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Studies of aquatic communities represent a unique method of monitoring the health of water resources. High Point City Lake small subunit 16S ribosomal DNA clone libraries were compared across small spatial and temporal scales. This study used polymerase chain reaction and shotgun cloning to isolate individual 16S rDNA sequences. A total of 437 operational taxonomic units were found in this study. Among all libraries 84 sequences demonstrated affiliation to the phylum Proteobacteria, including representatives from the classes  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\delta$ , and  $\gamma$ . The next most abundant category of putatively identified 16S ribosomal DNA was 24 sequences affiliated with the class Actinobacteria. Seventeen sequences demonstrated similarity to clones previously isolated from Crater Lake, CA bacterium.

These findings suggest that variability among the replicate libraries may be a reflection of the small library size.  $S_{CHAO1}$  and  $S_{ACE}$  diversity estimators suggest larger libraries would be required to achieve a stable estimate of OTUs, but given the small size of each of the replicate libraries their similarity values were not unexpected. Variability among clone libraries from diurnal samples taken at the same location was low. Variability among clone libraries across short spatial scales showed suggested little difference among samples in well mixed areas of the lake, but one library may have reflected the influence of a tributary inflow. Overall, these data suggest that the 16S rDNA libraries were similar to one another.

# A Comparison of Small Subunit 16S Ribosomal DNA Recombinant Plasmid Clone Libraries from High Point City Lake, NC

by

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Master of Science

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> > Approved by

Committee Chair

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To Jennifer D. Alexander, Horace R. Alexander, Jeremey R. Alexander and Leroy Harrison for inspiring perseverance through difficulty.

## APPROVAL PAGE

This thesis has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

An increased awareness of terrorist activities in 2001 led the US Government to initiate policies of proactive deterrence of terrorist attacks. In congressional testimony to the United States House of Representatives, Jeffrey Danneels of Sandia National Labs stated that, "the first component in the water system to be assessed for security risk is the sources or supplies of water, which include reservoirs, lakes, rivers, streams and ground water wells" (Danneels, 2001). The United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) has taken the lead on critical infrastructure protection of domestic water resources. One of the US EPA's goals is to improve the security around water utilities (US EPA, 2002). A tactic to be employed includes the use of universities and the use of private sector businesses to identify and to respond to contamination events (US EPA, 2002). Methods to increase awareness of biological threats include two strategies that can help reduce vulnerabilities. One strategy involves the direct detection of specific pathogens. Another strategy involves the use of community assessments or bioindicators to detect environmental change. Molecular techniques have been used to investigate phylogeny for more than a quarter century. Advances in nucleic acid extraction, amplification and sequencing technologies have made these methods practical for important public uses, including forensic and national security analysis. The most effective approach may

involve a combination of both detecting individuals and identifying community profiles through the use of microarray technology.

The application of molecular biology to help solve the challenge of community assessment can be traced to works by Woese and Fox (1977) and Pace *et al.,* (1986). Researchers determined that 16S and 18S rDNA were optimal molecules to assess evolutionary relationships because they were found in all self-replicating organisms, easily isolated, and their molecular structure is stable over time. These data, quantified by association coefficients, demonstrated that three major classifications of life exist on earth; eubacteria; archaebacteria; and eukaryotes (Woese and Fox, 1977).

Pace *et al.*, (1986) explored the use of small subunit (SSU) 16SrDNA sequencing as a means to define natural microbial populations and improve understanding of uncultured organisms. Their approach involved shotgun cloning, a method to assess individual phylotypes from a mixed population of phylotypes, to categorize populations within a large microbial community. They found the use of 16S rDNA preferable to 5S rDNA because of the greater number of bases available for comparative analysis. They also noted that the greater number of variations within 16S rDNA allowed for more detailed phylogenetic mapping. This work supported the use of sequence comparisons as an effective tool to estimate phylogenic relationships (Pace *et al.*, 1986). Similarly, the use of SSU rDNA in the determination of phylogeny may represent an approach to the problem of assessing security needs and environmental health, when combined with emerging detection technologies.

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The presence of highly conserved and variable regions within rDNA and the relative ease of finding extant information add to the appeal of rDNA as a target molecule. These regions allow researchers to differentiate between closely related strains (Pace *et al.*, 1986). There are extensive databases already in existence for the SSU rDNA (e.g. GenBank). Extant databases may aid in the identification of organisms clustered into operational taxonomic units (OTUs), groups of sequences exhibiting at least 97.5% identity (Marshall, 2002). Previous work by many authors (Marshall, 2002; Amos, 2002; Balser, 2003 and Yannarell *et al.*, 2004) demonstrates the utility of rDNA as an effective measure of comparison over space and time in aquatic systems.

Numerous variables can be used to make community assessments, including: physical parameters, relative species abundance, and diversity. Differing physical parameters have been shown to impact bacterioplankton communities. For example, Lindstrom *et al.* (2000) suggested that internal and external factors can have an impact on bacterioplankton communities. Internal processes are changes in lake physical parameters, predation and the abundance of autochthonous bacteria. External processes are inflow of allochthonous bacteria through runoff, nutrient load, sedimentary content, and removal of vegetation. They compared five lakes, noting little variation in water temperature and humic concentration, but differences in water color, lake size, and size of drainage area, and found differences in the bacterial communities.

Differences in the relative abundance may also provide insight to bacterial community makeup. Crump *et al.* (2003) described reasons for relatively high bacterial production in Toolik Lake, suggesting that the combination of phytoplankton organic and

terrestrial matter, result in high rates of bacterial growth. Investigators worked to differentiate allochthonous and autochthonous sources of organic matter and to describe the role of seasonal fluctuations on the quality and types of organic matter available. As a result of these efforts, persistent and transient populations were identified in Toolik Lake. Bacterial and phytoplankton production cycles were identified as components in the seasonal fluctuation of communities (Crump *et al.*, 2003). DNA fingerprint comparisons using denaturing gradient gel electrophoresis (DGGE) suggest communities shift with changes in environmental conditions. Researchers hypothesized that large seasonal changes in the physical parameters of a body of water would result in shifts in the species composition of the bacterioplankton community (Crump *et al.,* 2003). They found that relative abundance and advection of allochthonous bacteria resulted in shifts in species composition (Crump *et al.*, 2003). Bacterial production near the surface increased by 30 times, while production at 12-16 meters only increased by 2.5 times (Crump *et al.*, 2003). As a result of these findings researchers suggested that community shifts may occur as a result of succession or advection (Crump *et al.*, 2003).

Other studies have focused on wide distribution of common organism types found over extended spatial scales using multiple limnetic sources. Hiorns *et al.,* (1997) conducted a survey of fresh water rDNA sequence data using PCR and shotgun cloning. They were able to produce an overview of the range of phylotypes and diversity found in 7 Adirondack lakes (Hiorns *et al.*, 1997). The results of this study revealed that most members identified were from the class Proteobacteria, the phylum Cytophaga-Flavobacteria-Bacteroides and the order Actinomycetales, and suggested that at least

some taxa were widely distributed. This conclusion has been supported by additional studies that have suggested global distribution of at least some microbial taxa (Glöckner *et al.* 2000, Zwart, *et al.* 1998, Zwart, *et al.* 2002)

Yannarell *et al.,* (2004) conducted a study of within and between lake variability using multiple spatial scales and found that samples taken at spatial scales greater than or equal to 100m and between lakes showed significant variability, suggesting that within lake variability might be caused by geographic features of the lake that isolate communities in bays or narrow channels. However, different lakes having similar physical conditions tended to have similar bacterial communities (Yannarell *et al.*, 2004).

Liu *et al.,* (1997) were able to take advantage of 16S rDNA to differentiate all bacterial strains in a model bacterial community that had six differing strains. PCR was used to amplify target sequences in the model community followed by terminal restriction fragment length polymorphism analysis. Based on the length of the T-RFLP fragments, they were able to distinguish all six bacterial strains present (Liu *et al.,* 1997). They noted that the most critical parameters needed for describing the diversity and structure of a microbial community are species richness and species evenness (Liu *et al.,* 1997). Other studies have suggested that a combination of 16S rDNA analysis and microarray technology may represent a rapid tool to assess water quality (Marshall, 2002; Amos, 2002; Balser, 2003; Zhou and Thompson, 2002).

Microarrays are useful for identifying populations within natural environments (Zhou and Thompson, 2002). It is possible to identify populations using microarrays because common functional groups within different populations may demonstrate unique

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gene sequences that can be used as probes. This information may then be used to monitor the presence or absence of populations and serve as an environmental indicator (Zhou and Thompson, 2002).

The application of the microarray approach in defense and public health include three primary detection objectives. These are early detection, quality assurance, and exposure reduction. Early detection of target oligonucleotide sequences offers a valuable tool for making decision makers aware of the presence of harmful microbes. Microarrays can offer an effective quality assurance protocol that will help ensure the control of undesirable microbes in water supplies by providing a reliable detection mechanism. The task of separating pathogens from consumers may be improved with the ability to determine viability and/or infectivity of target microbes (Straub and Chandler, 2003). Before a useful microarray can become a reality, the design and selection of specific complementary nucleic acid probe sequences must first be made (Stenger *et al.*, 2002). Rapid assessment of water bodies, using both the detection of specific pathogens and community profiles, is now possible using microarray technology. It is unfortunate that the infrastructure to support such an assessment for water quality on a multiphasic basis is not in place at present (Straub and Chandler, 2003). The proposed work involves a comparison among different clone libraries that will provide a foundation which might be useful for the development of a rapid community assessment method.

Increasing understanding of the extant natural communities of multiple limnetic systems may aid in developing aquatic analytic methods that might include a biodetection or environmental microarray. By building a better understanding of the existing

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microbial communities across small and large scales and over time, suitable molecular markers may be identified. Work to understand extant microbial community composition within selected freshwater systems has already begun. Marshall (2002) and Amos (2002) addressed microbial community composition over large spatial and temporal scales. Marshall (2002) analyzed natural communities to characterize eukaryotic diversity in ecosystems. Three lakes were sampled, including three samples from one of the lakes, for a total of five samples. The study found that species abundance appeared to be more evenly distributed in temperate lakes as compared to an arctic lake. Each library contained 50 clones, which were grouped into operational taxonomic units (OTUs), defined as sequences with  $\geq 97.5\%$  similarity. Sorenson coefficients, used to measure community similarity, ranged from 0.062 to 0.212, demonstrating low overlap of OTUs between libraries. One OTU, identified as *Cryptomonas ovata*, was found to be cosmopolitan among the libraries studied. Amos (2002) studied the identical samples for 16S diversity. Again, five libraries were created, and 50 clones were sequenced from each. Prokaryotic libraries were found to be more diverse than eukaryotic libraries. These data suggests temperate lakes surveyed were similar in microbial composition. OTUs common to all five libraries were not found.

Balser (2003) assessed the similarity of 18S rDNA (eukaryotic) clone libraries among replicate samples and across small spatial and temporal scales from City Lake, North Carolina. Each library contained between 78-95 clones. Replicates varied slightly. Spatial samples suggested increasing variation with distance. Temporal samples did not appear to present a pattern. The number of clones in each OTU varied among libraries,

giving Sorensen similarity coefficients ranging from 0.32 to 0.38, suggesting limited overlap of sequences between libraries. Persistent cool and cloudy conditions during Balser's (2003) sampling may have reduced diurnal variability. Community characteristics were similar, although 79% of the sequences were not found in GenBank. The most common OTU was putatively identified as *Cryptomonas ovata,* which was also found in this lake previously by Marshall (2002).

Overall, the results of Marshall (2002), Amos (2002), and Balser (2003) included several key observations: 1) BLASTn yielded results that included both previously known and novel rDNA sequence; the majority of sequences were novel; 2) some OTUs were unique to individual libraries while other OTUs were shared among multiple libraries; 3) the distribution of OTUs was found to be log normal. Because Marshall (2002) and Amos (2002) addressed intermediate to large scale variation within freshwater lakes, the logical next step was to examine small scale temporal and spatial variation. Balser (2003) completed such a study on small scale variation for eukaryotes, finding that nearly 400,000 sequences would be needed to obtain complete diversity of City Lake and that time of sampling had little effect on microbial communities sampled.

The objective of this study was to characterize the prokaryotic microbial community of City Lake (High Point, NC) on small temporal and spatial scales. This was accomplished by comparing different clone libraries using 16S rDNA sequences (Figure 1). While the study does not give an exhaustive detail of the populations present in City Lake, it provides a snap-shot of the ranges of phylotypes and diversity present in City Lake, in a fashion similar to Hiorns *et al.,* (1997).



Figure 1: Overview of study approach

### CHAPTER II

## **METHODS**

Water samples were taken from six sites in City Lake, High Point, NC on 18 and 19 December 2002 (Figure 2). Collection points were selected along the axis of the lake to provide spatially distant samples within the lake. Triplicate 50 ml samples were passed through Whatman GF/F glass microfiber filters. Filters were placed in screw cap microcentrifuge tubes in 1 ml of cetyltrimethylammonium bromide (CTAB) buffer for storage at ambient temperature. Samples were also taken in triplicate for diurnal sampling on 18 December, at six hour intervals beginning at noon, 18 December 2002, for a 24-hour period at station 1-1300/3 (Figure 2) and stored at ambient temperature. DNA was extracted using a CTAB protocol described by Schaefer (1997). Briefly, the contents of the microcentrifuge tube were transferred to a 14 ml conical tube and 1 ml of 2x CTAB buffer was added to make a total of 2 ml CTAB buffer. The GF/F filters containing sample cells were ground separately using wooden applicator sticks. The sample was incubated at 60-65  $\degree$ C for 1-hour with periodic vortexing. Two milliliters of a solution of 24: 1(v: v) chloroform to isoamyl alcohol was added to the CTAB/filter mixture, shaken and then centrifuged for 20-60 minutes at full speed in a clinical centrifuge, until the top aqueous layer separated from the organic and filter mixture. The aqueous layer was pipetted into a 1.5 ml microcentrifuge tube and a volume of 100% 2 propanol equivalent to 0.7 volume of the aqueous layer was added. The tubes were then

inverted to ensure mixing and immediately centrifuged at 16,000 X g for 25 minutes. The supernatant was then poured off and the precipitate was allowed to air dry. The precipitate was then resuspended in 25 µl sterile Tris-EDTA buffer (pH 7.4). Following genomic DNA extraction, target sequences were amplified using protocols described in TOPO Cloning Kits for Sequencing (Invitrogen, 2000). Primers 8 forward (5'-AGA GTT TGA TCC TGG CTC AG-3') and 1541 reverse (5' AAG GAG GTG ATC CAG CCG CA-3') were used to target 16S rDNA for use in subsequent cloning reactions (Bruce *et al.*, 1992; Zwart *et al.,* 1998; Stein *et al.*, 2002). Each 50µl PCR reaction contained 2.5µl 16mM dNTP stock, 5µl Mg free10X PCR Buffer, 5µl 25mM  $MgCl<sub>2</sub>$ , 5µl 100µM BSA, 1µl 10µM 8F primer, 1µl 10µM 1541R primer, 0.2µl Promega Taq DNA Polymerase, 30.2µl sdH<sub>2</sub>0 and 1µl template DNA.

The PCR protocol involved an initial denaturation at 94°C for 2 minutes, followed by 29 cycles of the following: 94°C denaturation 1 minute; 54°C anneal 1 minute;72°C extension 1 minute and 72°C final extension 2.5 minutes. An effort was made to avoid freezing or vortexing of the PCR product to preserve fragment quality. The PCR product was then run in a gel to verify the presence of the 1600 base pair (bp) fragment. DNA fragments were then extracted from the agarose gel using a Qiagen Gel Extraction Kit (Qiagen, 2000). When gel electrophoreses showed distinct band separation, the amplicon was directly purified using a Qiagen PCR Cleanup Kit



Figure 2: High Point City Lake Aerial Photo taken 1 Dec 1999 and map provided by the City of High Point, NC. The numbers indicate sample collection stations while the white lines represent bubble aerators in the lake. All replicate and diurnal samples were taken at station 1.

(Qiagen, 2000). Following a successful extraction, DNA was stored at 4°C or -20°C until ready for use in the cloning reaction.

The purified PCR product was then used in the cloning reaction. Each sample was inserted into a pCR 4 TOPO plasmid vector and *E.coli* cells transformed (Invitrogen, 2000). Cells were then plated on LB containing 50µg/ml ampicillin and incubated at 37°C overnight. Colonies with recombinant inserts were selected and inoculated into LB broth and incubated overnight in a shaking water bath at 37°C and 200 rpm. Aliquots of the culture were taken for storage and for sequencing. Storage preparation included using 0.930 ml culture broth and 0.070 ml dimethylsulfoxide (DMSO) for a total volume of 1 ml that was immediately placed in -80°C storage.

Cultured broth (1 ml) was prepared for sequencing reaction using the Qiaprep Miniprep kit for the purification of plasmid DNA following manufacturer's directions. Plasmid DNA was then placed in cold storage at -20<sup>o</sup>C prior to a restriction digest.



Figure 3: Agarose gel of restriction digest product. The passenger DNA or insert was separated from the vector plasmid using EcoR I restriction enzyme. The passenger insert can be visualized at 1600 bp while the plasmid is visible at 2300 bp. In many instances an EcoR I restriction site was present within the passenger DNA. This is visualized as bands at 900 bp and 700 bp.

The 1600 bp insert was cut from the plasmid (EcoR1, 1.5 hr at  $37^{\circ}$ C) and an aliquot of product run in an agarose gel to verify its presence. Recombinant plasmids were placed in cold storage at -20°C after the 1600 bp fragment was verified (Figure 3). 16S rDNA was amplified for sequencing using the M13 forward, M13 reverse, or 524 internal primer in a linear fashion following manufacturer directions with the DYEnamic ET Dye Terminator Cycle Sequencing Kit (Amersham Biosciences, 2002). A volume of template DNA solution was added so that each sequencing reaction contained between 300-600 ng/ml. The final extension time was modified to allow complete elongation of the emerging DNA strand. The amplified sequencing mix was removed from the thermocycler and an ethanol cleanup was performed to remove any unincorporated dye terminators. The amplified mixture was then sequenced on a MegaBACE DNA Analysis System (Amersham Biosciences, 2002).

The electropherogram of each sequence was assigned a quality score using the Phred/Phrapsoftware package (Ewing *et al.,* 1998). Sequences with scores below 20 were removed from further analysis. Following these analyses, sequence files were converted to .ACE files and compiled in Biolign's alignment viewer (Hall, 2000). Each sequence was then viewed to ensure correct base calls, proper orientation, and suitable quality for comparison. Sequences were aligned using CLUSTAL W, a software package designed to align DNA and proteins using a progressive multiple alignment method (Thompson, 1994). Alignment allowed the grouping of organisms having genes with similar functional groups or OTUs (Kumar, 2001). Marshall (2002) found that 500 bp were more than sufficient to distinguish unique operational taxonomic units. A sequence

identity matrix was computed using the Biolign software package by conducting a pairwise comparison of each sequence that provided the proportion of identical residuals in the alignment (Hall, 2000). Sequences showing identity  $\geq$  0.975 were grouped as members of a single OTU. A second pairwise comparison was made between each library in a similar fashion. Sorenson similarity coefficients were calculated as described by Fox *et al.* (1977), Woese and Fox (1977), and McCaig *et al.* (1999). Sequences from each library were submitted to NCBI's BLASTn to determine nearest matches (Altschul, *et al.* 1997). MEGA version 3.1 was used to generate dendrograms of phylotypes that were used to infer the phylogenetic relationships within each library (Kumar, 2004).

Richness and evenness were assessed using the Shannnon-Wiener and Simpson indices, respectively. The Shannon-Wiener index (H), where  $H = \sum \rho_i \ln \rho_i$  and  $\rho = (n/N)$  $n =$  sequences in *i*th OTU and  $N =$  total sequences in library, provides a probability that a random individual selected will belong to a given category (McCaig *et al.,* 1999).

Richness and proportion of OTU was assessed using the Simpson Index. The Simpson Index (D), gives the probability that two randomly selected individuals from a sample belong to the same OTU. The equation is given as  $D = \sum \rho_i^2$ , where  $\rho$  is the proportion of individuals in the *i*th OTU (Dunbar *et al*., 1999; McCaig *et al*., 1999). An assessment of the completeness of subsampling was determined using Good's Coverage, calculated using  $C = 1-(\rho_i)$  x 100, where  $\rho_i$  is the number of individuals in the *i*th OTU (McCaig *et al.*, 1999).

The Sorenson similarity index is an incidence-based evaluation that makes pairwise comparisons of libraries to determine if any common individuals exist in both. An index of 1 would indicate that all individual types are found in both libraries, while a score of 0 would indicate no individual types in common. Sorenson similarity coefficients were calculated as  $2C/(A+B)$  where A = the number of unique OTUs found in library A; B = the number of unique OTUs found in library  $B$ ;  $C$  = the number of unique OTUs found in both library A and B.

Rarefaction analysis is one way to estimate total community diversity from a subsample and is an excellent starting point when beginning data set analysis (Hughes and Hellmann, 2005). Rarefaction was used to compare multiple sites having similar sample numbers or to evaluate differences in community diversity. Strongly curvilinear data plots may be evidence that diversity was adequately sampled (Kemp and Aller, 2004b). Rarefaction gives an estimate of a single sample's community diversity that can then be used to compare among samples.

SCHAO1 , an abundance based non-parametric estimator, was used to determine if libraries were of sufficient size to yield stable unbiased estimates of OTU richness (Kemp and Aller, 2004b). In addition,  $S_{ACE}$ , a coverage based estimator that correlates well with  $S_{CHAO1}$  when there are fewer than 10 sequences per OTU and the majority of OTUs occur only once or twice, was used as a reference for  $S_{CHAO1}$ . Equations for  $S_{CHAO1}$  and S<sub>ACE</sub> can be found in Kemp and Aller (2004b).

### CHAPTER III

## RESULTS

Eleven libraries were constructed from samples collected from City Lake on 18 and 19 December 2002 (Table 1). Between 89 and 112 clones were sequenced for each library. Six sequences, identified as potential chimera by ChimeraCheck software RDP, were eliminated from the analysis (Maidak *et al.*, 2001). Additionally, 44 sequences were eliminated from Library 1-1300/3, 43 eliminated from Library 1-1300/1, 59 eliminated from Library 1-1300/3, 37 eliminated from Library 2, 37 eliminated from Library 3, 31 eliminated from Library 1-1816, 38 eliminated from Library 1-0300, 31 eliminated from Library 1-0617, and 22 eliminated from Library 1-0617 because quality scores were below 20 on the Phred/Phrap quality score scale. From these libraries, 437 OTUs were identified.

Among all libraries, 84 clone sequences demonstrated affiliation with the division Proteobacterium, including representatives from each class,  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta$ ,  $\delta$  and  $\gamma$ . Twenty-four clone sequences affiliated with division Actinobacterium represented the next most abundant putatively identified 16S rDNA. Seventeen clone sequences demonstrated close association with Crater Lake bacterium. The most abundant OTU was found in Library 5, CL33 OTU 10 (43 clones), having 96-97% identity to uncultured bacterium FukuS 110 or uncultured freshwater clone 965004f10x1 (Glöckner *et al.*, 2000; Horner-

Sample $(Library \#)$	Date 2002	Time	Latitude (N)	Longitude (W)	Temp (C)	$*O2$ $(mgl^{-1})$	Conduct $(mScm^{-1})$	<b>TDS</b> $(mgl-1)$	*Turb $(\%)$	pH	*ChlA $(\mu g l^{-1})$
$1 - 1300/1$ 1-1300/2 1-1300/3	12/18	1300	35.59.725	79.56.669	6.36	10.37	120.1	0.0768	14.7	7.78	6.2
$\overline{2}$	12/18	1409	36.00.028	79.56.778	5.65	10.07	123.7	0.0791	18.3	7.81	11.3
3	12/18	1426	35.59.773	79.56.750	6.02	12.3	119.1	0.0762	13	7.91	9.7
$\overline{4}$	12/18	1438	35.59.904	79.57.005	5.84	11.02	112.5	0.0719	9.4	7.91	9.4
5	12/18	1454	35.59.976	79.57.001	6.61	11.17	113.9	0.0729	7.2	8.05	15.3
1-1816	12/18	1816	35.59.725	79.56.669	6.14	10.94	119.2	0.0763	13.1	7.98	15.5
$1 - 0300$	12/19	0300	35.59.725	79.56.669	5.83	10.79	119.4	0.0764	11.9	8.01	9.3
$1 - 0617$	12/19	0617	35.59.725	79.56.669	5.86	10.76	118.1	0.0756	11.9	8.09	16.2
$1 - 1200$	12/19	1200	35.59.725	79.56.669	6.17	11.2	117.1	0.0749	12.2	8.11	14

Table 1: Physical and chemical characteristics of City Lake samples collected on 18 and 19 Dec 2002. Samples 1-1816 to 1-1200 are diurnal samples taken from station 1.

 $^*O_2$  = dissolved oxygen; ChlA = chlorophyll a; Turb = turbidity

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closely resembling sequences of uncultured bacterium clone ES3-22 (unpublished), and Library 1-1816, CL38 OTU 3 (7 clones), consistent with uncultured bacterial clone ES3- 27 (Burkert *et al.*, 2003).

Rank abundance curves (Figure 4) make it practical to compare the richness of one OTU to others in a library. City Lake rank abundance curves are dominated by rare individuals (OTUs). The more steeply sloping curves indicate a more dominant OTU present in the library. The majority of OTUs have only one clone. The OTUs having the highest abundance were found in Library 5 OTU 10 (43 clones) followed by Library 2 OTU 3 (12 clones).

The overall range of observed Shannon-Wiener values was between 3.95 for Library 1-1300/1 to 1.86 for Library 5 (Table 2). The replicate Shannon-Wiener values were between 3.95 and 3.20. Spatial values ranged between 3.95 and 1.86. Shannon-Wiener scores from diurnal samples showed the least difference, ranging from 3.44 to 3.95. Library 5 was heavily weighted by a single OTU and represents the lowest recorded diversity in this study.

Overall Simpson Index values ranged from 0.0251 (1-1300/3) to 0.3751 (Library 5), with the larger value reflecting the large OTU and lower diversity in Library 5. Replicate Simpson Index values ranged slightly from 0.0251 to 0.0565. Spatial libraries demonstrated the greatest range in Simpson Index values, while diurnal values showed the least (Table 2). Coverage ranged from a high of 68% (Library 5) to a low of 18% (1- 1300/3), with an overall average of 38%.

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City Lake Library 1-1300/2 (Dec 2002) n=68







City Lake Library 3 (Dec 2002) n=63







City Lake Library 5 (Dec 2002) n=71



City Lake Library 1-1816 (Dec 2002) n=69



City Lake Library 1-0300 (Dec 2002) n=62



City Lake Library 1-0617 (Dec 2002) n=69







shown depicting individual OTUs as single columns. Bar height indicates the number of individuals in the OTU. Bar color indicates the putative organism or putative groups of organisms that contains the closest matching 16S rDNA to the City Lake Figure 4: Rank abundance curves for each City Lake 16S rDNA clone library are clone. When putatitive taxonomic identification was possible, it was limited to the information found in GenBank; therefore some affiliated 16S rDNA genes were putatively identified at the species level while others were putatively identified at other levels of taxonomic classification. The majority of clones matched the Uncultured Bacterium description in GenBank and are considered unidentified.

Table 2(A-C): Diversity, coverage, and richness characteristics of samples from this study.

**A**. Replicate Samples .



B. Samples taken along the axis of City Lake



The Sorenson similarity coefficients for replicate samples (Table 3-A) were generally moderate, ranging from 0.2461 to 0.5538 in replicate libraries. Sorenson similarity coefficients were most variable across the spatial samples (Table 3-B), with the lowest and highest recorded for all sample groups, ranging from 0.0833 to 0.6622. Diurnal similarity coefficients (Table 3-C) ranged from 0.2286 to 0.5263.

Upweighted Pair Group Method with Arithmetic Mean (UPGMA) application was used to generate phyletic dendrograms for each library (Kumar, 2001). Sequences from each library were used to generate phylogenetic trees. The results depict the evolutionary relationship of the partial 16S rDNA sequences found in each library (Figures 5-15).
Table 3: Sorenson values for 16S rDNA samples collected in this study and for 18S rDNA samples from Balser (2003). Sorenson values for 16S samples collected in this study and for 18S samples from Balser (2003). A: Replicate samples. B: Spatial samples. C: Diurnal samples. A. Sorenson values showing replicate samples



B. Sorenson values showing samples taken along the axis of City Lake.



C. Sorenson values showing samples taken over a diurnal period.





Figure 5: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 1-1300/1 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.



Figure 6: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 1-1300 Rep1 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.



Figure 7: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 1-1300 Rep2 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.



Figure 8: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 2 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.



Figure 9: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 3 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.



Figure 10: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 4 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.



Figure 11: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 5 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.



Figure 12: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 1-1816 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.



Figure 13: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 1-0300 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.



Figure 14: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 1-0617 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.



Figure 15: Bootstrap consensus tree for Library 1-1200 created using UPGMA Kimura 2-parameter with 500 replications. OTUs having two or more clones are grouped by brackets. GenBank Accession numbers are provided in parenthesis for OTUs with multiple clones. Bootstrap values below 50% are hidden.

## CHAPTER IV

## **DISCUSSION**

The identification of clones affiliated with Proteobacterium, Actinobacterium, and Crater Lake bacterium among others are consistent with Glöckner *et al.,* (2000), Burkert *et al.* (2003) and Amos (2002). Glöckner *et al.,* (2000) and Burkert *et al.*, (2003) found that Proteobacterium and Actinobacterium composed the most abundant and second most abundant putatively identified organisms in their studies. Amos (2003) and Burkert *et al.*, (2003) found Crater Lake bacterium, but in reduced numbers likely caused by elevated water temperatures. Shannon-Wiener and Simpson indices suggested that the City Lake clone libraries were well sampled overall. Generally, Sorenson similarity coefficients demonstrated considerable overlap among libraries, but less than the expected overlap for the replicate libraries. Replicate libraries demonstrated more variability than expected. This may be explained by the elimination of poor quality clones that may have represented the only incidence of prokaryotes that would not otherwise be documented in a given library. Another cause may have been an overestimation of the number of OTUs as a result of multiple single nucleotide polymorphisms within some clones.

The data reported in this study show patterns similar to Balser (2003). Representative 16S rDNA libraries sampled from City Lake on the basis of replicate, spatial and temporal scales reveal an expected distribution of representative OTUs

(Marshall, 2002; Amos, 2002; Balser, 2003). 16S rDNA library Shannon-Wiener values plot in a manner similar to Balser's (2003) 18S rDNA libraries (Fig 16). Libraries 2 and 3 share the greatest number of OTUs as revealed by a similarity coefficient of 0.62. This suggests that over half of the OTUs identified in each of these libraries were found in both libraries. Similarity coefficients for 16S rDNA clone libraries in this study ranged from 0.08 to 0.62. The overall mean similarity coefficient was 0.35, which suggest good overlap for libraries of this size. Larger libraries would have yielded larger similarity coefficients.

Library 5 was problematic. Low diversity and one OTU with 43 members might be the result of sampling organic matter or floating debris present in the lake at the time of sampling. The presence of allochthonous materials might explain the large number of clones in a single OTU (Horner-Devine *et al.*, 2003). Alternatively unusually low



Figure 16: 18S and 16S Shannon-Wiener Values derived from City Lake clones

diversity may be due to preferential amplification, PCR artifacts, or heteroduplexes (Wang and Wang, 1997). Finally, it is possible that this sample reflects a strong influence of inflowing tributary water, though this seems unlikely..

Similarity coefficients among spatial samples do not demonstrate a discernible trend (Figure 17). Investigators have found that bacterial diversity may vary as primary productivity changes in a system (Horner-Devine *et al.*, 2003; Torsvik *et al.*, 1998). This writing may explain the aberrant distribution of similarity coefficients as related to distance from sites. The presence of bubble aerators (Figure 2) may have impacted similarity coefficients and relative diversity distributions as related to sampling site distance. Yannarell and Triplett (2004) demonstrated that geographic obstacles within a single body of water can impact community composition by acting as a physical barrier.

For example the site of collection for Library 2 was separated by a tract of land from the site of collection for Library 4 (Figure 2). The similarity coefficient for Libraries 2 and 4 represent the lowest pairwise similarity scores of all samples. Spatial similarity coefficients also reveal that libraries 2 and 3 share the greatest number of OTUs overall samples. These results are possibly due to the relatively large OTU (12 clones) found in Library 2. Alternatively, sampling bias or molecular aberrations may have caused the unexpected occurrence of similarity coefficients observed in relation to sample site distance. It is also possible that the observed mix of similarity coefficients may have been due to a combination of the bubble aerators and sampling bias. Further study is needed to evaluate the relationship between similarity coefficients and sample distance.



Figure 17: Similarity Coefficient versus Distance. The chart above shows spatial similarity coefficients with relation to distance from sampling site. Sites are arranged (left to right) from those separated by the least distance to those libraries separated by the greatest distance. For instance Libraries 1-1300/1 and 3 are the closest libraries, while Libraries 1-1300/1 and 5 are the most distant. No obvious pattern is observed.

Diurnal similarity coefficients revealed no obvious patterns. Libraries 1-0300 and 1-0617 were collected at 0300 and 0617 respectively on 19 December 2002 and shared the greatest number of OTUs for the diurnal samples. Sorenson coefficients indicate overlap, averaging 0.4654, and suggesting that the community may have been well sampled.

Coverage was calculated to evaluate how effectively the microbial communities were sampled (Ravenschlag *et al.*, 1999). Coverage values ranged from a high of 68% (Library 5) to a low of 18% (Library 1-1300/2). Balser (2003) found coverage values

ranging from 44% to 69% using the identical samples used in this study, but targeting 18S rDNA clone libraries. Amos (2002) reported coverage to be 58% for both prokaryotic and eukaryotic targets in City Lake. The values reported in this study are consistent with these reports

Rarefaction analysis for City Lake replicate libraries reveal weakly curvilinear plots, suggesting that libraries should have been larger to give a more accurate assessment of relative diversity. Replicate sampling effort approaching 100 OTUs appear to be adequate to begin approaching an asymptomatic maximum (Figure 19).



Figure 18: Rarefaction curves for individual replicates and a composite replicate sample. The curve suggests high diversity in the sample and it suggests more OTUs are needed to begin an approach to its asymptote. The expected number of OTUs is plotted versus the number of clone sequences.



Figure 19: Rarefaction curves for spatial samples taken along a transect. The expected number of OTUs is plotted versus the number of clone sequences.



Figure 20: Rarefaction curves for diurnal samples. These data demonstrate the tightest clustering suggesting good replication. The expected number of OTUs is plotted versus the number of clone sequences.

Weakly curvilinear plots are evident (Figures  $19 - 20$ ), indicating that OTU richness may have been underestimated (Kemp and Aller, 2004a). The plot for Library 2 (Figure 19) shows the most curvilinear plot, suggesting that the number of observed OTUs necessary for stable estimates was approximately thirty OTUs. Plots 4 and 1-1816 appear to be weakly curvilinear and suggest that more than 45 OTUs would be necessary to achieve adequate sampling of the community. In contrast, a strongly curvilinear plot would have suggested that diversity was exhaustively sampled (Kemp and Aller, 2004a).

The composite replicate curves for  $S_{CHAO1}$  and  $S_{ACE}$  (Figure 21), predict that approximately 270 OTUs ,approximately 486 clones, would be needed for our library to be large enough to achieve maximum diversity coverage. Trend lines were calculated using least squares fit through subset points by using  $y = c \ln x + b$ , where c and b are constants and  $y = mx + b$  where b is a constant and m is the slope. Subset points were generated by using the average of 10 replicate subsets with replacement (Kemp and Aller, 2004a). The linear trend line was calculated to allow the evaluator to compare linear versus logarithmic fit. R squared values for both linear and logarithmic equations were included to allow a determination of the best fit (Cao *et al.*, 2002).

Near stable estimates of OTU richness were reached in 4 of the 11  $S<sub>CHAO1</sub>$  and  $S_{ACE}$  runs (Fig 21 C, E, F, L). There were 5 cases where  $S_{CHAO1}$  and  $S_{ACE}$  did not agree regarding the stability of OTU estimates (Figure 21 G, H, I, J, K). In these cases,  $S_{CHOUI}$ indicated an approach to an asymptote. Estimates for libraries 1-1300/2 and 1-1300/3 did not reach a near stable estimate or approach an asymptote for the predicted number of OTUs. Considering that the composite replicate curve suggests a near stable estimate,

this likely means that libraries 1-1300/2 and 1-1300/3 were not large enough individually (Kemp and Aller, 2004a).







Figure 21(A-L): Predicted number of OTUs based on  $S_{CHAO1}$  and  $S_{ACE}$ estimators compared to library size. Each point is the average of 10 replica subsets. Undefined  $S_{ACE}$  values are shown as zero (Kemp and Aller, 2004a).

As reported earlier, library comparisons were made using the Sorenson similarity coefficient, values ranged from 0.0833 to 0.6222. While OTUs suggest a grouping for target genes, these are not definitive. Studies have revealed that seemingly identical genes can be found in distantly related organisms. Kemp and Aller (2005) recognized that OTU classification criteria have an impact on the number of OTUs observed. OTU overlap made definitive OTU grouping difficult. In some cases, a single clone was found in two different OTUs. For example, clone 4A100 was found in two OTUs. This and similar cases were resolved by adding the sequence to the OTU with the highest corresponding similarity score.

Another difficulty in OTU classification is the potential over estimation of OTUs. Researchers have documented that high similarity ( $\geq$  97.5%) does not indicate species identification, rather a functional similarity (Osorio et al., 2005; Drancourt *et al.*, 2000; Cilia *et al.*, 1996). For example, in Library 1-1300/2, 56 OTUs were identified. After conducting a BLASTn search for each of the sequences in Library 1-1300/2, 6 previously identified OTUs were found to the match the same GenBank entry with 98% identity or greater, suggesting an overestimation of OTUs for this library. In another instance, the dendrogram for Library 1-1300/1 revealed clones determined to be a single OTU were separated from their cluster of sequences by a cluster of different OTUs. For example 5AOTU 40 ( Fig 5) is divided from its cluster members by 5AOTU 16. Specifically, clone 5A109 was 97.3% identical to clone 5A064 and 96.9% identical to clone 5A018: 5A109 nearly met the criteria to be included in 5AOTU 16, but instead qualified for inclusion in 5AOTU 40. The depiction found in the dendrogram for Library 1-1300/1

provides a more objective relationship of these clones to one another and as a result 5AOTU 40 appears to be separated by 5AOTU 16. Cilia *et al.,* (1996) encountered a similar problem differentiating a strain of *Escherichia* from a clade of *Shingella,* and determined that the lack of data point differences did not provide enough information to effectively build a representative dendrogram.

Attempts were made to minimize bias by treating all samples similarly. Extraction of genomic DNA and PCR run parameters were consistent for all libraries. Sources of bias outside of direct control may have included variation in the number of alleles present, G+C content, secondary structure, and the presence of chimeric templates (Kroes *et al.*, 1999). Preferential amplification of 16S rDNA templates may have been another source of bias that could have affected observed community structure (Reysehbach *et al.* 1992). Sample collection is another area of concern. For example, debris in City Lake may have contributed to the results of Library 5. In addition to procedural causes of bias, researchers have suggested that public databases are replete with chimeric sequences that have been identified as novel OTUs despite awareness of the problem of chimera (Hugenholtz and Huber, 2003). While this is a concern, every effort to eliminate the presence of chimeric sequences was made. Studies have found that as the number of PCR cycles increase, the chances of chimeric formation increase. PCR cycles in this study were limited to 29 cycles. The presence of multiple rRNA genes from the same organism can also induce chimeric formation as well (Wang and Wang, 1997). There is no definitive way to assure detection of all chimeras, but there are

generally accepted tools (Ribosomal Database Project Chimera\_Check and Bellerophon) that can detect chimeric sequences (Hugenholtz and Huber, 2003).

This study explored a portion of the existing community composition of High Point City Lake based on small temporal and spatial scales. The general hypothesis predicted that replicate samples would be the most similar, spatial samples taken from closer sampling sites would be more similar than those taken from more distant sites, and diurnal samples might reflect day-night differences. These hypotheses were not clearly supported by this data. The findings of this study suggest that the variability among the replicate libraries may be a reflection of the small library size.  $S_{CHAO1}$  and  $S_{ACE}$ predictors suggested larger libraries would be required to achieve a stable estimate of OTUs, but given the small size of the replicate libraries their similarity values were not bad.

Spatial samples studied did not overlap as much as expected, perhaps due to low coverage for these samples. Spatial samples did not demonstrate more similarity among closer libraries. However Library 5 had the most different community composition. Library 5 was collected from a shallow part of the lake without aerators. In addition this part of the lake may have been influenced by a stream. It is unclear if the different community composition truly represents differences due to geographic differences or if the differences were due to an unusually large OTU that doesn't reflect biological reality. Examination of Library 5 replicates would be required to determine if the difference observed was real or not.

The diurnal samples suggested little difference among samples. The similarity of the diurnal libraries may have been caused by cool weather and cloud cover, the presence of bubble aerators in the lake or a combination of both. The diurnal libraries with the greatest overlap were generated from samples collected with only 3 hours difference in collection time, as compared to 6 hours for the other diurnal samples.

The range of overlap among 16S rDNA libraries was greater than the range Balser (2003) found among 18S rDNA libraries; however, the mean 16S rDNA library similarity coefficient was 0.37, while Balser's (2003) 18S rDNA library similarity coefficient mean was 0.28. These values suggest that the 16S rDNA libraries were similar to one another with limited variability among libraries.

Clone sequences affiliated with Proteobacteria,, Actinobacterium and Crater Lake bacterium represented the most common cross referenced sequences in GenBank for this study. Crater Lake bacterium and *Zooglea ramgeria* were the only categories of organisms shared among this study and Amos (2002). This study found 12 occurrences of clones having  $\geq 0.975$  similarity to Crater Lake bacterium. Amos (2002) found two occurrences of clones having  $\geq 0.975$  similarity to Crater Lake bacterium. In contrast, this study putatively identified only one clone as *Zoogloea ramigera*, having only 0.96 similarity to its nearest GenBank match. Amos (2002) found eleven 16S rDNA clones with similarity  $\geq 0.975$  to *Zooglea ramigera*. The differences in the occurrence of the Crater Lake bacterium and *Zooglea ramigera* may be attributed to sample site selection or the difference may be attributed to differences in surface temperatures. The average air surface temperature on the day of sample collection for this study was 42ºC. Water

temperatures in City Lake were not reported in Amos (2002); however, surface air temperatures at City Lake on the day of sample collection was an average of 72ºC as reported by weatherunderground.com.

Studies focused on multiple genes would facilitate the development of a catalogue of 16S diversity. The criteria for determining the number of gene targets must be evaluated to allow broad community coverage, yet specific enough to determine differences for reliable taxonomic purposes. Studies by Balser (2003), Amos (2002), Marshal (2002), Lindstrom (2002), Glöckner *et al.* (2003) and Hiorns et al. (2003) suggest the presence of 16S rDNA of various phylotypes, some common across geographic and climactic scales. These studies suggest a ubiquitous set of organisms that may be present regardless of lake trophic status, perhaps present in differing abundance.

The difficulty of determining the identity of rare organisms is further hindered because most prokaryotic organisms are not culturable (Zengler et al. 2002). The use of microarray technology may be a near term solution to this obstacle. In addition, microarray technology may afford a practical monitoring tool for local utilities and water resource managers. Improved molecular, taxonomic, and biochemical methods combined with a better understanding of nutrient poor culture techniques will advance the microbial ecological understanding of microbial communities in aquatic environments.

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## APPENDIX A: Categories of Organisms Affiliated with City Lake Clone Libraries




#### APPENDIX B: Library 1-1300 APPENDIX B: Library 1-1300/1











### APPENDIX C: Library 1-1300/2













## APPENDIX D: Library 1-1300/3







### A P P E N DIX E: Library 2











### A P P E N DIX F: Library 3











#### A P P E N DIX G: Library 4













# APPENDIX H: Library 5










## A P P E N DIX I: Library 1-1816











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## A P P E N DIX J: Library 1-0 3 0 0











## A P P E N DIX K: Library 1-0617











## APPENDIX L: Library 1-1200





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Appendices B-L list City Lake clones and their % similarity. GenBank's BLASTn was used to find the nearest matching sequence to the City Lake clone and that match was included. GenBank accession numbers were also included as <sup>a</sup> reference aid. The last three columns provide BLASTn % identity to City Lake clones and the number of matching nucleotides.