

# Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve

## SEACAR Habitat Analyses

Last compiled on 08 January, 2025

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## Funding & Acknowledgements

The data used in this analysis is from the Export Standardized Tables in the SEACAR Data Discovery Interface (DDI). Documents and information available through the SEACAR DDI are owned by the data provider(s) and users are expected to provide appropriate credit following accepted citation formats. Users are encouraged to access data to maximize utilization of gained knowledge, reducing redundant research and facilitating partnerships and scientific innovation.

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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	Yes	Optional parameter not collected
SWMP	-2	No	Missing data
SWMP	-3	No	Data rejected due to QA/QC
SWMP	-4	No	Outside low sensor range
SWMP	-5	No	Outside high sensor range
SWMP	0	Yes	Passed initial QA/QC checks
SWMP	1	No	Suspect data
SWMP	2	Yes	Reserved for future use
SWMP	3	Yes	Calculated data: non-vented depth/level sensor correction for changes in barometric pressure
SWMP	4	Yes	Historical: Pre-auto QA/QC
SWMP	5	Yes	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-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Chlorophyll\_a\_uncorrected\_for\_pheophytin-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Colored\_dissolved\_organic\_matter\_CDOM-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Dissolved\_Oxygen-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Dissolved\_Oxygen\_Saturation-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_pH-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Salinity-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Secchi\_Depth-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Total\_Nitrogen-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Total\_Phosphorus-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Total\_Suspended\_Solids\_TSS-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Turbidity-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_Water\_Temperature-2024-Dec-08.txt*

# Chlorophyll a, Corrected for Pheophytin - Discrete Water Quality

## Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

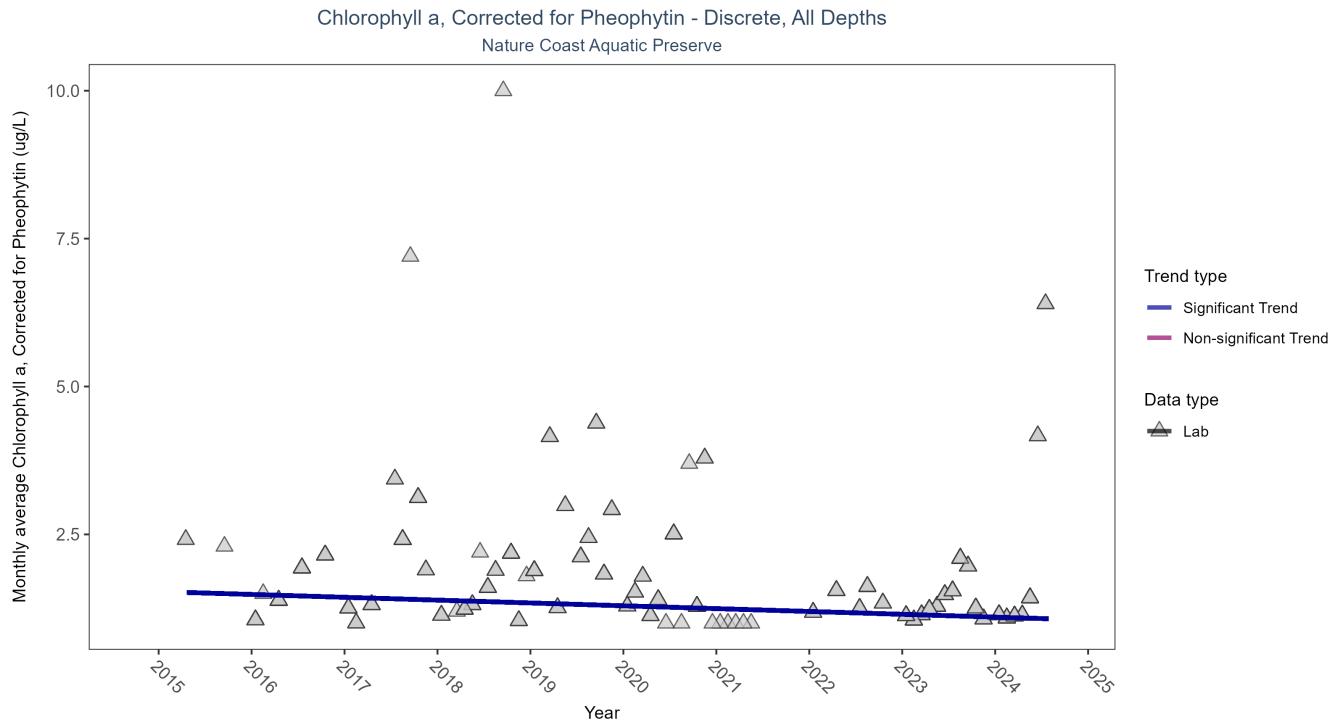


Figure 1: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Chlorophyll a, Corrected for Pheophytin - Discrete

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

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
All	2014	10	1	TRUE	-0.2277	0.0172	-0.0479	1.533	9.3108	0.5932	-1

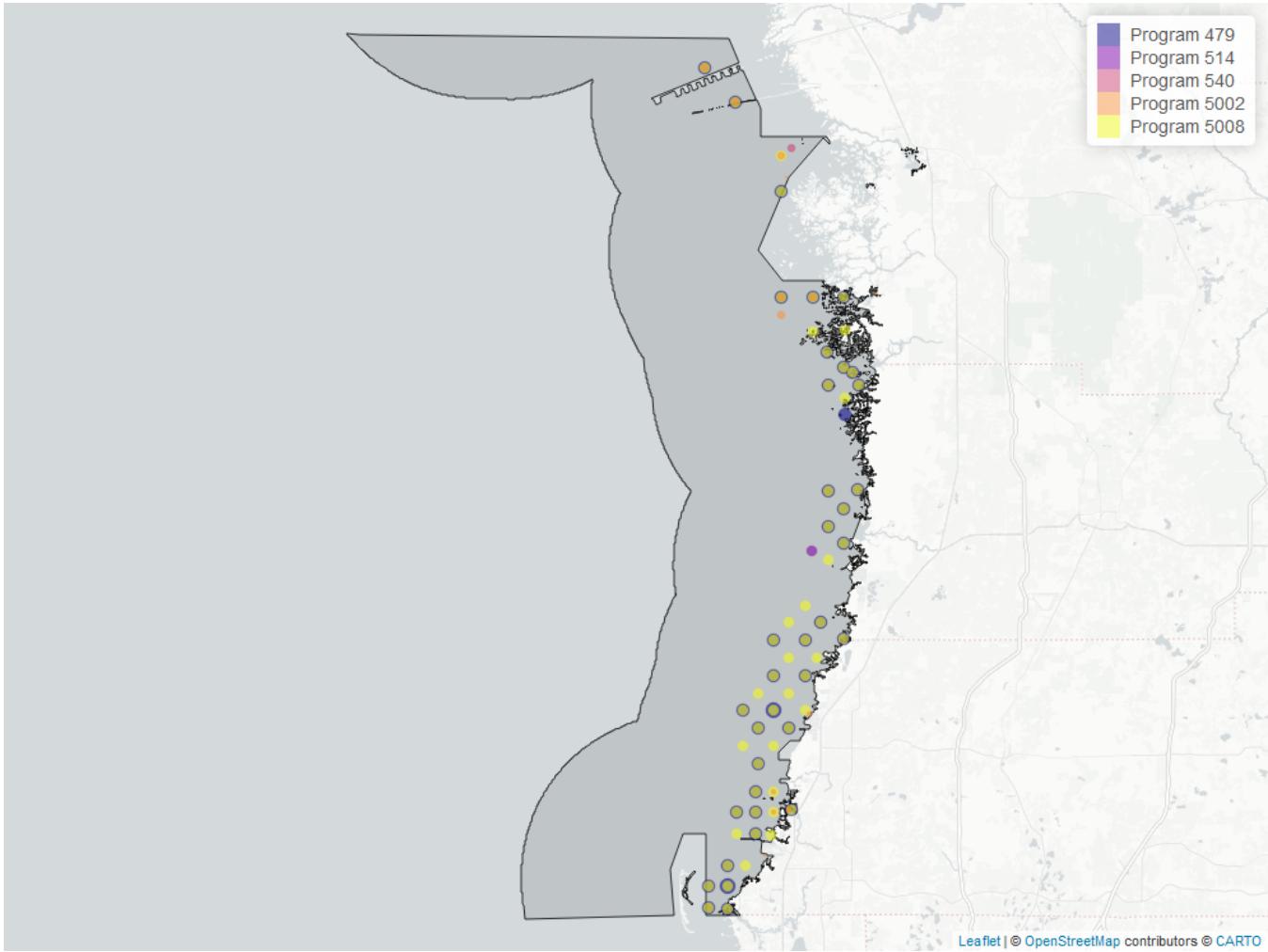


Figure 2: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for Chlorophyll a, Corrected for Pheophytin. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

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

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	1045	2016	2023
5008	906	2023	2024
5002	76	2015	2024
514	17	2020	2024
540	7	2017	2019

#### Program names:

479 - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program<sup>2</sup>

540 - Shellfish Harvest Area Classification Program<sup>3</sup>

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>

5008 - Project COAST (Coastal Assessment Team) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region<sup>5</sup>

# Chlorophyll a, Uncorrected for Pheophytin - Discrete Water Quality

## Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

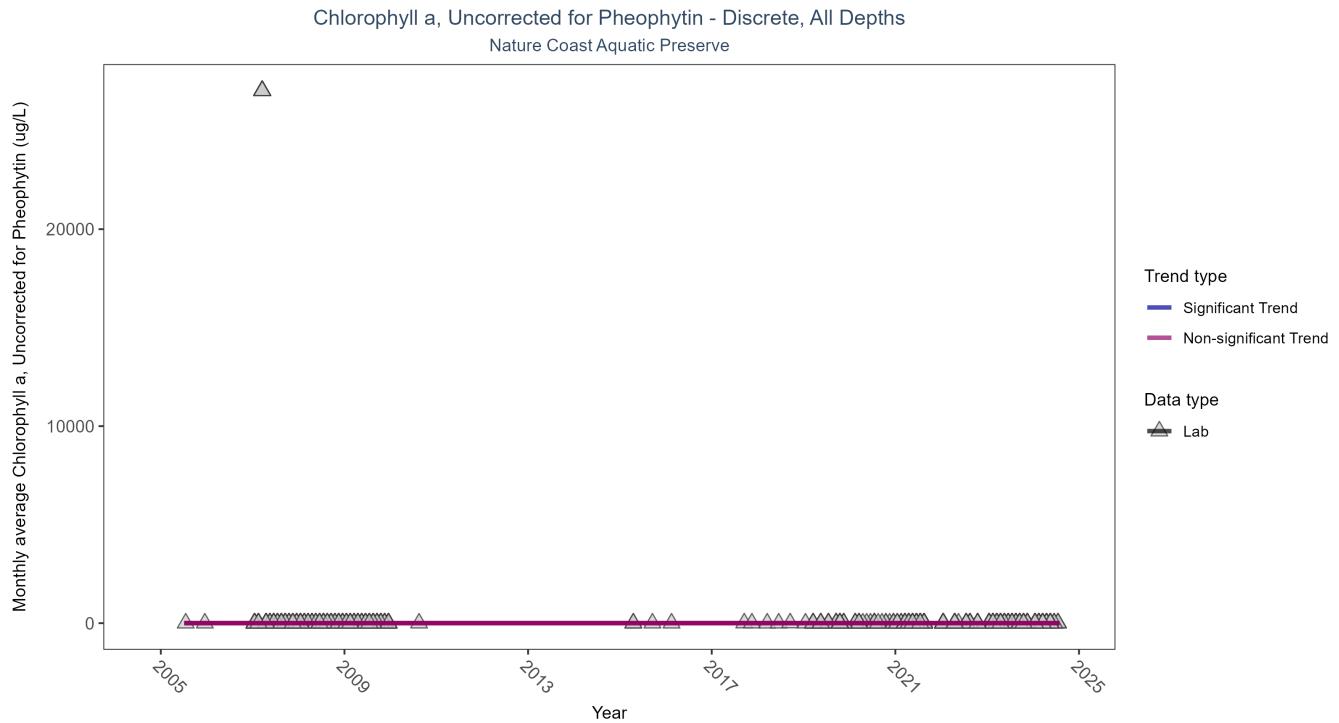


Figure 3: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Chlorophyll a, Uncorrected for Pheophytin - Discrete

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

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
All	3084	15	1	TRUE	-0.0027	0.8645	0.0017	1.2257	8.586	0.66	0

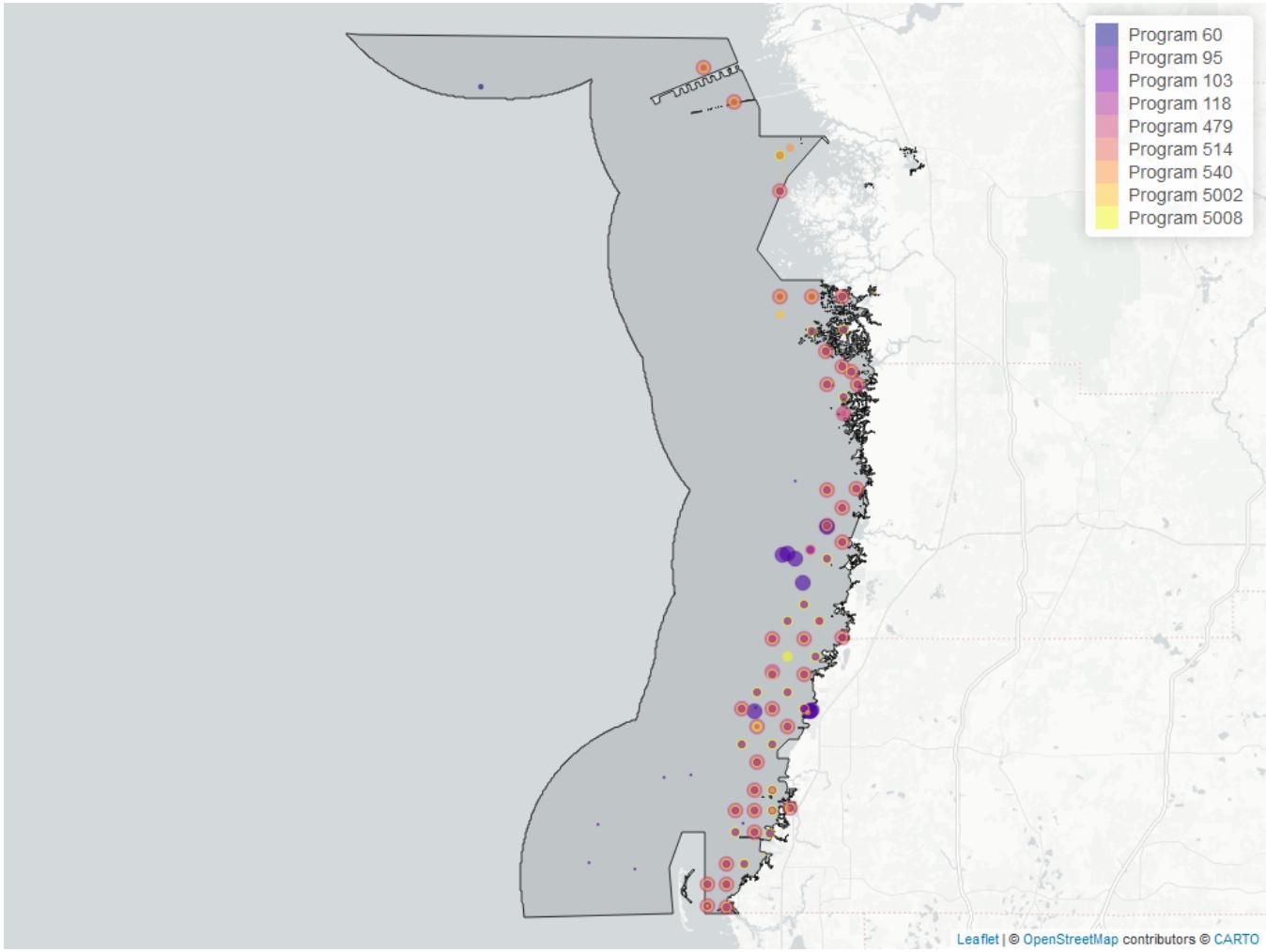


Figure 4: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for Chlorophyll a, Uncorrected for Pheophytin. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

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

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	1494	2007	2022
5008	911	2021	2024
103	586	2005	2021
5002	78	2015	2024
514	17	2020	2024
95	12	2003	2016
540	8	2017	2019
60	3	2015	2015
118	2	2005	2010

#### Program names:

60 - Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) - Gulf of Mexico Fall & Summer Shrimp/Groundfish Survey<sup>6</sup>

95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network<sup>7</sup>

- 103 - EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX<sup>8</sup>  
 118 - National Aquatic Resource Surveys, National Coastal Condition Assessment<sup>9</sup>  
 479 - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>  
 514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program<sup>2</sup>  
 540 - Shellfish Harvest Area Classification Program<sup>3</sup>  
 5002 - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>  
 5008 - Project COAST (Coastal Assessment Team) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region<sup>5</sup>

## Colored Dissolved Organic Matter - Discrete Water Quality Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

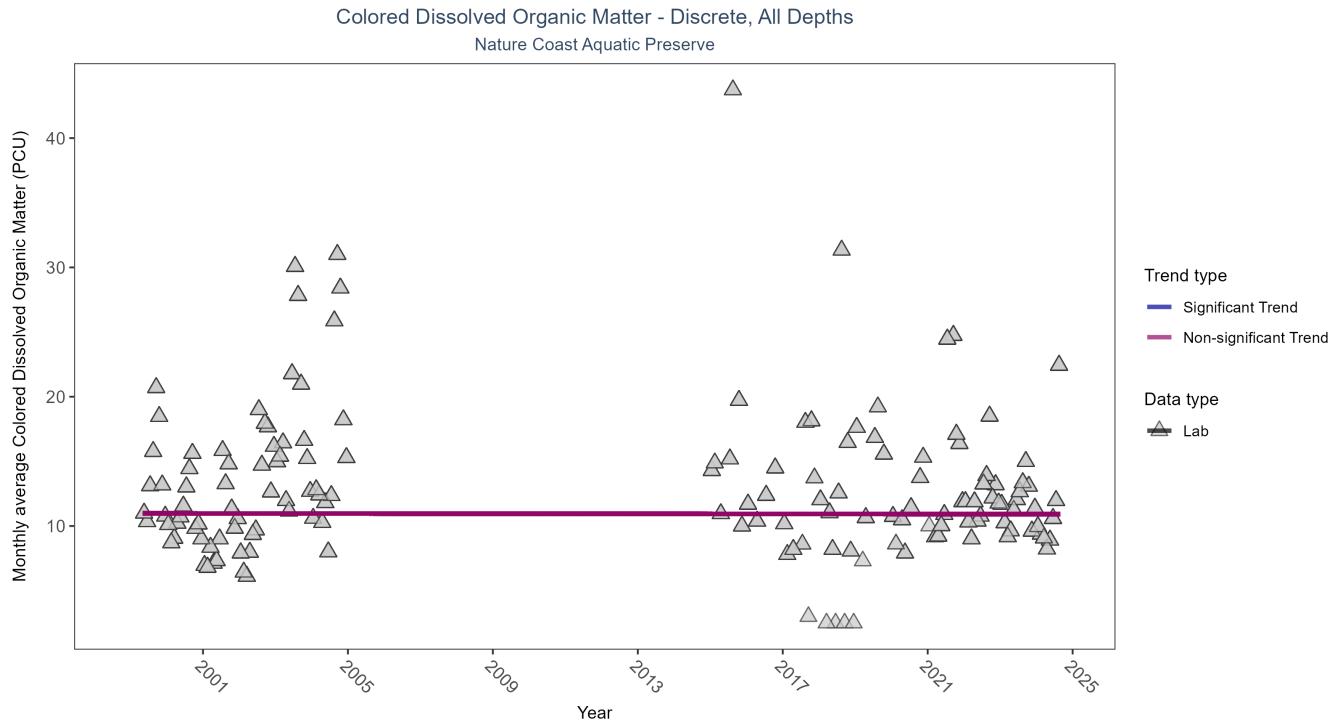


Figure 5: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Colored Dissolved Organic Matter - Discrete

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

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
All	5771	16	10.185	TRUE	0.0052	0.986	-0.0023	10.9757	2.8859	0.9921	0

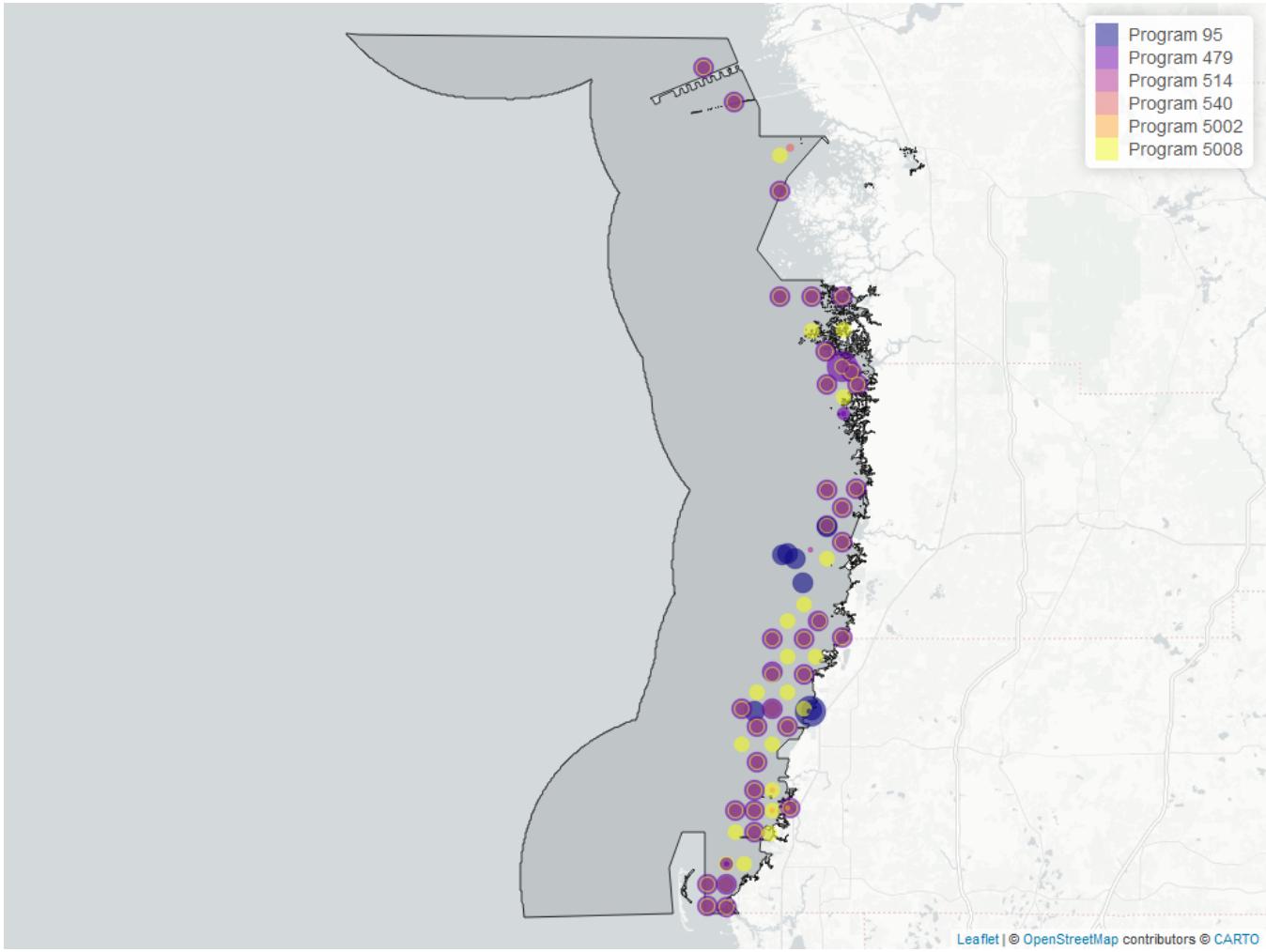


Figure 6: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for Colored Dissolved Organic Matter. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 11: Programs contributing data for Colored Dissolved Organic Matter

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	3541	1999	2023
5008	2243	2021	2024
5002	12	2024	2024
540	7	2017	2019
514	6	2020	2021

#### Program names:

479 - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program<sup>2</sup>

540 - Shellfish Harvest Area Classification Program<sup>3</sup>

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>

5008 - Project COAST (Coastal Assessment Team) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region<sup>5</sup>

## Dissolved Oxygen - Discrete Water Quality

### Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

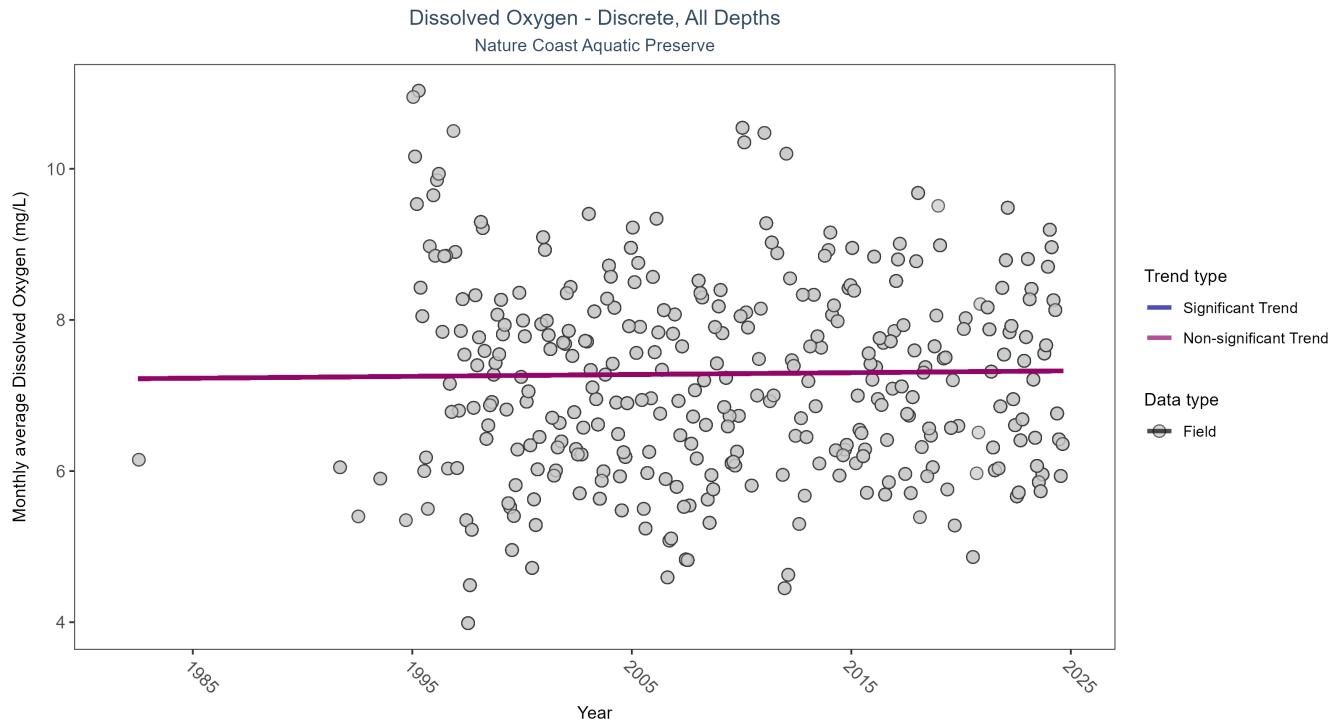


Figure 7: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Dissolved Oxygen - Discrete

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

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
All	9728	35	7.15	TRUE	0.0197	0.6156	0.0024	7.2215	9.2937	0.5948	0

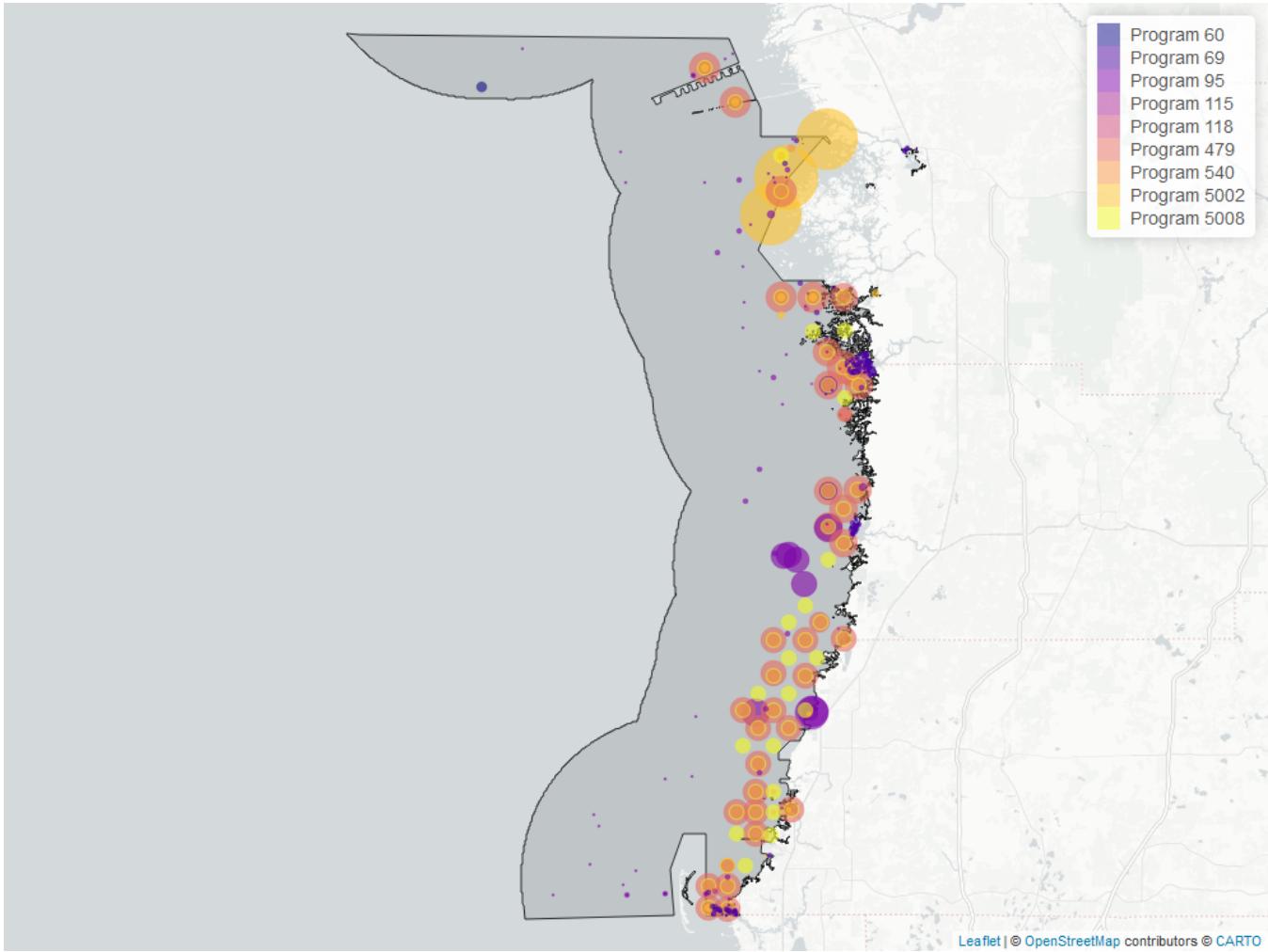


Figure 8: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for Dissolved Oxygen. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 13: Programs contributing data for Dissolved Oxygen

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	4979	1996	2023
5008	2240	2021	2024
5002	1816	1995	2024
69	428	2003	2009
95	225	1982	2018
60	15	2015	2015
115	12	1991	1994
540	7	2017	2019
118	6	2005	2021

#### Program names:

- 60 - Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) - Gulf of Mexico Fall & Summer Shrimp/Groundfish Survey<sup>6</sup>
- 69 - Fisheries-Independent Monitoring (FIM) Program<sup>10</sup>
- 95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network<sup>7</sup>

115 - Environmental Monitoring Assessment Program<sup>11</sup>

118 - National Aquatic Resource Surveys, National Coastal Condition Assessment<sup>9</sup>

479 - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

540 - Shellfish Harvest Area Classification Program<sup>3</sup>

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>

5008 - Project COAST (Coastal Assessment Team) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region<sup>5</sup>

## pH - Discrete Water Quality

### Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

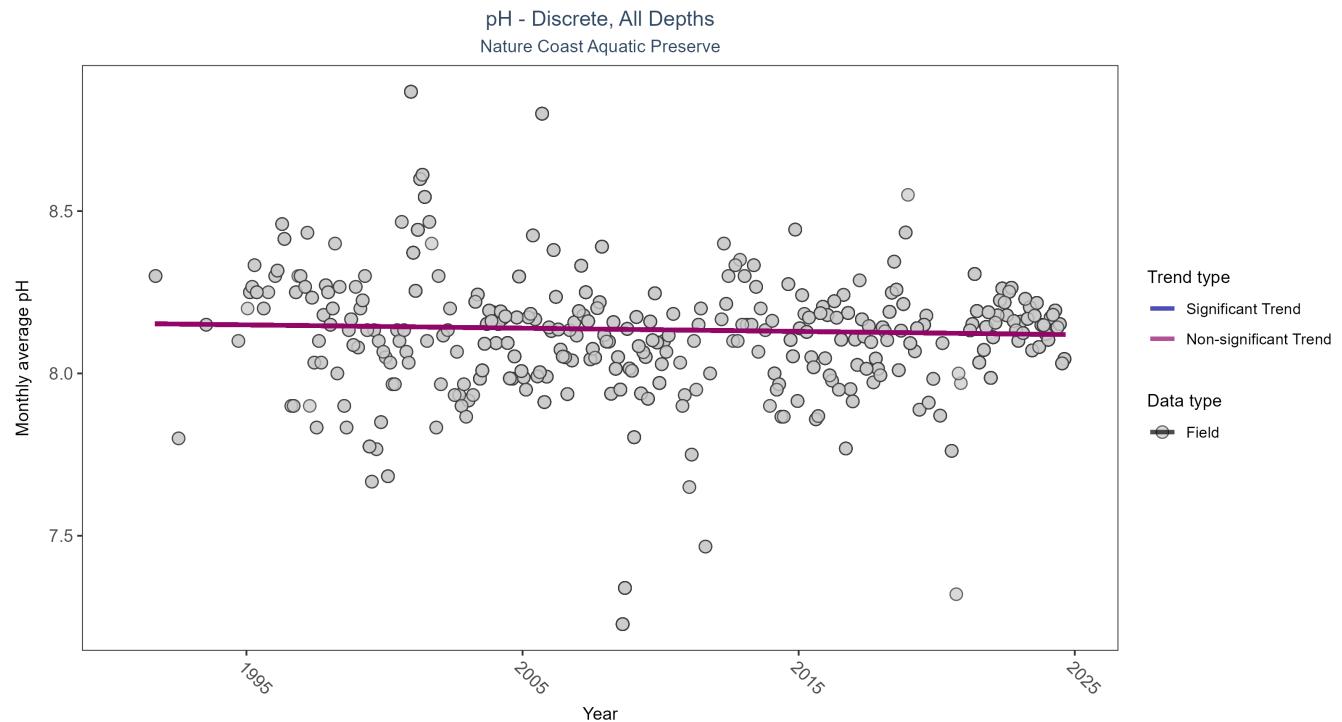


Figure 9: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for pH - Discrete

Table 14: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for pH

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
All	7160	34	8.15	TRUE	-0.039	0.3212	-0.001	8.1536	18.7198	0.0663	0

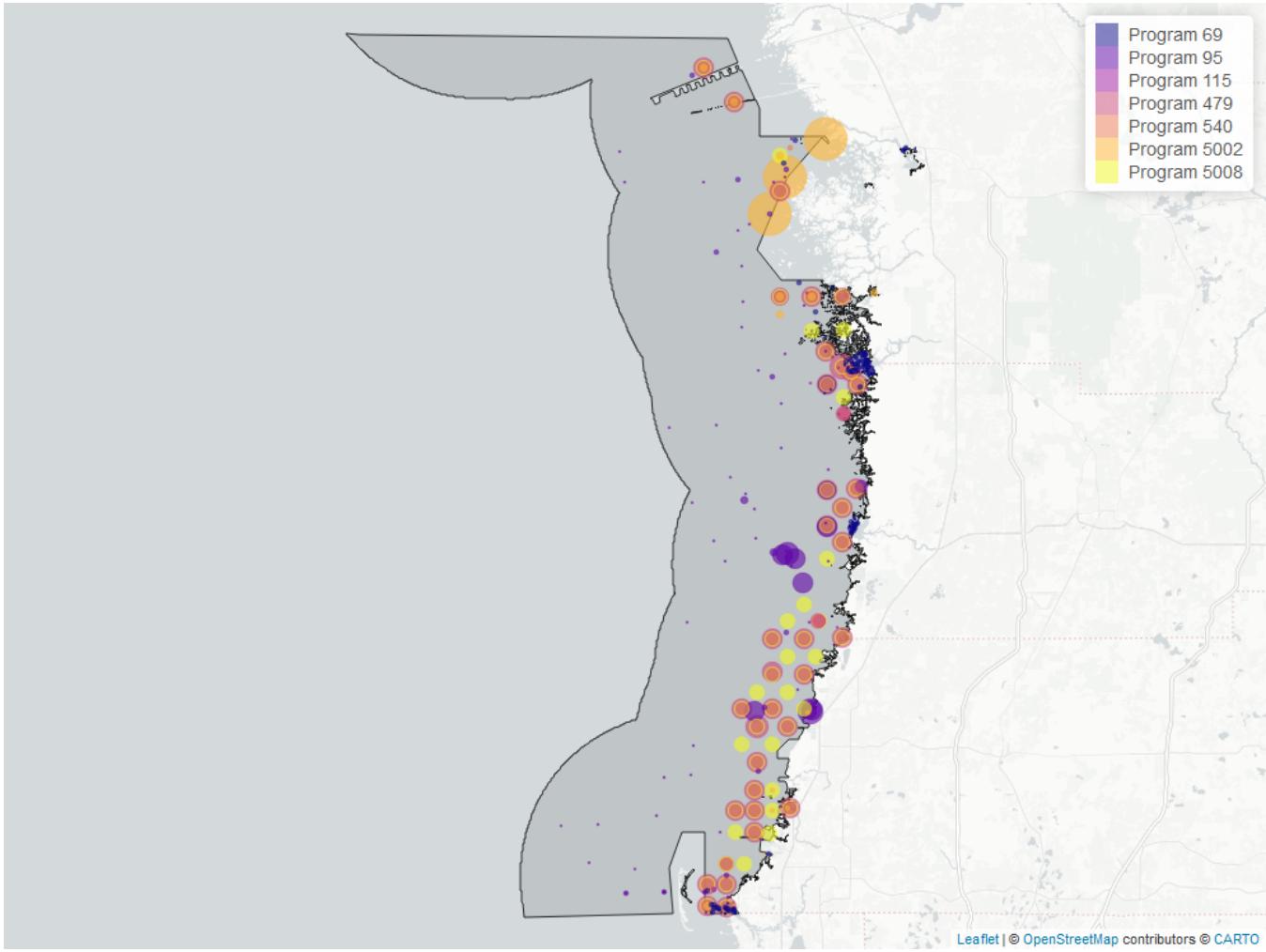


Figure 10: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for pH. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 15: Programs contributing data for pH

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	3261	2000	2023
5008	2240	2021	2024
5002	947	1995	2024
69	428	2003	2009
95	276	2003	2018
115	12	1991	1994
540	3	2017	2018

#### Program names:

69 - Fisheries-Independent Monitoring (FIM) Program<sup>10</sup>

95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network<sup>7</sup>

115 - Environmental Monitoring Assessment Program<sup>11</sup>

479 - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

540 - Shellfish Harvest Area Classification Program<sup>3</sup>

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>

5008 - Project COAST (Coastal Assessment Team) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region<sup>5</sup>

## Salinity - Discrete Water Quality

### Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

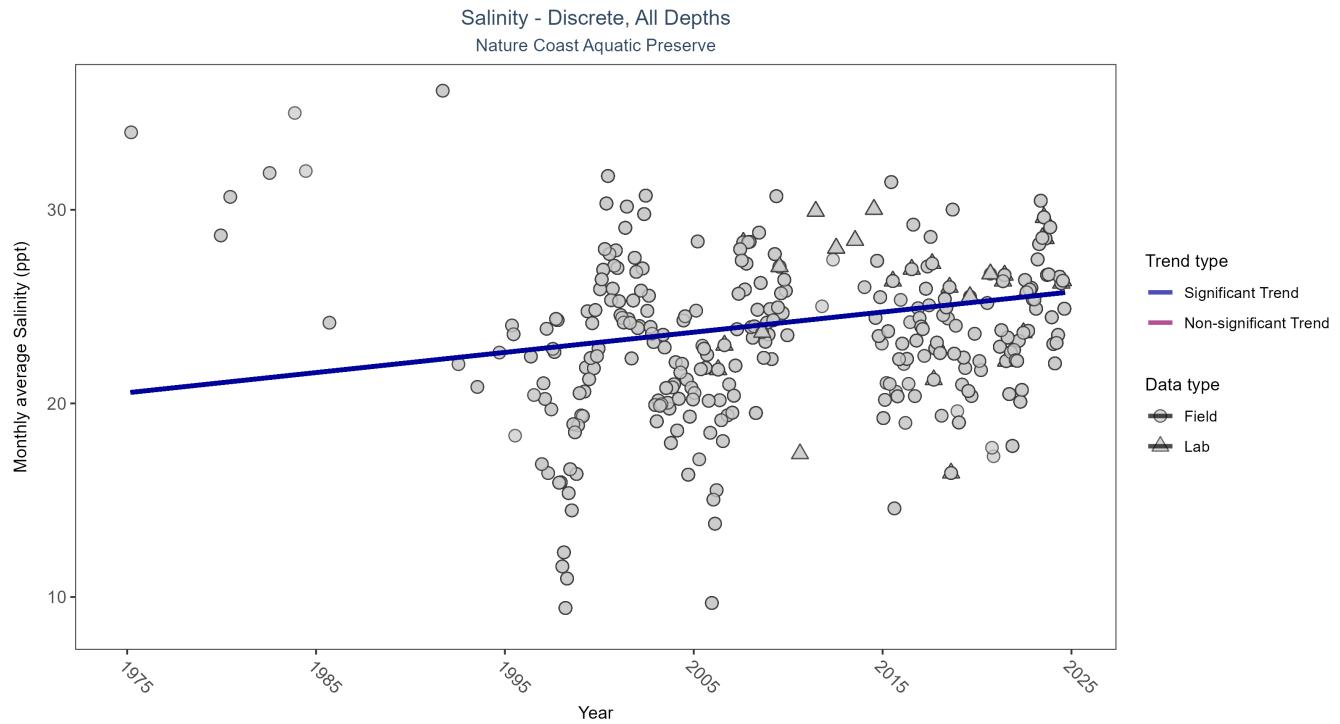


Figure 11: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Salinity - Discrete

Table 16: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Salinity

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
All	10763	41	24.23	TRUE	0.1626	0	0.1042	20.5496	6.4638	0.8407	1

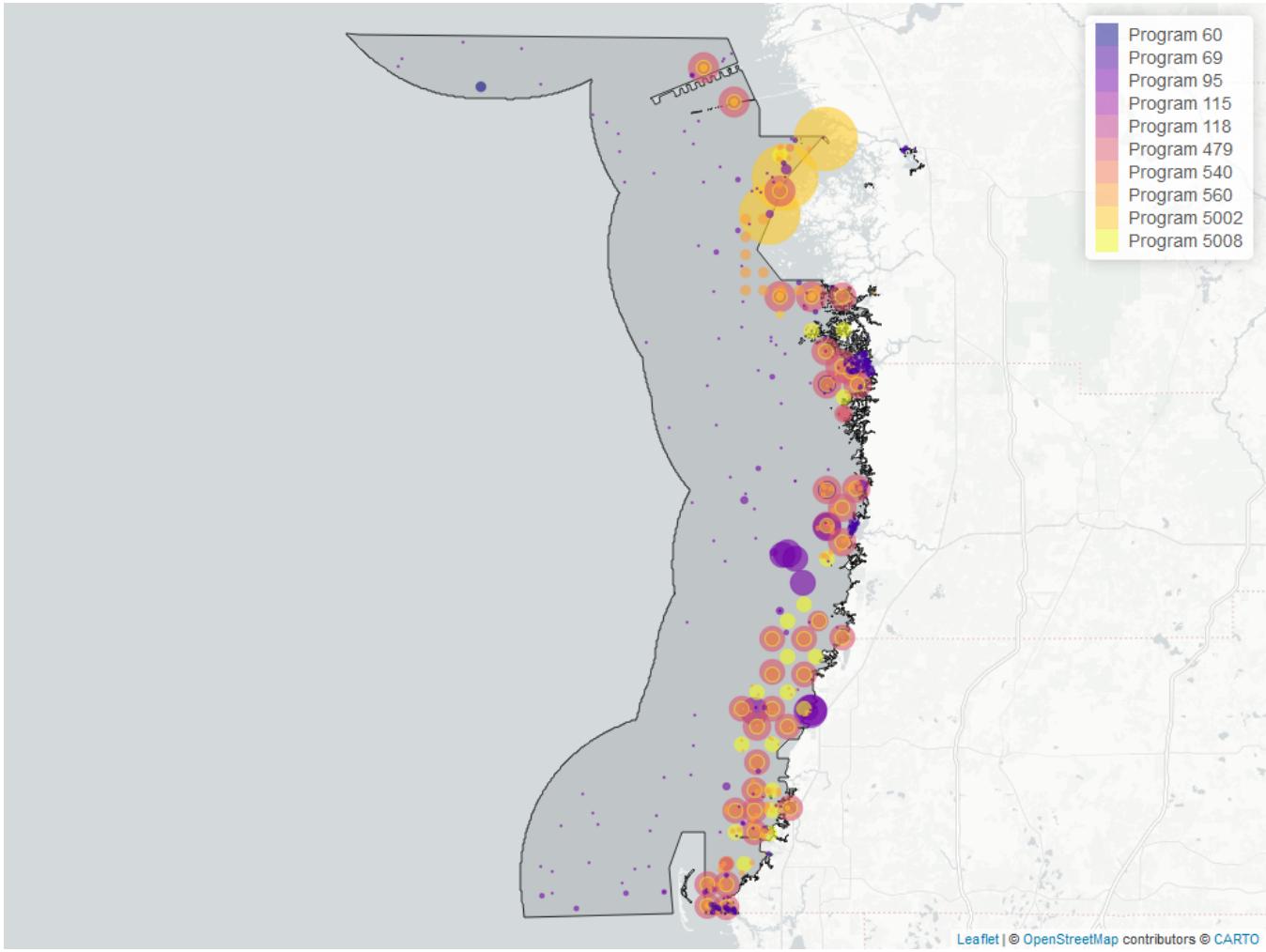


Figure 12: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for Salinity. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 17: Programs contributing data for Salinity

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	5008	1996	2023
5008	2351	2021	2024
5002	1963	1995	2024
560	580	2006	2024
69	428	2003	2009
95	403	1975	2018
60	15	2015	2015
115	12	1991	1994
540	7	2017	2019
118	5	2021	2021

#### Program names:

60 - Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) - Gulf of Mexico Fall & Summer Shrimp/Groundfish Survey<sup>6</sup>

69 - Fisheries-Independent Monitoring (FIM) Program<sup>10</sup>

95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network<sup>7</sup>

115 - Environmental Monitoring Assessment Program<sup>11</sup>

118 - National Aquatic Resource Surveys, National Coastal Condition Assessment<sup>9</sup>

479 - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

540 - Shellfish Harvest Area Classification Program<sup>3</sup>

560 - Big Bend Seagrasses & Nature Coast Aquatic Preserves - Seagrass Monitoring<sup>12</sup>

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>

5008 - Project COAST (Coastal Assessment Team) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region<sup>5</sup>

## Secchi Depth - Discrete Water Quality

### Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

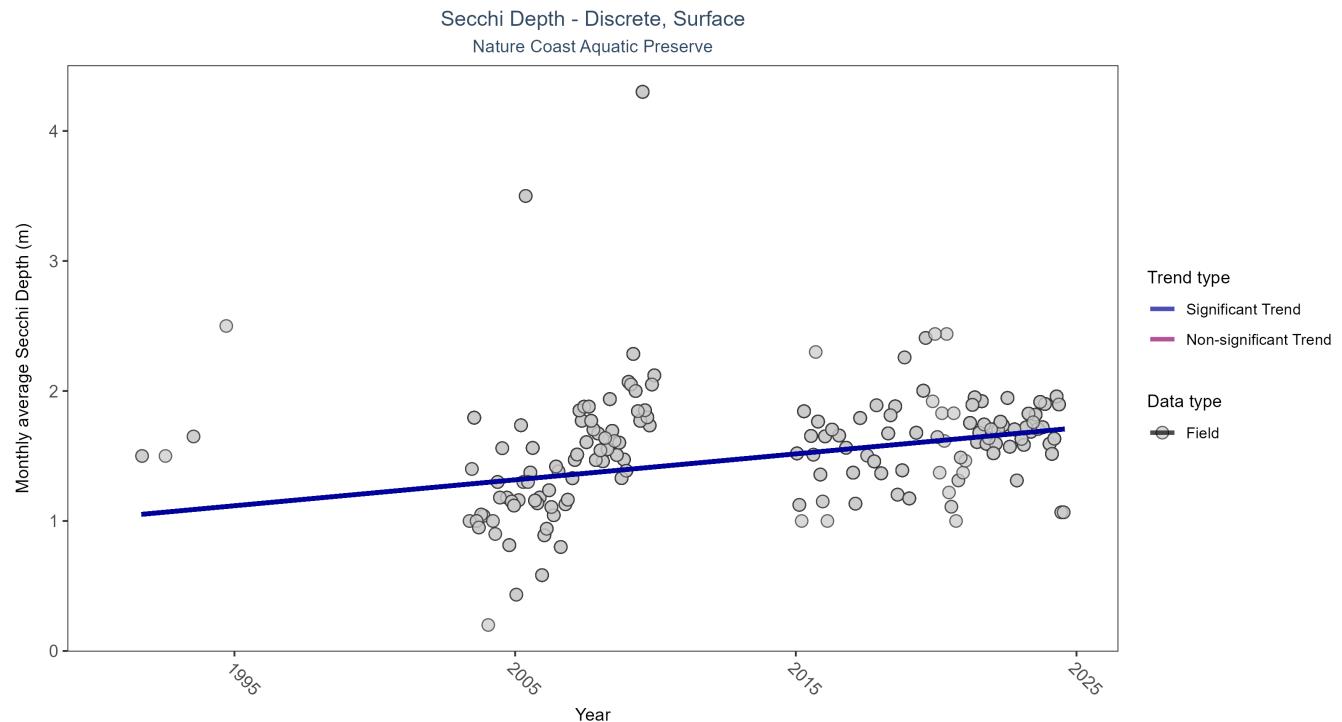


Figure 13: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Secchi Depth - Discrete

Table 18: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Secchi Depth

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
Surface	4374	21	1.59	TRUE	0.2993	0	0.02	1.0373	4.6677	0.9462	1

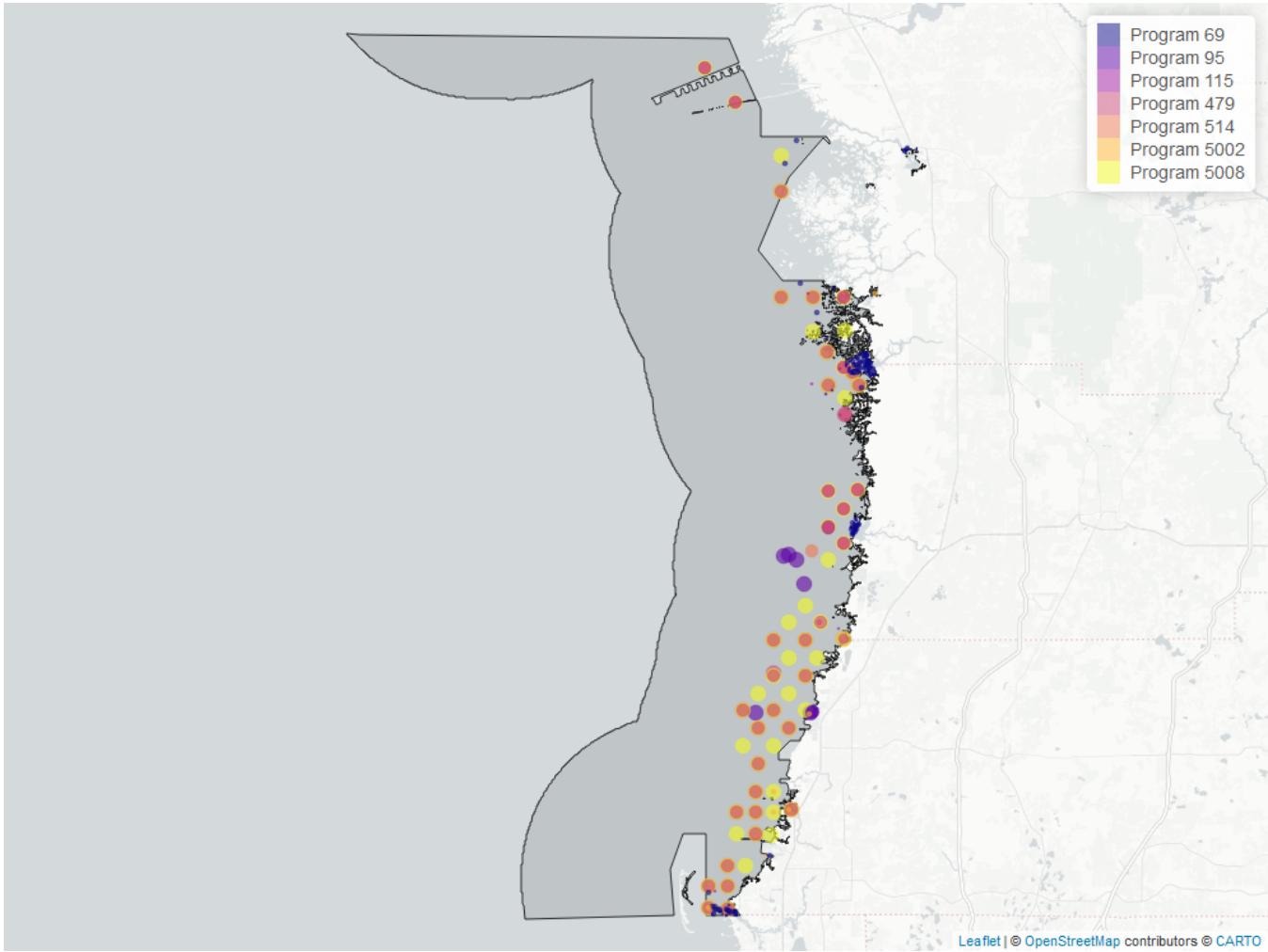


Figure 14: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for Secchi Depth. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 19: Programs contributing data for Secchi Depth

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	2146	2007	2023
5008	1746	2021	2024
69	428	2003	2009
5002	27	2015	2024
514	21	2019	2024
115	6	1991	1994

#### Program names:

69 - Fisheries-Independent Monitoring (FIM) Program<sup>10</sup>

115 - Environmental Monitoring Assessment Program<sup>11</sup>

479 - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program<sup>2</sup>

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>

5008 - Project COAST (Coastal Assessment Team) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region<sup>5</sup>

## Total Nitrogen - Discrete Water Quality

### 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 NO<sub>3</sub>O<sub>2</sub> 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

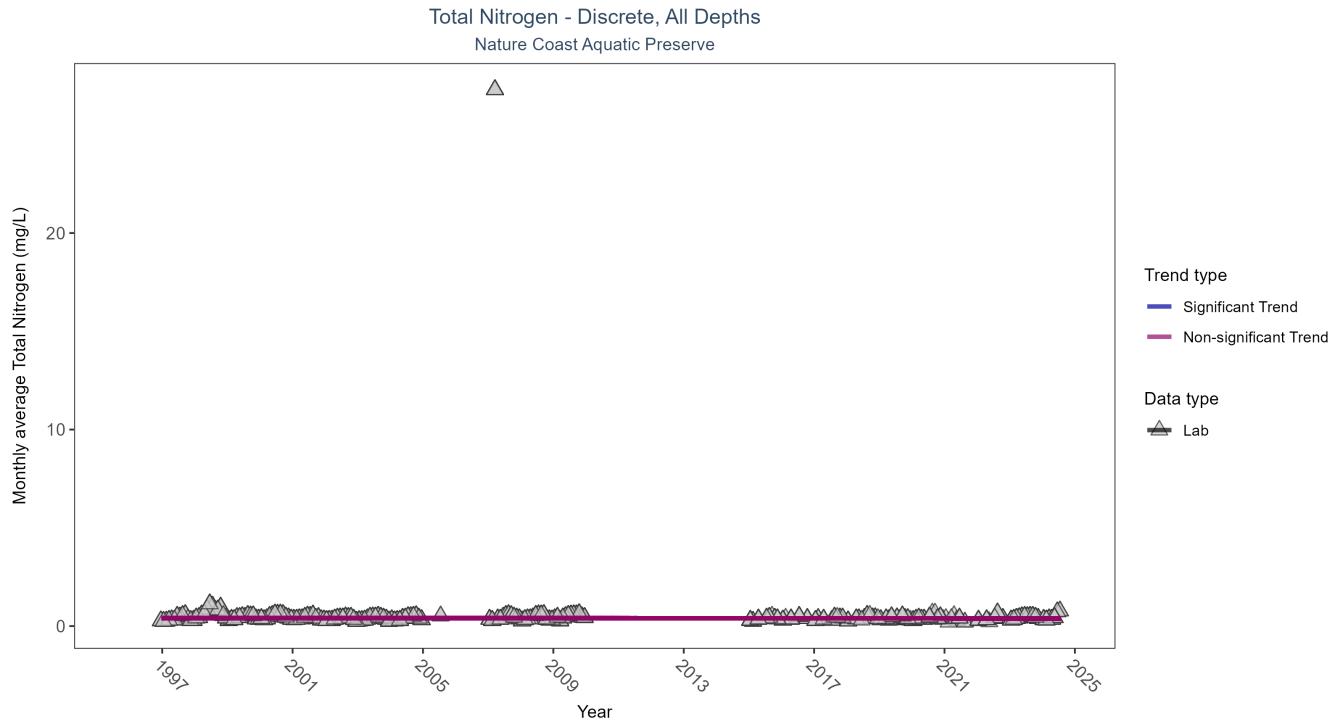


Figure 15: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Total Nitrogen - Discrete

Table 20: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Total Nitrogen

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
All	6213	23	0.39	TRUE	-0.0581	0.19	-0.0008	0.4102	10.0326	0.5275	0

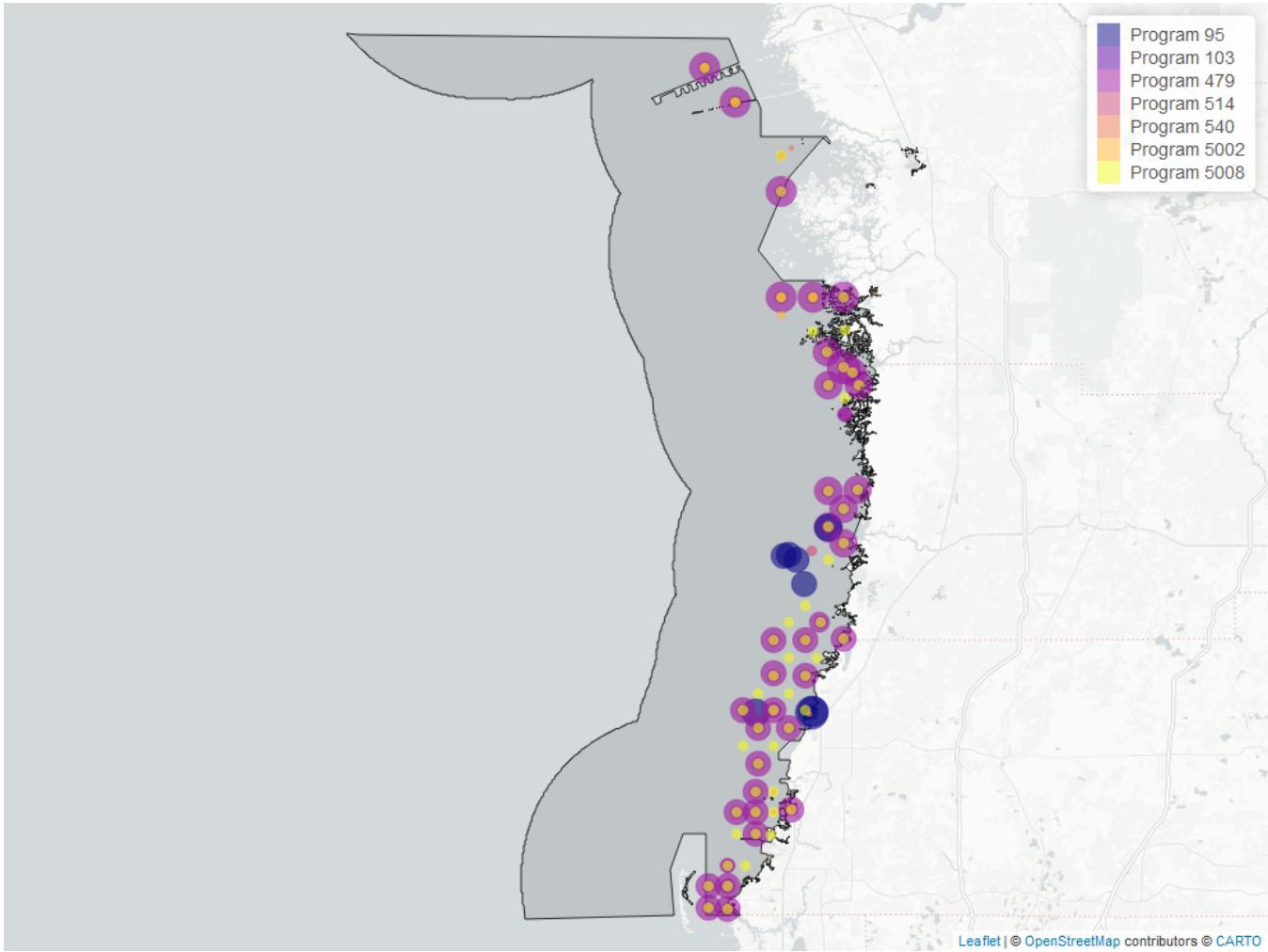


Figure 16: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for Total Nitrogen. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 21: Programs contributing data for Total Nitrogen

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	5237	1996	2023
5008	922	2021	2024
5002	73	2015	2024
514	20	2019	2021
540	6	2017	2019
103	2	2005	2005

#### Program names:

103 - EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX<sup>8</sup>

479 - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program<sup>2</sup>

540 - Shellfish Harvest Area Classification Program<sup>3</sup>

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>

5008 - Project COAST (Coastal Assessment Team) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region<sup>5</sup>

## Total Phosphorus - Discrete Water Quality

### Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

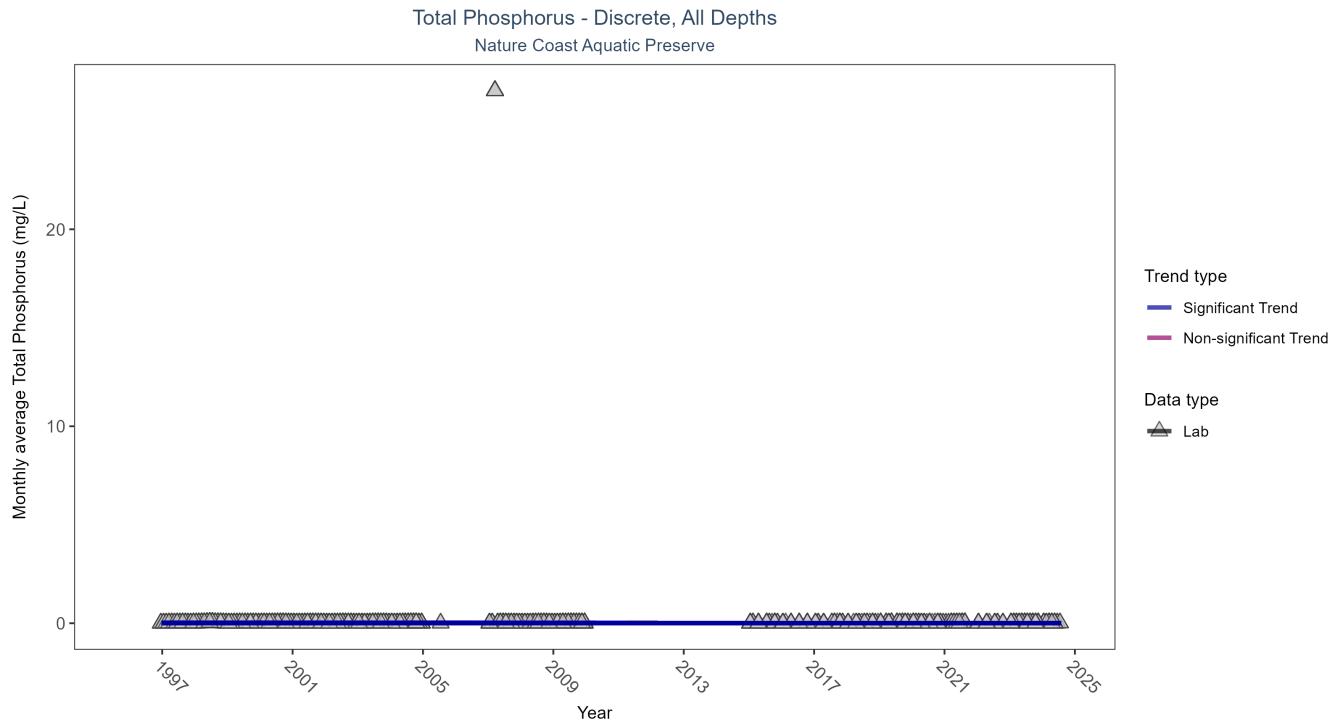


Figure 17: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Total Phosphorus - Discrete

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

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
All	6606	23	0.009	TRUE	-0.1609	0.0007	-0.0001	0.0118	11.1717	0.429	-1

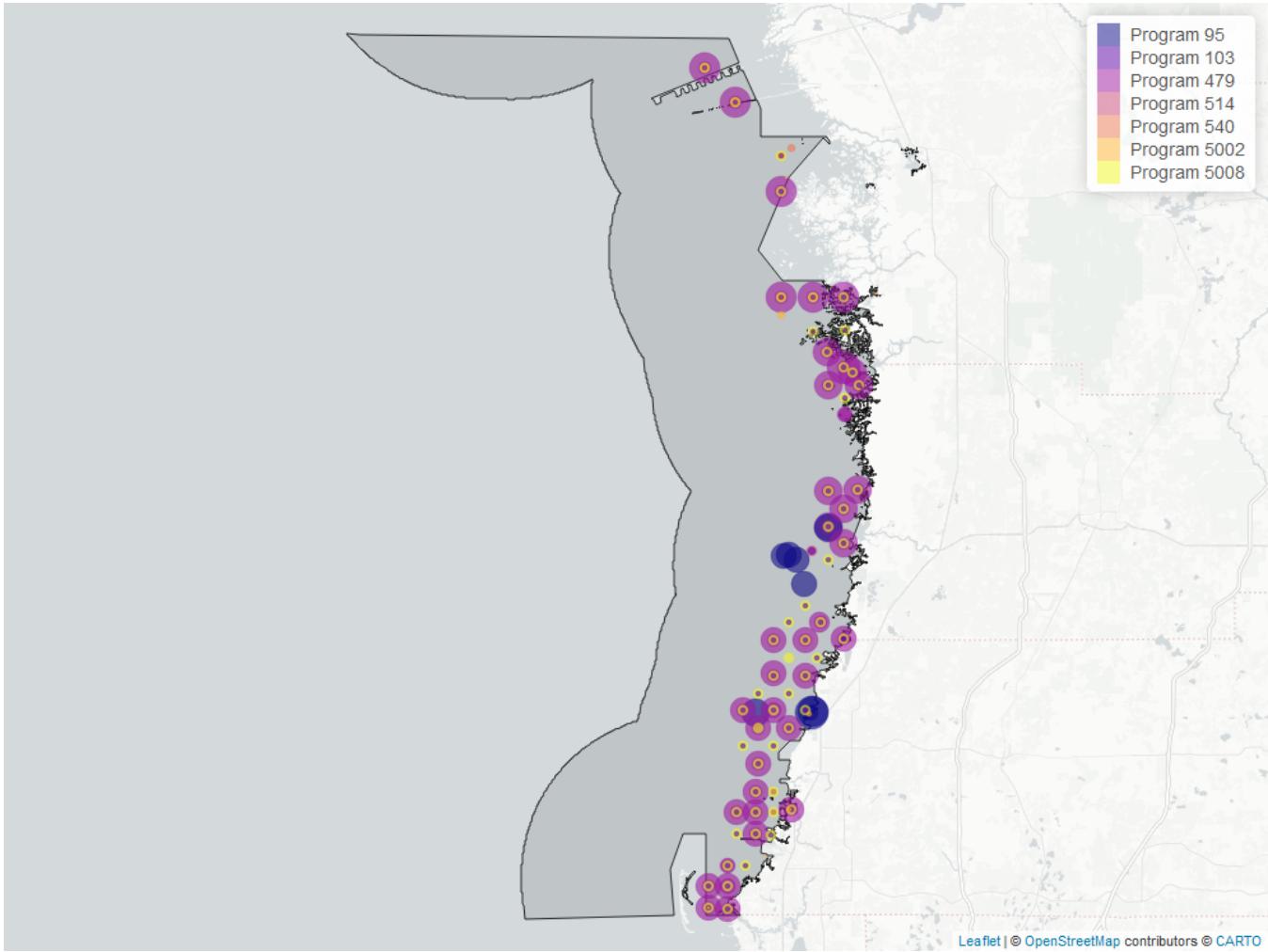


Figure 18: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for Total Phosphorus. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 23: Programs contributing data for Total Phosphorus

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	5239	1996	2023
5008	922	2021	2024
103	345	2005	2021
5002	74	2015	2024
514	20	2019	2021
540	7	2017	2019

#### Program names:

103 - EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX<sup>8</sup>

479 - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

514 - Florida LAKEWATCH Program<sup>2</sup>

540 - Shellfish Harvest Area Classification Program<sup>3</sup>

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>

5008 - Project COAST (Coastal Assessment Team) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region<sup>5</sup>

## Turbidity - Discrete Water Quality

### Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

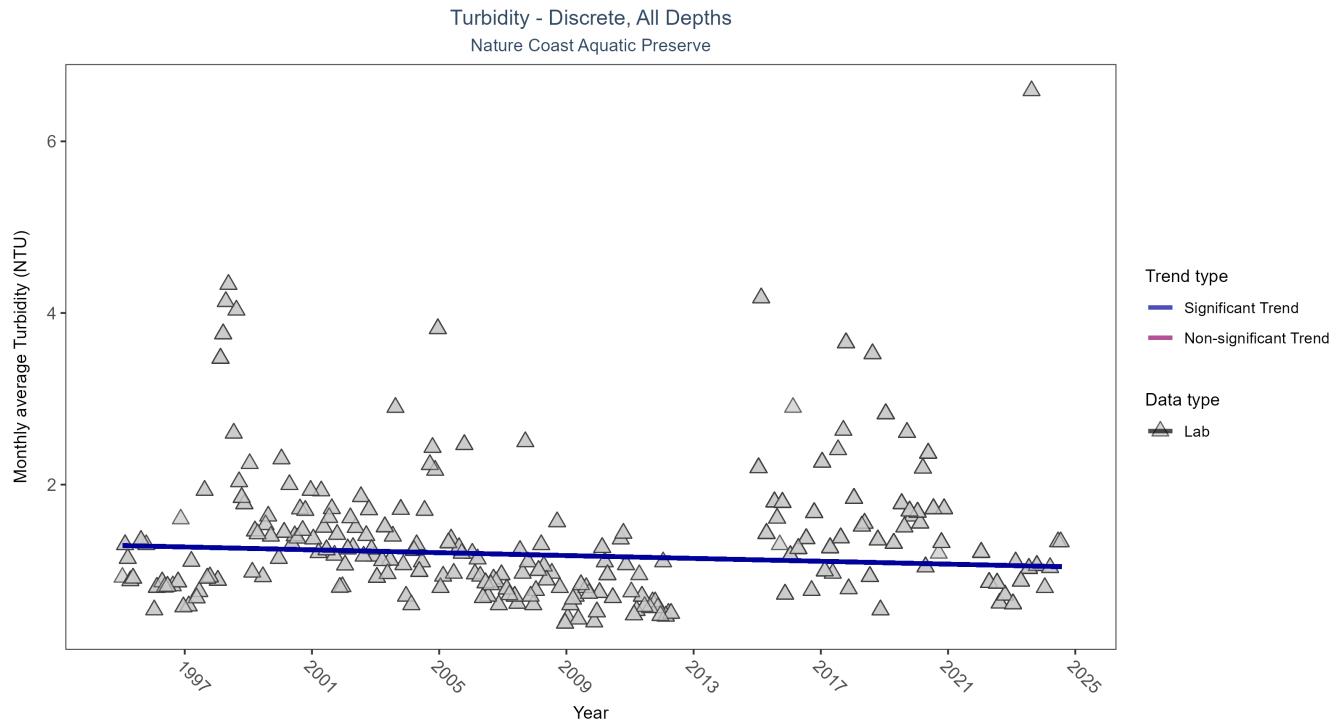


Figure 19: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Turbidity - Discrete

Table 24: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Turbidity

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
All	1952	27	1	TRUE	-0.1197	0.0325	-0.0083	1.2901	7.6861	0.7411	-1

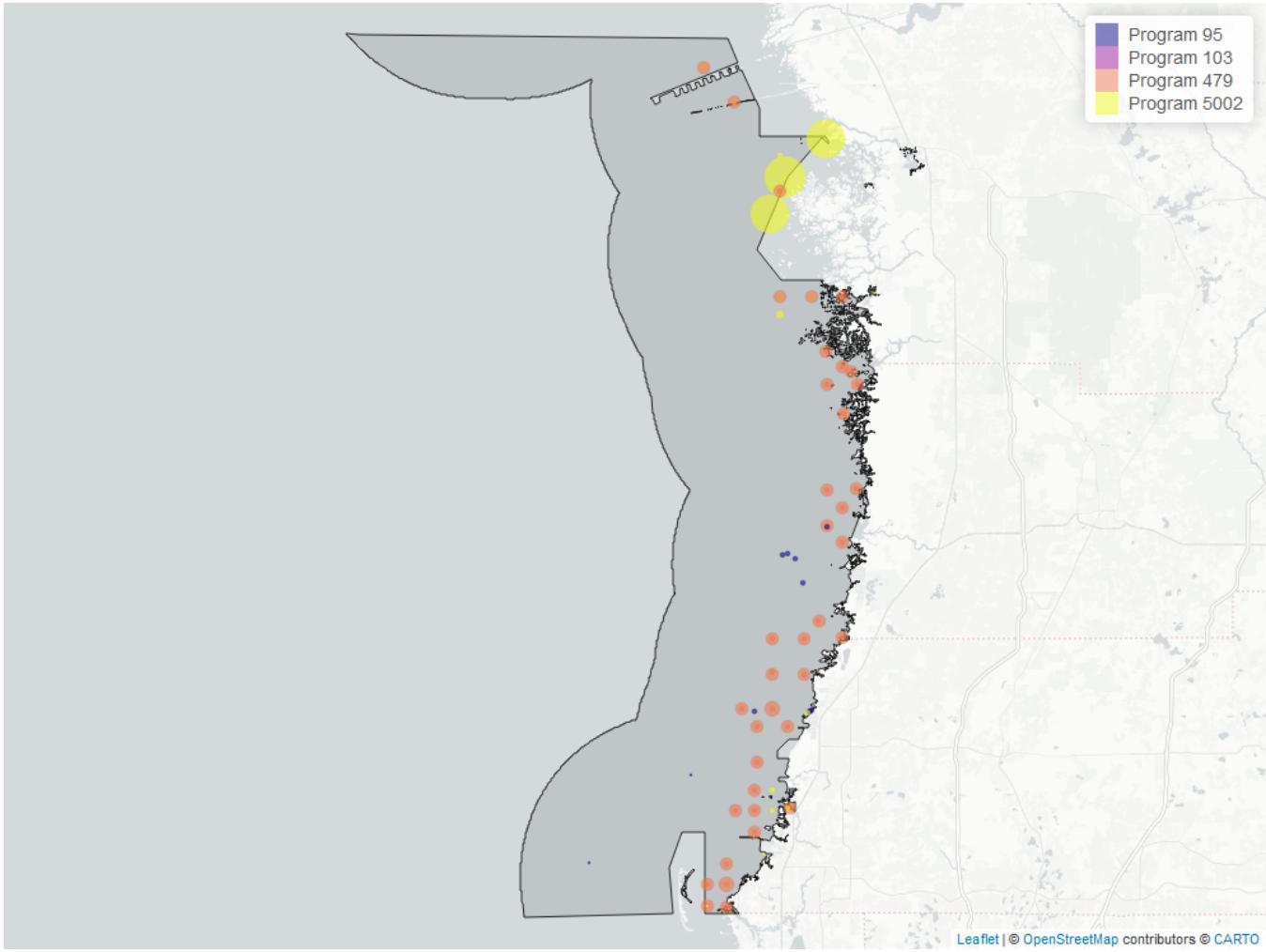


Figure 20: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for Turbidity. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 25: Programs contributing data for Turbidity

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	1198	2015	2023
5002	755	1995	2024
95	4	2003	2003
103	1	2005	2005

#### Program names:

95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network<sup>7</sup>

103 - EPA STORET and RETrieval Data Warehouse (STORET)/WQX<sup>8</sup>

479 - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

5002 - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>

## Water Temperature - Discrete Water Quality

### Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis

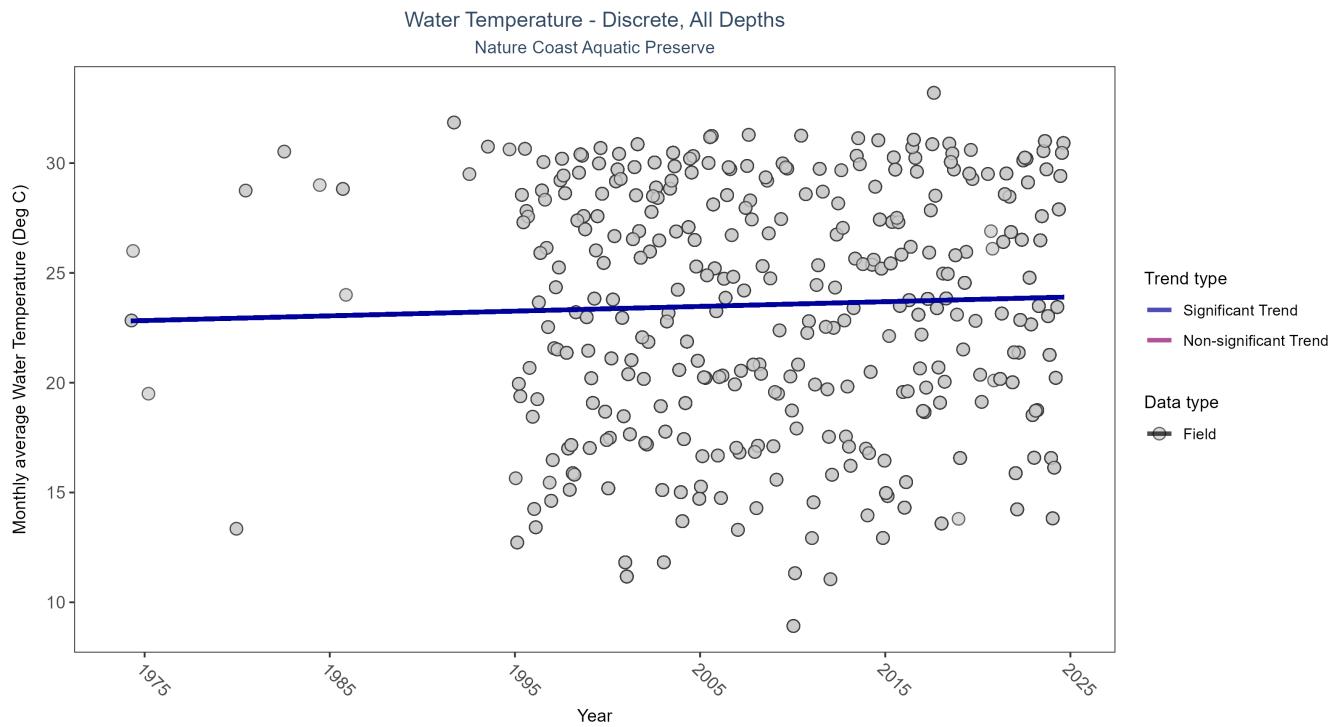


Figure 21: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for Water Temperature - Discrete

Table 26: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Trend Analysis for Water Temperature

RelativeDepth	N-Data	N-Years	Median	Independent	tau	p	SennSlope	SennIntercept	ChiSquared	pChiSquared	Trend
All	8758	41	24.3	TRUE	0.0932	0.0172	0.0215	22.8084	7.3291	0.7718	1

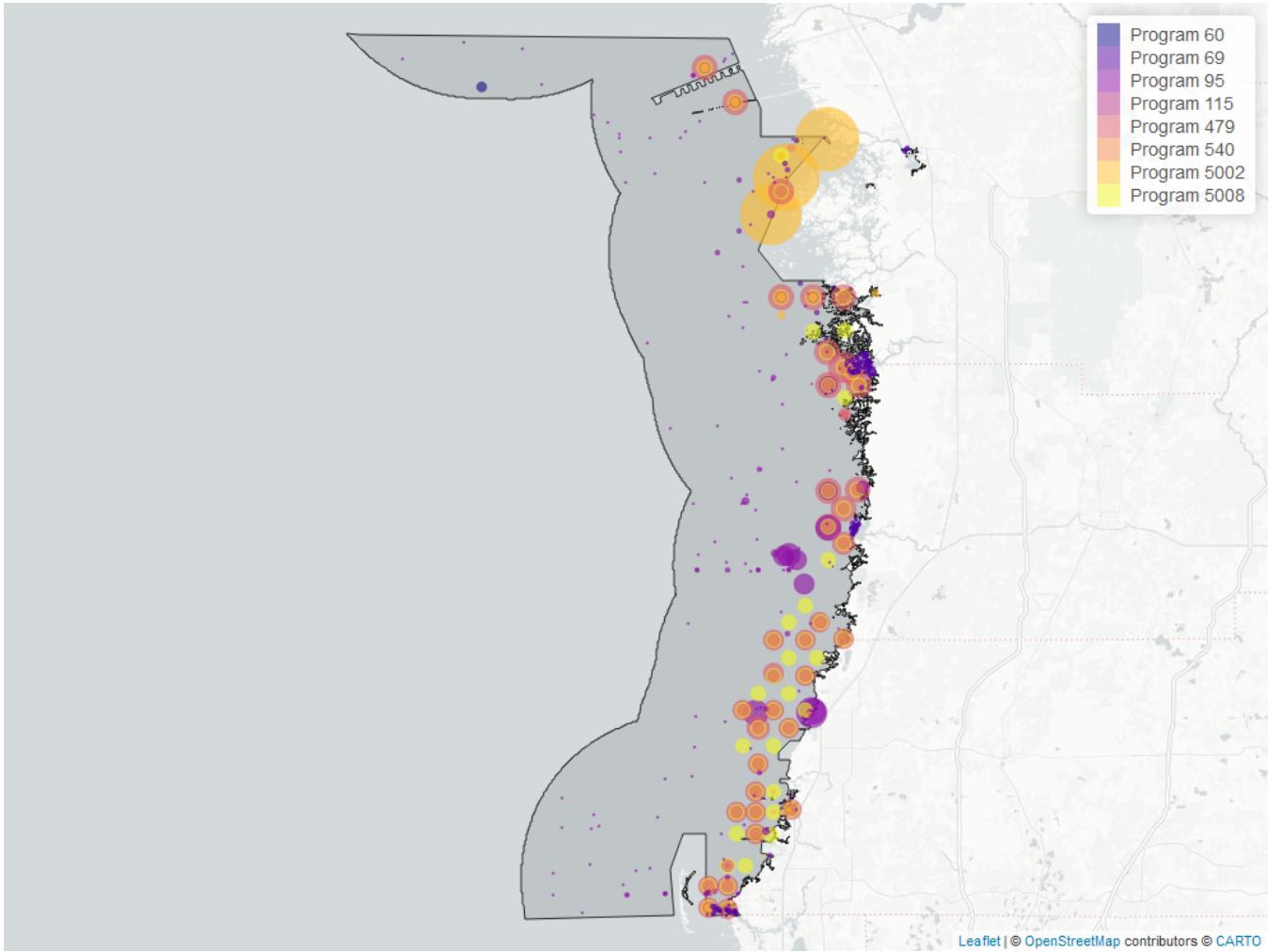


Figure 22: Map showing location of Discrete sampling sites for Water Temperature. The bubble size on the maps below reflect the amount of data available at each sampling site.

Table 27: Programs contributing data for Water Temperature

<i>ProgramID</i>	<i>N_Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>
479	3677	1996	2023
5008	2240	2021	2024
5002	1971	1995	2024
69	428	2003	2009
95	408	1974	2018
60	15	2015	2015
115	12	1991	1994
540	7	2017	2019

#### Program names:

60 - Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) - Gulf of Mexico Fall & Summer Shrimp/Groundfish Survey<sup>6</sup>

69 - Fisheries-Independent Monitoring (FIM) Program<sup>10</sup>

95 - Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network<sup>7</sup>

115 - Environmental Monitoring Assessment Program<sup>11</sup>

*479* - Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring<sup>1</sup>

*540* - Shellfish Harvest Area Classification Program<sup>3</sup>

*5002* - Florida STORET / WIN<sup>4</sup>

*5008* - Project COAST (Coastal Assessment Team) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region<sup>5</sup>

## Water Quality - Continuous

The following files were used in the continuous analysis:

- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_cont\_Dissolved\_Oxygen\_NW-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_cont\_Dissolved\_Oxygen\_Saturation\_NW-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_cont\_pH\_NW-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_cont\_Salinity\_NW-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_cont\_Turbidity\_NW-2024-Dec-08.txt*
- *Combined\_WQ\_WC\_NUT\_cont\_Water\_Temperature\_NW-2024-Dec-08.txt*

### Continuous monitoring locations in Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve

Table 28: Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserves Continuous Water Quality Monitoring (471)

<i>ProgramLocationID</i>	<i>Years of Data</i>	<i>Use in Analysis</i>	<i>Parameters</i>
BBSHS	1	FALSE	DO , DOS , pH , Turb
BBSHS	13	TRUE	Sal , TempW

Table 29: National Water Information System (7)

<i>ProgramLocationID</i>	<i>Years of Data</i>	<i>Use in Analysis</i>	<i>Parameters</i>
283925082441201	1	FALSE	TempW
284506082435801	1	FALSE	TempW

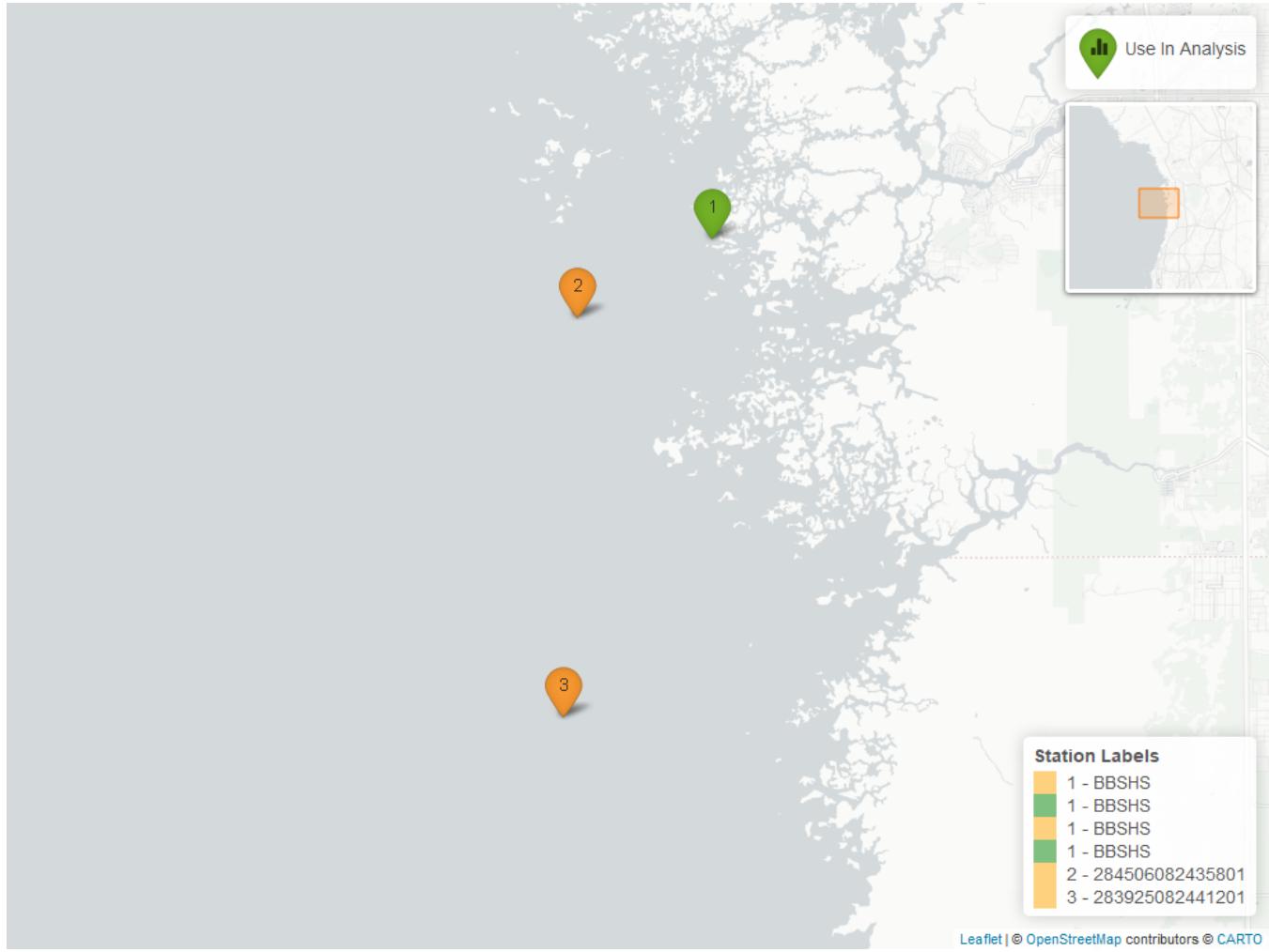


Figure 23: Map showing Continuous Water Quality Monitoring sampling locations within the boundaries of Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve. Sites marked as *Use In Analysis* are featured in this report.

## Water Temperature - All Stations Combined

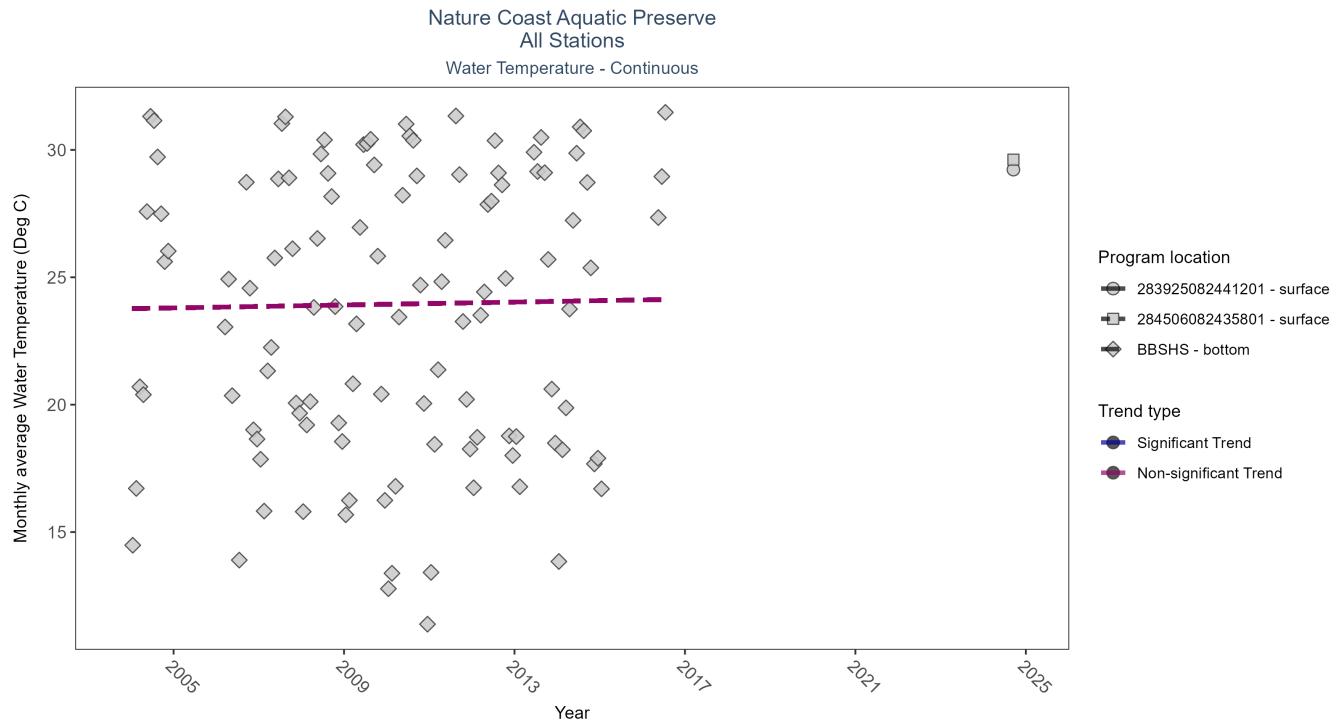


Figure 24: Figure for Water Temperature - Continuous - All stations combined

Table 30: Seasonal Kendall-Tau Results for All Stations - Water Temperature

Station	N_Data	N_Years	Period of Record	Median	tau	SennIntercept	SennSlope	p
283925082441201	15	1	2024 - 2024	29.40	-	-	-	-
284506082435801	16	1	2024 - 2024	29.85	-	-	-	-
BBSHS	244110	12	2004 - 2016	24.50	0.05	23.77	0.03	0.5239

# Submerged Aquatic Vegetation

The data file used is: All\_SAV\_Parameters-2024-Dec-08.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.

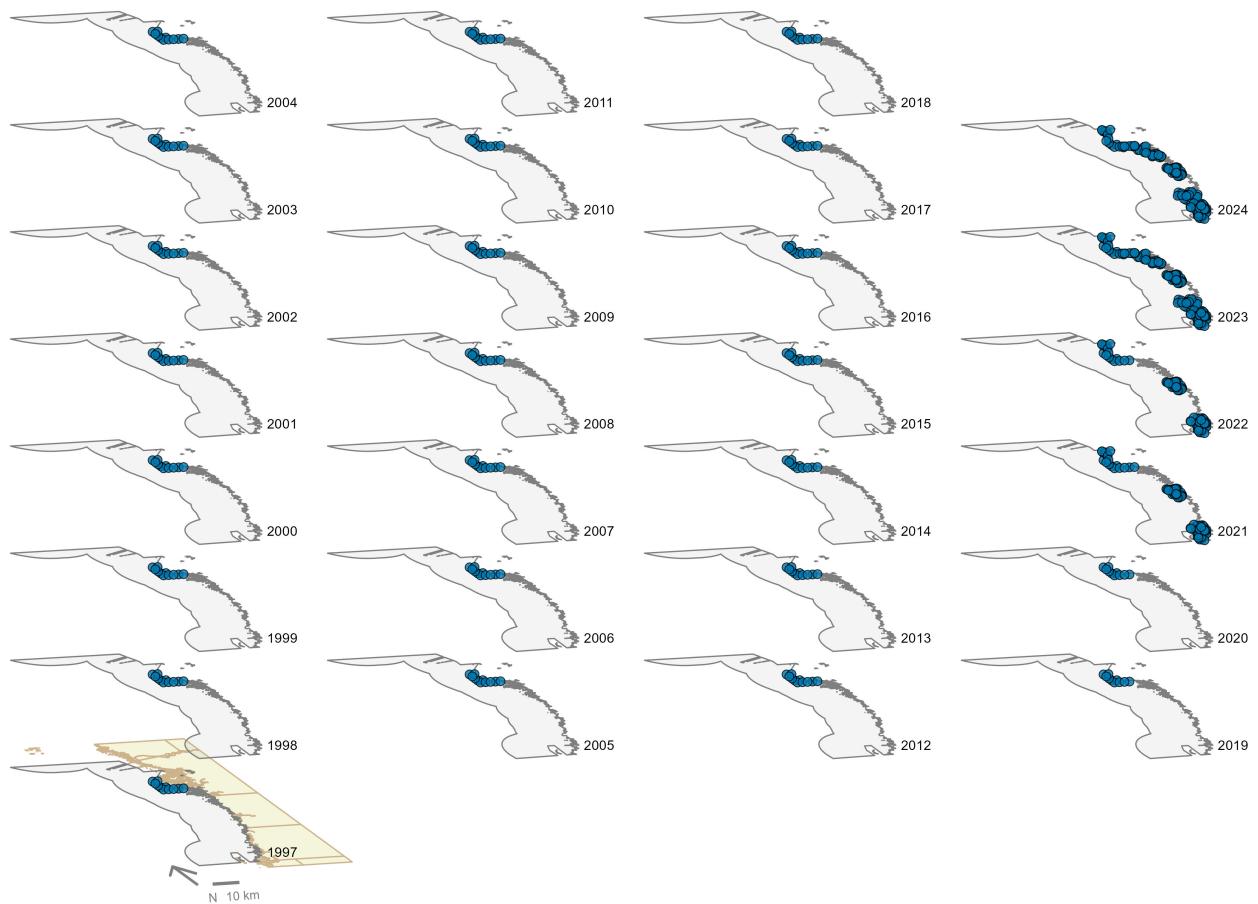
## Notes

*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

Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve  
SAV Percent Cover - Sample Locations



Program name  
● Big Bend Seagrasses & Nature Coast Aquatic Preserves - Seagrass Monitoring

Figure 25: Maps showing the temporal scope of SAV sampling sites within the boundaries of *Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve* by Program name.

## Sampling locations by Program:

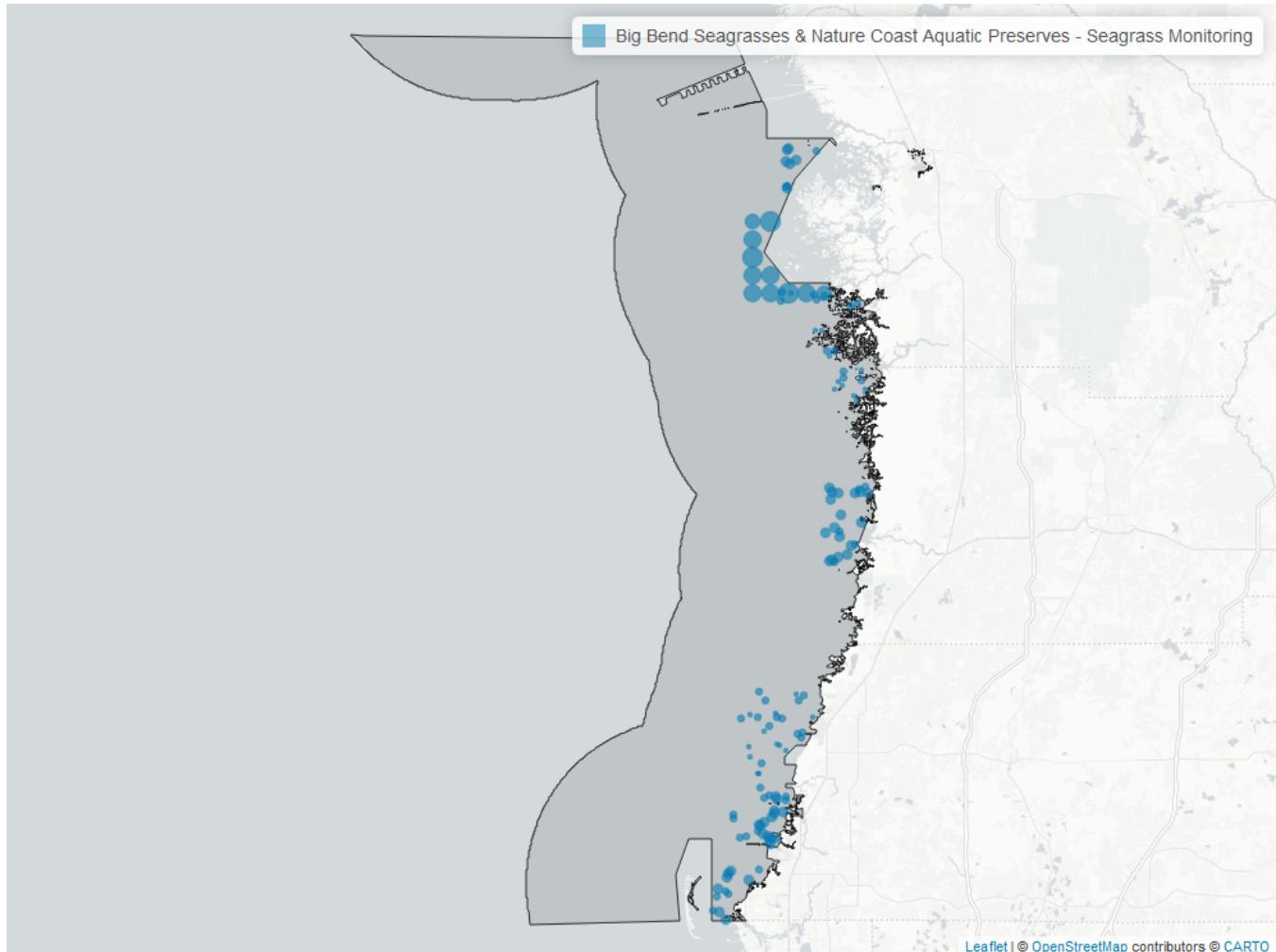


Figure 26: Map showing SAV sampling sites within the boundaries of *Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve*. The point size reflects the number of samples at a given sampling site.

Table 31: Big Bend Seagrasses and Nature Coast Aquatic Preserves - Seagrass Monitoring - Program 560

<i>N-Data</i>	<i>YearMin</i>	<i>YearMax</i>	<i>method</i>	<i>Sample Locations</i>
9545	1997	2024	Modified Braun Blanquet	129
6417	2021	2024	Percent Cover	129

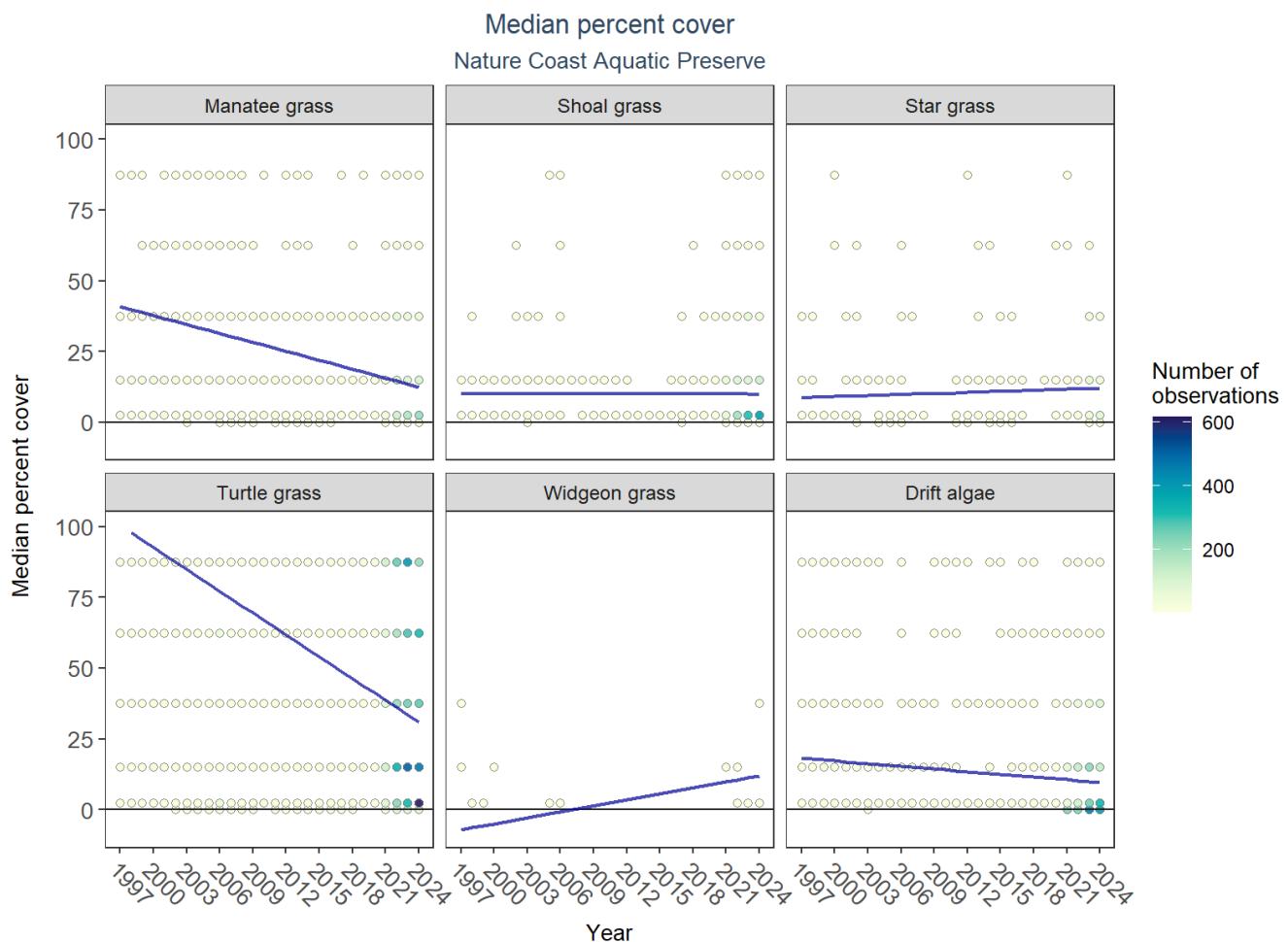


Figure 27: Trends in median percent cover for various seagrass species in Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve

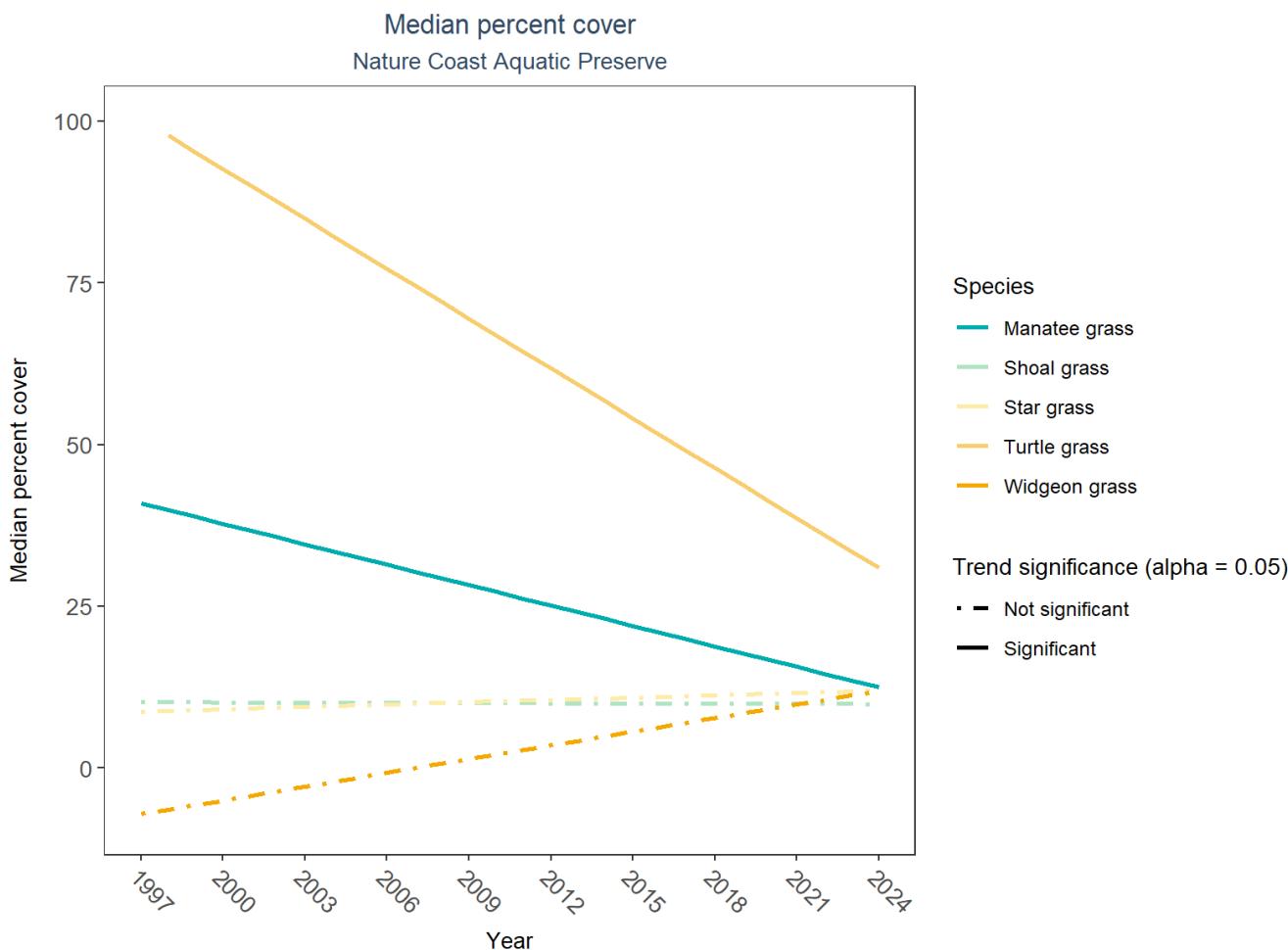


Figure 28: Trends in median percent cover for various seagrass species in Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve - simplified

Table 32: Percent Cover Trend Analysis for Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve

CommonName	Trend Significance (0.05)	Period of Record	LME-Intercept	LME-Slope	p
Drift algae	Significantly decreasing trend	1997 - 2024	19.149515	-0.3161501	0.0160063
Shoal grass	No significant trend	1997 - 2024	10.224288	-0.0105454	0.8700755
Star grass	No significant trend	1997 - 2024	8.345838	0.1223518	0.2948394
No grass in quadrat	Model did not fit the available data	1998 - 2024	-	-	-
Widgeon grass	No significant trend	1997 - 2024	-9.224510	0.7048073	0.7467175
Manatee grass	Significantly decreasing trend	1997 - 2024	44.072677	-1.0522346	0.0095624
Turtle grass	Significantly decreasing trend	1997 - 2024	108.013641	-2.5697366	0.0000000

Frequency of occurrence  
Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve

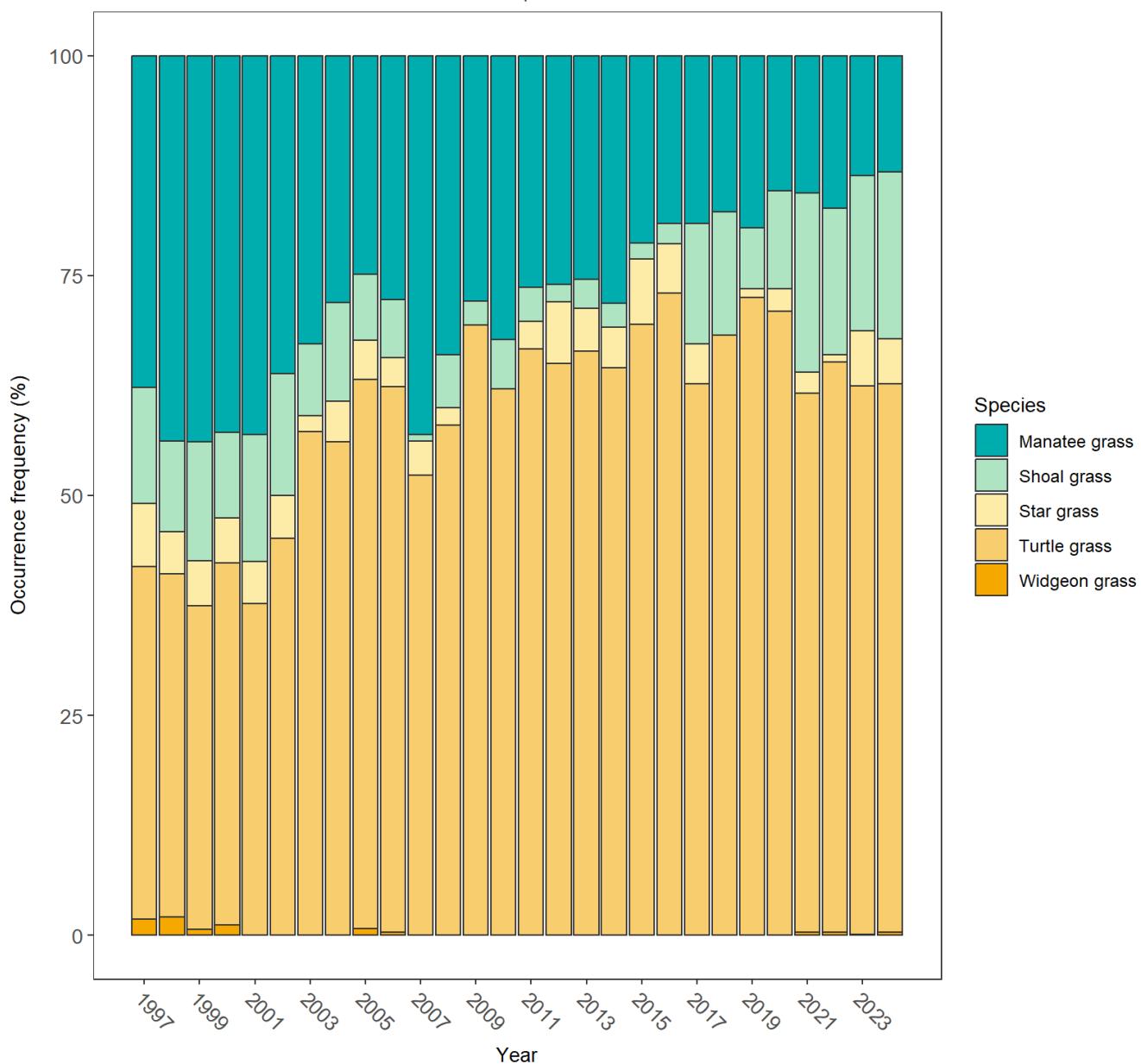


Figure 29: Frequency of occurrence for various seagrass species in Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve

## Nekton

The data file used is: All\_NEKTON\_Parameters-2024-Dec-17.txt

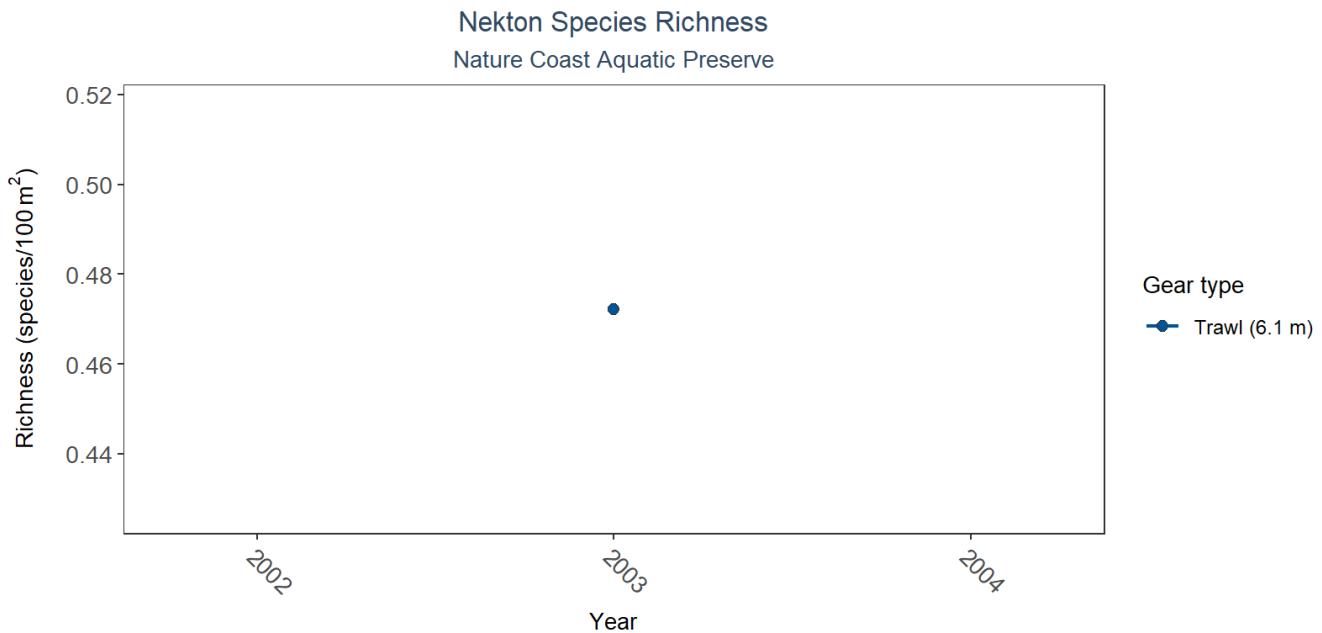


Figure 30: Figure for Nekton Species Richness in Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve

Table 33: Nekton Species Richness

Gear Type	Sample Count	Number of Years	Period of Record	Median N of Taxa	Mean N of Taxa
Trawl (6.1)	2	1	2003 - 2003	0.47	0.47

## Coastal Wetlands

The data file used is: All\_CW\_Parameters-2024-Dec-08.txt

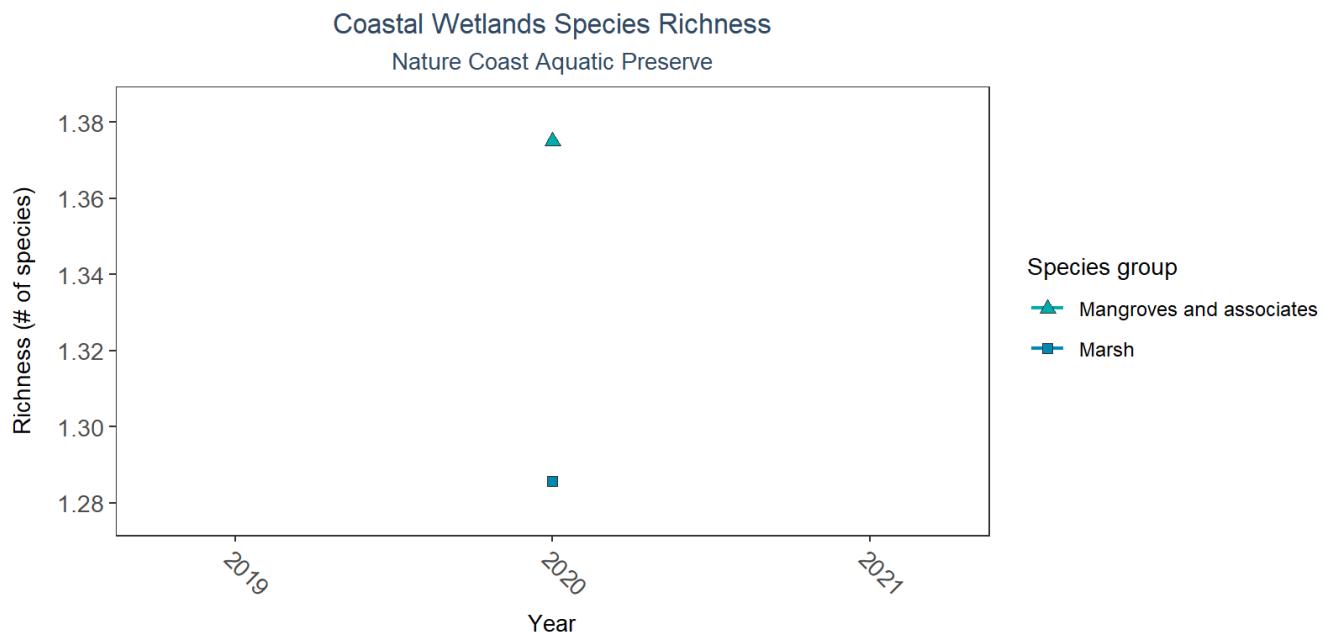


Figure 31: Figure for Coastal Wetlands Species Richness in Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve

Table 34: Coastal Wetlands Species Richness

Species Group	Sample Count	Number of Years	Period of Record	Median N of Taxa	Mean N of Taxa
Mangroves and associates	8	1	2020 - 2020	1	1.38
Marsh	14	1	2020 - 2020	1	1.29

## References

1. Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). [Southwest Florida Water Management District - Water Quality Monitoring](#). (2024).
2. University of Florida (UF); Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences. [Florida LAKEWATCH Program](#). (2024).
3. Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) - Division of Aquaculture. [Shellfish Harvest Area Classification Program](#). (2022).
4. Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). [Florida STORET / WIN](#). (2024).
5. University of Florida (UF); Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection (RCP); Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserves / Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve. [Project COAST \(Coastal Assessment Team\) - Springs Coast Ecosystem Region](#). (2024).
6. Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission. [Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program \(SEAMAP\) - Gulf of Mexico Fall & Summer Shrimp/Groundfish Survey](#). (2016).
7. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC); Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI). [Harmful Algal Bloom Marine Observation Network](#). (2018).
8. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). [EPA STOrage and RETrieval Data Warehouse \(STORET\)/WQX](#). (2023).
9. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Office of Water; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); U.S. Geological Survey (USGS); U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); National Estuary Program (NEP); coastal states. [National Aquatic Resource Surveys, National Coastal Condition Assessment](#). (2021).
10. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). [Fisheries-Independent Monitoring \(FIM\) Program](#). (2022).
11. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Office of Research and Development. [Environmental Monitoring Assessment Program](#). (2004).
12. Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP); Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection (RCP); Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserves; University of Florida - Nature Coast Aquatic Preserve. [Big Bend Seagrasses & Nature Coast Aquatic Preserves - Seagrass Monitoring](#). (2024).