

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

## NCA Northeast Year 2003 Benthic Abundance Data

***These data have not passed final QA and should be considered provisional.***

To download Ascii Text data files, select state, view data, then use your browser's "File" "Save As..." option. All data files are comma delineated CSV files.

To download SAS Export files in Zipped SAS Export Format, select from list then "Save it to disk". Several software packages are available to unzip files. The SAS software system is needed to process unzipped SAS XPORT files.

The individual state datasets contain the results of Benthic Abundance Examinations. These data files contain the following:

STATION	Station Identifier
STAT_ALT	Alternate Site Sampled (A, B, or C)
EVNTDATE	Date of Sampling Event
LAT_NAME	Taxa Name
TSN	ITIS Taxonomic Serial Number
ABUNDANC	Taxon Abundance
ID_LEVEL	Level of Taxonomic Identification
GRABSIZE	Size of Benthic Grab Sampler

STATION and STAT\_ALT should be used to link test results with Station locations recorded in the STATIONS dataset. LAT\_NAME is the full scientific name of the taxa identified. TSN provides the ITIS Taxonomic Serial Number of the organism. ABUNDANC is the number or organisms of this taxa found in the sample. ID\_LEVEL describes the level of taxonomic identification.

The Taxonomic Information (BENTAXA) file provides additional taxonomic information on organisms named in the abundance files. The variable LAT\_NAME can be used to link this information to records in the abundance files. This file contains the following:

LAT_NAME	Taxa Latin Name
TSN	ITIS Taxonomic Serial Number
PHYLUM	Taxonomic Phylum
CLASS	Taxonomic Class
ORDER	Taxonomic Order
FAMILY	Taxonomic Family
GENUS	Taxonomic Genus
SPECIES	Species

The methods used to derive these data are described in "Section 3-Benthic Macroinvertebrate Methods Macrobenthic Assessment" of EMAP Laboratory Methods Manual -Estuaries, Volume 1: Biological and Physical Analyses (U.S. EPA, 1995). A summary of these methods follows:

In the lab, all taxa in a grab sample were sorted by a technician and then identified and counted by a skilled taxonomist. Only organisms larger than 0.5 mm were processed; therefore groups such as turbellarian flatworms, nematodes, ostracods, harpacticoid copepods and foraminifera were excluded from the identification process. Because of complexities involved with precise identification, the following groups of organisms were routinely identified to the indicated taxonomic level: anthozoa (class), chironomidae (family), hirudinea (class), nemertinea (phylum), oligochaeta (class), ostracoda (subclass), sipuncula (phylum), turbellaria (class), and copepoda (order). The taxonomic level represented by the name is specified in the parameter ID\_LEVEL. (This information may help an analyst when counting the number of unique species in a grab.)