

Rock Creek Advisor

Conservancy District

Rock Creek Water Monitoring Project

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Rock Creek Conservancy District has been collecting water samples and data, consistently since 1999. Because it has been a long time since we showed you how, and why we collect the data, I thought this would be a good time to have a refresher course on what we are doing, and why, explaining also the data we collect in more detail. One of the best measurements of water quality is the collection of macro invertebrates at the same locations over time.

Collecting macro invertebrates is just one of the many ways to biomonitor; this is the use of organisms to assess or monitor environmental conditions. Benthic macroinvertebrates are animals that are big enough (macro) to be seen with the naked eye. They lack backbones (invertebrate) and live at least part of their lives in or on the bottom (benthos) of a body of water. Macroinvertebrates include aquatic insects (such as mayflies, stoneflies, and beetles), snails, worms, freshwater clams and mussels, and crayfish.

Benthic macroinvertebrates are ideal for use in biomonitoring: Biological stream monitoring is based on the fact that different species react to pollution in different ways. Pollution –sensitive organisms such as mayflies, and caddisflies are more susceptible to the effect of physical or chemical changes in a stream than other organisms, so that these organisms act as indicators of the absence of pollutants. Pollution –tolerant organisms such as midges and worms are less susceptible to changes in physical chemical parameters in a stream. The presence or absence of those indicator organisms is an indirect measure of pollution. When a stream becomes polluted, pollution-sensitive organisms decrease in number or disappear; pollution- tolerant organisms increase in variety and number. Unlike chemical monitoring, which provides information about water quality at the time of measurement, biological monitoring can provide information about past and/or episodic pollution.

Below is a sample page that shows you how to take the macro invertebrates we collect and put it in a chart form, which will give us the pollution tolerance index for each site.

Pollution Tolerance Index

The macroinvertebrate index is divided into Pollution Tolerance Groups (PT Group) 1,2,3 and 4. These PT groups represent the different levels of pollution tolerance. The higher the group number, the higher the pollution tolerance level. Record the number of macroinvertebrates you find here.

PT GROUP 1 <i>Intolerant</i>	PT GROUP 2 <i>Moderately Intolerant</i>	PT GROUP 3 <i>Fairly Tolerant</i>	PT GROUP 4 <i>Very Tolerant</i>
Stonefly Nymph <u>6</u>	Damselfly Nymph _____	Midge Larvae <u>>100</u>	Left-Handed Snail <u>1</u>
Mayfly Nymph <u>5</u>	Dragonfly Nymph <u>15</u>	Black Fly Larvae _____	Aquatic Worms <u>25</u>
Caddis Fly Larvae <u>10</u>	Sowbug _____	Planaria <u>16</u>	Blood Midge _____
Dobsonfly Larvae _____	Scud _____	Leech _____	Rat-tailed Maggot _____
Riffle Beetle _____	Crane Fly Larvae _____		
Water Penny <u>30</u>	Clams/Mussels _____		
Right-Handed Snail _____	Crayfish <u>2</u>		

The next row is the # of Taxa. Insects that have the same body shape all belong to the same taxa (see the back of your PTI macroinvertebrate data sheet for general body shape/taxa). To find the total number of taxa for each PT Group you need to add the number of types of organisms. It is possible to have a particular PT group without any numbers, therefore it will score a zero.

Do not make the mistake of adding the numbers of organisms together:

# of TAXA <u>4</u>	# of TAXA <u>2</u>	# of TAXA <u>2</u>	# of TAXA <u>2</u>
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The next row is the group scores. Multiply each # of taxa by its weighting factor.

# of TAXA <u>4</u>	# of TAXA <u>2</u>	# of TAXA <u>2</u>	# of TAXA <u>2</u>
Weighting Factors: (x 4) <u>16</u>	(x 3) <u>6</u>	(x 2) <u>4</u>	(x 1) <u>2</u>

Add the weighting factors up and you get a pollution tolerance index rating of 28
The scale is 23 or more excellent, 17-22 Good, 11-16 Fair, 10 or Less Poor

	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4	Site 5	Site 6	Site 7	Site 8	Site 9	Site 10	Site 1	Site 2	Site 3	Site 4	Site 5	Site 6	Site 7	Site 8	Site 9	Site 10
Group 1 Intolerant																				
Stonefly Nymph			X																	
Mayfly Nymph			X		X	X	X	X	X				X							
Caddis Fly Larvae								X		X		X	X		X					
Dobson Fly Larvae																				
Rifle Beetle								X				X		X		X				X
Water Penny																				
Right-Handed Snail																				
Total # of Taxa	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	2	2	1	0	1	3	0	2	0	1	0	0	1
Weighting Factors 4	0	0	8	0	4	4	4	8	8	4	0	4	12	0	8	0	4	0	0	4
Group 2 Moderately Intolerant							X		X											X
Damselfly Nymph			X		X	X			X						1		X	X	X	
Dragonfly Nymph																	X			X
Sow bug																				
Scud										X										
Crane Fly Larvae			X									X	X				X			
Clams/Mussels		X	X	X							X	X	X	X	X			X	X	
Crayfish	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X				X		
Total # of Taxa	1	2	2	4	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	3	3	2	2
Weighting Factors 3	3	6	9	12	3	6	6	6	3	6	3	9	6	9	6	3	9	9	6	6
Group 3 Fairly Tolerant																				
Midges							X													
Black Fly Larvae																				
Planaria		X									X									
Leech				X			X				X									
Total # of Taxa	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Weighting Factors 2	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Group 4 Very Tolerant																				
Left-Handed Snail	X		X	X		X	X			X	X		X						X	
Aquatic Worms							X													
Blood Midge	X	X				X				X	X		X		X	X				X
Rat-Tailed Maggot																				
Total # of Taxa	2	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Weighting Factors 1	2	1	0	1	1	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	2	0	1	1	0	1	1
Pollution Tolerance Index	5=P	9=P	17=G	13=F	10=P	10=P	12=F	18=G	11=F	10=P	5=P	16=F	18=G	5=P	14=F	4=P	14=F	9=P	7=P	10=P

Below is a collection of data gathered from macroinvertebrates from the Rock Creek, from September 2002 – December 2006. Macro invertebrates were collected from the ten sites, and recorded and given a pollution tolerance index rating.

Site Index Rating 12/17/06	Site1=5 Poor	Site2= 16 Fair	Site3= 18 Good	Site4= 5 Poor	Site5=14 Fair	Site6= 4 Poor	Site7= 14 Fair	Site8= 9 Poor	Site9=7 Poor	Site10= 10 Poor
Site Index Rating 10/28/06	Site1=4 Poor	Site2= 7 Poor	Site3= 12 Fair	Site4= 17 Good	Site5=12 Fair	Site6= 4 Poor	Site7= 19 Good	Site8= 14 Fair	Site9=22 Good	Site10= 8 Poor
Site Index Rating 09/04/06	Site1=5 Poor	Site2= 7 Poor	Site3= 12 Fair	Site4= 17 Good	Site5=12 Fair	Site6= 4 Poor	Site7= 19 Good	Site8= 14 Fair	Site9=22 Good	Site10= 8 Poor
Site Index Rating 09/04/06	Site1=5 Poor	Site2= 9 Poor	Site3= 17 Good	Site4= 13 Fair	Site5=10 Poor	Site6=10 Poor	Site7= 12 Fair	Site8= 18 Good	Site9=11 Fair	Site10= 10 Poor
Site Index Rating 06/17/06	Site1=11 Fair	Site2= 12 Fair	Site3=13 Fair	Site4= 8 Poor	Site5=10 Poor	Site6=5 Poor	Site7= 4 Poor	Site8= 8 Poor	Site9=13 Fair	Site10= 7 Poor
Site Index Rating 04/08/06	Site1=3 Poor	Site2= 10 Poor	Site3= 5 Poor	Site4= 8 Poor	Site5= 16 Fair	Site6=5 Poor	Site7= 15 Fair	Site8= 16 Fair	Site9=10 Poor	Site10= 18 Good
Site Index Rating 11/26/05	Site1=1 Poor	Site2= 10 Poor	Site3=11 Fair	Site4= 9 Poor	Site5=7 Poor	Site6=4 Poor	Site7=9 Poor	Site8= 13 fair	Site9=13 Fair	Site10= 4 Poor
Site Index Rating 9/06/05	Site1=4 Poor	Site2= 7 Poor	Site3=16 Fair	Site4= 9 Poor	Site5=16 Fair	Site6=10Poor	Site7=8 Poor	Site8= 16 fair	Site9=16 Fair	Site10=12 Fair
Site Index Rating 7/14/05	Site1=8 Poor	Site2=15 Fair	Site3=26 Excellent	Site4= 22 Good	Site5=10 Poor	Site6=8Poor	Site7=17 Good	Site8= 15 fair	Site9=14 Fair	Site10=11 Fair
Site Index Rating 5/16/05	Site1= 15 Fair	Site2=14 Fair	Site3=10 Poor	Site4=14 Fair	Site5=11 Fair	Site6=16 Fair	Site7=11 Fair	Site8=19 Good	Site9=14 Fair	Site10=11 Fair
Site Index Rating 12/4/05	Site1=1 Poor	Site2=13 Poor	Site3=15 Fair	Site4=18 Good	Site5=11 Fair	Site6=13 Fair	Site7=22 Good	Site8=10 Poor	Site9=17 Good	Site10=9 poor
Site Index Rating 9/6/2004	Site1=4 Poor	Site2=10 Poor	Site3=21 Good	Site4=15 Fair	Site5=11 Fair	Site6=0 Poor	Site7=1 Poor	Site8=14 Fair	Site9=21 Good	Site10=10 poor
Site Index Rating 06/21/04	Site1=4 Poor	Site2=15 Fair	Site3=8 Poor	Site4=14 Fair	Site5=8 Poor	Site6=0 Poor	Site7=1 Poor	Site8=6 Poor	Site9=5 Poor	Site10=15 Fair
Site Index Rating 04/09/04	Site1=15 Fair	Site2=19 Good	Site3=25 Excellent	Site4=10 Poor	Site5=7 Poor	Site6=4 Poor	Site7=6 Poor	Site8=7 Poor	Site9=16 Fair	Site10=15 Fair
Site Index Rating 12/7/03	Site 1=5Poor	Site2=4 Poor	Site3=8 Poor	Site4=7 Poor	Site5=5 Poor	Site6=3 Poor	Site7=5 poor	Site8=12 Fair	Site9=19 Good	Site10=18 Good
Site index rating 9/6/03	site 1=1 Poor	site 2 = 3 Poor	site 3 = 1 Poor	site 4 = 4 Poor	site 5 = 0 Poor	site 6 = 0 Poor	site 7 = 0 Poor	site 8 = 11 Fair	site 9 = 18 Good	site 10 = 11 Fair
Site Index Rating 6/10/03	Site 1=4Poor	Site2=12Fair	Site3=19Good	Site4=9 Poor	Site5=3 Poor	Site6=5 Poor	Site7=4 poor	Site8=18 Good	Site9=15 Fair	Site10=7 Poor
Site Index Rating 4/18/03	Site 1=1Poor	Site2=11Fair	Site3=17Good	Site4=4 Poor	Site5=9 Poor	Site6=0 Poor	Site7=9 poor	Site8=22 Good	Site9=20 Good	Site10=10 Poor
Site Index Rating 12/16/02	Site1=2 Poor	Site2=13 Fair	Site3=13 Fair	Site4=7 Poor	Site5=6 Poor	Site6=10 Poor	Site7=12 Fair	Site8=8 Poor	Site9=14 Fair	Site10=7 Poor
SITE INDEX RATINGS 5/4/02	Site1=10 Poor	Site2=14 Fair	Site3=16 Fair	Site4=13 Fair	Site5=8 Poor	Site6=5 Poor	Site7=8 Poor	Site8=15 Fair	Site9=19 Good	Site10=11 Fair
Site Index Rating 8/13/02	Site1= 8 Poor	Site2=16 Fair	Site3=17 Good	Site 4=20 Good	Site 5=11 Fair	Site 6=5 Poor	Site7=4 Poor	Site8=12 Fair	Site9=22 Good	Site 10=16 Fair
Site Index Rating 9/02/02	Site 1=4 Poor	Site 2=4 Poor	Site 3=9 Poor	Site 4 =0 Poor	Site 5 = 10 Poor	Site 6 = 3 Poor	Site 7 = 7 Poor	Site 8 =11 Fair	Site 9 = 14 Fair	Site 10=11 Poor

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Rock Creek Water Monitoring for Nitrogen 4/21/1999 – 9/06/2006

Nitrogen	4/21/1999	6/3/1999	8/11/1999	9/30/1999	12/15/1999	2/14/2000	4/13/2000	6/8/2000	9/18/2000	12/13/2000	4/13/2001	6/19/2001	10/2/2001
site1	10.7	22.3	0	0.31	20.9	19.2	11.3	2.17	0	0	0.4	2.1	0
site2	10	21.3	0.26	0.2	11.2	19	11	1.95	0	0	0.6	1.8	0
site3	7.4	18.1	1.5	0.28	7.6	11.6	7.4	1.96	0	0	0.5	1.9	0
site4	7.4	18.5	0	0.25	4.4	11.7	7.3	1.97	0	0	0.5	2	0
site5	7.1	17.4	0.23	0.23	4.4	12	6.8	2.41	0	0	0.5	2.3	0
Nitrogen	4/21/1999	6/3/1999	8/11/1999	9/30/1999	12/15/1999	2/14/2000	4/13/2000	6/8/2000	9/18/2000	12/13/2000	4/13/2001	6/19/2001	10/2/2001
site6	7.3	17.9	0.24	0.27	1.9	12.5	6.3	3.18	0	15.8	10.21	8.16	10
site7	7.5	17.3	0	0.32	3.8	18.5	6.3	3.12	0	12.3	9.85	8.11	2.04
site8	6.9	18.2	0	0.28	0.97	13.6	5.9	3.12	0	11.5	9.87	7.84	1.79
site9	6.8	17.7	0	0.38	0.86	11.3	6	3.14	0	12.2	10.08	8.03	1.83
site10	6.9	18.5	0	0	0.6	12.6	6.1	3.2	0	12.3	9.72	8.47	1.93
MCL	25 mg/L												
Nitrogen	12/20/2001	4/14/2002	6/13/2002	9/2/2002	12/3/2002	4/23/2003	6/13/2003	9/2/2003	12/1/2003	4/8/2004	6/18/2004	9/16/2004	12/8/2004
site1	0	4.3	3.61	0.45	13.23	6.08	21.75	2.65	6.85	5.08	6	1.66	10.61
site2	0	5.96	4.78	0	9.26	5.83	22.42	4.67	7.25	5.58	9.54	1.47	11.65
site3	0	4.97	3.41	0	5.76	4.4	21.7	2.41	6.09	3.65	6.12	0.93	8.82
site4	0	5	4	0	5.59	4.2	20.7	2.24	5.89	3.5	5.88	0.79	8.36
site5	0	5.53	6.11	0	5.94	4.42	20.72	2.2	5.95	3.6	5.37	0.84	8.36
Nitrogen	12/20/2001	4/14/2002	6/13/2002	9/2/2002	12/3/2002	4/23/2003	6/13/2003	9/2/2003	12/1/2003	4/8/2004	6/18/2004	9/16/2004	12/8/2004
site6	4.04	5.44	5.85	0	5.43	3.92	20.96	2.11	5.85	3.27	5.42	0.72	8.25
site7	4.09	5.54	5.9	0	4.47	3.34	21.4	1.99	5.51	3.61	5.63	0.55	7.97
site8	4.06	5.39	5.99	0	4.36	3.47	21.37	1.92	5.61	3.14	5.46	0.49	7.96
site9	4.09	5.44	6.14	0	4.12	3.55	21.89	1.93	5.65	3.15	5.54	0.37	8.03
site10	4.09	5.6	7	0	5.2	3.87	21.98	1.85	5.85	3.1	5.69	0.63	7.85
Nitrogen	site1	site2	site3	site4	site5	site6	site7	site8	site9	site10			
4/22/2005	8.96	9.98	7.44	7.54	7.18	7.29	7.37	7.15	7.58	8.15			
6/28/2005	31.04	4.89	BDL	BDL	0.21	BDL	BDL	0.41	BDL	BDL			
9/19/2005	1.28	BDL	BDL	BDL	BDL	BDL	BDL	BDL	BDL	BDL			
12/13/2005	3.74	3.69	2.91	2.83	2.77	2.38	2.23	2.27	2.24	2.21			
4/18/2006	12.34	14.5	10.2	10.06	9.64	9.25	9.04	8.96	8.89	8.86			
6/29/2006	6.07	4.94	1.98	2.39	2.93	2.31	2.2	3.34	3.72	4.12			
9/6/2006	0.26	0.1	0.07	0.09	0.09	0.1	0.1	0.21	0.34	1.82			
MCL	25 mg/L	BDL= Below detection level of method utilized= .20											

MCL= Maximum Contaminant Level is the highest permissible level of a contaminant in water which is delivered to any public water system.

Bold numbers are over the MCL. The MCL's I have collected are only a guide to compare with other waterways in the area.

Total Coliform, and E-Coli limits are based on secondary contact water (boating, fishing) 10,000 col/100ml is permissible for Total Coliform, but less than 5,000col/100ml is desirable. E-Coli's MCL is less than 235 col/100ml for total body contact.

Total Phosphorus MCL is .04 mg/L for aquatic wildlife. Nitrate + Nitrite's MCL 25 mg/L. is based on wastewater limits set for Indiana.

The table below and on page 4 show the results for the Rock Creek Channel biological monitoring for the year 2005. Page two and three are tables from water testing results for contaminants, from April of 1999 to December 2005. If you have questions or want past Rock Creek Advisors, please contact the Rock Creek Conservancy District Clerk, Stacia Henderson or Mark Grimm at 260-824-0624 ext. 3.