



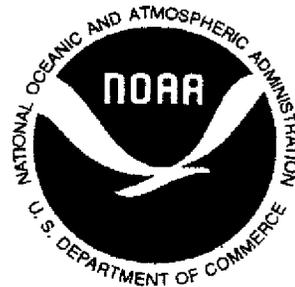
Great Bay Coast Watch

Monitoring Water Quality and Phytoplankton in New Hampshire Coastal Waters

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Great Bay Coast Watch – Monitoring Water Quality and Phytoplankton in New Hampshire Coastal Waters

Introduction

The Great Bay Coast Watch (GBCW) was founded in 1990 as part of the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension/Sea Grant outreach. The GBCW mission is to protect the long-term health of New Hampshire's coastal environment through volunteer monitoring and education programs. This year the New Hampshire Coastal Program (NHCP) funded the Watch in part to continue water quality and phytoplankton monitoring and to expand educational and outreach efforts.

Currently GBCW volunteers monitor 21 sites for water quality parameters on a monthly basis from April to November. At each site visit, GBCW volunteers measure water temperature, pH, salinity, dissolved oxygen, transparency, and collect a sample for fecal coliform analysis. Following a quality assurance/quality control plan approved by the Environmental Protection Agency, volunteers are checked twice a season on sampling procedures. GBCW now has a long-term database monitoring the overall health of the Great Bay Estuarine System with results from over 4000 monitoring visits.

In 1999 GBCW volunteers completed training and started the first New Hampshire harmful algae bloom (HAB) monitoring effort. HAB events continue to increase in U.S. coastal waters. Most species of algae or phytoplankton are not harmful and serve as an important energy source at the base of the food chain. However, a small number of species can produce toxins that when present in large quantities may concentrate in shellfish. Harvested and consumed by humans these now toxic shellfish can cause sickness and death. Many coastal states now rely on volunteers to collect water quality data and assist scientists and shellfish managers in monitoring for blooms of potentially toxic phytoplankton species. Currently GBCW volunteers are trained to identify four target species that are toxic or capable of becoming toxic. They include *Alexandrium spp.*, *Dinophysis spp.*, *Prorocentrum lima* and *Pseudonitzschia*.

The main Objectives of this project were:

1. Recruit and train additional volunteers for water quality monitoring and phytoplankton sampling
2. Continue quality sampling and data collection
3. Continue education and outreach efforts through monthly meetings, community presentations, and development of fact sheets



New volunteers – Janet Lucco and Kathy Watson – participate in GBCW training session

Activities and Achievements

GBCW trained 25 new volunteers.

Volunteers contributed over 400 hours in the field and lab for baseline water quality monitoring at project sites in New Castle, Newington, and Portsmouth (see appendix B – volunteer hours).

Volunteers and school groups worked with Professor Dave Burdick, UNH research scientist, to analyze and present GBCW data to conservation commissions in New Castle, Portsmouth and Newington NH.

Volunteers completed quality assurance/quality control sessions twice during the field season to ensure accurate sampling procedures.

Volunteer Phytoplankton samplers contributed over 300 hours to this project while monitoring for toxic phytoplankton blooms at five coastal locations (see appendix A &B).

The phytoplankton coordinator attended a workshop at the University of Rhode Island on methods to study phytoplankton species *Prorocentrum lima* with research scientist Dr. Lucie Miranda.

Phytoplankton coordinator and volunteers attended a two-day workshop hosted by the Maine Phytoplankton Volunteer program.

The Phytoplankton project coordinator worked with students at North Hampton Middle School, summer computer program, to photograph and display phytoplankton samples using a digital camera and demonstrated the phytoplankton database.

GBCW volunteers represented the Watch at the following public events:

Apple Harvest Celebration – Dover NH
Ducker's Day – Durham NH
Exeter River Alewife Festival – Exeter NH

GBCW organized monthly educational meeting and training sessions for volunteers. Speakers and topic included the following:

Andy Chapman, NHDES, Sampling for Potential Pollution Sources in Great and Little Bays
NHCP – Findings of the Annual Coastal Clean-up
Ray Grizzle – UNH Jackson Estuarine Laboratory – Habitat Restoration at South Mill Pond in Portsmouth, NH
Joanne McLaughlin – NHCP – Volunteer assistance with identifying erosion problems in tidal areas
Doug Bogen – Clean Water Action – Air Pollution in NH
Julia Peterson, UNH Sea Grant Program – Identifying Potential Pollution Sources Around the Home
A Panel Discussion on Dredging in NH

GBCW produced the following education and outreach materials (see appendix A):

- Great Bay Coast Watch – Phytoplankton Monitoring Program 2001 Report
- Great Bay Coast Watch – Monitoring the Meadows of the Sea

Discussion

The projects supported in this grant allowed Great Bay Coast Watch to expand education and outreach opportunities and continue the development of long-term databases available for numerous users.

The watch produced two new educational brochures with funds from this grant: 1. Great Bay Coast Watch – Phytoplankton Monitoring Program 2001 Report 2. Great Bay Coast Watch – Monitoring the Meadows of the Sea. These materials are valuable for presenting current information on activities of the Watch to the public. The first allowed for a more detailed presentation of the phytoplankton data collected by the volunteers while the second is a smaller handout that explains the project in general. These brochures are used for both recruitment and education. To date they have been distributed at public presentations such as the conservation commission meetings, River Alewife Festival, and GBCW monthly meetings. Volunteers also keep a supply of the smaller brochure, “Monitoring the Meadows of the Sea”, for distribution if they interact with the public while sampling.

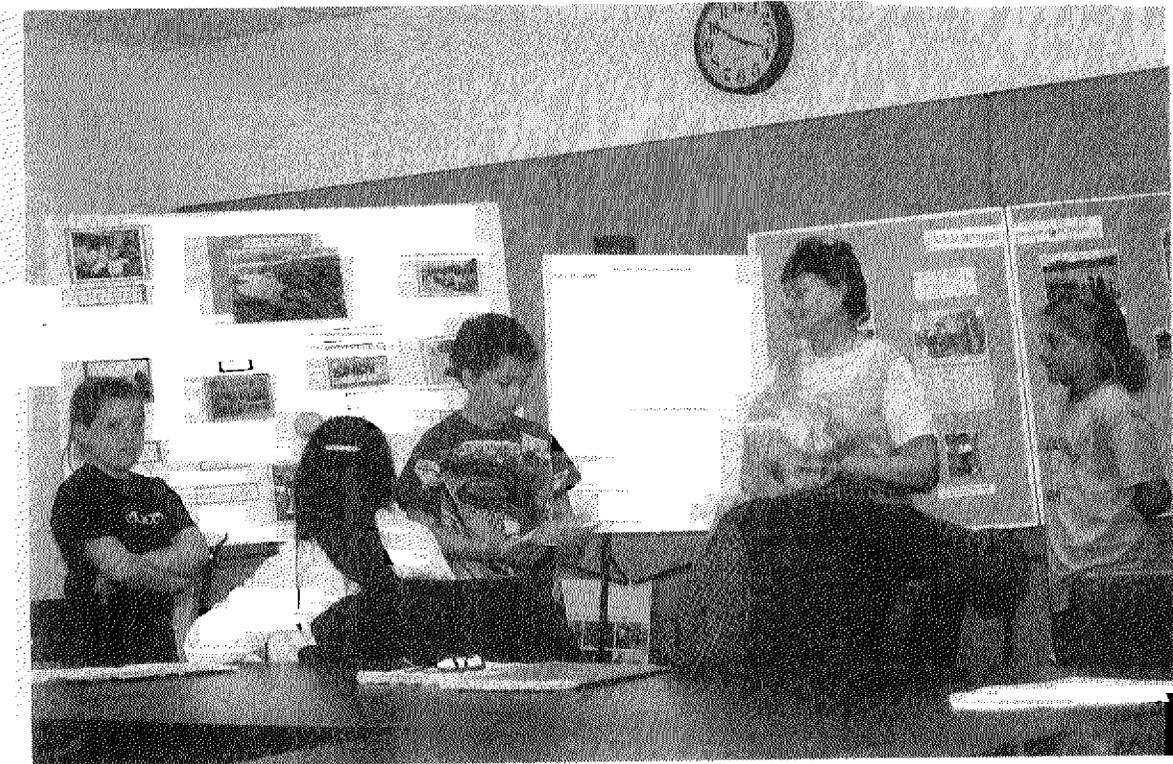
GBCW completed three community presentations to conservation commissions in New Castle, Portsmouth and Newington, NH with the assistance of local school groups, volunteers and a research scientist from UNH. This was a great opportunity to enlist local school groups in activities to promote watershed awareness. Five students, along with their teachers, from Portsmouth Middle School and the New Franklin School analyzed data from GBCW that related sites and Portsmouth NH. Two home-schooled students participated with their mother in a presentation to the Newington NH Conservation Commission. In addition two GBCW volunteers rounded out the Newington team and made an additional presentation in New Castle, NH. Volunteers found this to be a great opportunity to learn in detail about data they had collected that related to locations of interest to them, and increase awareness of Great Bay Coast Watch and local water quality issues with local decision makers. All project participants found the opportunity to develop ideas with the research scientist from UNH as a valuable learning tool.

The phytoplankton project continues to be a valuable observation tool of potentially harmful algae blooms. Funding for this grant began in July, 2001 and volunteers were mid-way through the current sampling season. Summer samples included lots of easily identifiable favorites, the bold, flashy, and colorful non-toxic dinoflagellate *Ceratium spp.* and the Grecian urn shaped *Dinophysis spp.* During the summer, volunteers continued to use our field microscopes for public outreach. Phytoplankton and water samples were also collected and information shared with interested onlookers. We also had contact during the season with whale watch customers, summer camp students at the Seacoast Science Center, and summer school students in North Hampton. Our microscopes continue to be a valuable bridge between tourists, local residents, and our GBCW program mission of education and research.

During the fall we found increased numbers of the cell *pseudonitzchia spp.* reported at the Parsons Creek site in Rye, and also in the Hampton and Seabrook areas. Finding the cell in samples does not necessarily mean that shellfish are in danger of becoming toxic. There are

many species of *pseudonitzchia* but only a very few produce toxins, and only then under rare nutrient conditions. So far, samples sent for analysis to the USFDA Sea Food Laboratory in Washington D.C. have contained species not known to be capable of producing toxins.

Volunteer training opportunities this season included a trip to Bigelow Laboratory for Ocean Sciences, Boothbay Harbor Maine to join members of the Maine Cooperative Extension's Volunteer Phytoplankton Monitoring Program for a spring training session. Live phytoplankton samples for identification practice were supplied by the Guillian-Pravolli Culture Center at Bigelow.



Students from the 4th grade at New Franklin School, with teacher Ann Smith, discuss GBCW data with the Portsmouth conservation commission

Appendix A – Outreach and Education Publications

Appendix B Volunteer hours and match summary

Quarter 1

	Hours	Miles
07/26/2001 Joint Meeting and BBQ	72.5	457
09/05/2001 Monthly Meeting	32	385
08/07/2001 QA/QC	49	500
08/08/2001 QA/QC	52	338
Monthly water quality sampling New Castle, Newington, Portsmouth sites	86	
Phytoplankton Sampling July-September	137	955
total	428.5	2635
match\$	\$4,713.50	\$909.80

Quarter 2

09/15/2001 Ducker's Day Presentation	23	161
10/03/2001 Monthly Meeting	38	356
11/14/2001 Chili and Chowder festival	135	581
12/31/2001 Volunteer area leaders meeting	15	0
kit clean-up	39	159
Monthly water quality sampling New Castle, Newington, Portsmouth sites	70	
Phytoplankton Sampling October and Nov.	71	549
total	391	1806
match \$	\$4,301.00	\$623.00

Quarter 3

	<u>hours</u>	<u>miles</u>
01/21/2002 Volunteer Action sign-up, Portsmouth Middle school		3
01/22/2002 Meeting for town presentations		16
02/11/2002 Secchi disk maintenance		49
03/06/2002 Annual Meeting		54
3/8&9 Phytoplankton Workshop, Darling Marine Center		174
03/12/2002 Phytoplankton training, Kingman Farm		28
03/13/2002 Introduction to GBCW		13.5
03/19/2002 Meeting for town presentations		8
03/20/2002 New Volunteer Training		28
03/28/2002 Student Training		20
various Steve Cooper, GBCW volunteer - report production		40
3/25 & 28 Phytoplankton sampling		14
		<u>3</u>
Total		<u>60</u>
match \$	\$4,955.50	\$639.48

Quarter 4

04/23/02 Monthly Meeting	60	473
4/8&9 equipment calibration	15.5	114
4/10&11 sampling kit assembly	28.5	158
04/15/02 training session	37	242
4/17&18 Quality Assurance/Control volunteer testing	126	1347
4/17&18 QA/QC volunteer team support	55	
4/22&23 sampling kit assembly	20	
05/08/02 monthly meeting	67.5	477
05/13/02 phytoplankton training	3	20
05/18/02 public display-Exeter Alewife Festival	12	
06/05/02 monthly meeting	<u>42</u>	<u>420</u>
	466.5	3251
phyto field sampling	158	1248
monthly water quality sampling New Castle, Newington, Portsmouth sites	110	1095
Lab work-processing water quality samples for fecal coliforms	176	
volunteer assistance with reports/fact sheets production	68	
community presentations	<u>75</u>	<u>188</u>
	total 1053.5	5782
	match \$	\$11,588.50 \$2,110.43

total match \$ \$29,840.41

09R Rye Harbor

Date	Time	Current Speed	Wind Speed	Wind Direction	Air Temp. (C)	Transparency	Water Depth (cm)	Water Temp (C)	Water Temp. In Cylinder (C)	Water Density	Salinity (ppt)	Tow Depth (cm)	Duration (min)	Dissolved Oxygen (ppm)	Tube 1	Tube 2	Pr. app.	A.L.	Pu. spp.	D. spp.	Dominant Species	Number of Calls	Comments	Sampler	Vol. (ml)	Vol. (ml)	
																											P. spp. = Procestrum spp.
4/8/2002	8:50	L	5	SW	5	100	100	6	7	1.027	33.4	100	5	10.1	6	7	0	0	0	0	0	SK	15		D. salmonea, A. Stewart, J. Chambers, L. Beattie	240	29
4/15/2002	13:40	O	5	NE	8.5	275	510	9	9	1.0265	33	200	5	10.7	6	11	0	0	0	0	0	SK	19		A. Stewart, L. Beattie, J. Chambers	180	15
4/25/2002	9:00	L	10	NE	8	250	nt	7.5	8	1.024	28.8	300	5	10.2	4	13	0	0	0	0	0	SK	17		A. Stewart, J. Chambers, D. Salomone	240	24
4/28/2002	13:20	L	8	NE	5	300	nt	6.5	6	1.026	32	250	5	8.4	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	SK	2		A. Stewart, L. Beattie	90	11
5/4/2002	13:15	L	8	W	12	200	200	9	10	1.025	31.3	200	5	9.2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	CO	2		A. Stewart, L. Beattie	120	10
5/9/2002	8:15	L	3	SW	12.5	nt	nt	10	11	1.025	31.5	400	4	nt	1	17	0	0	0	0	0	CS	18		A. Stewart, J. Chambers, L. Beattie	160	15
5/20/2002	17:15	L	5	N-NW	13	150	150	12	12	1.023	28.1	100	5	8.25	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	CO	8		A. Stewart, L. Beattie	90	6
8/4/2002	18:55	L	3	SE	18.5	800	800	12	12.5	1.025	31.8	5		10.3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	CO	4		Jack Chambers, Andy S	150	6

09 CL Coastal Lab

Date	Time	Current Speed	Wind Speed	Wind Direction	Air Temp. (C)	Transparency	Water Depth (cm)	Water Temp (C)	Water Temp. In Cylinder (C)	Water Density	Salinity (ppt)	Tow Depth (cm)	Duration (min)	Dissolved Oxygen (ppm)	Tube 1	Tube 2	Pr. app.	A.L.	Pu. spp.	D. spp.	Dominant Species	Number of Calls	Comments	Sampler	Vol. (ml)	Vol. (ml)	
																											P. spp. = Procestrum spp.
07/05/01	12:00	L	5	nd	21.5	450	520	13	15	1.024	31.1	nt	nt	9.5	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	CP	7		D. Chamberland, C	160	35
07/11/01	16:45	O	5	SE	18	515	516	14.5	14.5	1.025	32.5	400	4	9	4	13	0	0	0	0	0	CP	17		S. Cooper, C. Horst	210	42
07/19/01	11:15	O	12	NW	nd	550	550	16	17	1.024	31.8	400	4	8.4	4	5	0	0	0	0	0	CP	9		D. Chamberland, S	120	70
08/01/01	10:35	O	5	NE	28.8	425	500	16.5	28	1.021	31.3	400	3	7.6	17	17	0	0	0	0	0	RH	34		staff	0	0
08/03/01	13:30	O	8	N	33	400	500	20	18	1.0245	32.7	nt	nt	9.2	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	CP	3		D. Chamberland, T	180	82
08/15/01	9:00	O	0	0	21	465	465	16.5	19	1.024	32.1	350	4	7.7	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	CP	5		C. Horst, C. Wol	240	36
08/24/01	16:30	O	5	E	nt	310	740	19.5	19	1.025	33.4	300	3	6.1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	CP	0		D. Chamberland, T	160	62
08/29/01	15:40	O	5	W	20	400	500	14	14	1.025	32.1	400	3.5	9.1	7	6	0	0	0	0	0	CP, PM	13		D. Chamberland, T	240	65
08/29/01	9:00	O	5	W	17	450	470	15.5	16	1.025	32.8	400	4	7.2	8	9	0	0	0	0	0	CP, PM	17		Cady Wolfe, Steve	210	41
10/03/01	12:45	O	7	SE	18	340	540	15	15	1.025	32.4	300	3	7.7	3	10	0	0	0	0	0	PM	13		Don Chamberland	100	80
10/17/01	13:14	nt	nt	nt	11.5	580	580	11.5	12	1.026	33	300	3	8.6	26	18	0	0	0	0	0	PM	44		T. Bower, C. Horst	310	49
10/22/01	8:30	O	5	S	9	500	500	10	11	1.028	32.8	300	3	8.2	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	PM	7		T. Bower, D. Cham	120	50
03/28/02	10:34	L	12	N	7	190	500+	6	7	1.0235	28.9	400	3	10.2	87	102	0	0	0	0	0	diatoms	168		C. Horst, E. Hoffman, C. Hoffman	360	42
04/04/02	16:28	L	12-15	N	6.1	217	430	6.5	7	1.022	27	400	3	10.3	31	13	0	0	0	0	0	diatoms	44		C. Hoffman, E. Huli	120	38

