SCCWRP #0276

Sediment Grain Size: Interlaboratory Intercalibration Experiment

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INTRODUCTION

In southern California, benthic monitoring programs usually include measurements of benthic community composition combined with measurements of physical factors such as sediment chemistry and sediment grain size. These physical factors are measured in order to differentiate changes in community structure caused by anthropogenic impacts from those caused by natural factors such as wave energy and substrate type. In particular, sediment grain size is measured to determine substrate type, an important determinant of benthic community structure. Since heavy metals, pesticides and other chemicals are generally associated with fine fraction in sediment, sediment grain size is also used to normalize sediment chemistry data.
On September 30, 1993, the Southern California Coastal Water Research Project (SCCWRP) hosted a workshop on sediment grain size analysis. Participants included laboratory and data analysts involved in monitoring wastewater outfalls in southern California, including representatives from the County Sanitation Districts of Orange County, the County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles, the Environmental Monitoring Division of the City of Los Angeles, the Point Loma Wastewater Facility of the City of San Diego, Kinnetics Laboratories, Inc., MBC Applied Environmental Sciences, Inc., and MEC Analytical Systems, Inc. The objective of the workshop was to discuss analytical techniques used for measuring sediment grain size with the hope that methodologies could be made more consistent.