N37° 18'30" and W76° 1'0"

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## Project Information

## **Microbial Regulation of Greenhouse Gas N<sub>2</sub>O Emission from Intertidal Oyster Reefs (Oyster Reef N<sub>2</sub>O Emission)**

Extracted from the NSF award abstract: Oyster reefs are biogeochemical hot spots and prominent estuarine habitats that provide disproportionate ecological function. Suspension-feeding eastern oysters, *Crassostrea virginica*, are capable of improving water quality and diminishing eutrophication by filtering nutrients and particles from the water and depositing them in the sediments. Remineralization of these deposits may enhance sedimentary denitrification that facilitates nitrogen removal in tidal estuaries. However, the scientific underpinning of oyster reef function has been challenged in various studies. In addition, recent studies of filter feeding invertebrates reported the production of nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), a greenhouse gas, as an end product of incomplete denitrification by gut microbes. *C. virginica* could be another source of N<sub>2</sub>O flux from intertidal habitats. Preliminary work indicated substantial N<sub>2</sub>O production from individual oysters. The estimated N<sub>2</sub>O production from high density oyster reefs may exceed the N<sub>2</sub>O flux measured from some estuaries. With the new discovery of N<sub>2</sub>O emission and uncertainty regarding eutrophication control, the ecological value of oyster reef restoration may become equivocal. This project will quantify N<sub>2</sub>O fluxes to understand the factors controlling N<sub>2</sub>O emission from oyster reefs. Sedimentary N processes will be examined to develop an oyster reef N model to estimate N<sub>2</sub>O emission from tidal creek estuaries relative to other N cycling processes. The PIs hypothesize that intertidal oyster reefs are a substantial source of N<sub>2</sub>O emission from estuarine ecosystems and the magnitude of emission may be linked to water quality. If substantial N<sub>2</sub>O flux from oyster reefs is validated, ecological benefits of oyster reef restoration should be reevaluated. This interdisciplinary research team includes a microbial ecologist, a biogeochemist, an ecologist and an ecosystem modeler. They will utilize stable isotope and molecular microbiological techniques to quantify oyster N<sub>2</sub>O production, elucidate microbial sources of N<sub>2</sub>O emission from oysters and sediments, and estimate seasonal variation of N<sub>2</sub>O fluxes from oyster reefs. Measurements from this study will be integrated into a coupled oyster bioenergetics-sediment biogeochemistry model to compare system level rates of N cycling on oyster reefs as a function of oyster density and water quality. Modeling results will be used to assess the relative trade-offs of oyster restoration associated with N cycling. They expect to deliver the following end products: 1) estimation of annual N<sub>2</sub>O flux from oyster reefs as an additional source of greenhouse gases from estuaries, 2) a better understanding of the environmental and microbial factors influencing N<sub>2</sub>O and N<sub>2</sub> fluxes in tidal estuaries, 3) transformative knowledge for the effect of oyster restoration on water quality enhancement and ecosystem function, 4) direct guidance for oyster restoration projects whose goals include water quality enhancement, and 5) a modeling tool for use in research and restoration planning.

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## Funding

Funding Source	Award
<a href="#">NSF Division of Ocean Sciences (NSF OCE)</a>	<a href="#">OCE-1233372</a>

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