

Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve

SEACAR Habitat Analyses

Last compiled on 22 May, 2025

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Funding & Acknowledgements

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Threshold Filtering

Threshold filters, following the guidance of Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (*FDEP*) Division of Environmental Assessment and Restoration (*DEAR*) are used to exclude specific results values from the SEACAR Analysis. Based on the threshold filters, Quality Assurance / Quality Control (*QAQC*) Flags are inserted into the *SEACAR_QAQCFlagCode* and *SEACAR_QAQC_Description* columns of the export data. The *Include* column indicates whether the *QAQC* Flag will also indicate that data are excluded from analysis. No data are excluded from the data export, but the analysis scripts can use the *Include* column to exclude data (1 to include, 0 to exclude).

Table 1: Continuous Water Quality threshold values

Parameter Name	Units	Low Threshold	High Threshold
Dissolved Oxygen	mg/L	-0.000001	50
Dissolved Oxygen Saturation	%	-0.000001	500
Salinity	ppt	-0.000001	70
Turbidity	NTU	-0.000001	4000
Water Temperature	Degrees C	-5.000000	45
pH	None	2.000000	14

Table 2: Discrete Water Quality threshold values

Parameter Name	Units	Low Threshold	High Threshold
Ammonia, Un-ionized (NH3)	mg/L	-	-
Ammonium, Filtered (NH4)	mg/L	-	-
Chlorophyll a, Corrected for Pheophytin	ug/L	-	-
Chlorophyll a, Uncorrected for Pheophytin	ug/L	-	-
Colored Dissolved Organic Matter	PCU	-	-

Parameter Name	Units	Low Threshold	High Threshold
Dissolved Oxygen	mg/L	-0.000001	25
Dissolved Oxygen Saturation	%	-0.000001	310
Fluorescent Dissolved Organic Matter	QSE	-	-
Light Extinction Coefficient	m^-1	-	-
NO2+3, Filtered	mg/L	-	-
Nitrate (NO3)	mg/L	-	-
Nitrite (NO2)	mg/L	-	-
Nitrogen, organic	mg/L	-	-
Phosphate, Filtered (PO4)	mg/L	-	-
Salinity	ppt	-0.000001	70
Secchi Depth	m	0.000001	50
Specific Conductivity	mS/cm	0.005000	100
Total Kjeldahl Nitrogen	mg/L	-	-
Total Nitrogen	mg/L	-	-
Total Nitrogen	mg/L	-	-
Total Phosphorus	mg/L	-	-
Total Suspended Solids	mg/L	-	-
Turbidity	NTU	-	-
Water Temperature	Degrees C	3.000000	40
pH	None	2.000000	13

Table 3: Quality Assurance Flags inserted based on threshold checks listed in Table 1 and 2

SEACAR QAQC Description	Include	SEACAR QAQCFlagCode
Exceeds maximum threshold	0	2Q
Below minimum threshold	0	4Q
Within threshold tolerance	1	6Q
No defined thresholds for this parameter	1	7Q

Value Qualifiers

Value qualifier codes included within the data are used to exclude certain results from the analysis. The data are retained in the data export files, but the analysis uses the *Include* column to filter the results.

STORET and WIN value qualifier codes

Value qualifier codes from *STORET* and *WIN* data are examined with the database and used to populate the *Include* column in data exports.

Table 4: Value Qualifier codes excluded from analysis

Qualifier Source	Value Qualifier	Include	MDL	Description
STORET-WIN	H	0	0	Value based on field kit determination; results may not be accurate
STORET-WIN	J	0	0	Estimated value
STORET-WIN	V	0	0	Analyte was detected at or above method detection limit
STORET-WIN	Y	0	0	Lab analysis from an improperly preserved sample; data may be inaccurate

Discrete Water Quality Value Qualifiers

The following value qualifiers are highlighted in the Discrete Water Quality section of this report. An exception is made for **Program 476 - Charlotte Harbor Estuaries Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring Network** and data flagged with Value Qualifier **H** are included for this program only.

H - Value based on field kit determiniation; results may not be accurate. This code shall be used if a field screening test (e.g., field gas chromatograph data, immunoassay, or vendor-supplied field kit) was used to generate the value and the field kit or method has not been recognized by the Department as equivalent to laboratory methods.

I - The reported value is greater than or equal to the laboratory method detection limit but less than the laboratory practical quantitation limit.

Q - Sample held beyond the accepted holding time. This code shall be used if the value is derived from a sample that was prepared or analyzed after the approved holding time restrictions for sample preparation or analysis.

S - Secchi disk visible to bottom of waterbody. The value reported is the depth of the waterbody at the location of the Secchi disk measurement.

U - Indicates that the compound was analyzed for but not detected. This symbol shall be used to indicate that the specified component was not detected. The value associated with the qualifier shall be the laboratory method detection limit. Unless requested by the client, less than the method detection limit values shall not be reported

Systemwide Monitoring Program (SWMP) value qualifier codes

Value qualifier codes from the *SWMP* continuous program are examined with the database and used to populate the *Include* column in data exports. *SWMP* Qualifier Codes are indicated by *QualifierSource=SWMP*.

Table 5: SWMP Value Qualifier codes

<i>Qualifier Source</i>	<i>Value Qualifier</i>	<i>Include</i>	<i>Description</i>
SWMP	-1	1	Optional parameter not collected
SWMP	-2	0	Missing data
SWMP	-3	0	Data rejected due to QA/QC
SWMP	-4	0	Outside low sensor range
SWMP	-5	0	Outside high sensor range
SWMP	0	1	Passed initial QA/QC checks
SWMP	1	0	Suspect data
SWMP	2	1	Reserved for future use
SWMP	3	1	Calculated data: non-vented depth/level sensor correction for changes in barometric pressure
SWMP	4	1	Historical: Pre-auto QA/QC
SWMP	5	1	Corrected data

Water Column

The water column habitat extends from the water's surface to the bottom sediments, and it's where fish, dolphins, crabs and people swim! So much life makes its home in the water column that the health of marine and coastal ecosystems, as well as human economies, depend on the condition of this vulnerable habitat. Local patterns of rainfall, temperature, winds and currents can rapidly change the condition of the water column, while global influences such as [El Niño/La Niña](#), large-scale fluctuation in sea temperatures and climate change can have long-term effects. Inputs from the prosperity of our day-to-day lives including farming, mining and forestry, and emissions from power generation, automobiles and water treatment can also alter the health of the water column. Acting alone or together, each input can have complex and lasting effects on habitats and ecosystems.

SEACAR evaluates water column health with several essential parameters. These include nutrient surveys of nitrogen and phosphorus, and water quality assessments of salinity, dissolved oxygen, pH, and water temperature. Water clarity is evaluated with Secchi depth, turbidity, levels of chlorophyll a, total suspended solids, and colored dissolved organic matter. Additionally, the richness of nekton is indicated by the abundance of free-swimming fishes and macroinvertebrates like crabs and shrimps.

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Analysis

Indicators must have a minimum of five to ten years, depending on the habitat, of data within the geographic range of the analysis to be included in the analysis. Ten years of data are required for discrete parameters, and five years of data are required for continuous parameters. If there are insufficient years of data, the number of years of data available will be noted and labeled as "insufficient data to conduct analysis". Further, for the preferred Seasonal Kendall-Tau test, there must be data from at least two months in common across at least two consecutive years within the RCP managed area being analyzed. Values that pass both of these tests will be included in the analysis and be labeled as *Use_In_Analysis = TRUE*. Any that fail either test will be excluded from the analyses and labeled as *Use_In_Analysis = FALSE*. The points for all Water Column plots displayed in this section are monthly averages. Trend significance will be denoted as "Significant Trend" (when $p < 0.05$), or "Non-significant Trend" (when $p \geq 0.05$). Any parameters with insufficient data to perform Seasonal Kendall-Tau test will have their monthly averages plotted without a corresponding trend line.

Water Quality - Discrete

The following files were used in the discrete analysis:

- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Chlorophyll_a_corrected_for_pheophytin-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Chlorophyll_a_uncorrected_for_pheophytin-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Colored_dissolved_organic_matter_CDOM-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Dissolved_Oxygen-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Dissolved_Oxygen_Saturation-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_pH-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Salinity-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Secchi_Depth-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Total_Nitrogen-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Total_Phosphorus-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Total_Suspended_Solids_TSS-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Turbidity-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_Water_Temperature-2025-Mar-06.txt*

Chlorophyll a, Corrected for Pheophytin - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

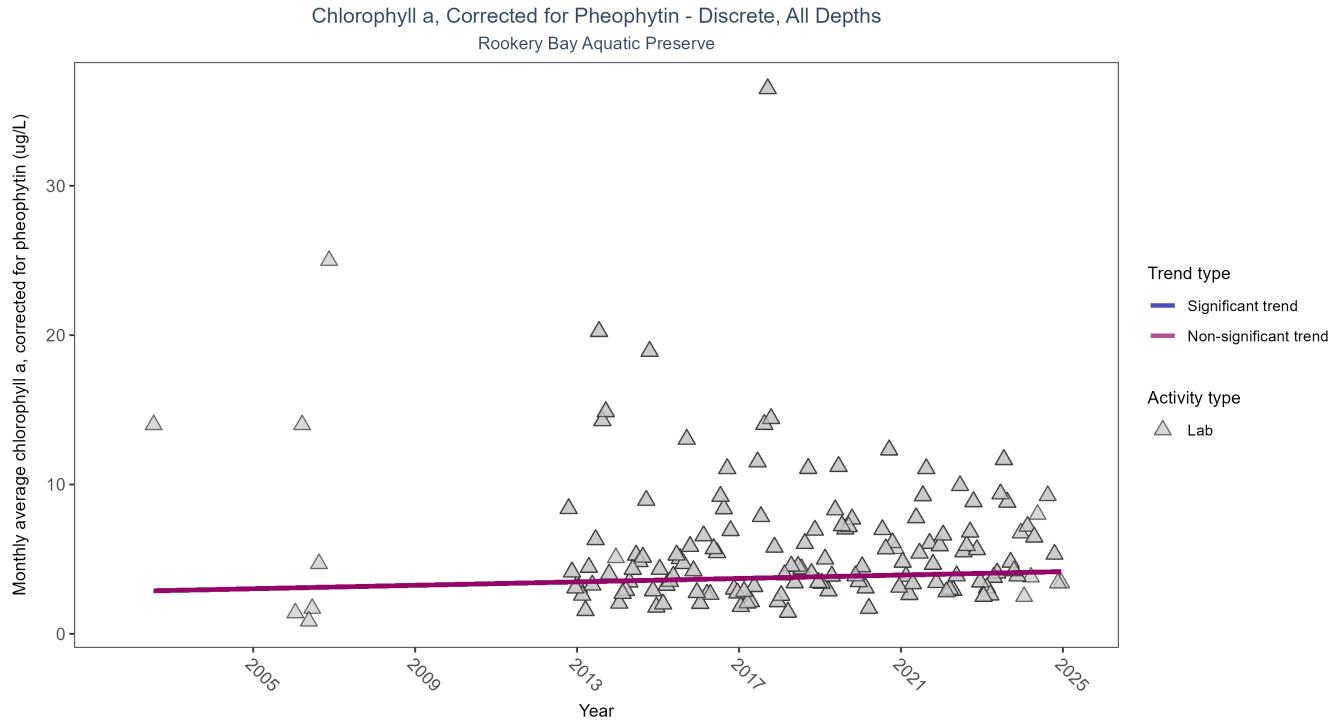


Figure 1: Scatter plot of monthly average levels of chlorophyll a, corrected for pheophytin, over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only laboratory-analyzed chlorophyll a (triangles) is included in the plot.

Table 6: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Chlorophyll a, Corrected for Pheophytin

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Lab	No significant trend	1565	15	2002 - 2024	4.3	0.1036	2.8484	0.0573	0.0968

Chlorophyll a, corrected for pheophytin, showed no detectable trend between 2002 and 2024.

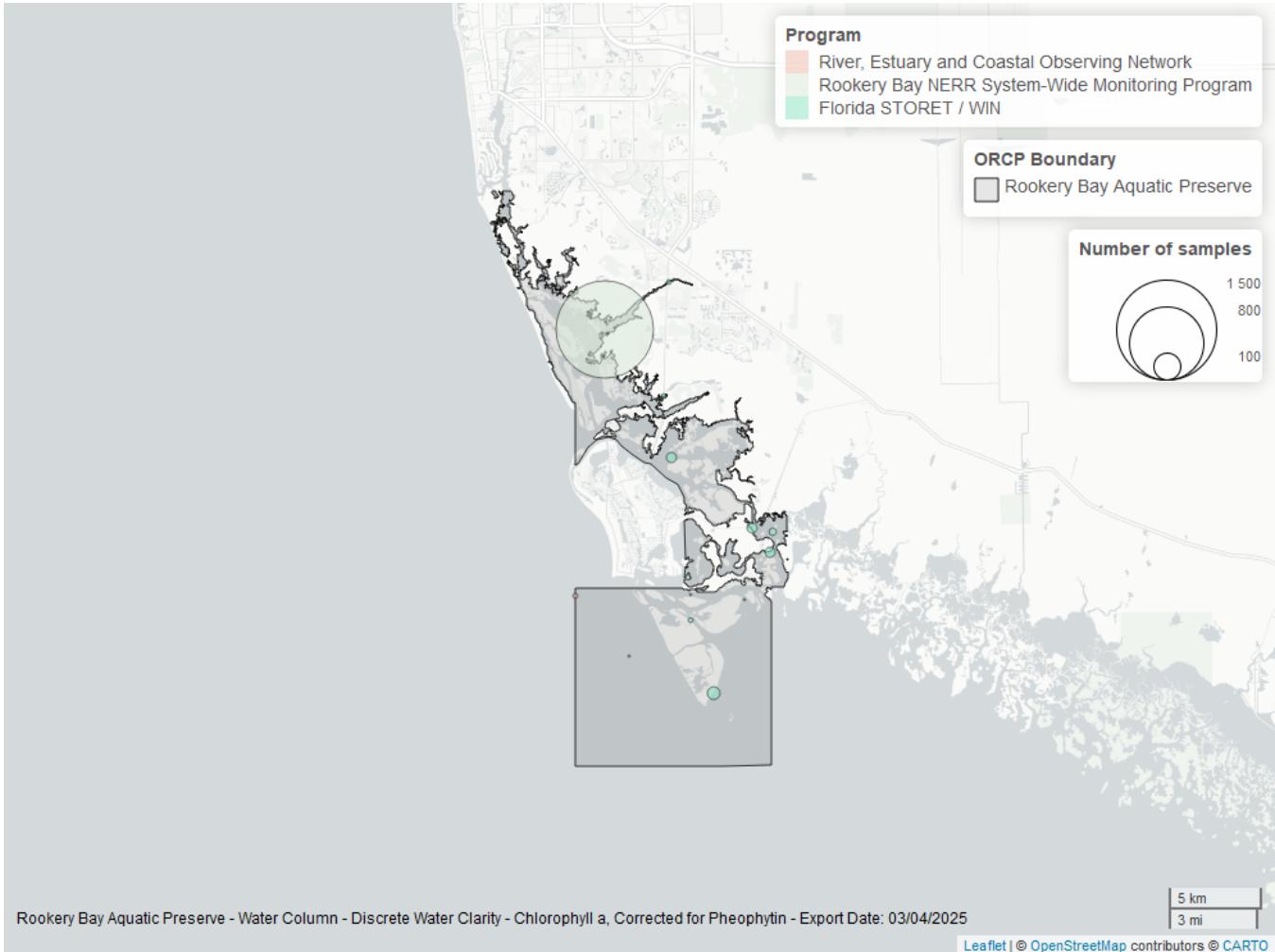


Figure 2: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 7: Programs contributing data for Chlorophyll a, Corrected for Pheophytin

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
354	1480	2012	2024
5002	105	2002	2024
303	3	2022	2023

Program names:

303 - River, Estuary and Coastal Observing Network¹

354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Chlorophyll a, Uncorrected for Pheophytin - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

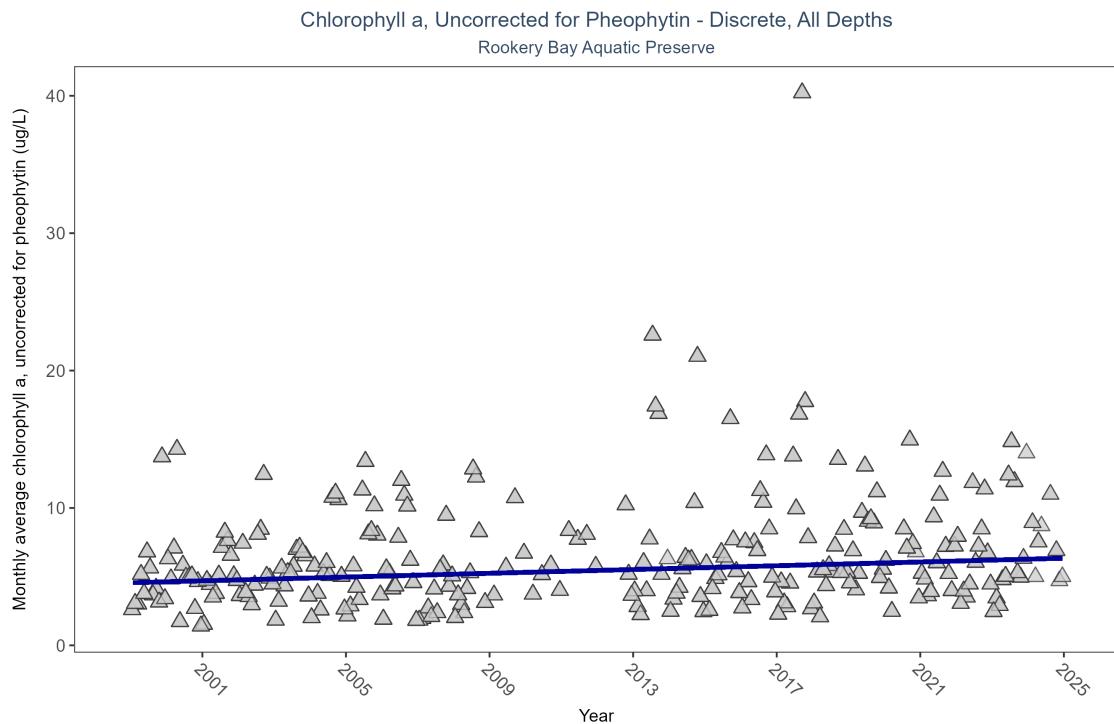


Figure 3: Scatter plot of monthly average levels of chlorophyll a, uncorrected for pheophytin, over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only laboratory-analyzed chlorophyll a (triangles) is included in the plot.

Table 8: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Chlorophyll a, Uncorrected for Pheophytin

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Lab	Significantly increasing trend	3159	26	1999 - 2024	5	0.1945	4.558	0.0686	0

Monthly average chlorophyll a, uncorrected for pheophytin, increased by $0.07 \mu\text{g/L}$ per year, indicating a decrease in water clarity.

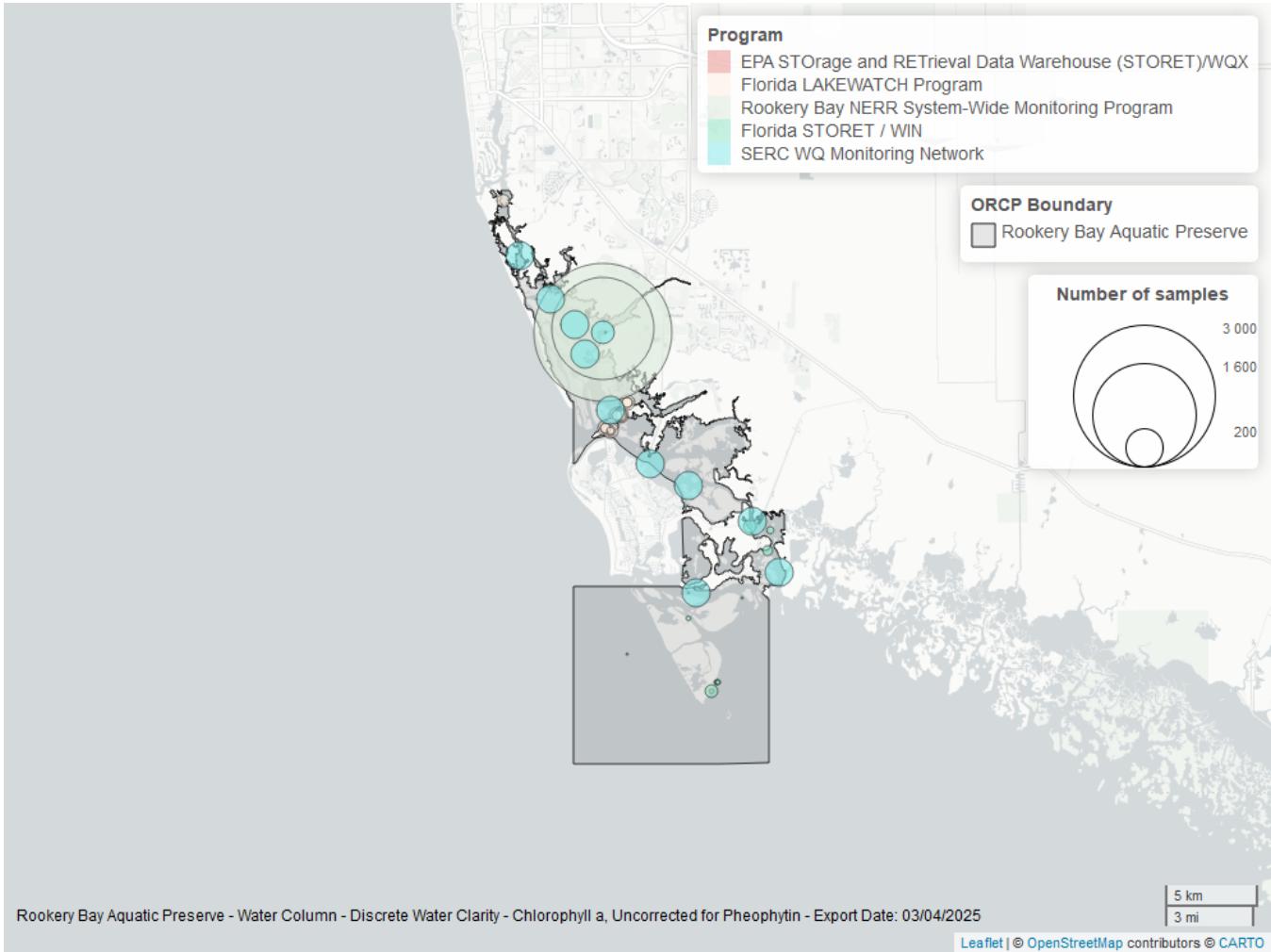


Figure 4: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 9: Programs contributing data for Chlorophyll a, Uncorrected for Pheophytin

ProgramID	N_Data	YearMin	YearMax
354	4496	2002	2024
509	1234	1999	2008
514	374	2001	2011
5002	101	2001	2024
103	11	2021	2021

Program names:

- 103 - EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX⁴
- 354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²
- 509 - SERC Water Quality Monitoring Network⁵
- 514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program⁶
- 5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Colored Dissolved Organic Matter - Discrete Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

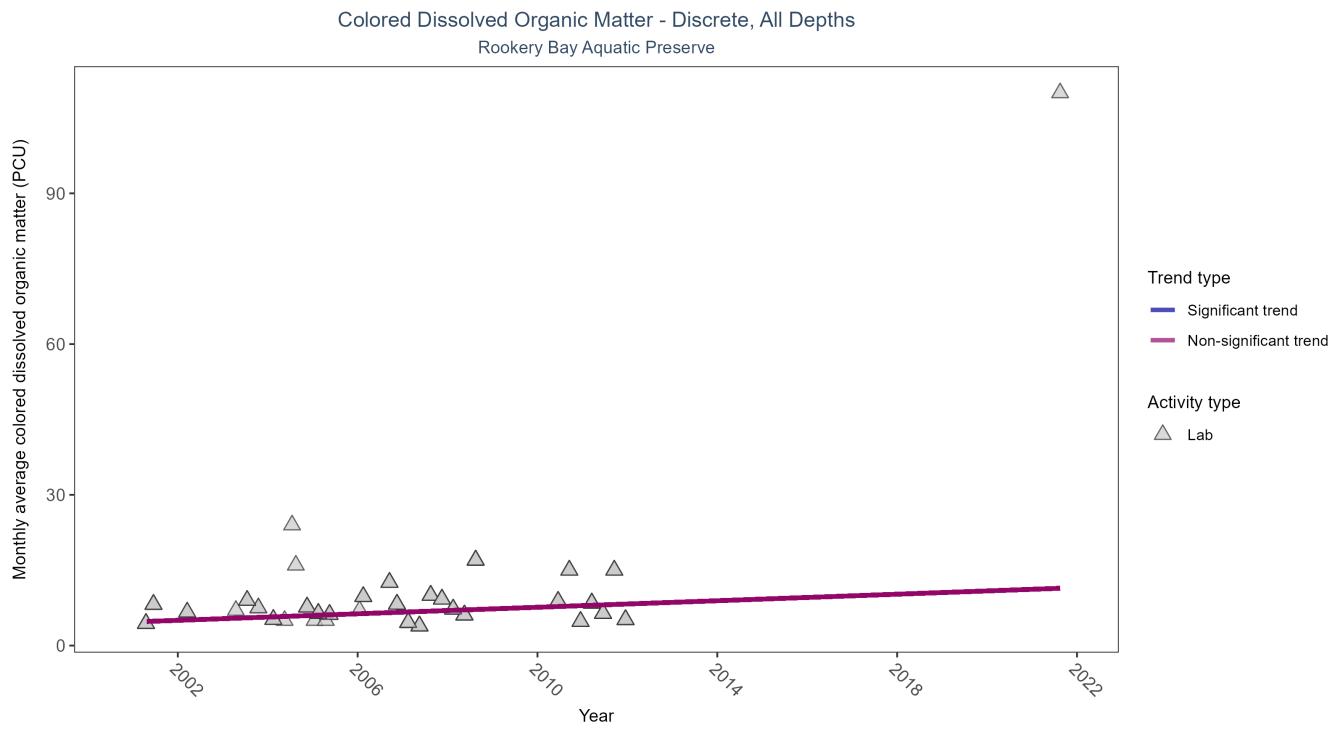


Figure 5: Scatter plot of monthly average colored dissolved organic matter (CDOM) over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only laboratory-analyzed CDOM (triangles) is included in the plot.

Table 10: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Colored Dissolved Organic Matter

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Lab	No significant trend	183	11	2001 - 2021	7	0.505	4.7	0.325	0.0515

Colored dissolved organic matter showed no detectable trend between 2001 and 2021.

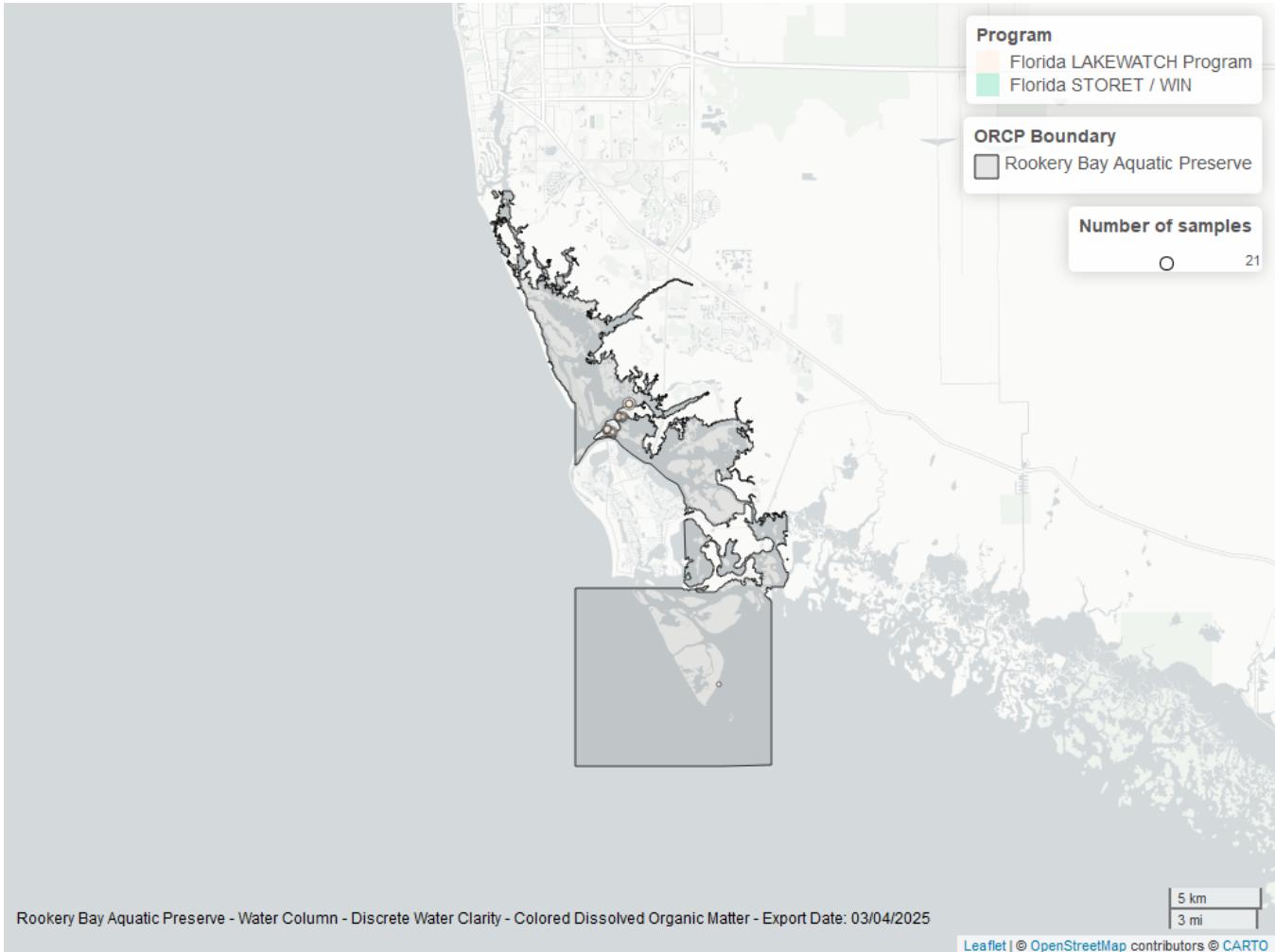


Figure 6: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 11: Programs contributing data for Colored Dissolved Organic Matter

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
514	182	2001	2011
5002	1	2021	2021

Program names:

514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program⁶

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Dissolved Oxygen - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

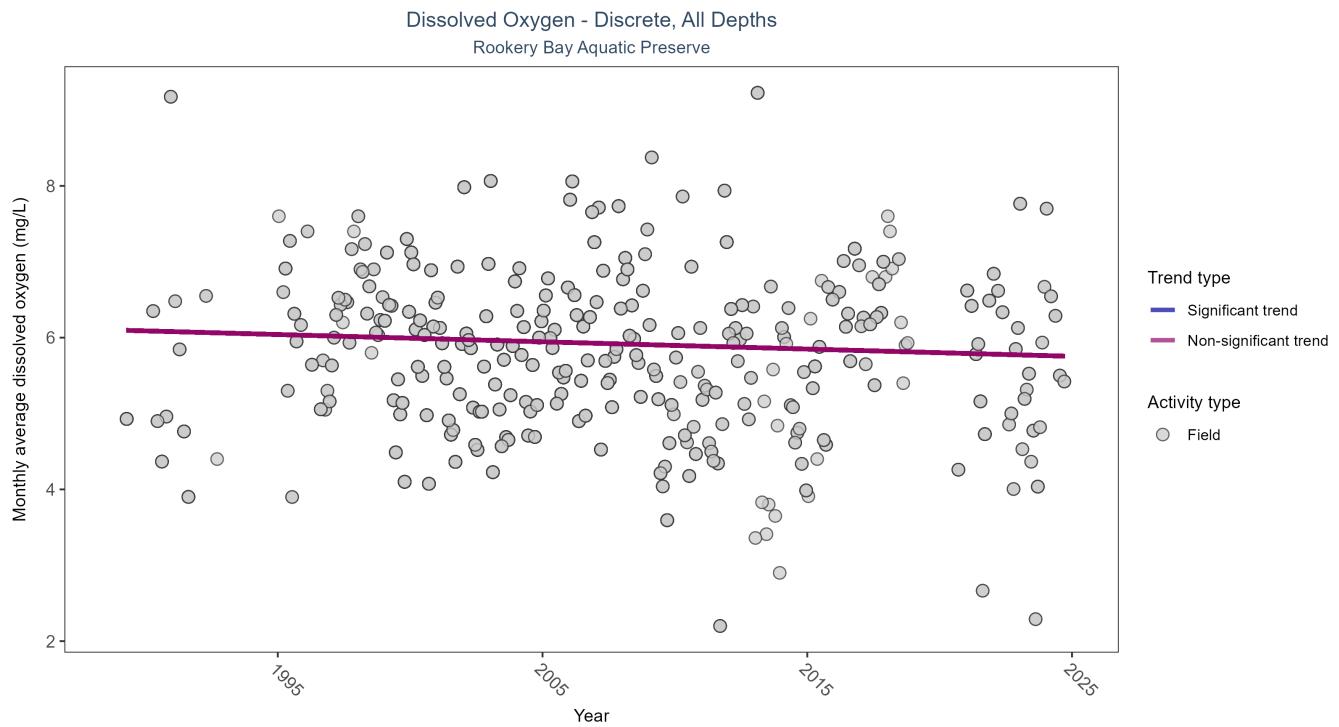


Figure 7: Scatter plot of monthly average dissolved oxygen over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only dissolved oxygen values measured in the field (circles) are included in the plot.

Table 12: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Dissolved Oxygen

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Field	No significant trend	4542	33	1989 - 2024	5.82	-0.0677	6.0986	-0.0096	0.0926

Dissolved oxygen showed no detectable trend between 1989 and 2024.

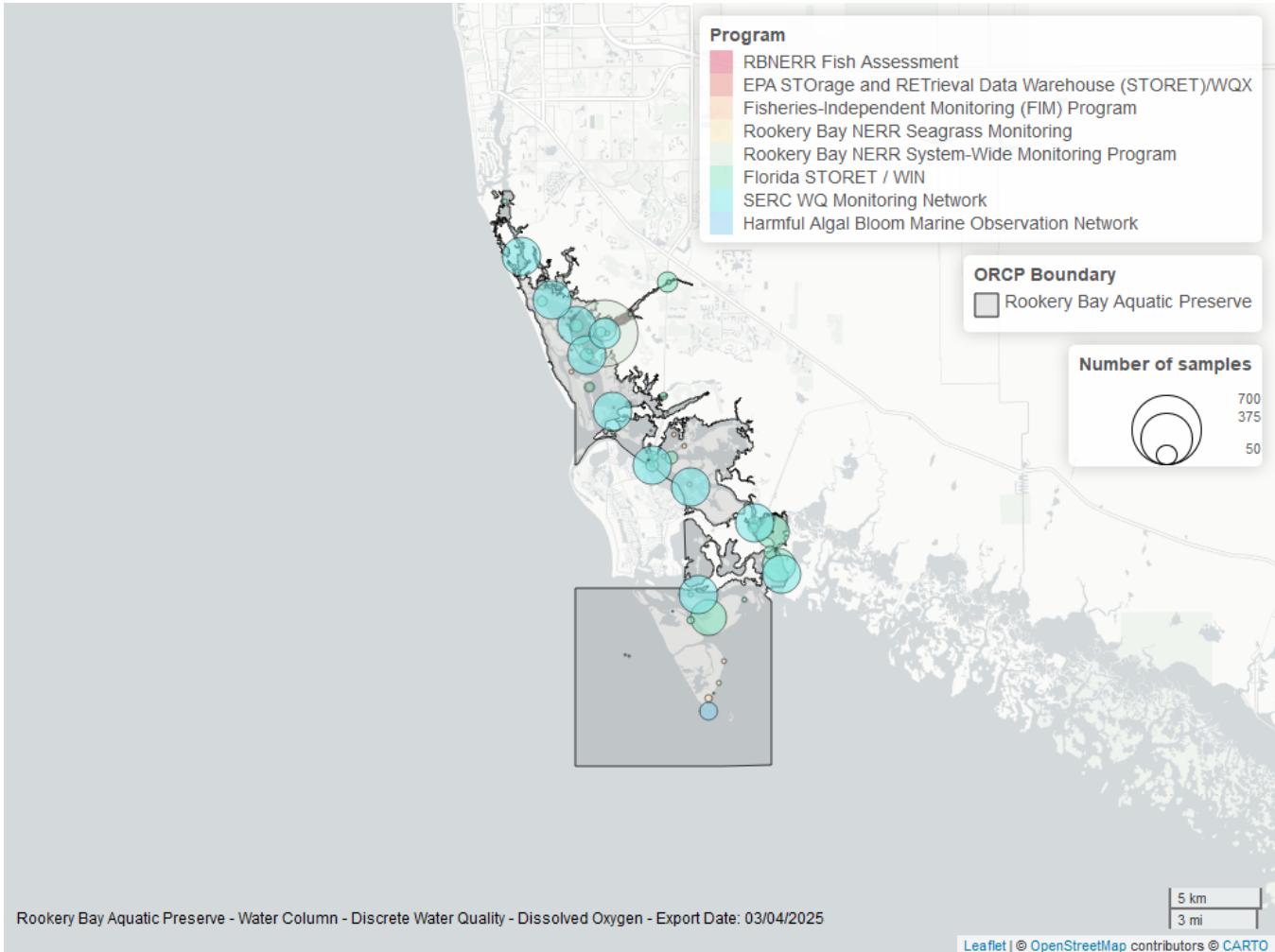


Figure 8: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 13: Programs contributing data for Dissolved Oxygen

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
509	2429	1999	2008
5002	850	1989	2024
354	734	2002	2023
4043	488	2000	2009
95	51	1997	2018
103	32	2021	2021
572	27	1998	2005
69	22	2001	2001

Program names:

69 - Fisheries-Independent Monitoring (FIM) Program⁷

95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network⁸

103 - EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX⁴

354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²

509 - SERC Water Quality Monitoring Network⁵

572 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Seagrass Monitoring⁹

4043 - RBNERR Fish Assessment¹⁰

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Dissolved Oxygen Saturation - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

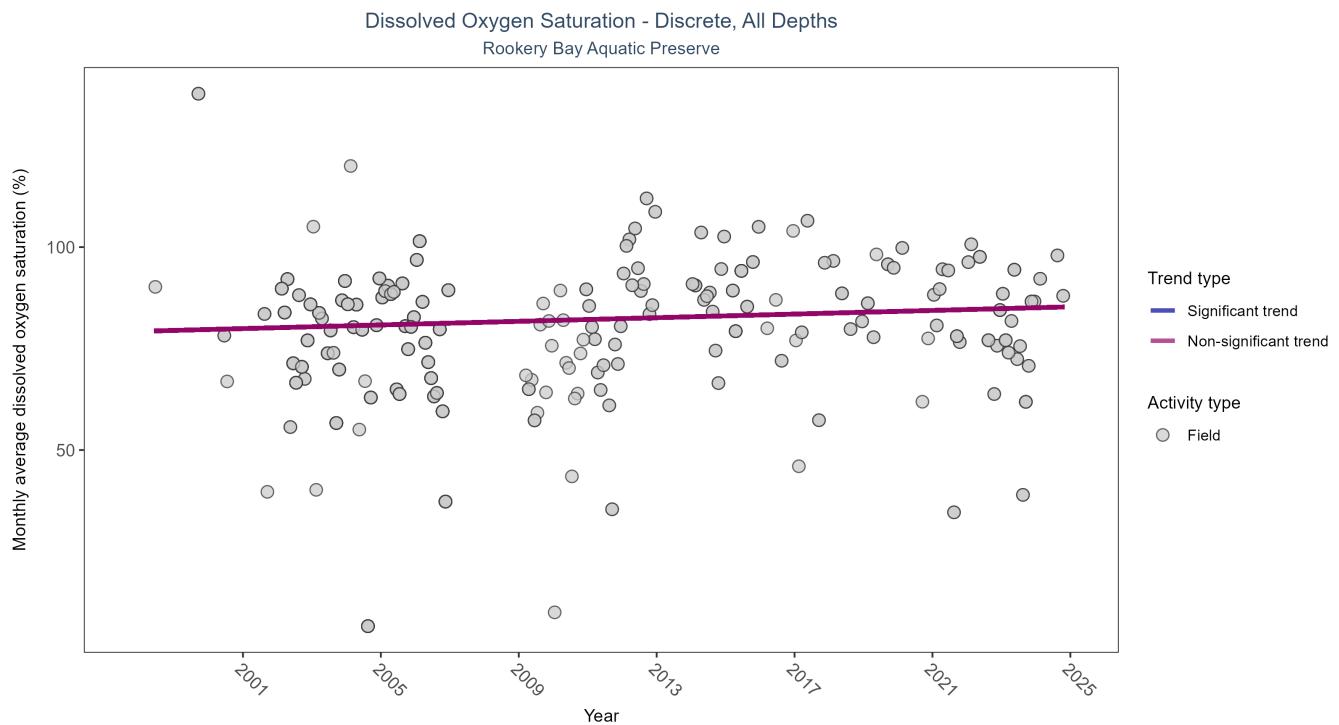


Figure 9: Scatter plot of monthly average dissolved oxygen saturation over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only dissolved oxygen saturation values measured in the field (circles) are included in the plot.

Table 14: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Dissolved Oxygen Saturation

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Field	No significant trend	793	24	1998 - 2024	80.9	0.0756	79.2534	0.2235	0.1974

Dissolved oxygen saturation showed no detectable trend between 1998 and 2024.

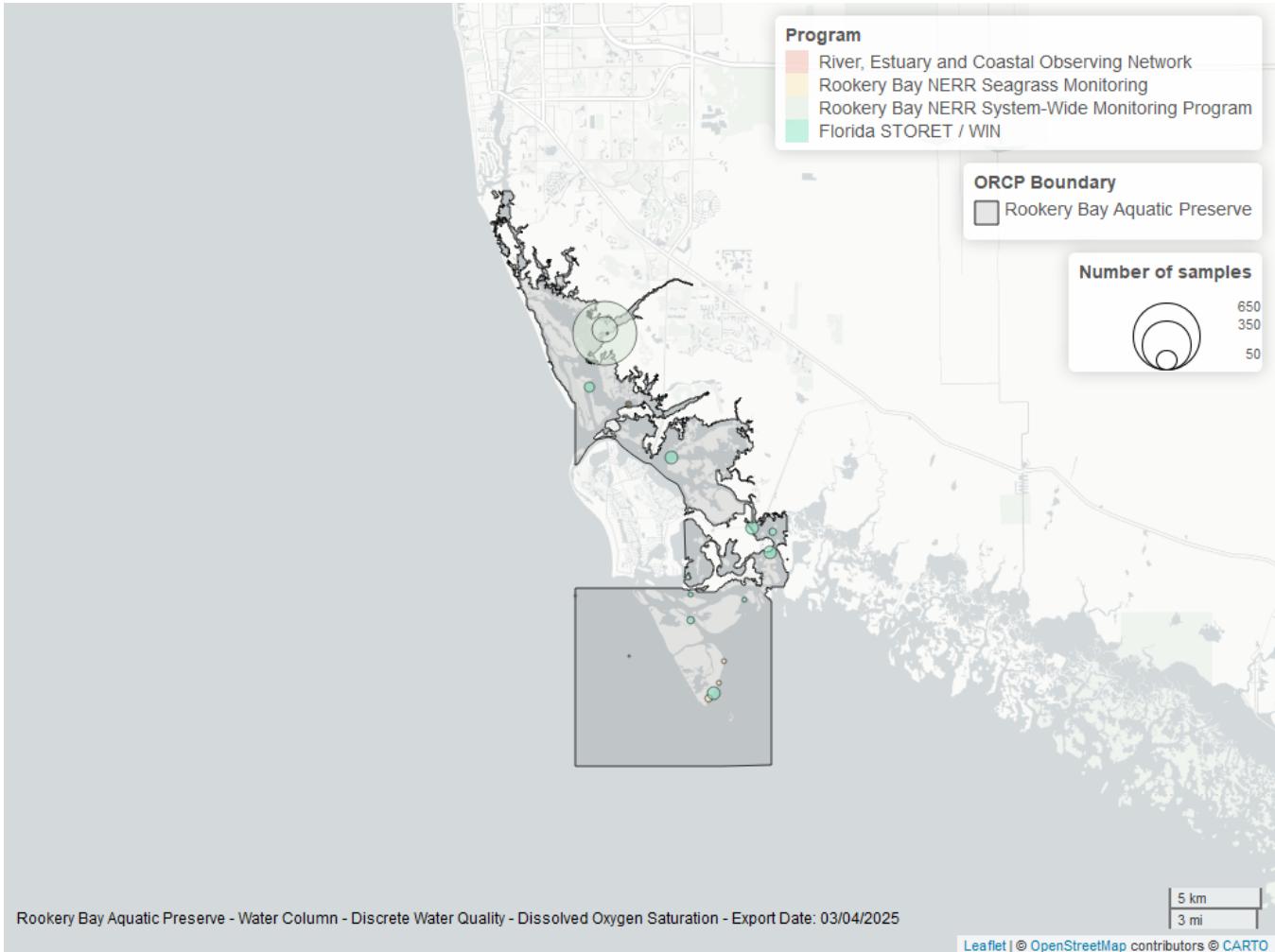


Figure 10: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 15: Programs contributing data for Dissolved Oxygen Saturation

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
354	713	2002	2024
5002	145	2015	2024
572	27	1998	2005
303	1	2023	2023

Program names:

303 - River, Estuary and Coastal Observing Network¹

354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²

572 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Seagrass Monitoring⁹

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

pH - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

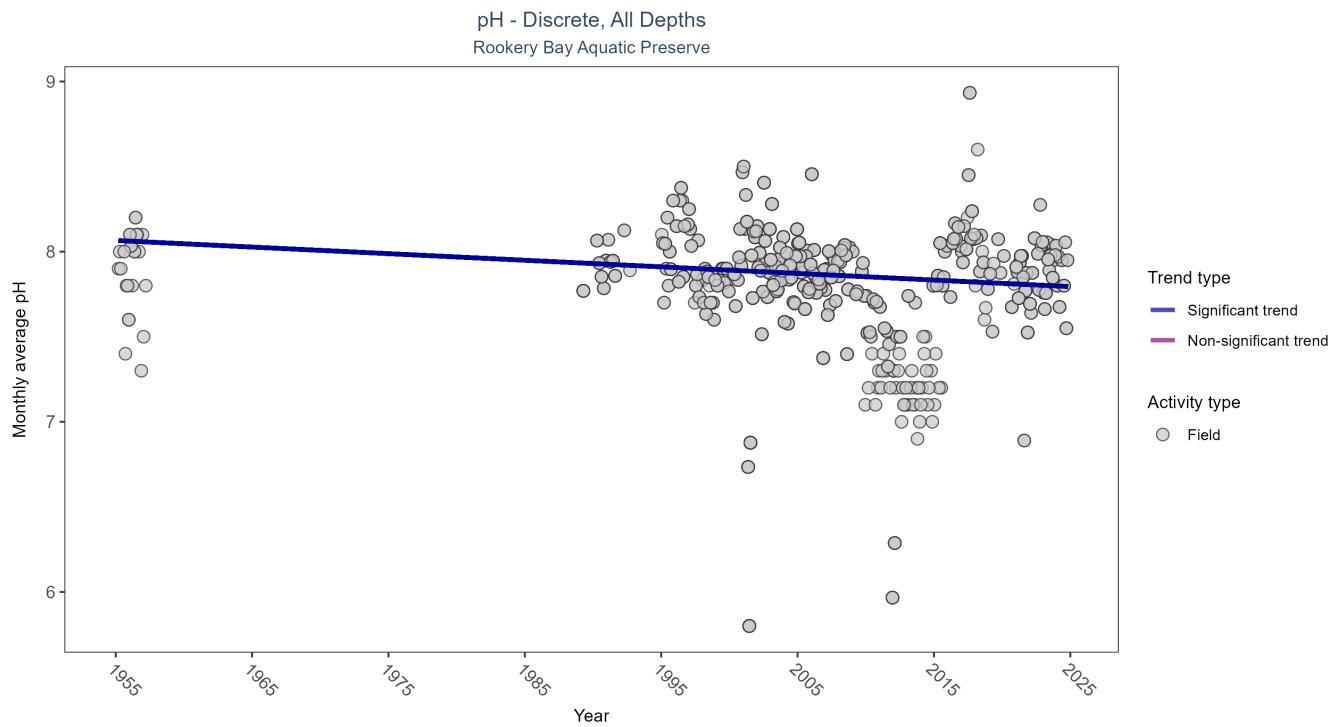


Figure 11: Scatter plot of monthly average pH over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only pH values measured in the field (circles) are included in the plot.

Table 16: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for pH

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Field	Significantly decreasing trend	2456	37	1955 - 2024	7.9	-0.1392	8.0657	-0.0039	0.0004

Monthly average pH decreased by less than 0.01 pH units per year.

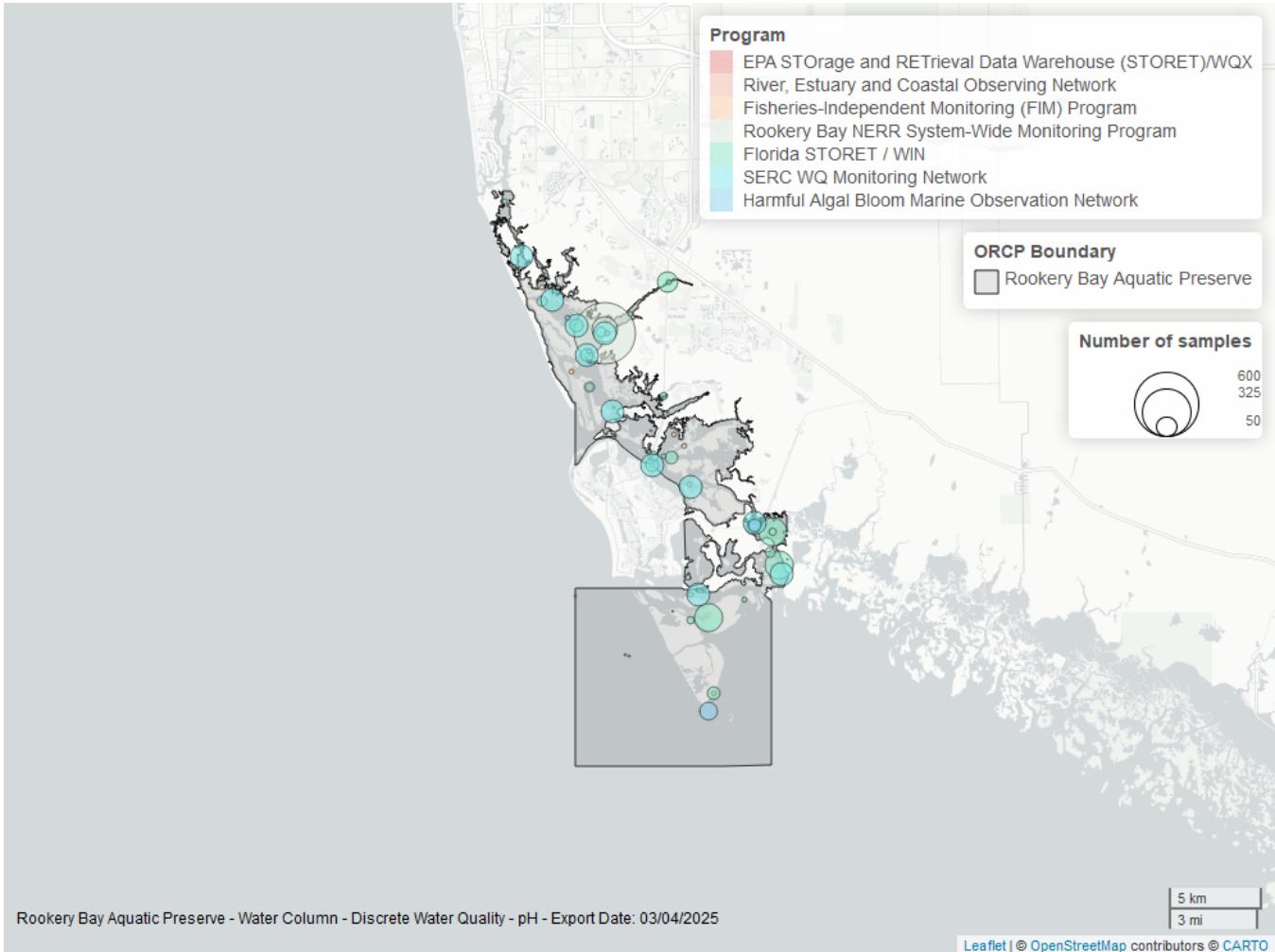


Figure 12: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 17: Programs contributing data for pH

ProgramID	N_Data	YearMin	YearMax
509	971	2001	2008
5002	780	1989	2024
354	674	2002	2024
95	76	1955	2018
103	40	2021	2021
69	22	2001	2001
303	1	2023	2023

Program names:

69 - Fisheries-Independent Monitoring (FIM) Program⁷

95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network⁸

103 - EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX⁴

303 - River, Estuary and Coastal Observing Network¹

354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²

509 - SERC Water Quality Monitoring Network⁵
 5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Salinity - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

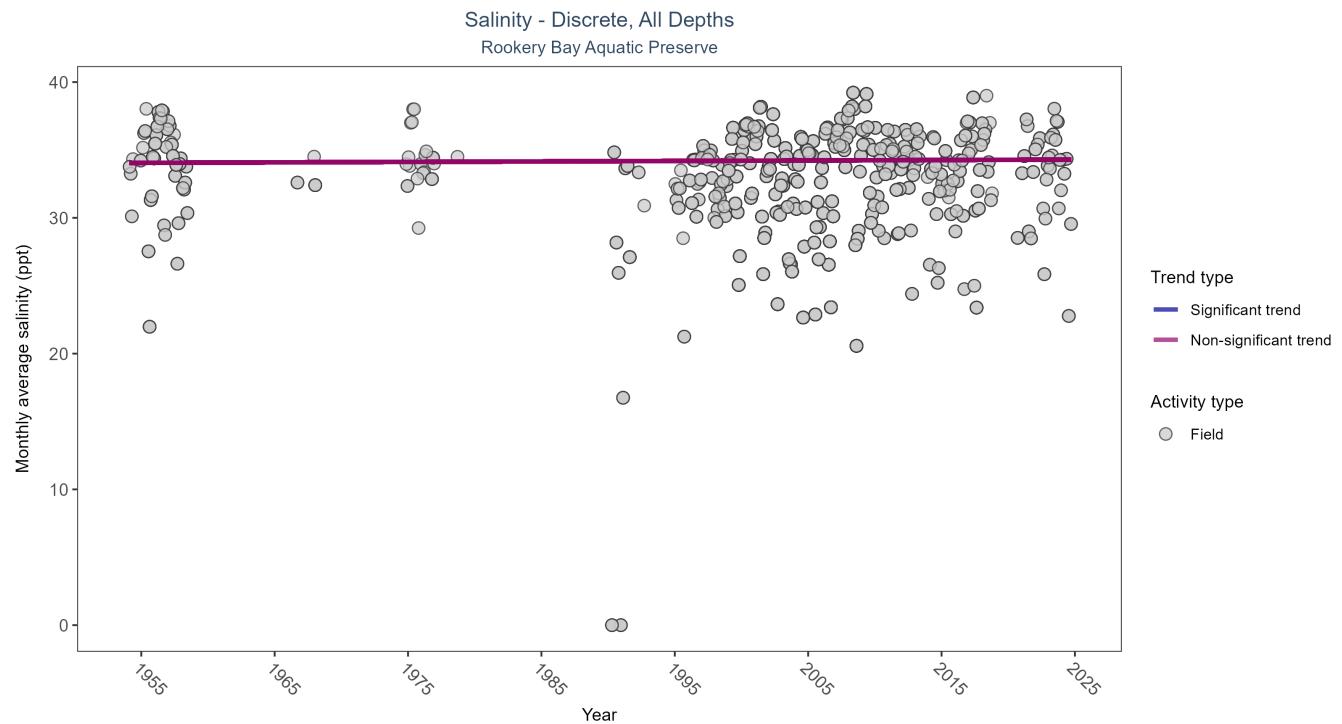


Figure 13: Scatter plot of monthly average salinity over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend lines are also shown. Discrete salinity values derived from grab samples analyzed in the field (circles) or the laboratory (triangles) are both included in the plot.

Table 18: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Salinity

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
All	No significant trend	5276	45	1954 - 2024	34.1	0.0147	34.0471	0.0035	0.674

Salinity showed no detectable trend between 1954 and 2024.

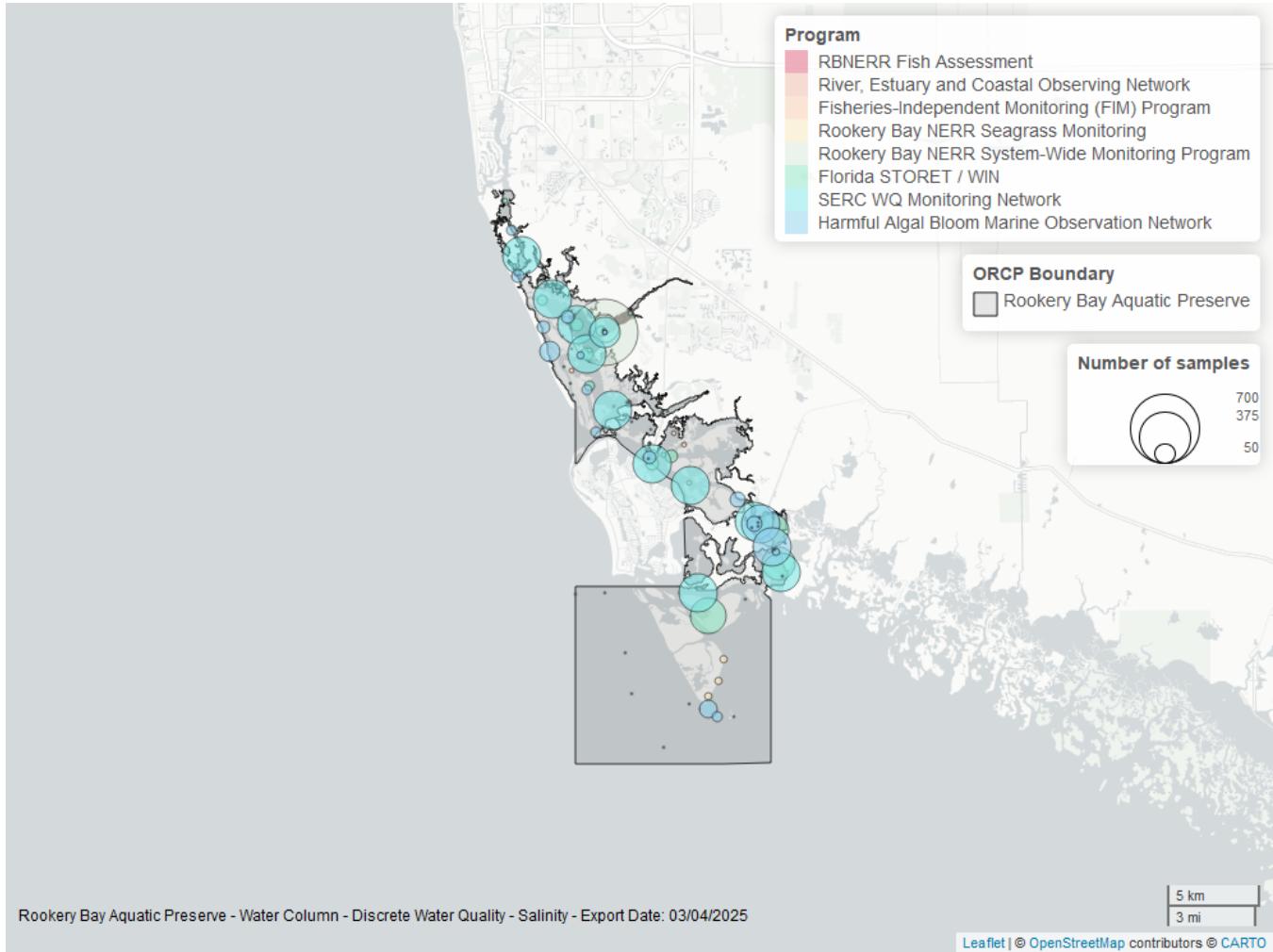


Figure 14: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 19: Programs contributing data for Salinity

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
509	2439	1999	2008
95	843	1954	2018
354	816	2002	2024
5002	752	1989	2024
4043	499	2000	2009
572	31	1998	2005
69	22	2001	2001
303	1	2023	2023

Program names:

- 69 - Fisheries-Independent Monitoring (FIM) Program⁷
- 95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network⁸
- 303 - River, Estuary and Coastal Observing Network¹
- 354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²
- 509 - SERC Water Quality Monitoring Network⁵

572 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Seagrass Monitoring⁹

4043 - RBNERR Fish Assessment¹⁰

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Secchi Depth - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

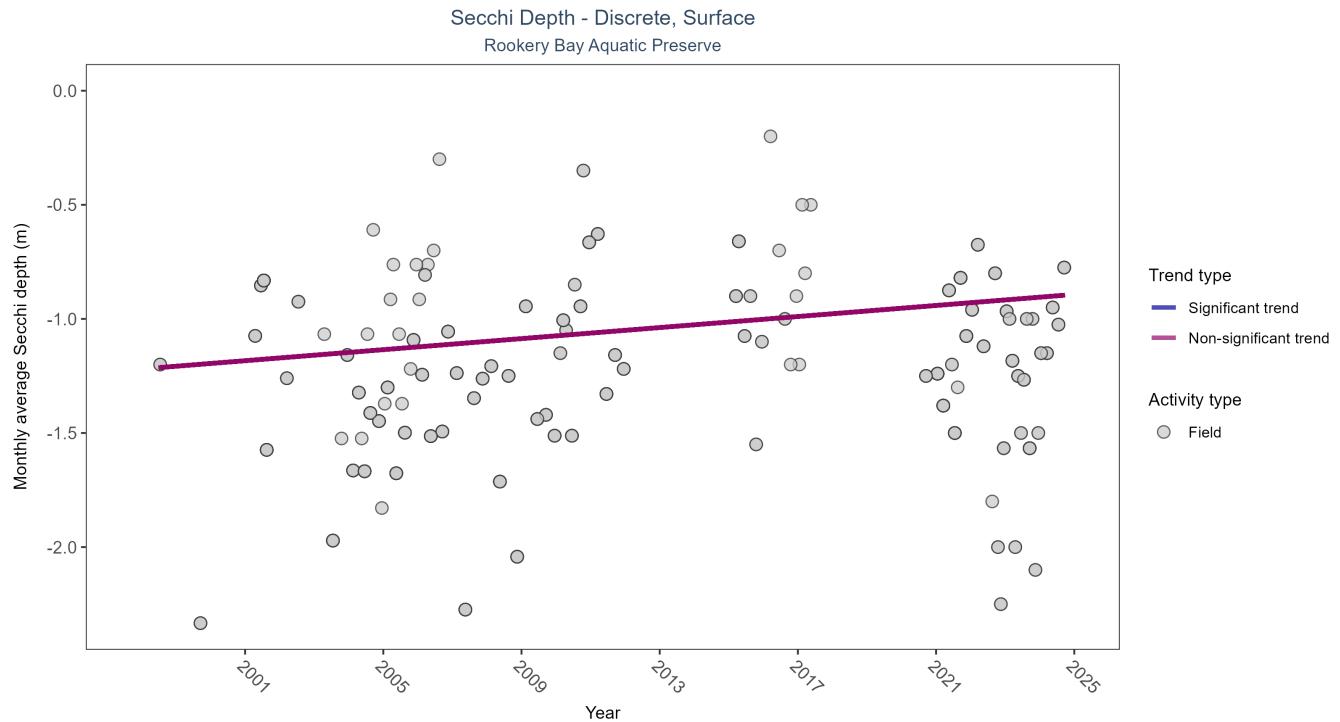


Figure 15: Scatter plot of monthly average Secchi depth over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Secchi depth is only measured in the field (circles).

Table 20: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Secchi Depth

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Field	No significant trend	440	21	1998 - 2024	-1.2	0.1331	-1.2195	0.0121	0.0768

Secchi depth showed no detectable trend between 1998 and 2024.

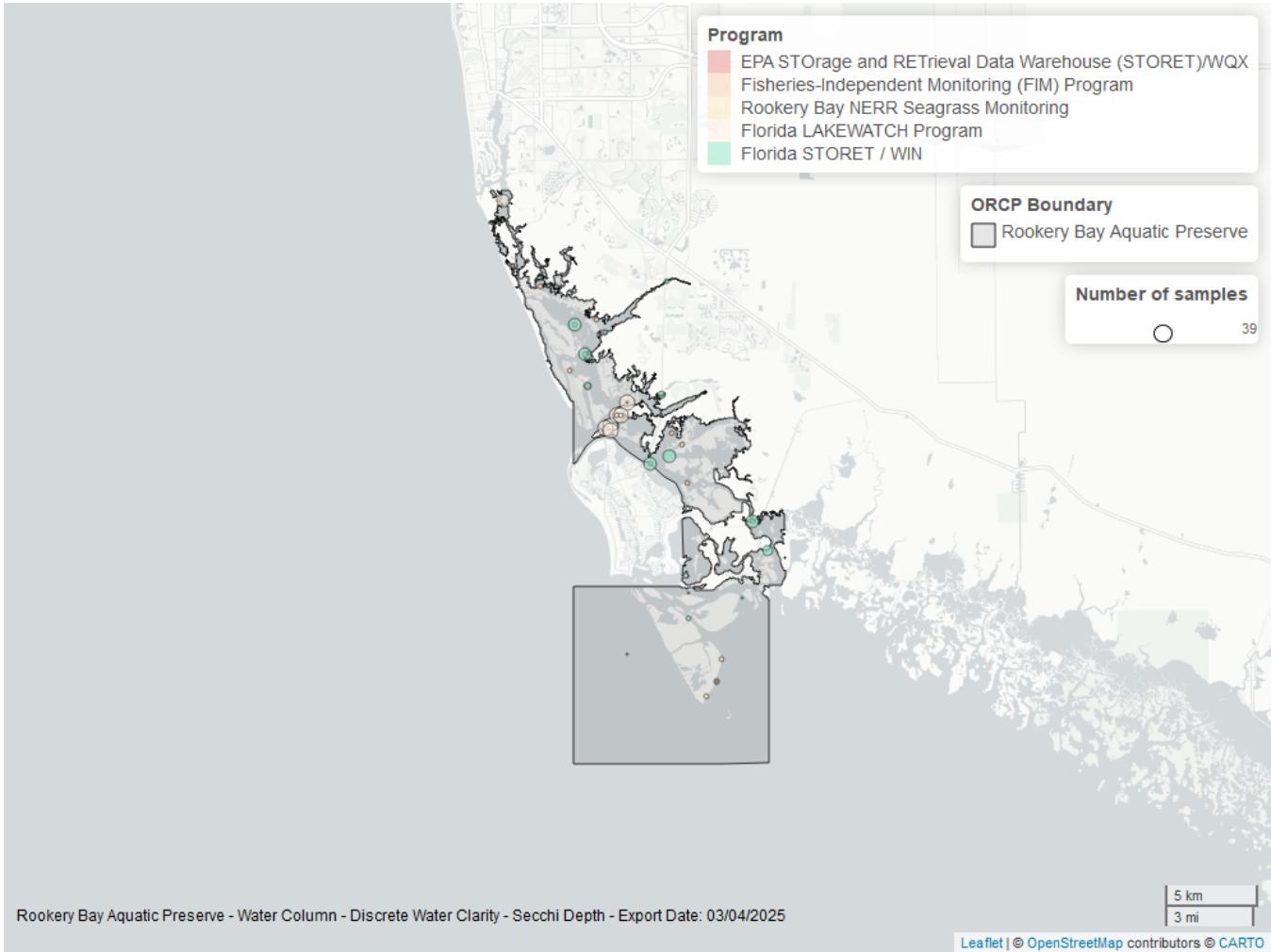


Figure 16: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 21: Programs contributing data for Secchi Depth

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
514	216	2001	2011
5002	165	2006	2024
103	28	2021	2021
69	22	2001	2001
572	9	1998	2003

Program names:

- 69 - Fisheries-Independent Monitoring (FIM) Program⁷
- 103 - EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX⁴
- 514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program⁶
- 572 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Seagrass Monitoring⁹
- 5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Total Nitrogen - Discrete

Total Nitrogen Calculation:

The logic for calculated Total Nitrogen was provided by Kevin O'Donnell and colleagues at FDEP (with the help of Jay Silvanima, Watershed Monitoring Section). The following logic is used, in this order, based on the availability of specific nitrogen components.

- 1) $TN = TKN + NO_3O_2;$
- 2) $TN = TKN + NO_3 + NO_2;$
- 3) $TN = ORGN + NH_4 + NO_3O_2;$
- 4) $TN = ORGN + NH_4 + NO_2 + NO_3;$
- 5) $TN = TKN + NO_3;$
- 6) $TN = ORGN + NH_4 + NO_3;$

Additional Information:

- Rules for use of sample fraction:
 - Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) report that if both “Total” and “Dissolved” components are reported, only “Total” is used. If the total is not reported, then the dissolved components are used as a best available replacement.
 - Total nitrogen calculations are done using nitrogen components with the same sample fraction, nitrogen components with mixed total/dissolved sample fractions are not used. In other words, total nitrogen can be calculated when TKN and NO₃O₂ are both total sample fractions, or when both are dissolved sample fractions. *Future calculations of total nitrogen values may be based on components with mixed sample fractions.*
- Values inserted into data:
 - ParameterName = “Total Nitrogen”
 - SEACAR_QAQCFlagCode = “1Q”
 - SEACAR_QAQC_Description = “SEACAR Calculated”

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

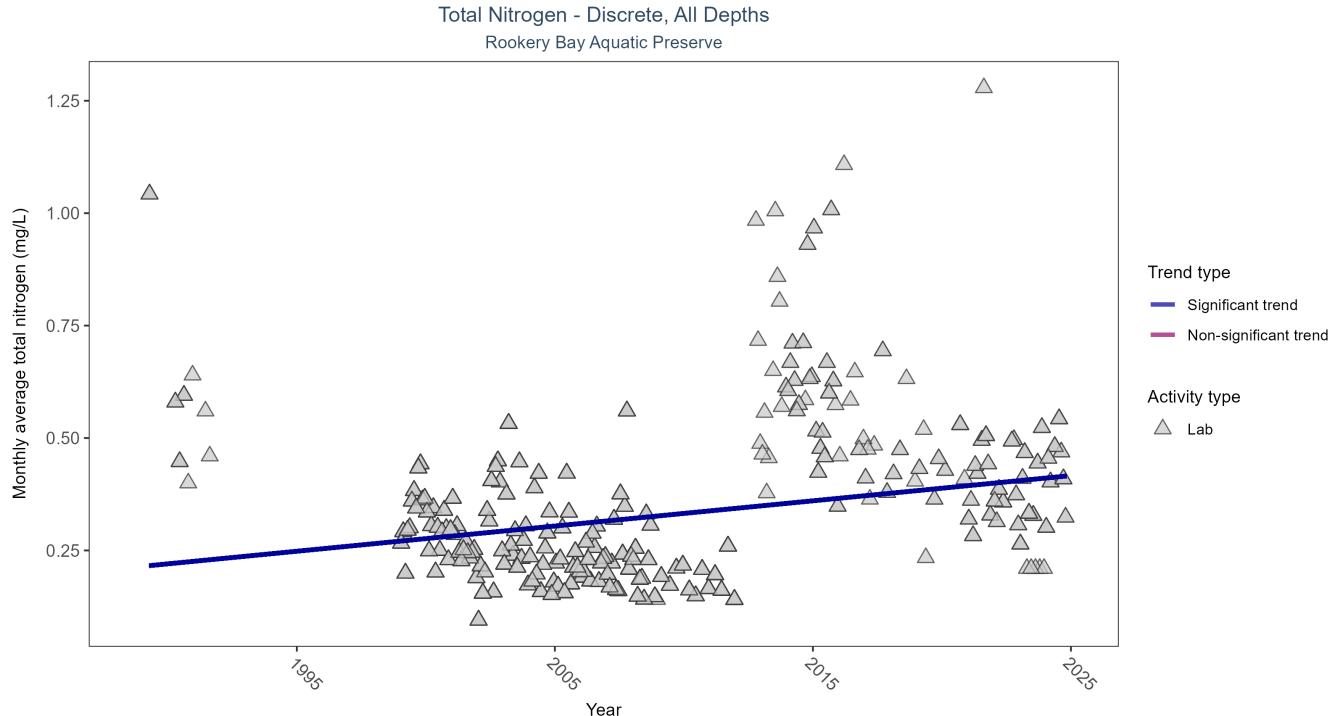


Figure 17: Scatter plot of monthly average total nitrogen over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only nitrogen values obtained from laboratory analyses (triangles) are included in the plot.

Table 22: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Total Nitrogen

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Lab	Significantly increasing trend	2770	29	1989 - 2024	0.26	0.1696	0.2146	0.0056	0.0003

Monthly average total nitrogen increased by 0.01 mg/L per year.

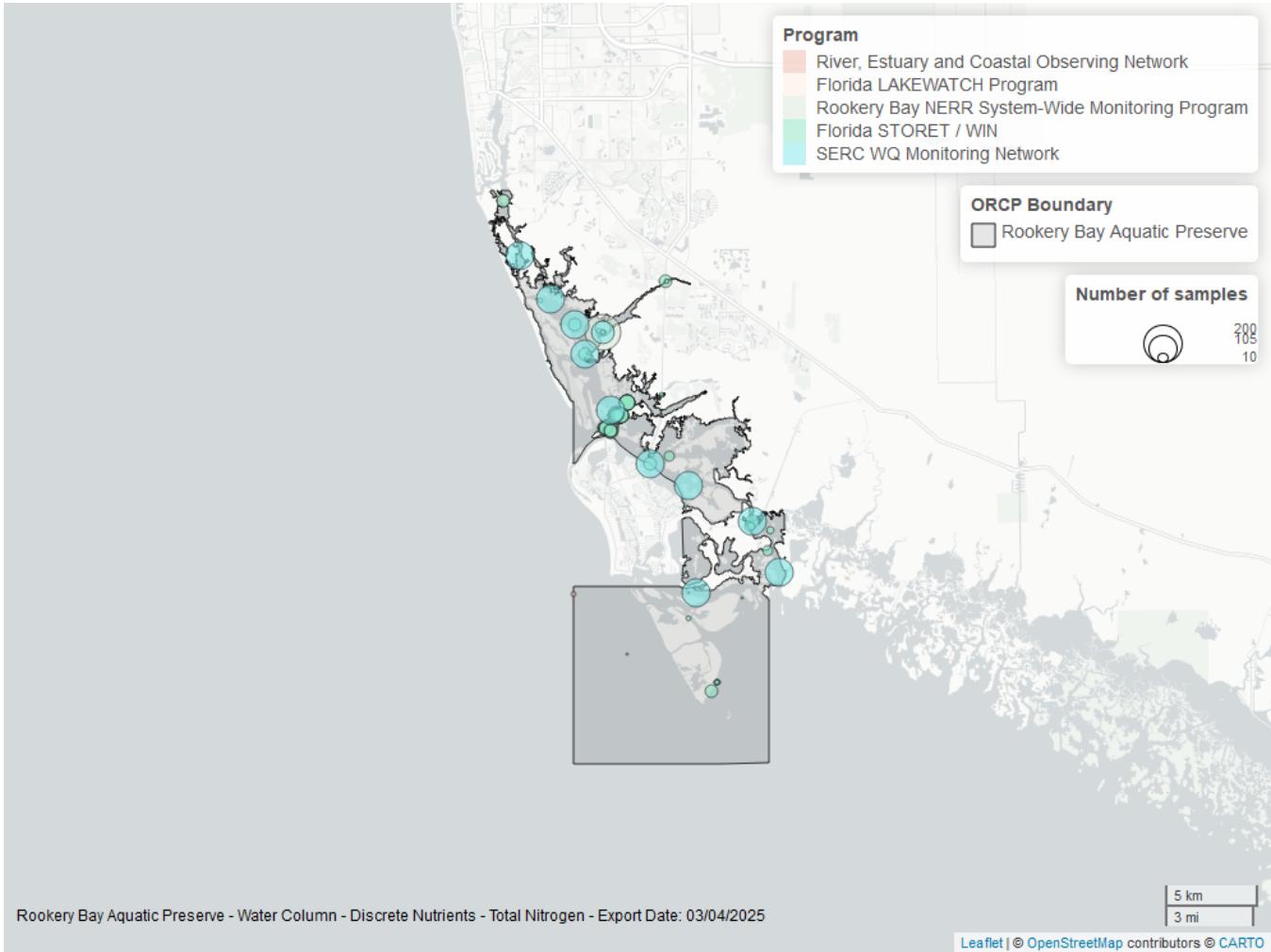


Figure 18: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 23: Programs contributing data for Total Nitrogen

ProgramID	N_Data	YearMin	YearMax
509	1246	1999	2008
5002	776	1989	2024
514	546	2001	2011
354	239	2002	2018
303	3	2022	2023

Program names:

303 - River, Estuary and Coastal Observing Network¹

354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²

509 - SERC Water Quality Monitoring Network⁵

514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program⁶

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Total Phosphorus - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

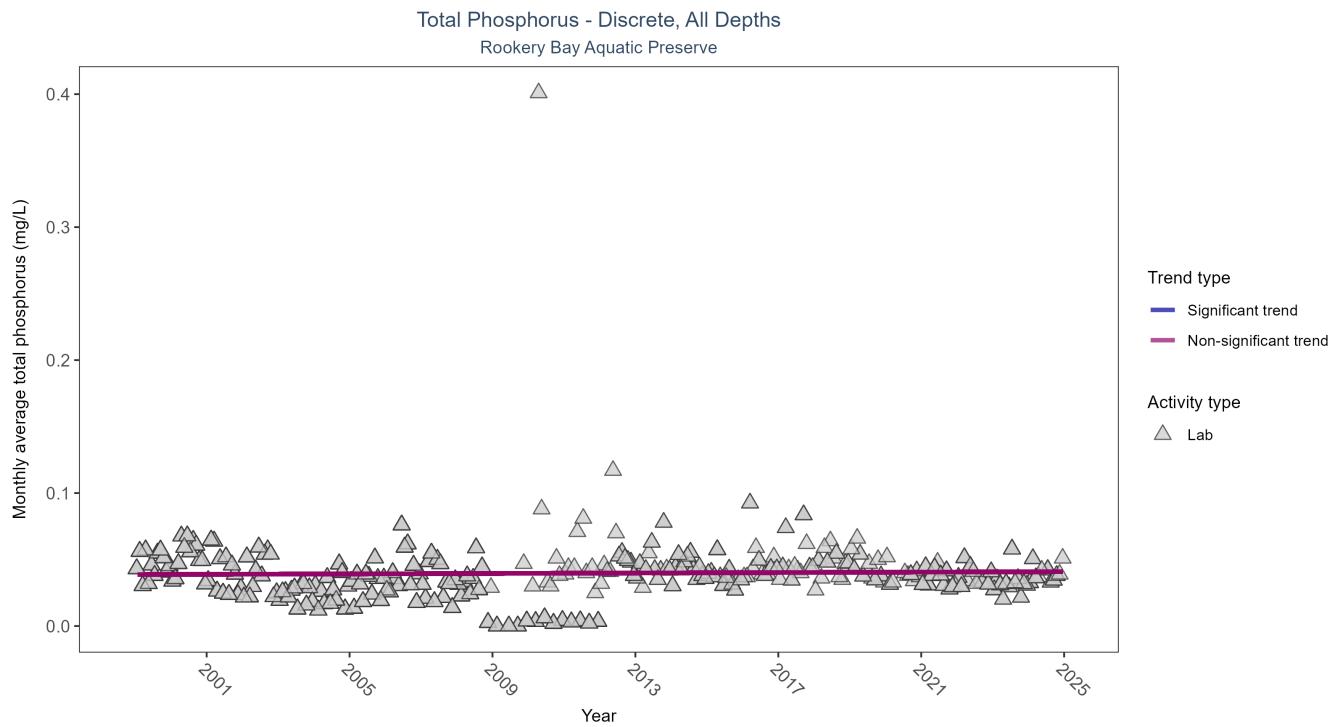


Figure 19: Scatter plot of monthly average total phosphorus over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only phosphorus values obtained from laboratory analyses (triangles) are included in the plot.

Table 24: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Total Phosphorus

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Lab	No significant trend	2395	26	1999 - 2024	0.034	0.0301	0.0387	0.0001	0.4508

Total phosphorus showed no detectable trend between 1999 and 2024.

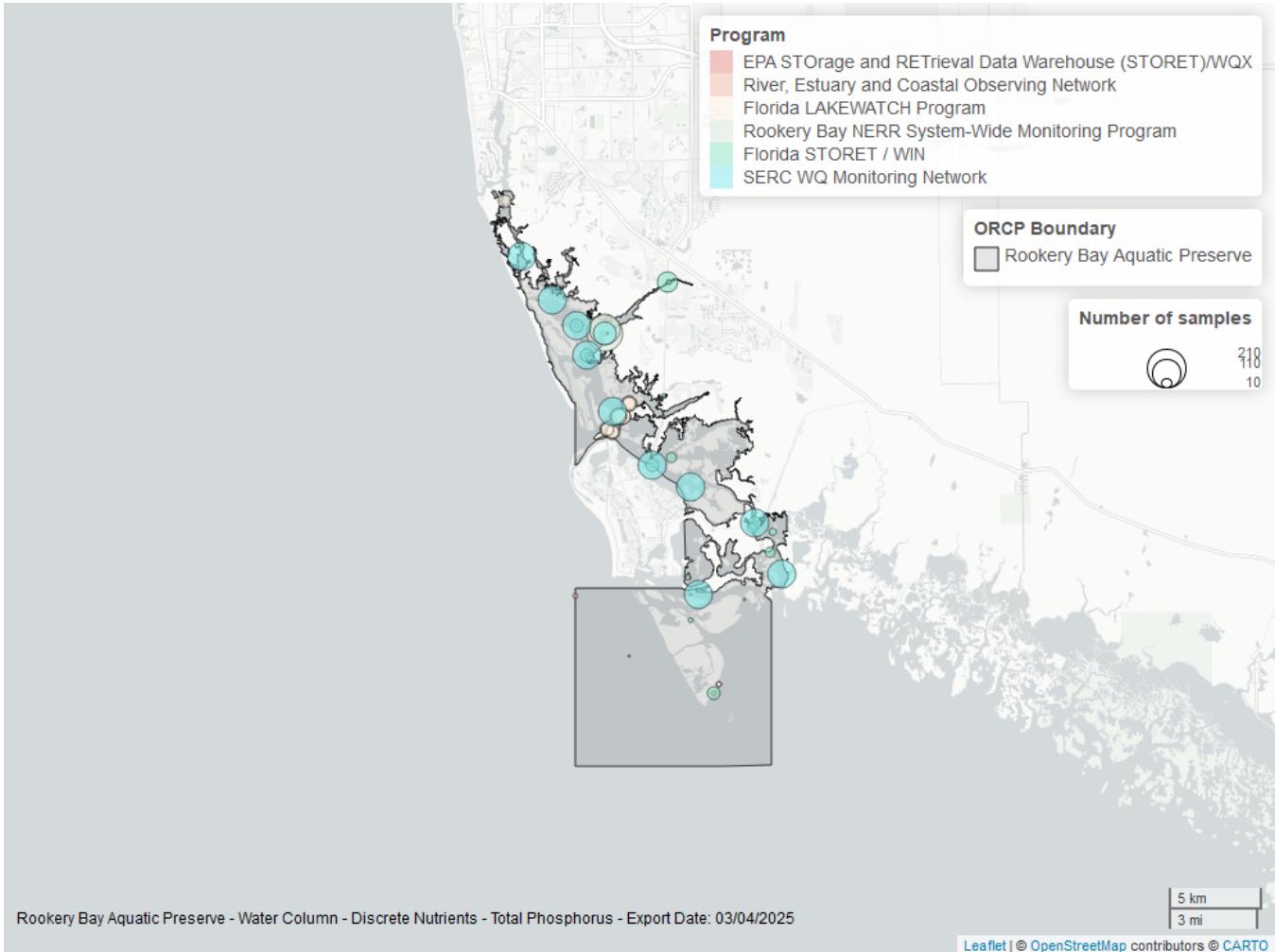


Figure 20: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 25: Programs contributing data for Total Phosphorus

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
509	1236	1999	2008
514	542	2001	2011
354	340	2002	2024
5002	259	2002	2024
103	32	2021	2021
303	3	2022	2023

Program names:

- 103 - EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX⁴
- 303 - River, Estuary and Coastal Observing Network¹
- 354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²
- 509 - SERC Water Quality Monitoring Network⁵
- 514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program⁶
- 5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Total Suspended Solids - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

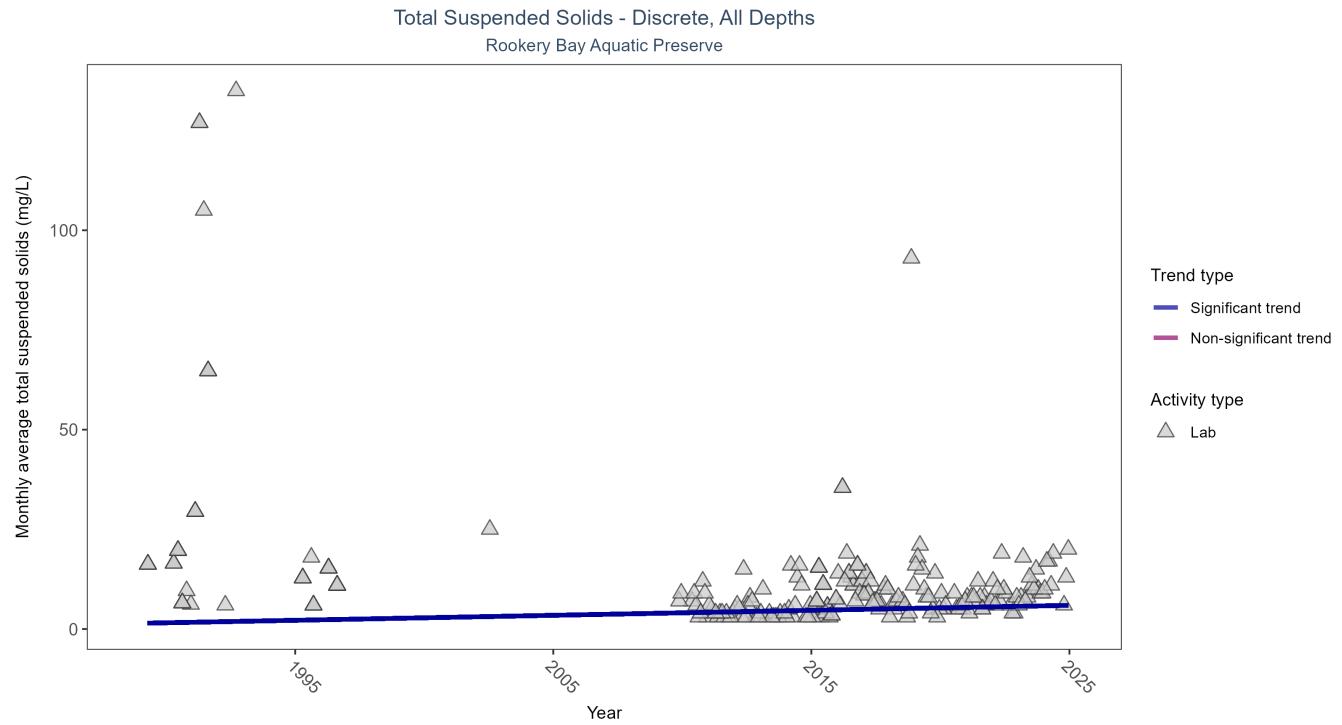


Figure 21: Scatter plot of monthly average total suspended solids (TSS) over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only TSS values obtained from laboratory analyses (triangles) are included in the plot.

Table 26: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Total Suspended Solids

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Lab	Significantly increasing trend	250	23	1989 - 2024	8	0.1371	1.4375	0.125	0.0269

Monthly average total suspended solids increased by 0.12 mg/L per year, indicating a decrease in water clarity.



Figure 22: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 27: Programs contributing data for Total Suspended Solids

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
354	226	2016	2024
5002	151	1989	2021

Program names:

354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²
 5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Turbidity - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

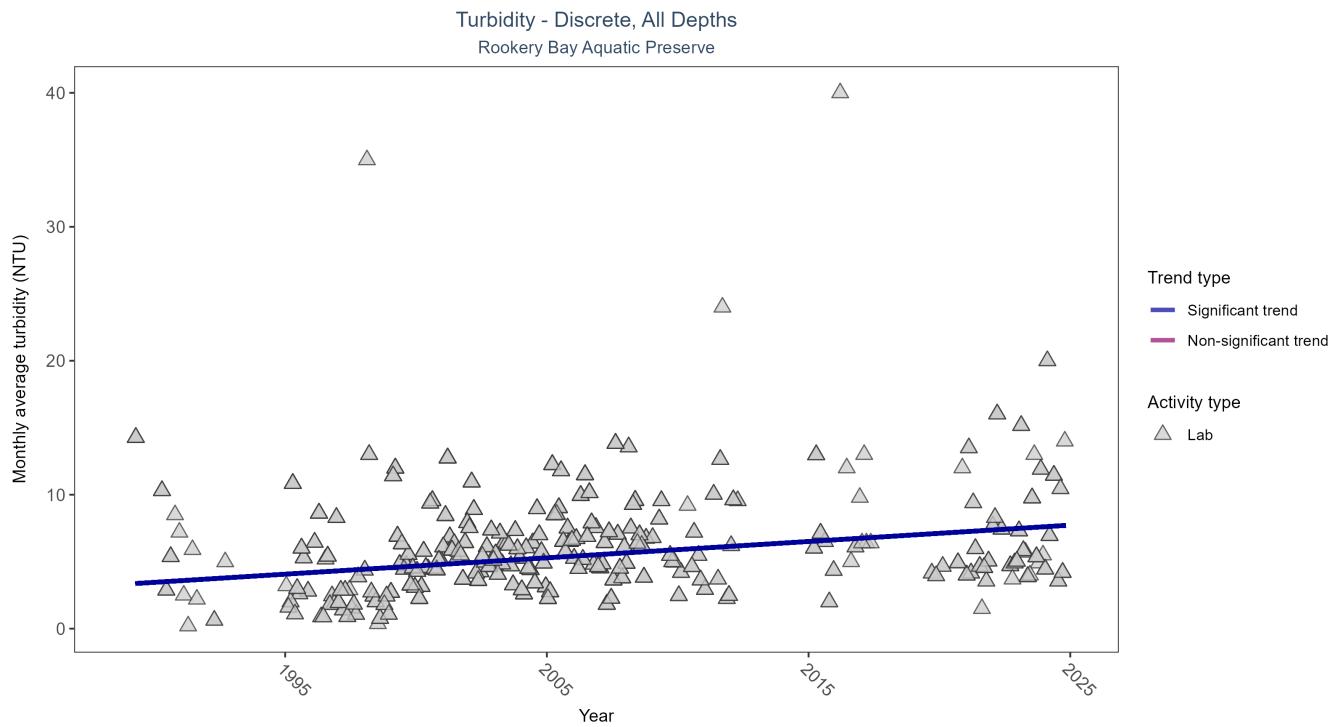


Figure 23: Scatter plot of monthly average turbidity over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only turbidity values measured in the laboratory (triangles) are included in the plot.

Table 28: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Turbidity

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Lab	Significantly increasing trend	1849	31	1989 - 2024	4.99	0.2464	3.3359	0.122	0

Monthly average turbidity increased by 0.12 NTU per year, indicating a decrease in water clarity.

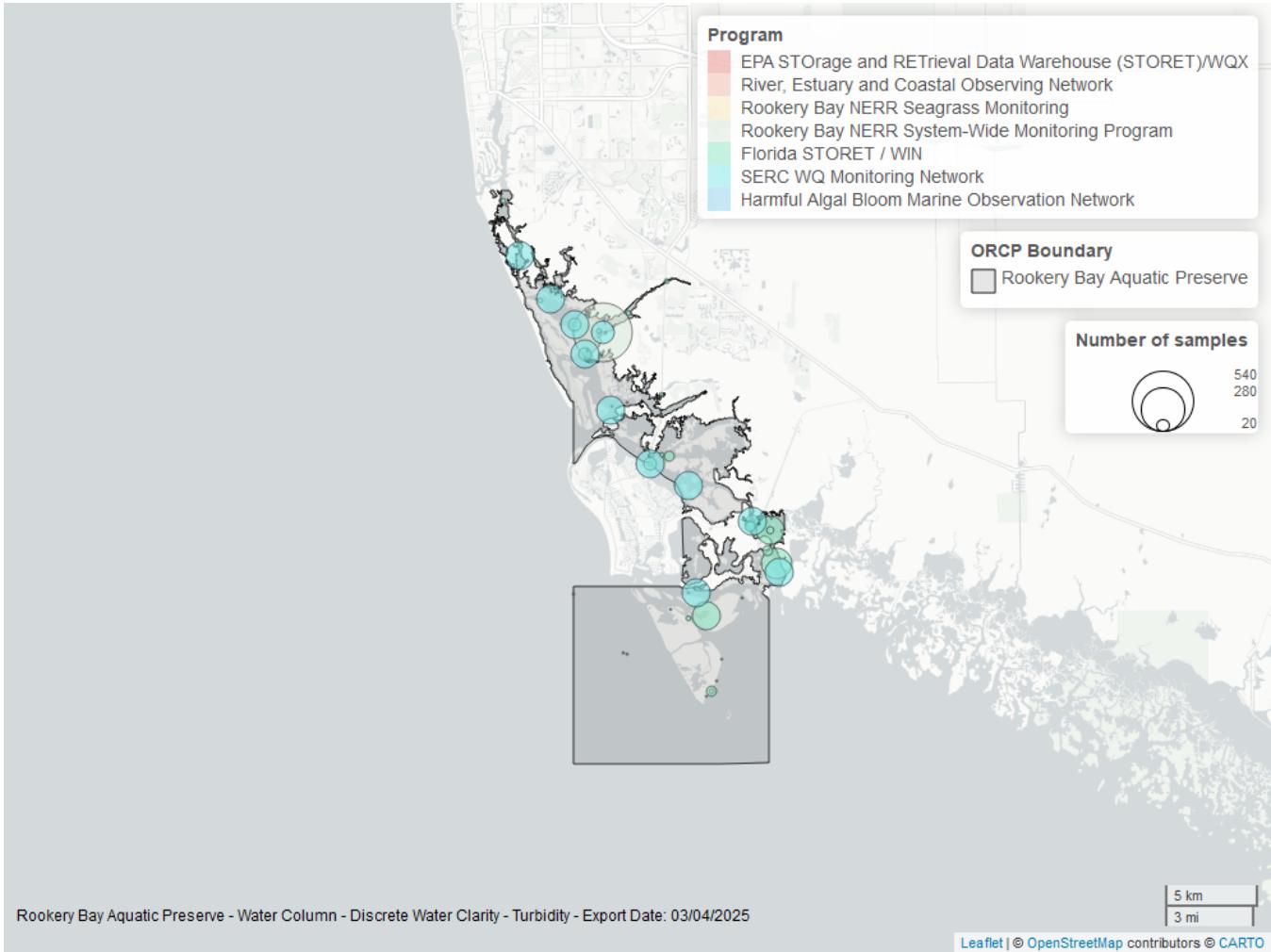


Figure 24: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 29: Programs contributing data for Turbidity

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
509	1236	1999	2008
5002	621	1989	2024
354	527	2002	2006
103	32	2021	2021
572	4	2000	2003
95	3	2003	2011
303	1	2023	2023

Program names:

95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network⁸

103 - EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX⁴

303 - River, Estuary and Coastal Observing Network¹

354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²

509 - SERC Water Quality Monitoring Network⁵

Water Temperature - Discrete

Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

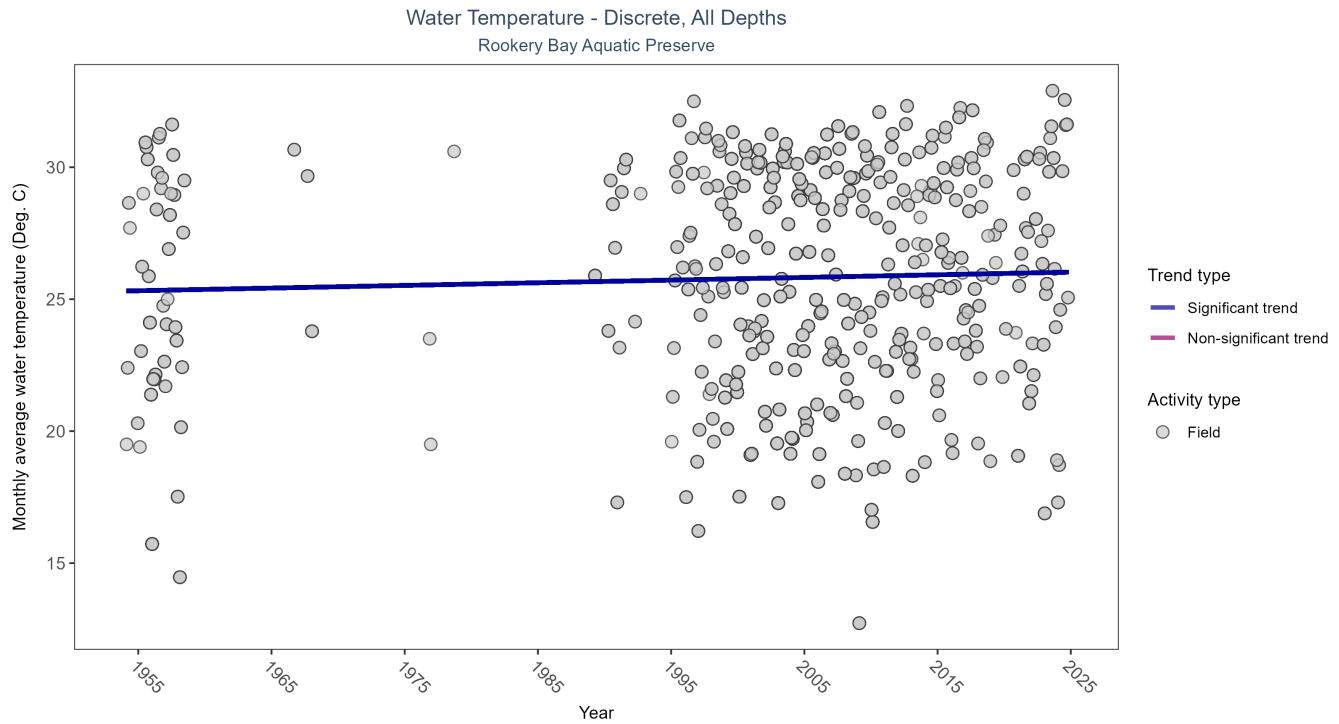


Figure 25: Scatter plot of monthly average water temperature over time. If the time series included ten or more years of discrete observations, a significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend line is also shown. Only water temperature measurements taken in the field (circles) are included in the plot.

Table 30: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Water Temperature

Activity Type	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
Field	Significantly increasing trend	5231	44	1954 - 2024	26.4	0.0771	25.3108	0.0101	0.0255

Monthly average water temperature increased by 0.01°C per year.

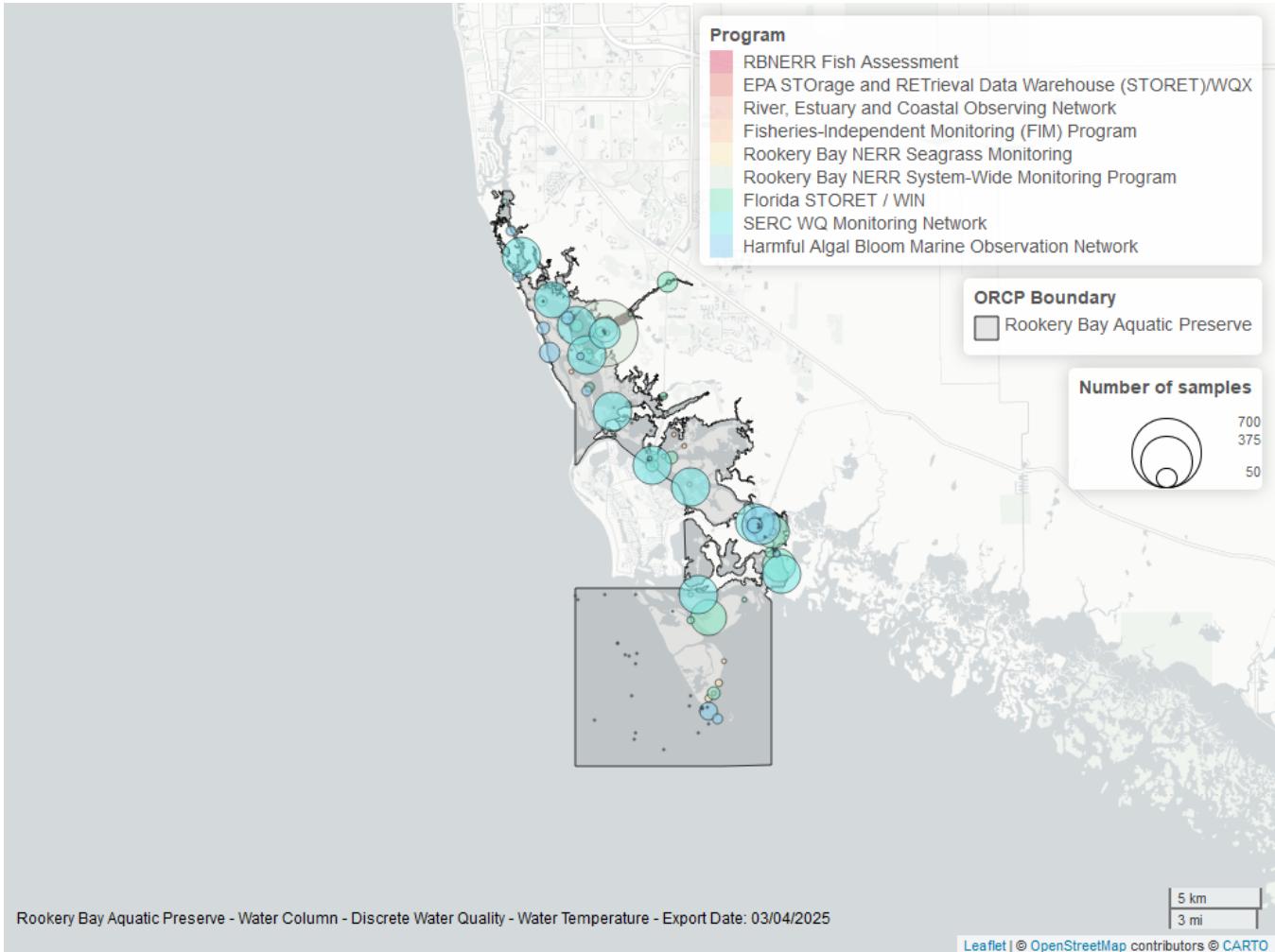


Figure 26: Map showing location of discrete water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 31: Programs contributing data for Water Temperature

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
509	2443	1999	2008
5002	947	1989	2024
354	795	2002	2024
95	561	1954	2018
4043	498	2000	2009
103	40	2021	2021
572	30	1998	2005
69	22	2001	2001
303	1	2023	2023

Program names:

- 69 - Fisheries-Independent Monitoring (FIM) Program⁷
- 95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network⁸
- 103 - EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX⁴
- 303 - River, Estuary and Coastal Observing Network¹

- 354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²
- 509 - SERC Water Quality Monitoring Network⁵
- 572 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Seagrass Monitoring⁹
- 4043 - RBNERR Fish Assessment¹⁰
- 5002 - Florida STORET / WIN³

Water Quality - Continuous

The following files were used in the continuous analysis:

- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_cont_Dissolved_Oxygen_SW-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_cont_Dissolved_Oxygen_Saturation_SW-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_cont_pH_SW-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_cont_Salinity_SW-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_cont_Turbidity_SW-2025-Mar-06.txt*
- *Combined_WQ_WC_NUT_cont_Water_Temperature_SW-2025-Mar-06.txt*

Continuous monitoring locations in Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve

Table 32: Station overview for Continuous parameters by Program

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>ProgramLocationID</i>	<i>Years of Data</i>	<i>Use in Analysis</i>	<i>Parameters</i>
354	rkbmhwq	2	FALSE	DO , DOS , pH , Sal , Turb , TempW
354	rkbhwq	24	TRUE	DO , DOS , pH , Sal , Turb , TempW

Program names:

354 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve System-Wide Monitoring Program²

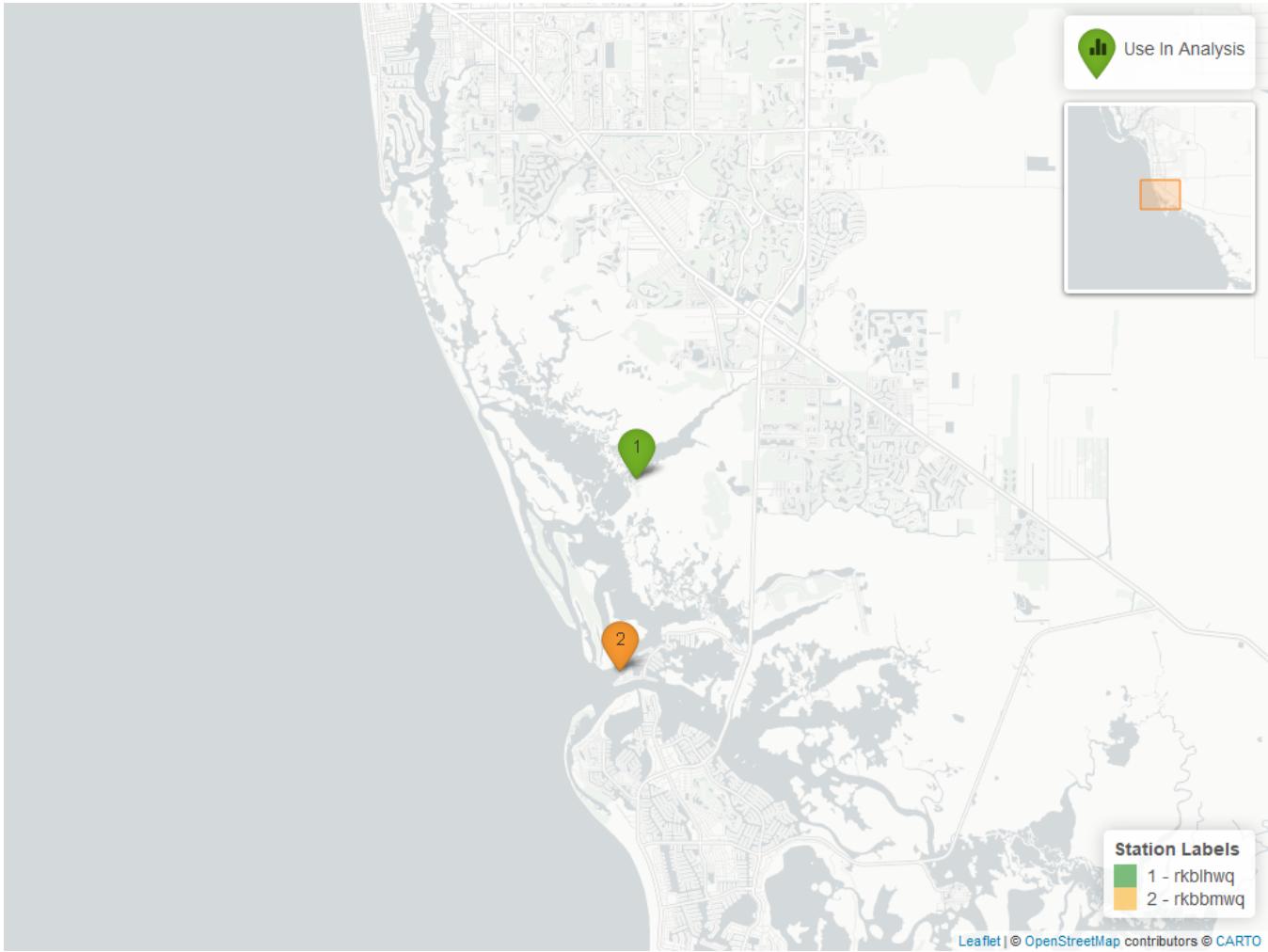


Figure 27: Map showing continuous water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. Sites marked as *Use In Analysis* (green) are featured in this report.

Dissolved Oxygen - Continuous

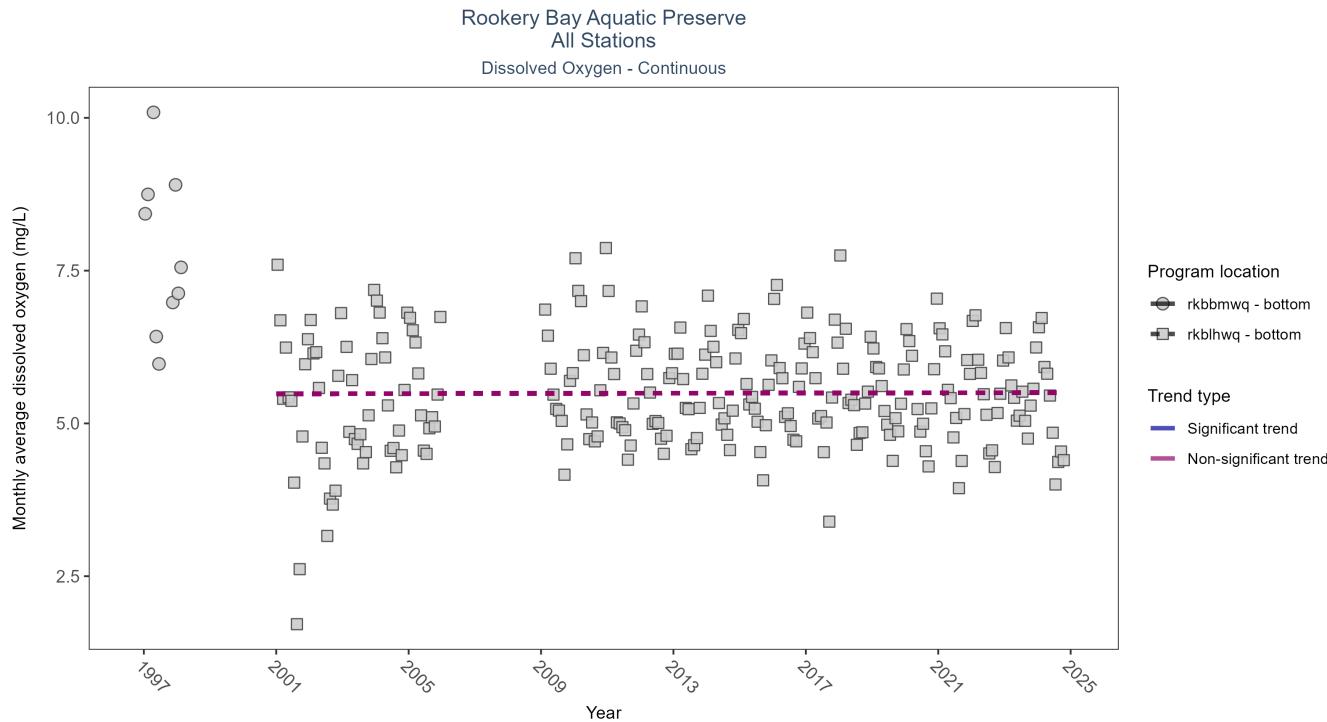


Figure 28: Scatter plot of monthly average dissolved oxygen over time at continuously monitored program locations. Each location is analyzed separately, with significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend lines shown for time series that included five or more years of observations.

Table 33: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Dissolved Oxygen - All Stations

Station	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
rkbbmwq	Insufficient data to calculate trend	10441	2	1997 - 1998	7.2	-	-	-	-
rkbhwq	No significant trend	570691	21	2001 - 2024	5.5	0	5.48	0	0.86

No detectable change in monthly average dissolved oxygen was observed at one location. There was insufficient data to fit a model for one location.

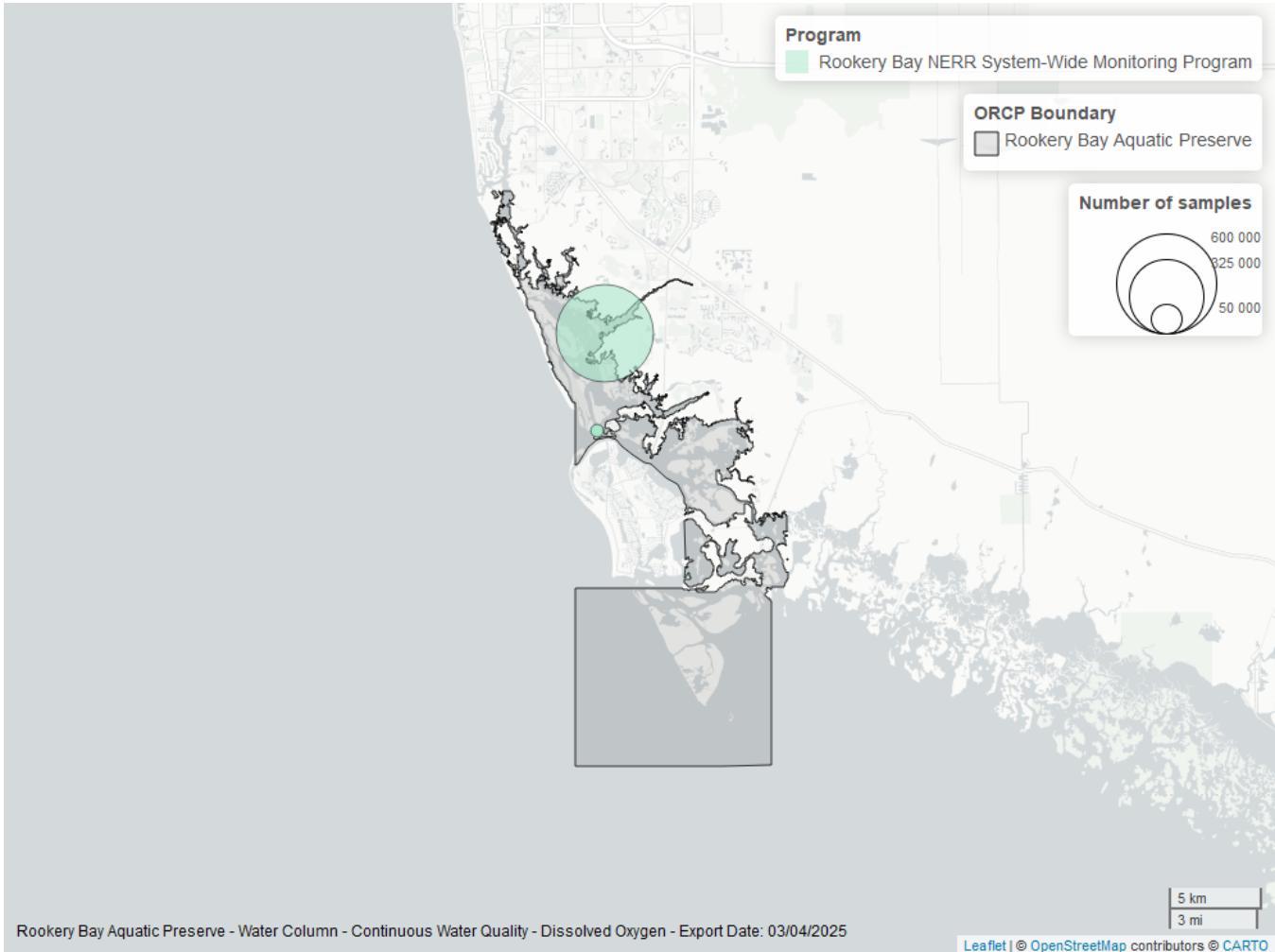


Figure 29: Map showing location of dissolved oxygen continuous water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Dissolved Oxygen Saturation - Continuous

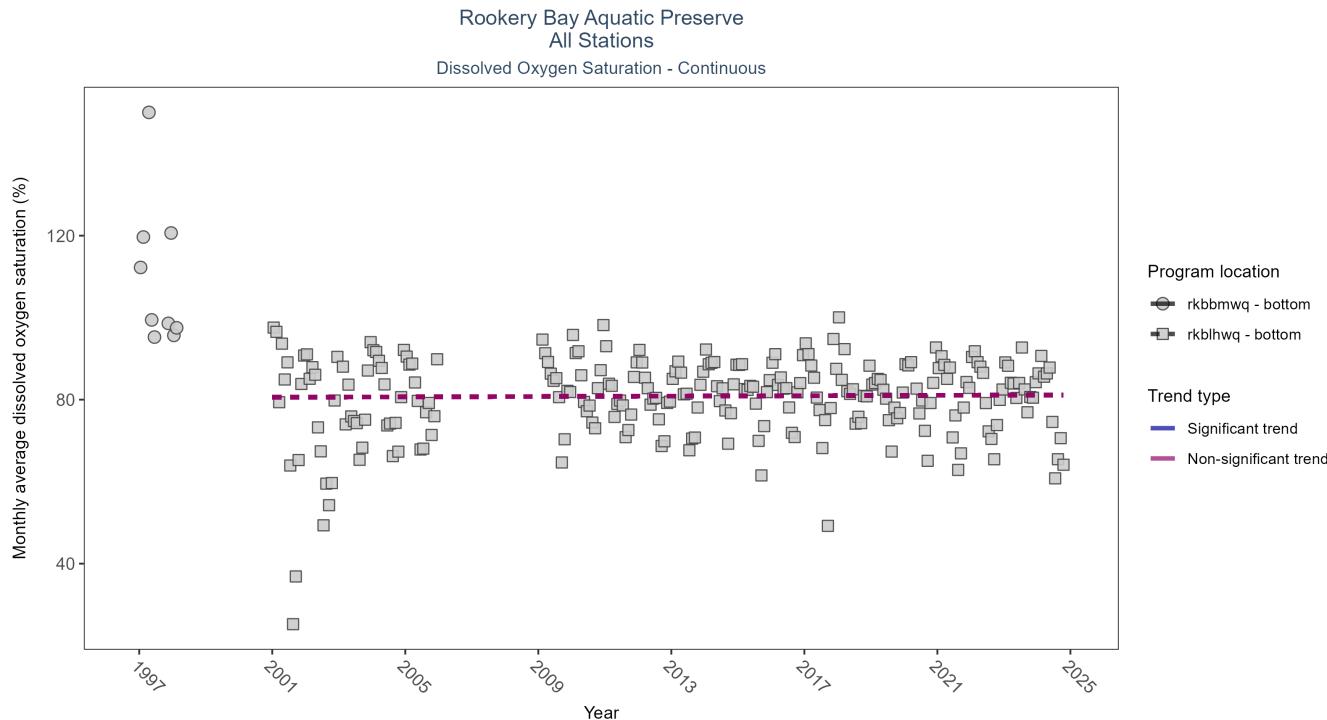


Figure 30: Scatter plot of monthly average dissolved oxygen saturation over time at continuously monitored program locations. Each location is analyzed separately, with significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend lines shown for time series that included five or more years of observations.

Table 34: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Dissolved Oxygen Saturation - All Stations

Station	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
rkbbmwq	Insufficient data to calculate trend	10441	2	1997 - 1998	102.4	-	-	-	-
rkbhwq	No significant trend	583009	21	2001 - 2024	81.7	0.02	80.58	0.02	0.55

No detectable change in monthly average dissolved oxygen saturation was observed at one location. There was insufficient data to fit a model for one location.

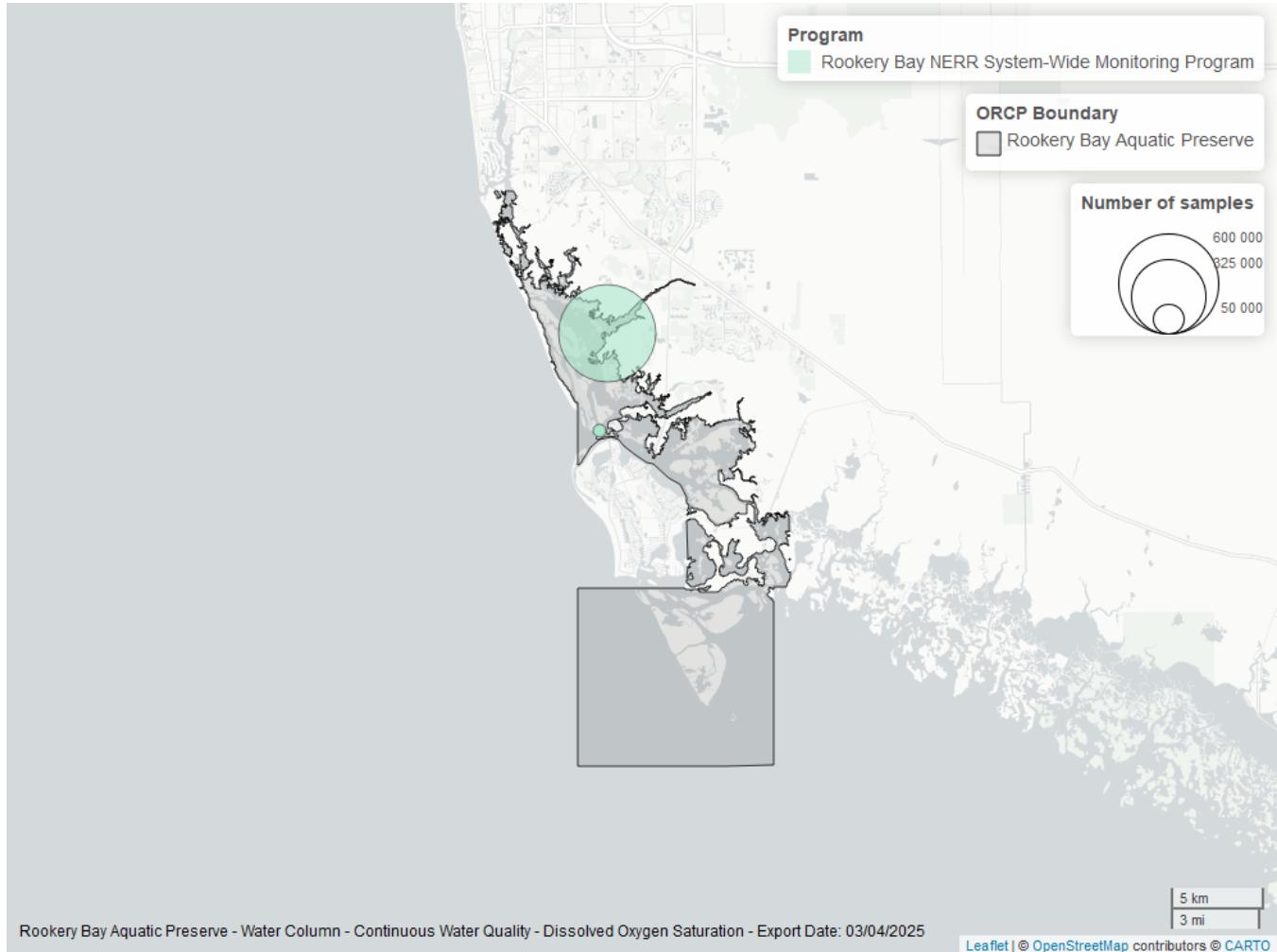


Figure 31: Map showing location of dissolved oxygen saturation continuous water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

pH - Continuous

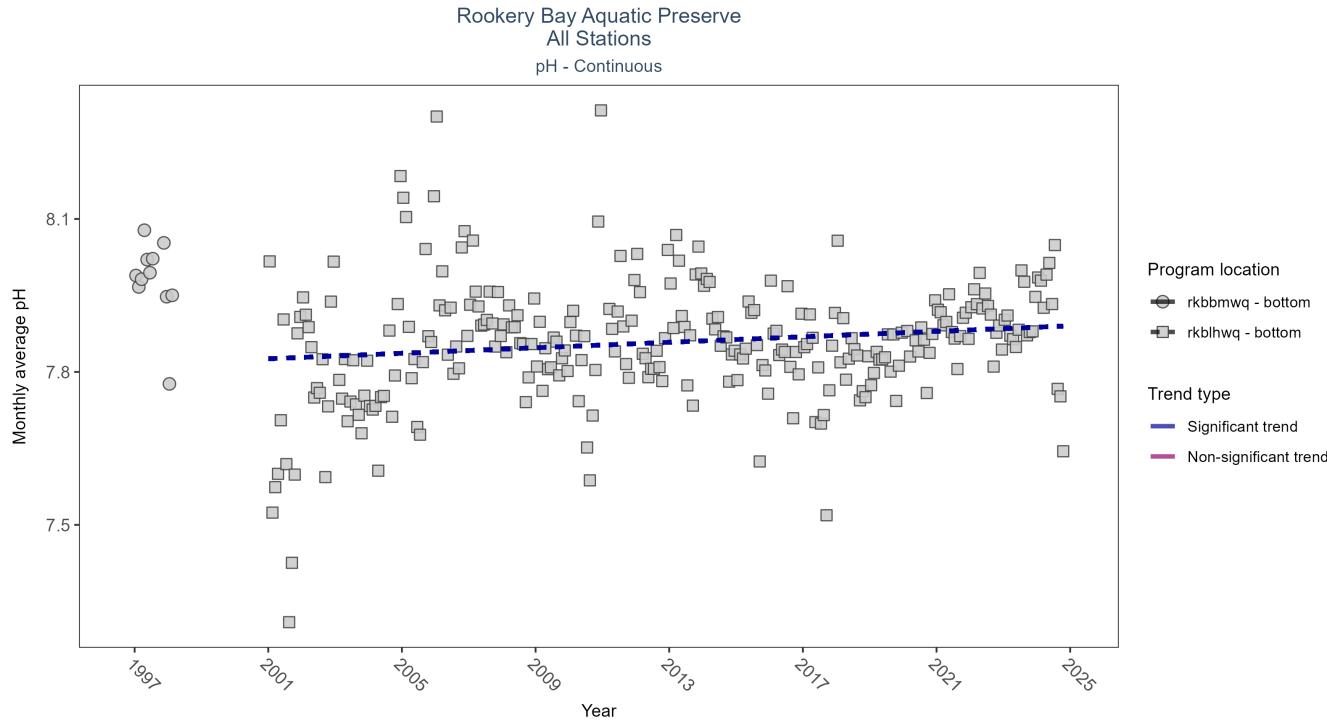


Figure 32: Scatter plot of monthly average pH over time at continuously monitored program locations. Each location is analyzed separately, with significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend lines shown for time series that included five or more years of observations.

Table 35: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for pH - All Stations

Station	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
rkbbmwq	Insufficient data to calculate trend	12610	2	1997 - 1998	8.0	-	-	-	-
rkbhwq	Significantly increasing trend	629829	24	2001 - 2024	7.9	0.14	7.83	0	0

At one program location, monthly average pH increased by less than 0.01 pH units per year. There was insufficient data to fit a model for one location.



Figure 33: Map showing location of ph continuous water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Salinity - Continuous

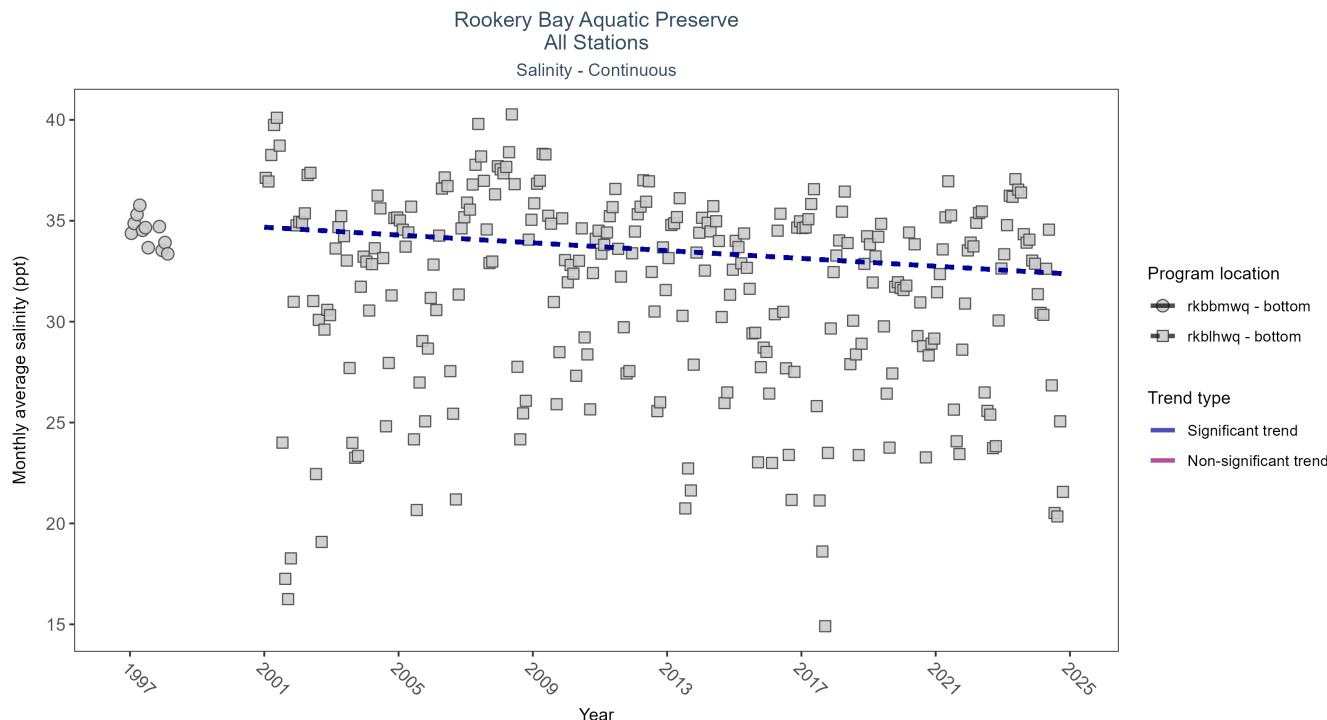


Figure 34: Scatter plot of monthly average salinity over time at continuously monitored program locations. Each location is analyzed separately, with significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend lines shown for time series that included five or more years of observations.

Table 36: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Salinity - All Stations

Station	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
rkbbmwq	Insufficient data to calculate trend	12256	2	1997 - 1998	34.5	-	-	-	-
rkbhwq	Significantly decreasing trend	657842	24	2001 - 2024	33.1	-0.16	34.68	-0.1	0

At one program location, monthly average salinity decreased by 0.10 ppt per year. There was insufficient data to fit a model for one location.

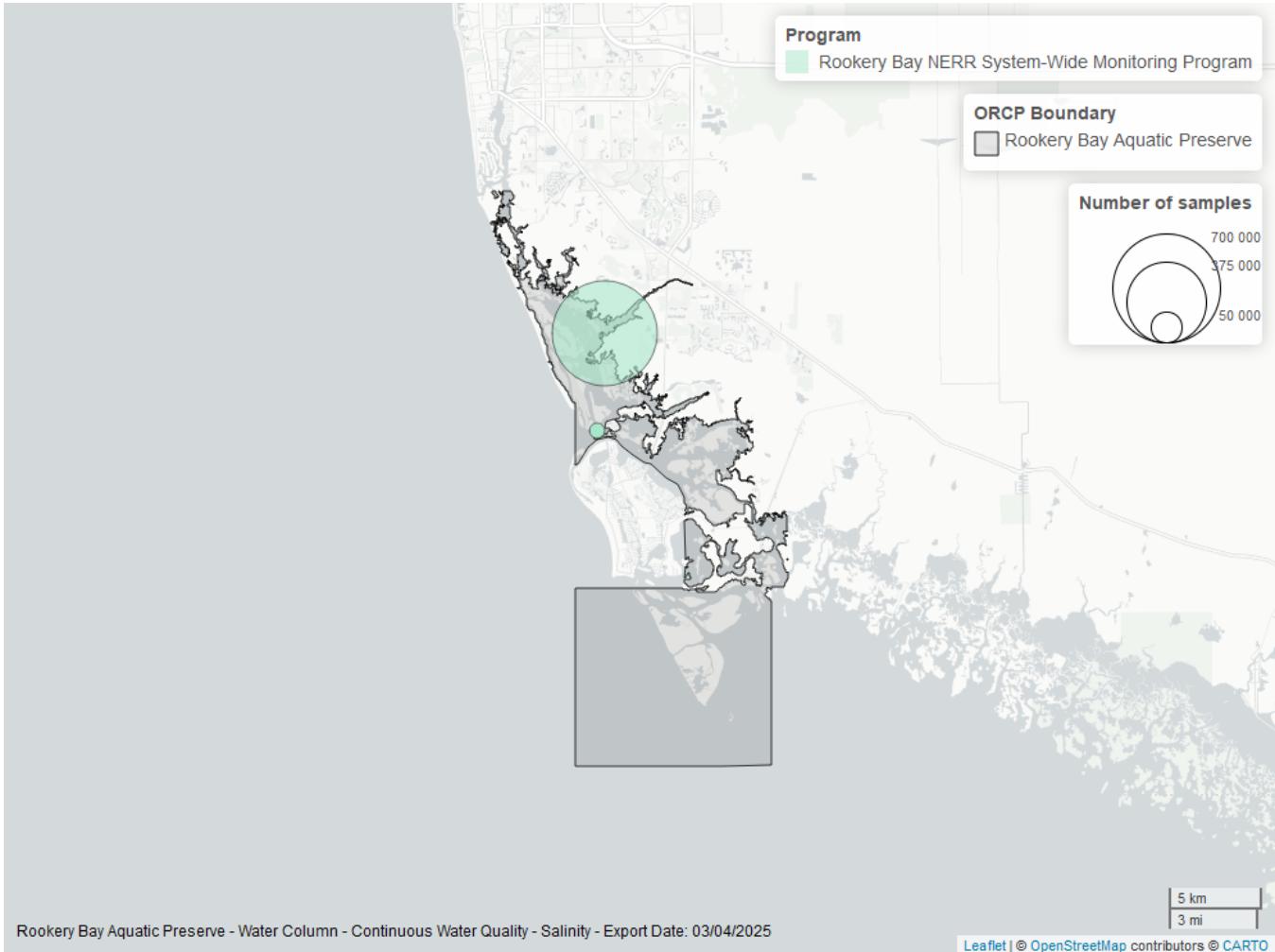


Figure 35: Map showing location of salinity continuous water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Turbidity - Continuous

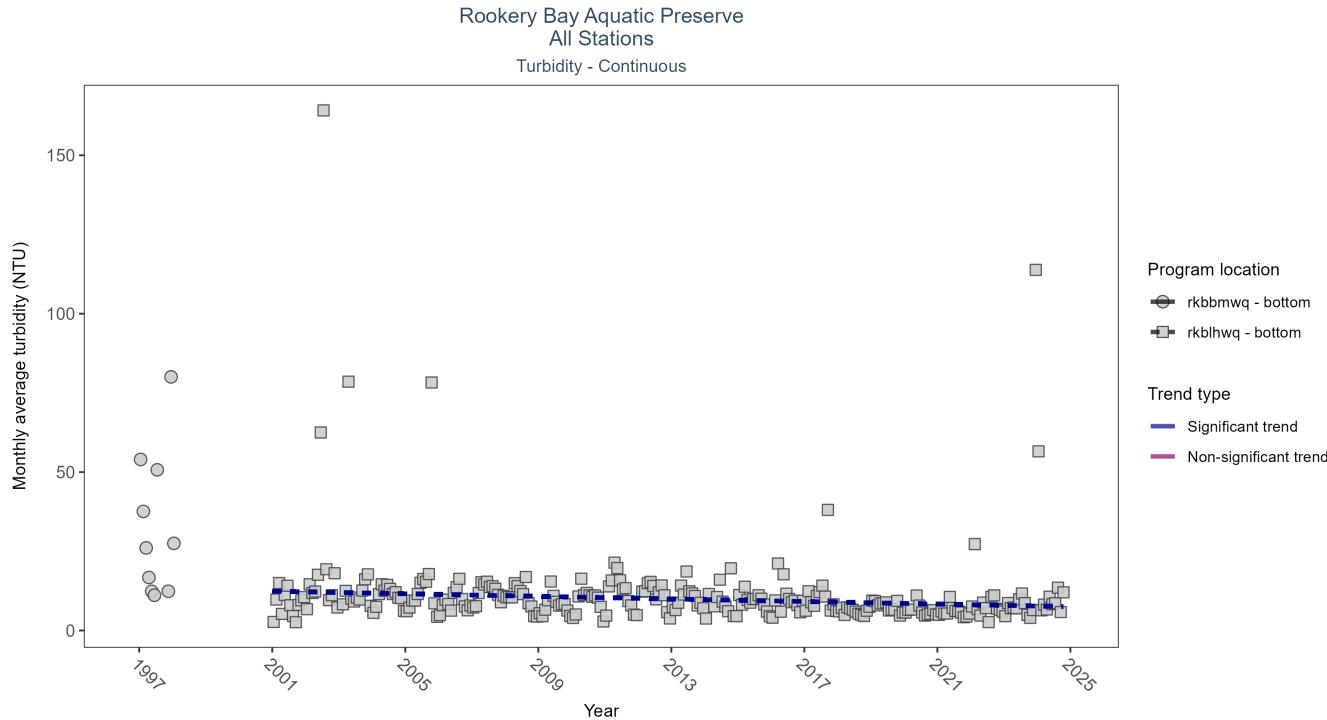


Figure 36: Scatter plot of monthly average turbidity over time at continuously monitored program locations. Each location is analyzed separately, with significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend lines shown for time series that included five or more years of observations.

Table 37: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Turbidity - All Stations

Station	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
rkbbmwq	Insufficient data to calculate trend	10654	2	1997 - 1998	11	-	-	-	-
rkbhwq	Significantly decreasing trend	605017	24	2001 - 2024	8	-0.27	12.4	-0.2	0

At one program location, monthly average turbidity decreased by 0.20 NTU per year. There was insufficient data to fit a model for one location.

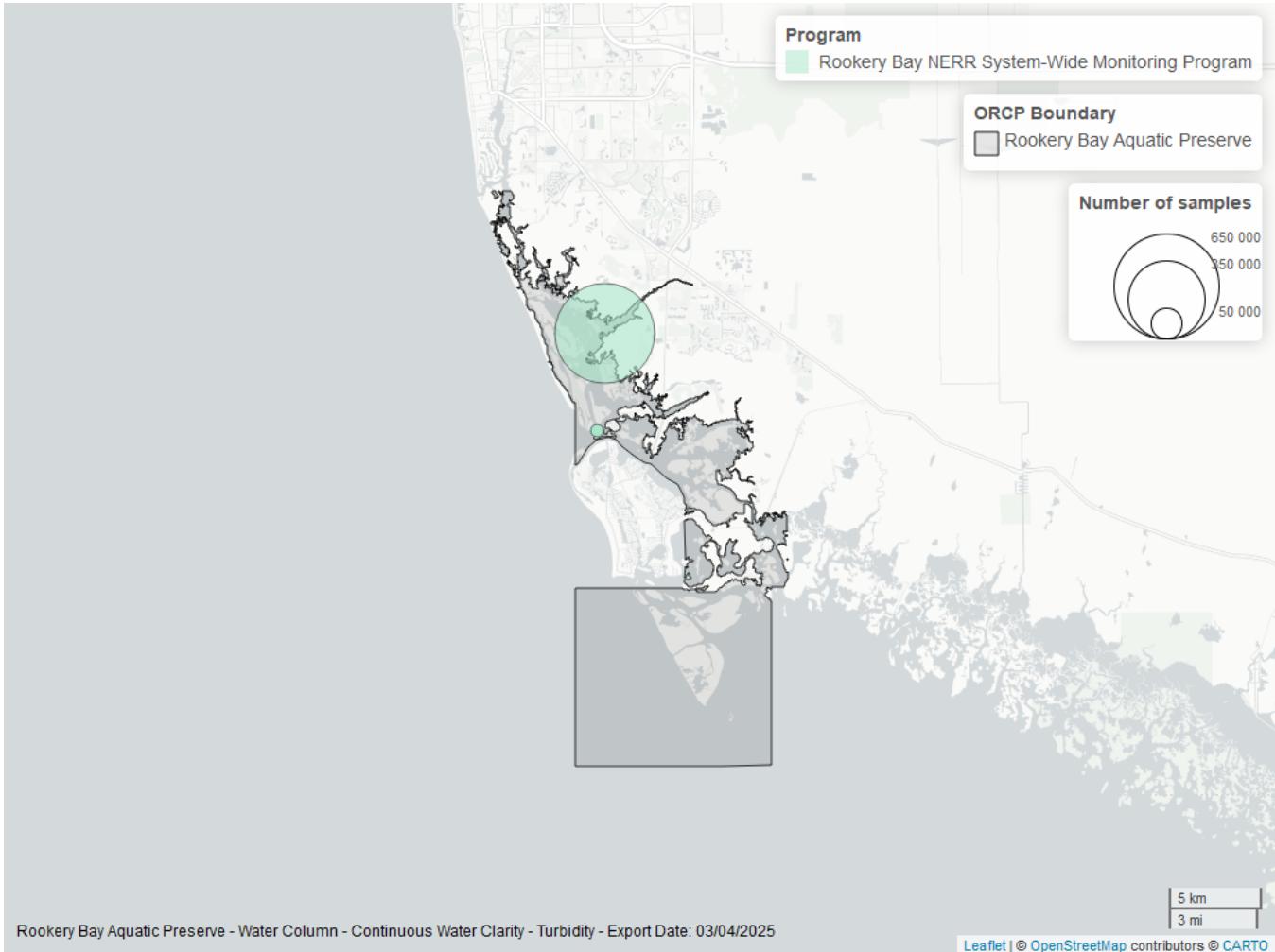


Figure 37: Map showing location of turbidity continuous water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Water Temperature - Continuous

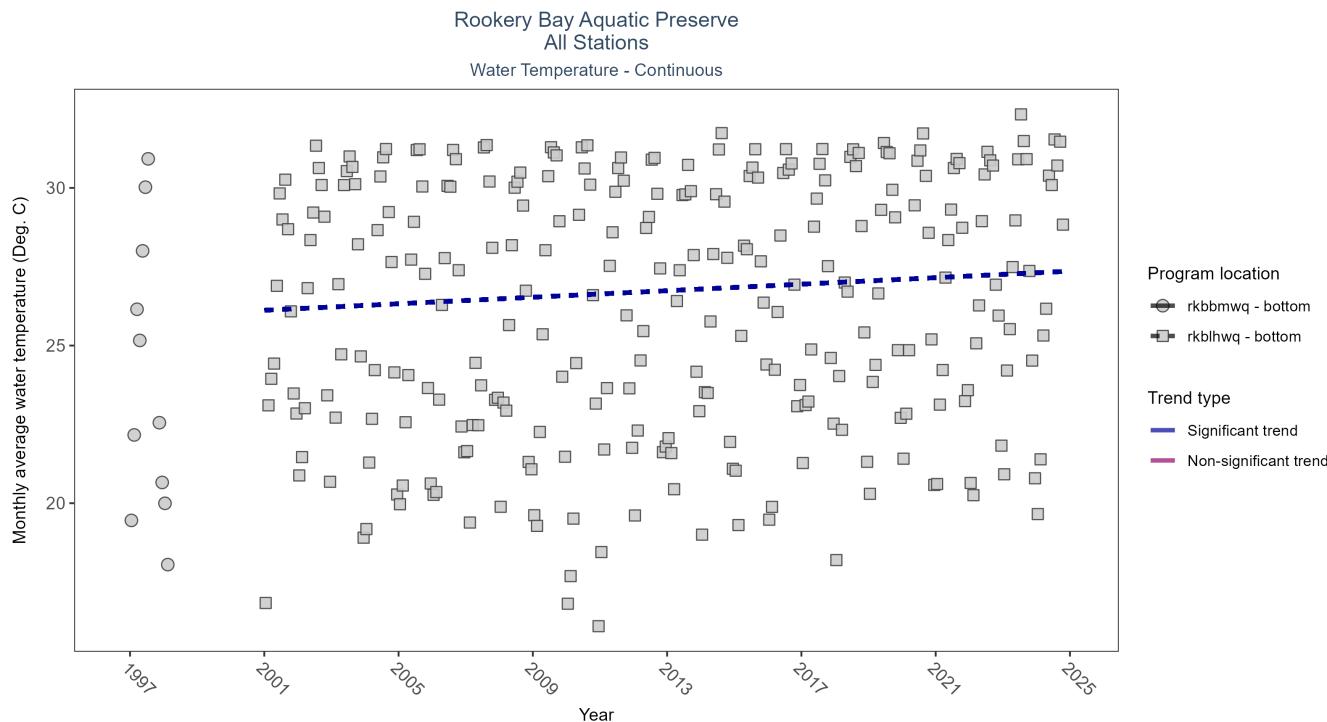


Figure 38: Scatter plot of monthly average water temperature over time at continuously monitored program locations. Each location is analyzed separately, with significant (blue) or non-significant (magenta) trend lines shown for time series that included five or more years of observations.

Table 38: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Water Temperature - All Stations

Station	Statistical Trend	Sample Count	Years with Data	Period of Record	Median	tau	Sen Intercept	Sen Slope	p
rkbbmwq	Insufficient data to calculate trend	12610	2	1997 - 1998	23.8	-	-	-	-
rkbhwq	Significantly increasing trend	688994	24	2001 - 2024	27.0	0.25	26.12	0.05	0

At one program location, monthly average water temperature increased by 0.05°C per year. There was insufficient data to fit a model for one location.

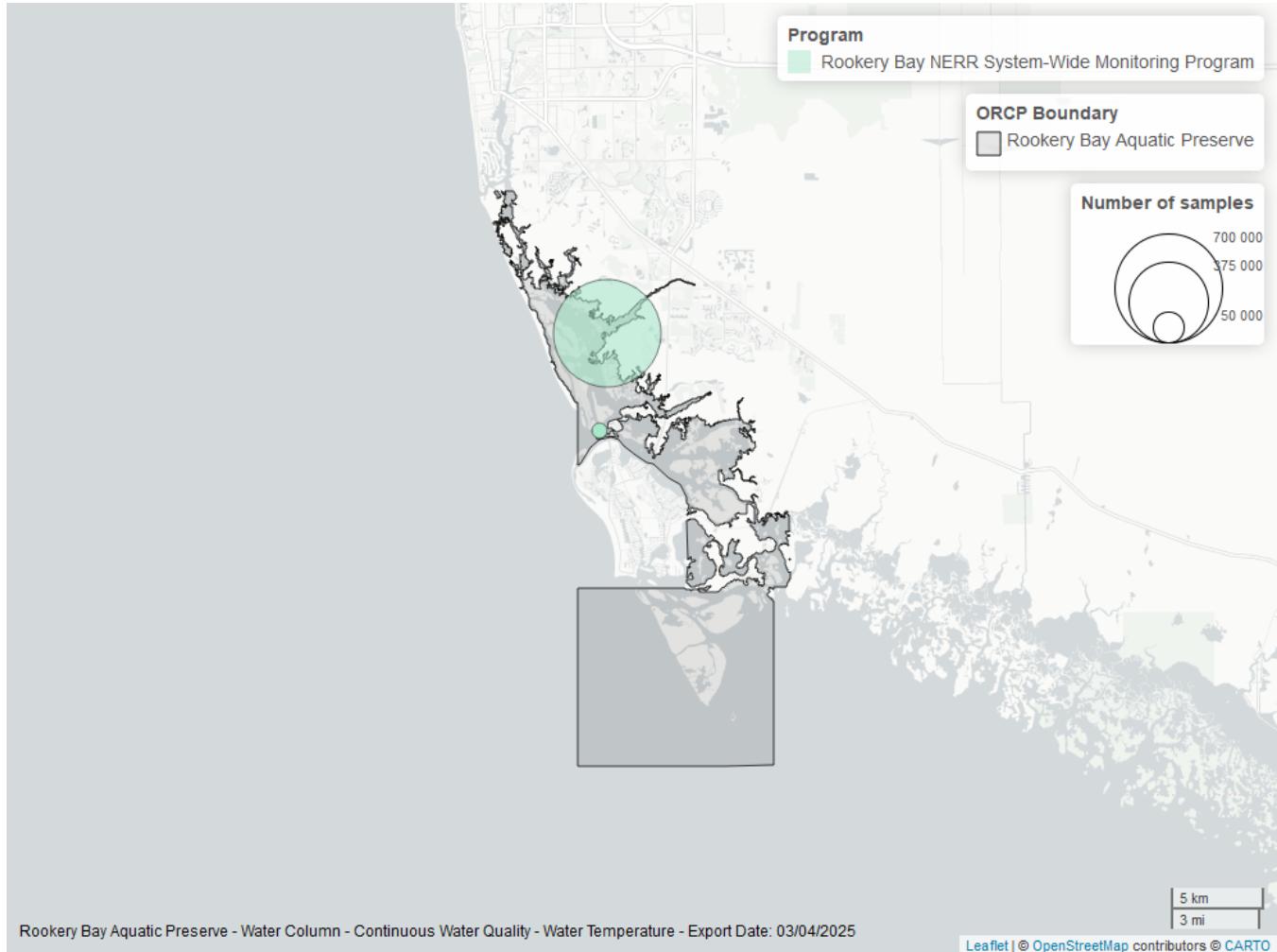


Figure 39: Map showing location of water temperature continuous water quality sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Submerged Aquatic Vegetation

The data file used is: All_SAV_Parameters-2025-Mar-06.txt

Submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) refers to plants and plant-like macroalgae species that live entirely underwater. The two primary categories of SAV inhabiting Florida estuaries are *benthic macroalgae* and *seagrasses*. They often grow together in dense beds or meadows that carpet the seafloor. *Macroalgae* include multicellular species of green, red and brown algae that often live attached to the substrate by a holdfast. They tend to grow quickly and can tolerate relatively high nutrient levels, making them a threat to seagrasses and other benthic habitats in areas with poor water quality. In contrast, *seagrasses* are grass-like, vascular, flowering plants that are attached to the seafloor by extensive root systems. *Seagrasses* occur throughout the coastal areas of Florida, including protected bays and lagoons as well as deeper offshore waters on the continental shelf. *Seagrasses* have taken advantage of the broad, shallow shelf and clear water to produce two of the most extensive seagrass beds anywhere in continental North America.

Parameters

Percent Cover measures the fraction of an area of seafloor that is covered by SAV, usually estimated by evaluating multiple small areas of seafloor. Percent cover is often estimated for total SAV, individual types of vegetation (seagrass, attached algae, drift algae) and individual species.

Frequency of Occurrence was calculated as the number of times a taxon was observed in a year divided by the number of sampling events, multiplied by 100. Analysis is conducted at the quadrat level and is inclusive of all quadrats (i.e., quadrats evaluated using Braun-Blanquet, modified Braun-Blanquet, and percent cover.)

Species

Turtle grass (*Thalassia testudinum*) is the largest of the Florida seagrasses, with longer, thicker blades and deeper root structures than any of the other seagrasses. It is considered a climax seagrass species.

Shoal grass (*Halodule wrightii*) is an early colonizer of vegetated areas and usually grows in water too shallow for other species except *widgeon grass*. It can often tolerate larger salinity ranges than other seagrass species. *Shoal grass* is characterized by thin, flat blades, that are narrower than *turtle grass* blades.

Manatee grass (*Syringodium filiforme*) is easily recognizable because its leaves are thin and cylindrical instead of the flat, ribbon-like form shared by many other seagrass species. The leaves can grow up to half a meter in length. *Manatee grass* is usually found in mixed seagrass beds or small, dense monospecific patches.

Widgeon grass (*Ruppia maritima*) grows in both fresh and salt water and is widely distributed throughout Florida's estuaries in less saline areas, particularly in inlets along the east coast. This species resembles *shoal grass* in certain environments but can be identified by the pointed tips of its leaves.

Three species of *Halophila spp.* are found in Florida - **Star grass** (*Halophila engelmannii*), **Paddle grass** (*Halophila decipiens*), and **Johnson's seagrass** (*Halophila johnsonii*). These are smaller, more fragile seagrasses than other Florida species and are considered ephemeral. They grow along a single long rhizome, with short blades. These species are not well-studied, although surveys are underway to define their ecological roles.

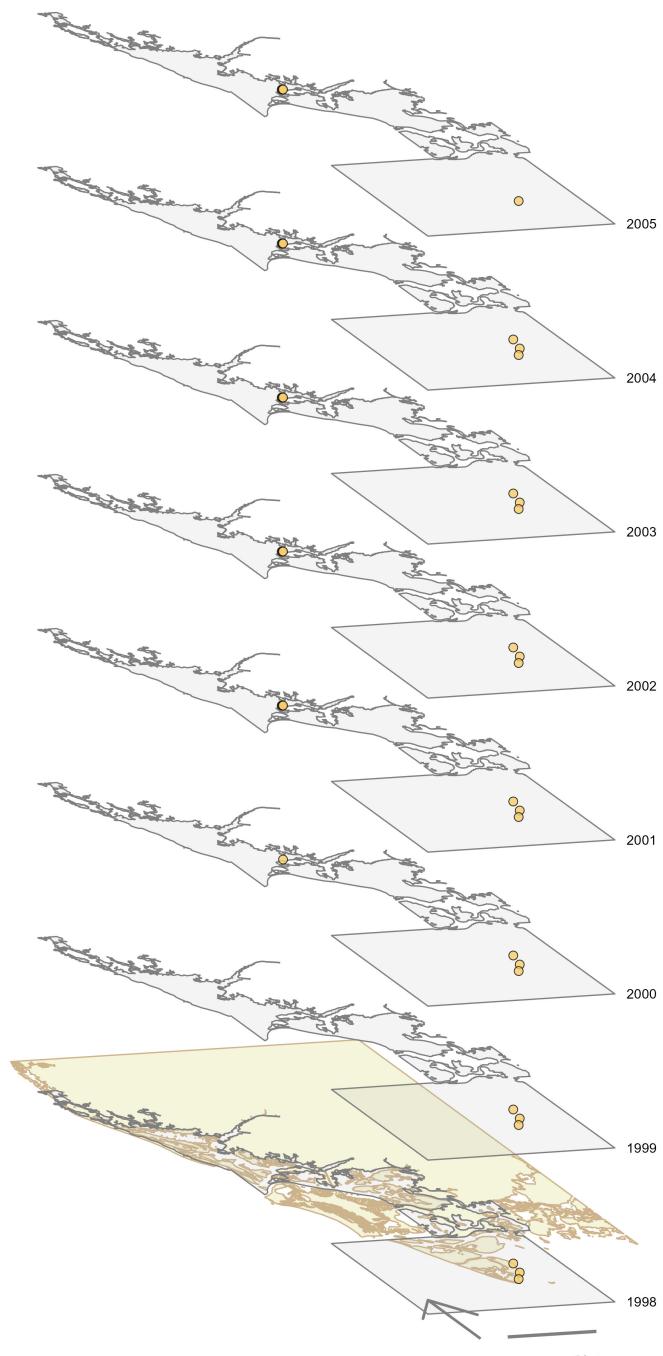
Notes

Star grass, *Paddle grass*, and *Johnson's seagrass* will be grouped together and listed as **Halophila spp.** in the following managed areas. This is because several surveys did not specify to the species level:

- Banana River Aquatic Preserve
- Indian River-Malabar to Vero Beach Aquatic Preserve
- Indian River-Vero Beach to Ft. Pierce Aquatic Preserve
- Jensen Beach to Jupiter Inlet Aquatic Preserve
- Loxahatchee River-Lake Worth Creek Aquatic Preserve
- Mosquito Lagoon Aquatic Preserve

- Biscayne Bay Aquatic Preserve
- Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve
SAV Percent Cover - Sample Locations



Program name
● Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Seagrass Monitoring

Figure 40: Maps showing the temporal scope of SAV sampling sites within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve* by Program name.

Click [here](#) to view spatio-temporal plots on GitHub.

Sampling locations by Program:

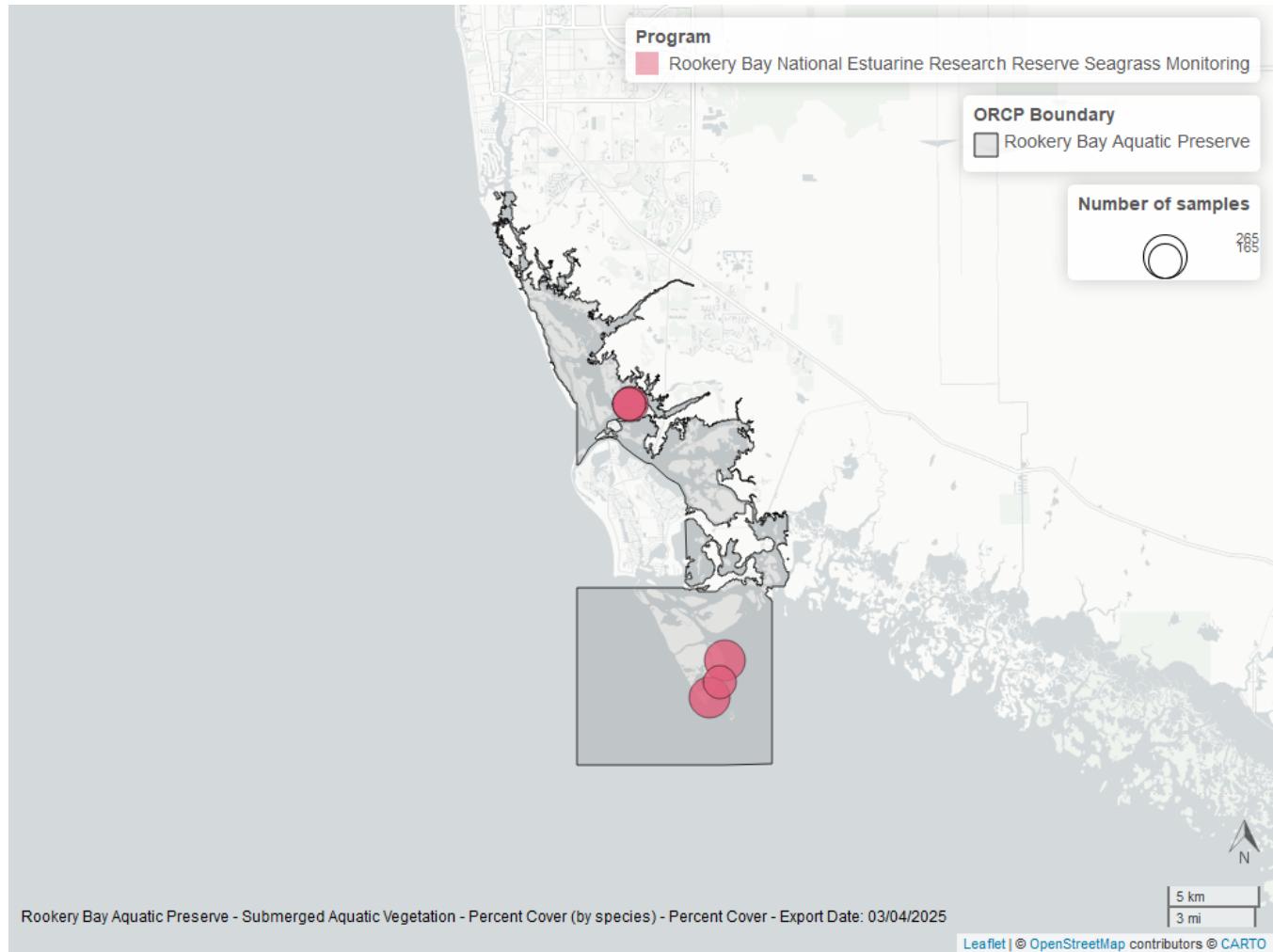


Figure 41: Map showing SAV sampling sites within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The point size reflects the number of samples at a given sampling site.

Table 39: Program Information for Submerged Aquatic Vegetation

ProgramID	N-Data	YearMin	YearMax	method	Sample Locations
572	1220	1998	2005	Percent Cover	6

Program names:

572 - Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve Seagrass Monitoring⁹

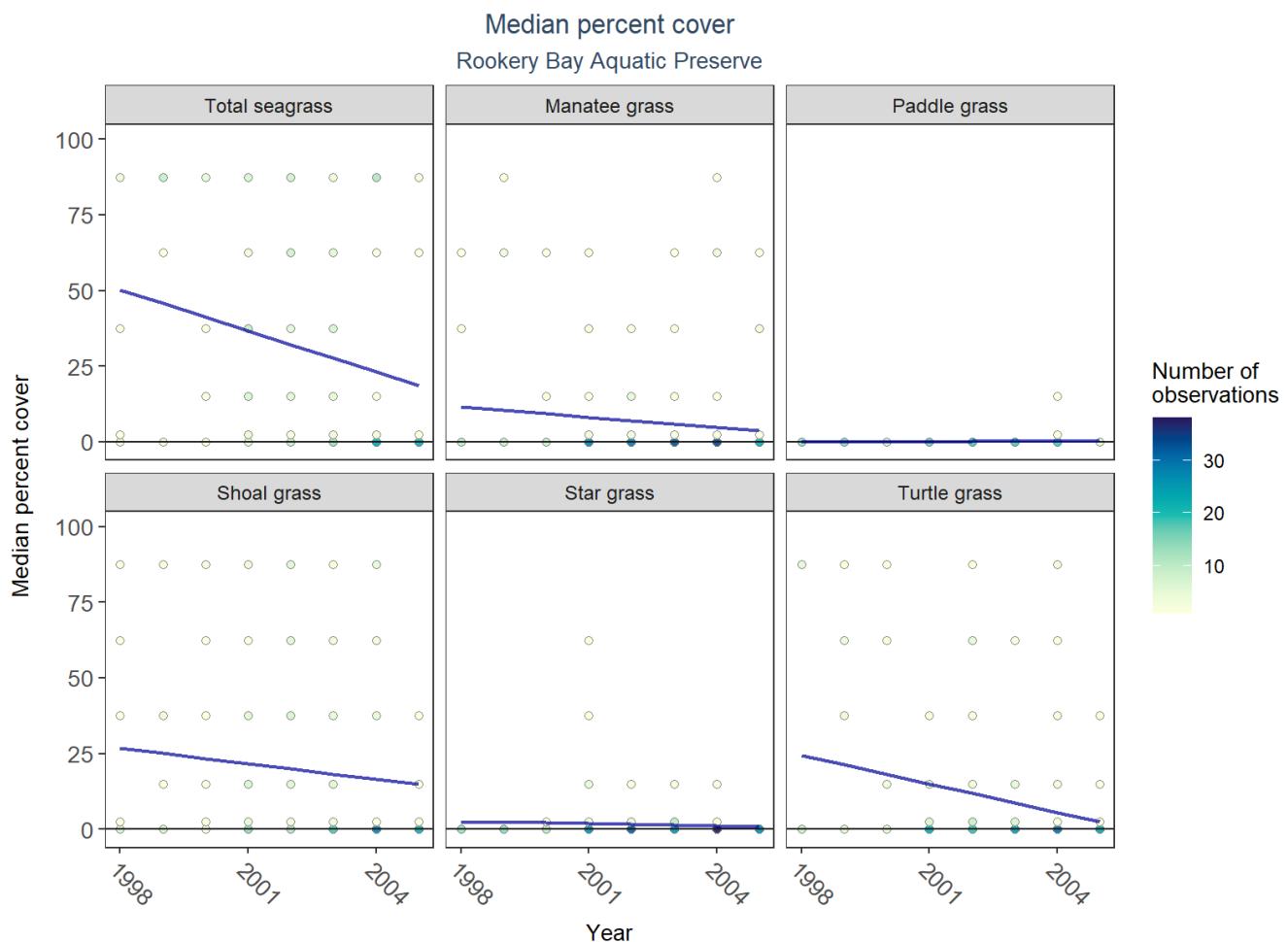


Figure 42: Scatter plots of median percent cover of submerged aquatic vegetation over time by group. Plots for time series that included five or more years of observations show the estimated trend as a blue line.

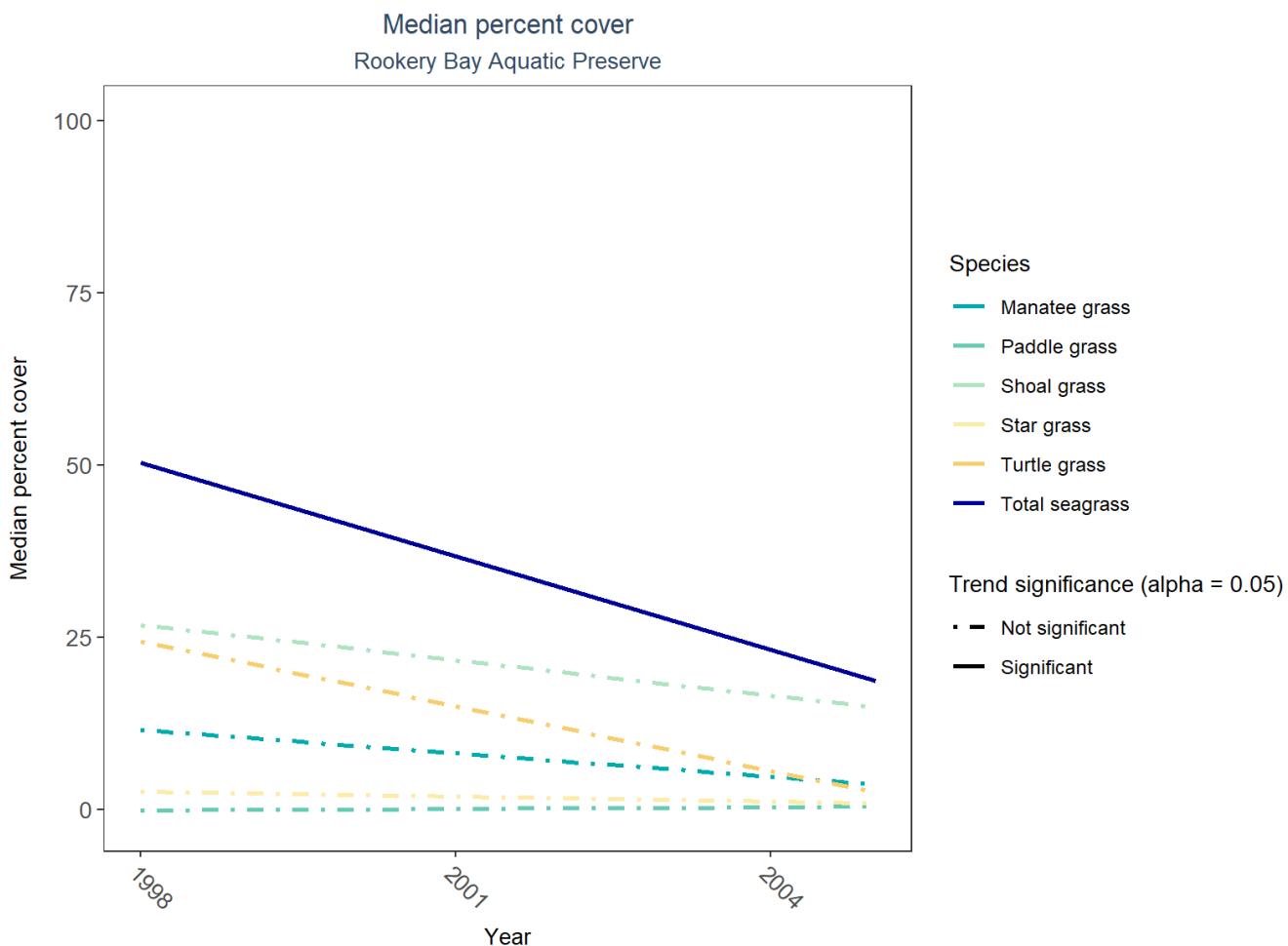


Figure 43: Trends in median percent cover for various seagrass species in Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve - simplified

Table 40: Percent Cover Trend Analysis for Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve

Common Name	Trend Significance (0.05)	Period of Record	LME-Intercept	LME-Slope	p
Shoal grass	No significant trend	1998 - 2005	33.6287758	-1.7091102	0.2545788
Paddle grass	No significant trend	1998 - 2005	-0.4445706	0.0784256	0.3562670
Star grass	No significant trend	1998 - 2005	3.5304880	-0.2323272	0.4437146
Manatee grass	No significant trend	1998 - 2005	16.1047779	-1.1343834	0.4001007
Turtle grass	No significant trend	1998 - 2005	36.9898331	-3.1381234	0.06666781
Total seagrass	Significantly decreasing trend	1998 - 2005	68.3695374	-4.5209769	0.0166179

An annual decrease in percent cover was observed for total seagrass (-4.5%). Manatee grass, paddle grass, shoal grass, star grass, and turtle grass showed no detectable change in percent cover.

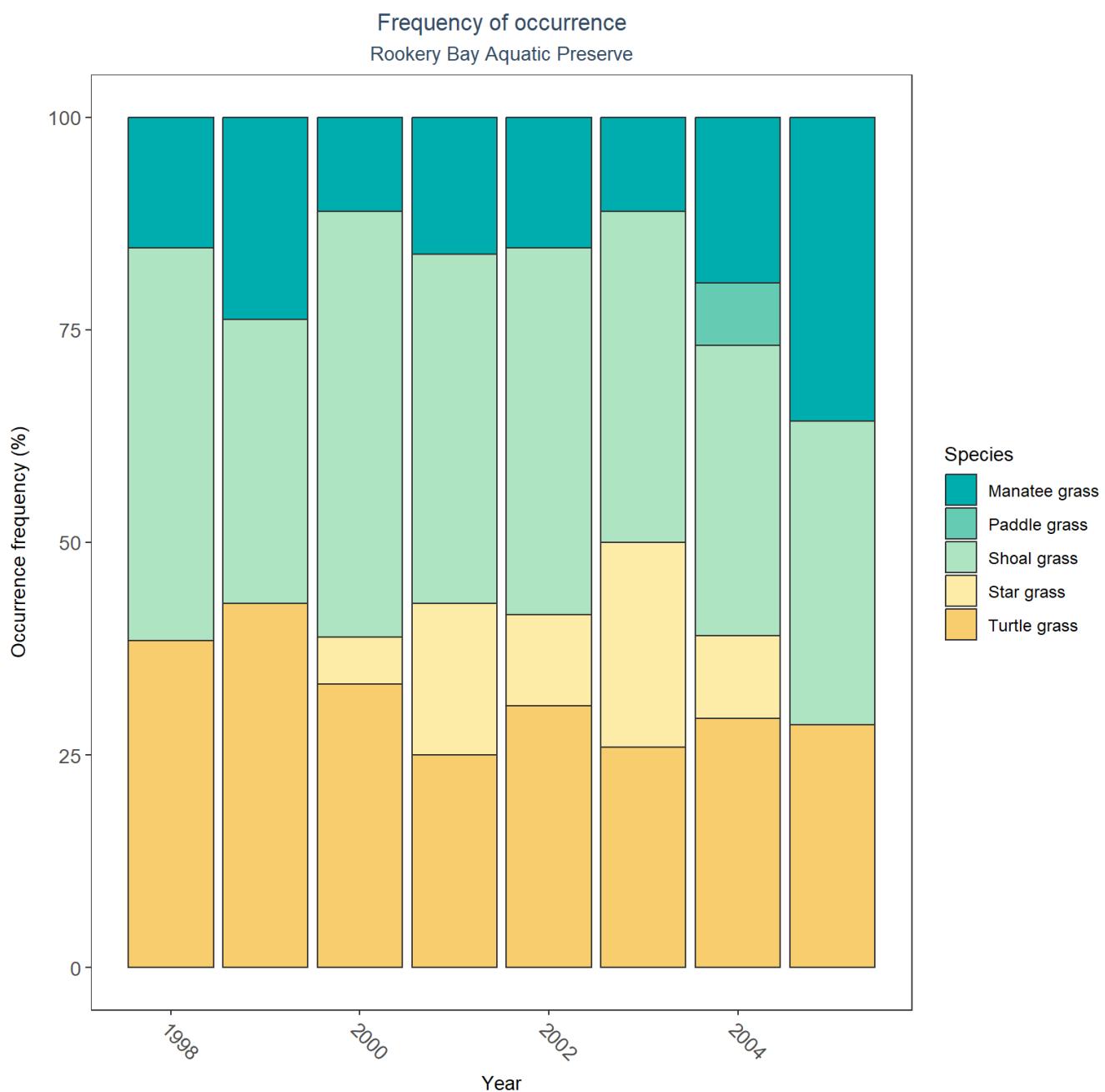


Figure 44: Frequency of occurrence for various seagrass species in Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve

Nekton

The data file used is: **All_NEKTON_Parameters-2025-Mar-06.txt**

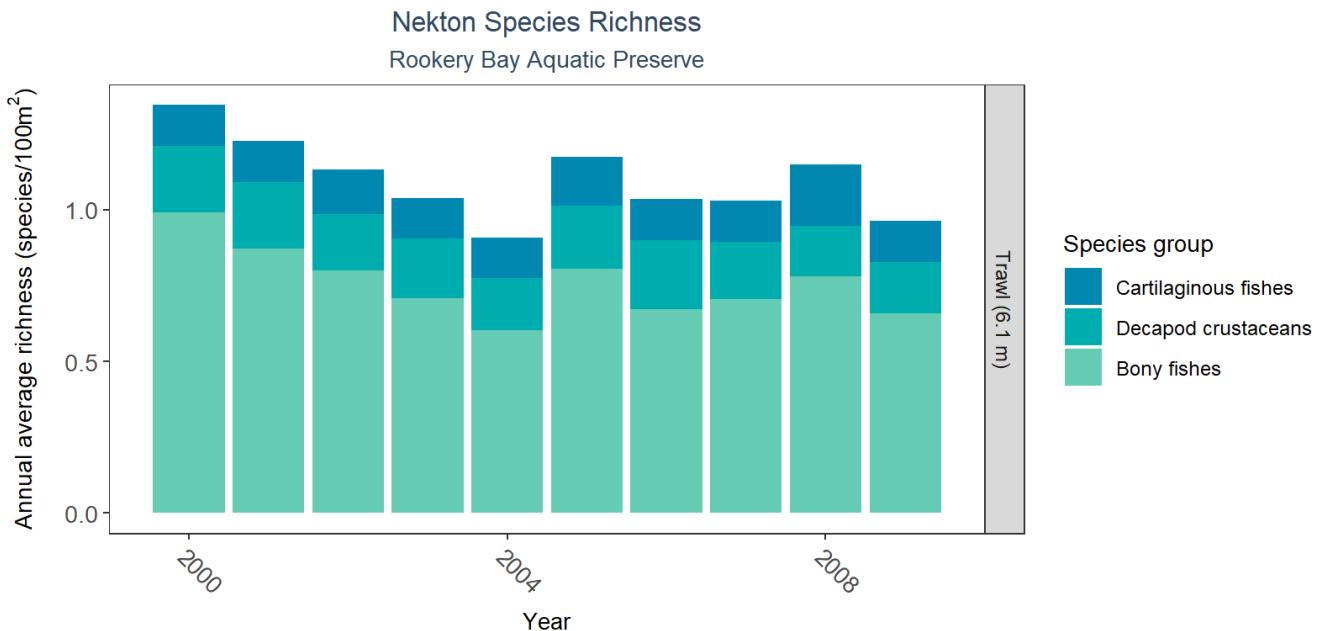


Figure 45: Bar graph(s) of annual average nekton richness over time for species groups occurring in at least 1% of samples. The bar colors represent species groups including bony fishes, cartilaginous fishes, decapod crustaceans (e.g., shrimps, crabs, and lobsters), and cephalopods (e.g., squid). Gear types and sizes are indicated in the panel label.

Table 41: Nekton Species Richness

Gear Type	Sample Count	Number of Years	Period of Record	Median N of Taxa	Mean N of Taxa
Trawl (6.1)	1052	10	2000 - 2009	0.27	0.48

The median annual number of taxa was 0.27 based on 1,052 observations collected by 6.1-meter trawl between 2000 and 2009.

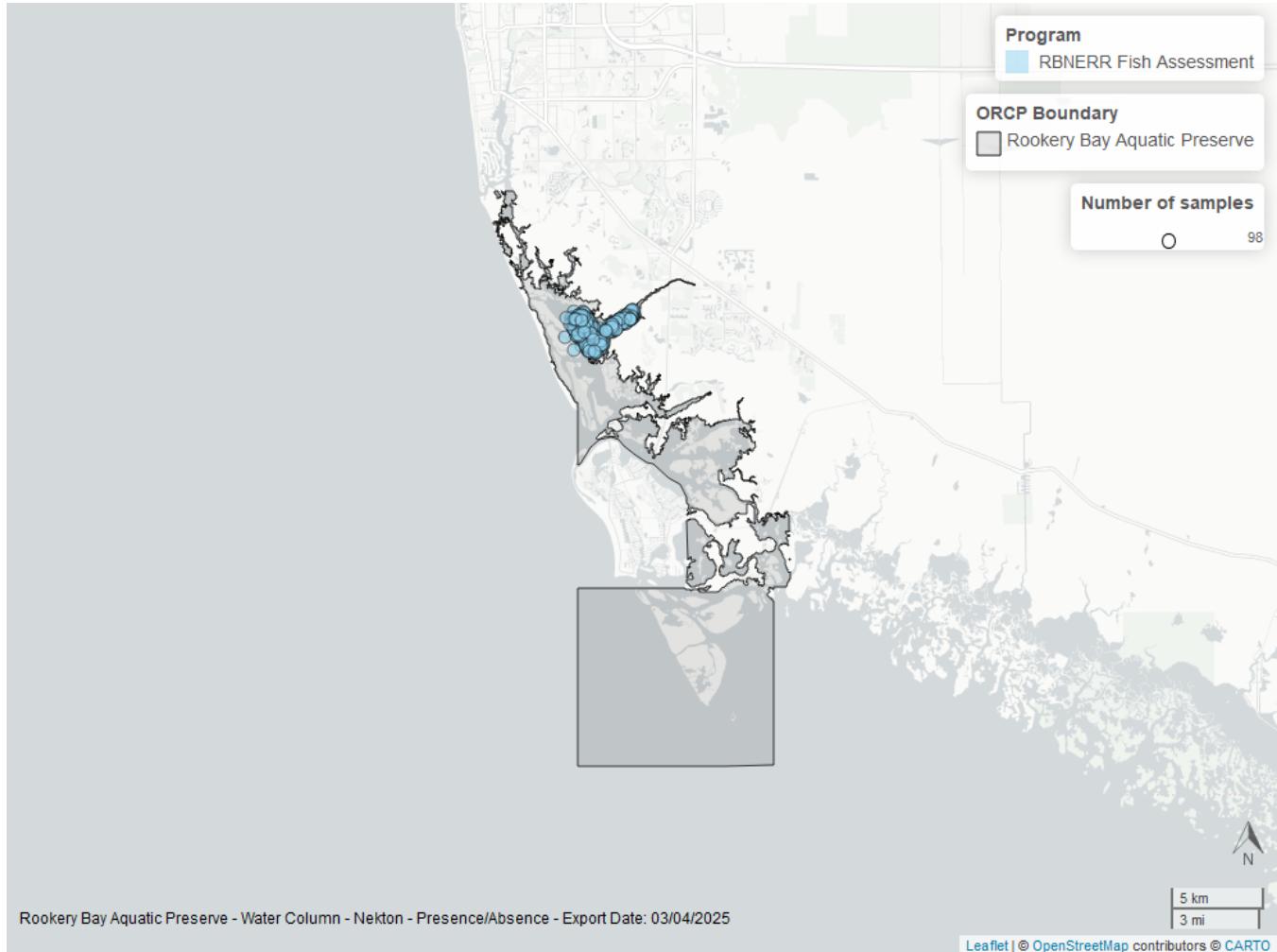


Figure 46: Map showing location of nekton sampling locations within the boundaries of *Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve*. The bubble size on the maps above reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

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