

Environmental Public Health Surveillance of Freshwater Harmful Algal Blooms in Washington State Using Drone Technology

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WSEHA AEC

Outline

- > **Background**
- > **Study Aims**
- > **Methods**
- > **Results**
- > **Discussion**
- > **Limitations**
- > **Concluding Remarks**
- > **Acknowledgments**





Background

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Harmful Cyanobacterial Blooms (HCBs)

- Freshwater cyanobacteria (“blue-green algae”)
- Produce taste-and-odor compounds and potent toxins
- Threaten recreational and drinking water sources
- Frequency, duration, magnitude to increase with climate change



Animal Safety Alert

TOXIC Blue-Green Algae

When in Doubt... Stay Out!

If you see a bloom, do not let your pet in the water.

- Toxic algal blooms can poison animals, wildlife, and people.
- Toxic blooms can be different colors: green, blue, red, or brown.
- Blooms appear as foam, scum, or streaks on the surface of water.
- Look for blooms in lakes, ponds, and rivers.

If your pets go in the water:

- Do not let them lick their fur.
- Rinse them with clean water.
- Rinse your hands and any exposed skin.

Dogs can have severe signs within minutes to hours.

Look for these signs:

- Low energy
- Not eating
- Vomiting
- Stumbling
- Seizures
- Weakness
- Drooling
- Diarrhea
- Paralysis
- Tremors

If your pet becomes ill - Call your veterinarian immediately!

Report animal poisonings to your local health department, or the WA Dept of Health. Ph: 360-236-3330
www.doh.wa.gov/algae

Washington State Department of Health
DOH 330-114 June 2017



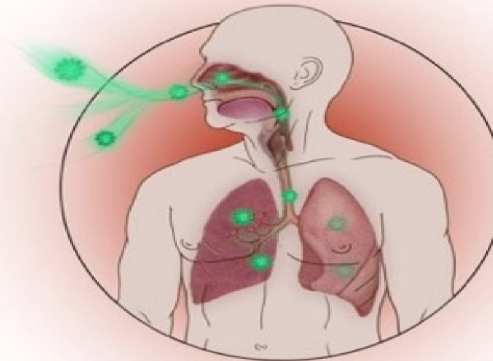
MODES OF TRANSMISSION

(Figure 3, Lad et al., 2022)



INGESTION

Consuming HAB contaminated water, seafood, or algal supplements



INHALATION

Breathing aerosols from HAB contaminated water sources



DERMAL CONTACT

Skin contact during recreational activities in HAB contaminated water

RESPIRATORY

Inhalation of HAB toxins may cause inflammation and weaken walls of the lungs



HEPATIC

HAB toxins such as microcystins may increase liver inflammation and lipid accumulation, pyroptosis of hepatocytes, and promote carcinogenic effects



GASTROINTESTINAL

Exposure to HAB toxins may lead to inflammation, cell death and increased risk for colorectal cancer



NEURO

Some HAB toxins can cross the blood brain barrier and target cholinergic synapses or voltage-gated ion channels, can damage neurons by inducing oxidative stress and inflammation



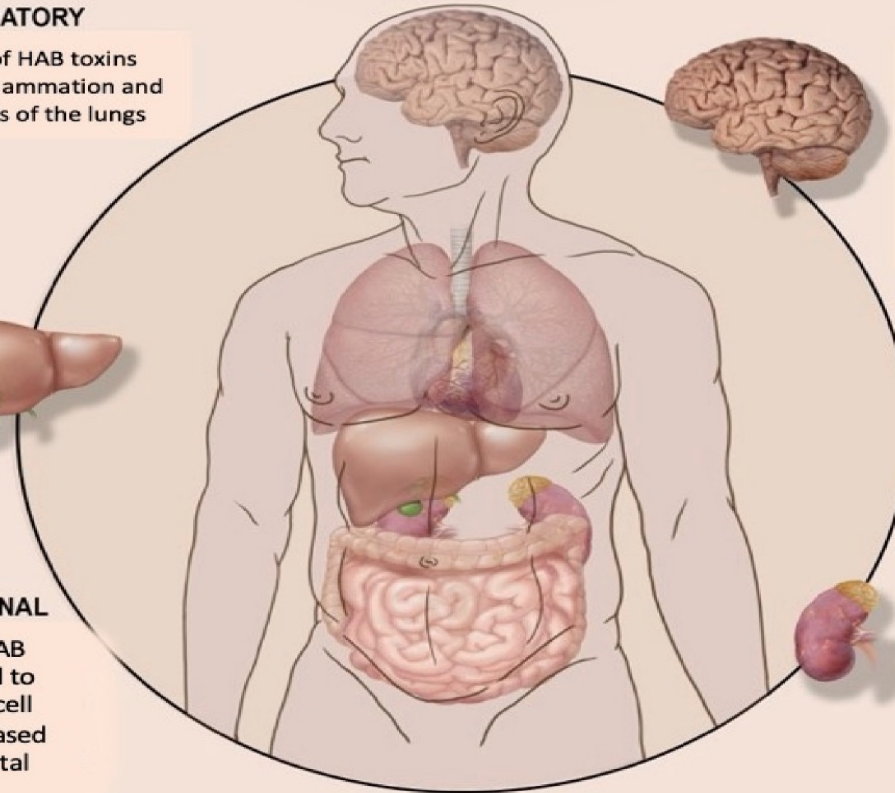
CARDIOVASCULAR

Exposure to HAB toxins may lead to cardiac inflammation and fibrosis as well as cardiac hypertrophy



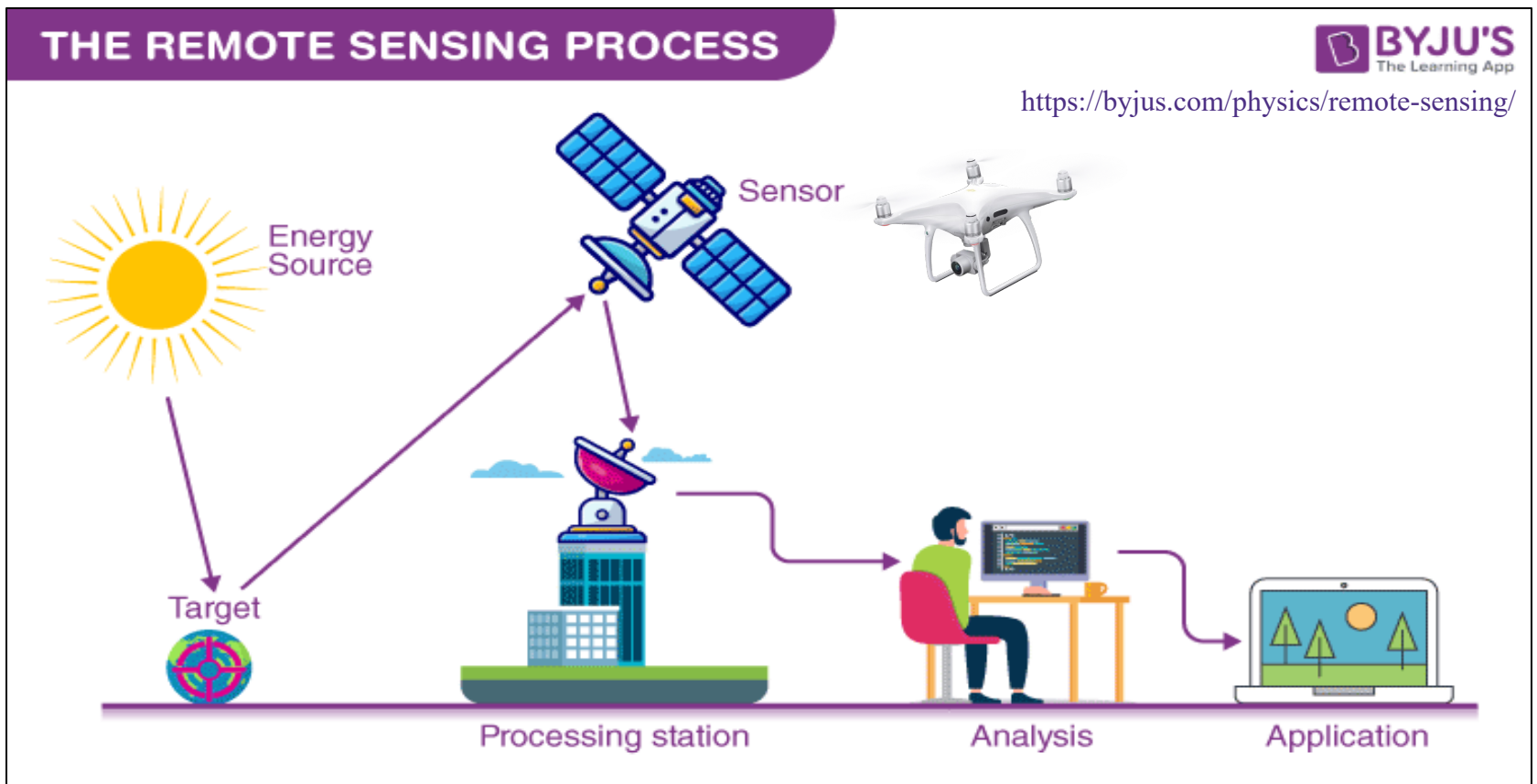
RENAL

Exposure to HAB toxins induces oxidative stress, inflammation and cell death in renal cell types, thus potentially leading to decreased renal function



Remote Sensing Applications

- > **Detection Tools: Tier I** (biological / bloom activity?) > **Tier II** (cyanobacteria?) > **Tier III** (cyanotoxins?)
 - Almuhtaram et al. (2021)





Comparative and Intercalibration Studies | **Open Access** |

Commercially available unoccupied aerial systems for monitoring harmful algal blooms: A comparative study

Edna G. Fernandez-Figueroa Alan E. Wilson, Stephanie R. Rogers

First published: 30 December 2021 | <https://doi.org/10.1002/lom3.10477> | Citations: 7

Associate editor: Ivona Cetinic

Journal of Contemporary Water Research & Education

Case Study Article | **Free Access**

Monitoring Algal Blooms in Small Lakes Using Drones: A Case Study in Southern Illinois

Di Wu, Ruopu Li Jia Liu, Nafeesa Khan

First published: 26 April 2023 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1936-704X.2022.3383.x>

Open Access **Article**

Using Imagery Collected by an Unmanned Aerial System to Monitor Cyanobacteria in New Hampshire, USA, Lakes

by Christine L. Bunyon ^{1,*} , Benjamin T. Fraser ¹ , Amanda McQuaid ² and Russell G. Congalton ¹

¹ Department of Natural Resources and the Environment, University of New Hampshire, 56 College Road, Durham, NH 03824, USA

² University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension, 59 College Road, Durham, NH 03824, USA

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Remote Sens. **2023**, *15*(11), 2839; <https://doi.org/10.3390/rs15112839>

Submission received: 17 May 2023 / Revised: 22 May 2023 / Accepted: 24 May 2023 / Published: 30 May 2023



Study Setting



LEGEND
● Sample Locations



Study Aims

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Study Aims

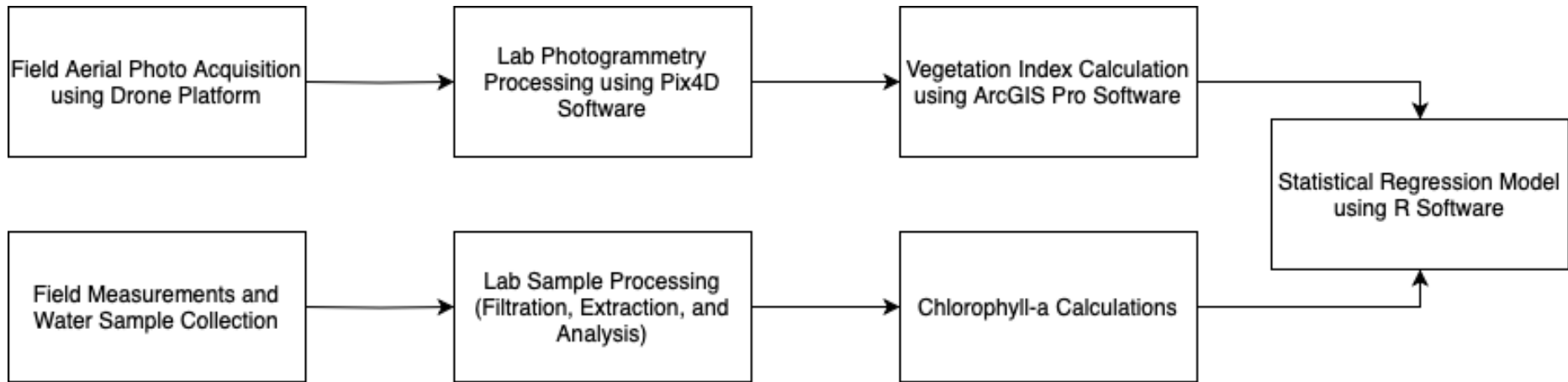
- > **Aim 1:** Understand the human health risks of HCBs and the local context for their monitoring, surveillance, and risk notification.
 - Complete a narrative literature review
 - Meet with local, county, and state professionals working with HCBs
- > **Aim 2:** Assess the use of remotely piloted drones as a supplemental HCB monitoring tool in a smaller-scale freshwater lake.
 - Perform drone-based aerial photo collection and water sample collection
 - Analyze data using simple linear regression models
- > **Aim 3:** Communicate challenges and facilitators with a drone-based data collection guidance document.
 - Provide deliverable to pertinent local agencies summarizing findings



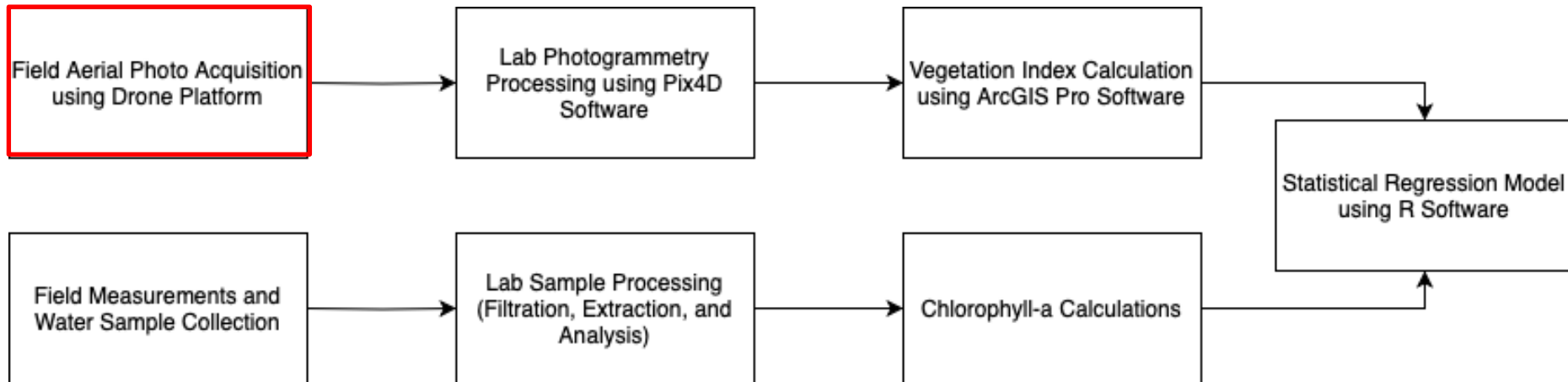
Methods

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Methods



Methods

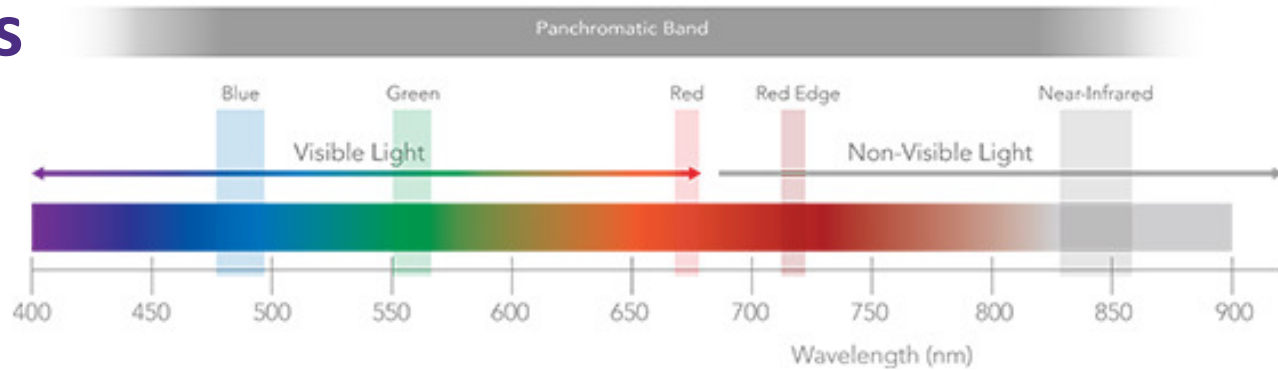


Drone Platforms



Parameter	DJI Phantom 4 Pro+ RTK	DJI Matrice 210
Approximate Weight with Batteries	1.391 kg	4.8 kg
Diagonal Length	350 mm	643 mm
Vertical Position Accuracy	±0.1 m	±0.5 m
Horizontal Position Accuracy	±0.1 m	±1.5 m
Max Payload Capacity	0.5 kg	1.34 kg
Max Flight Time	30 min.	34 min.
Retail Value	\$6,600 USD	\$12,000 USD

Drone Sensors



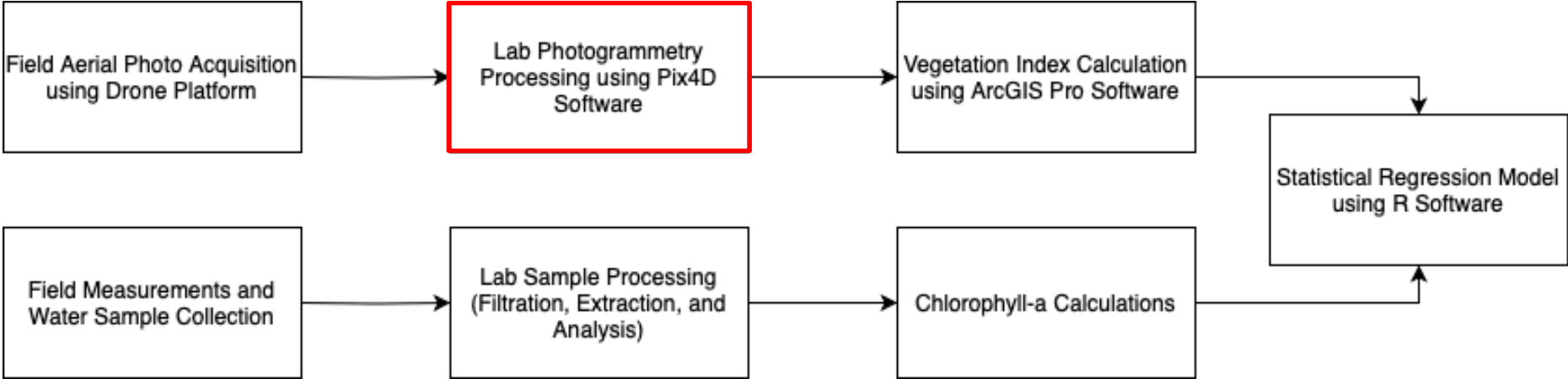
60m
90m
120m

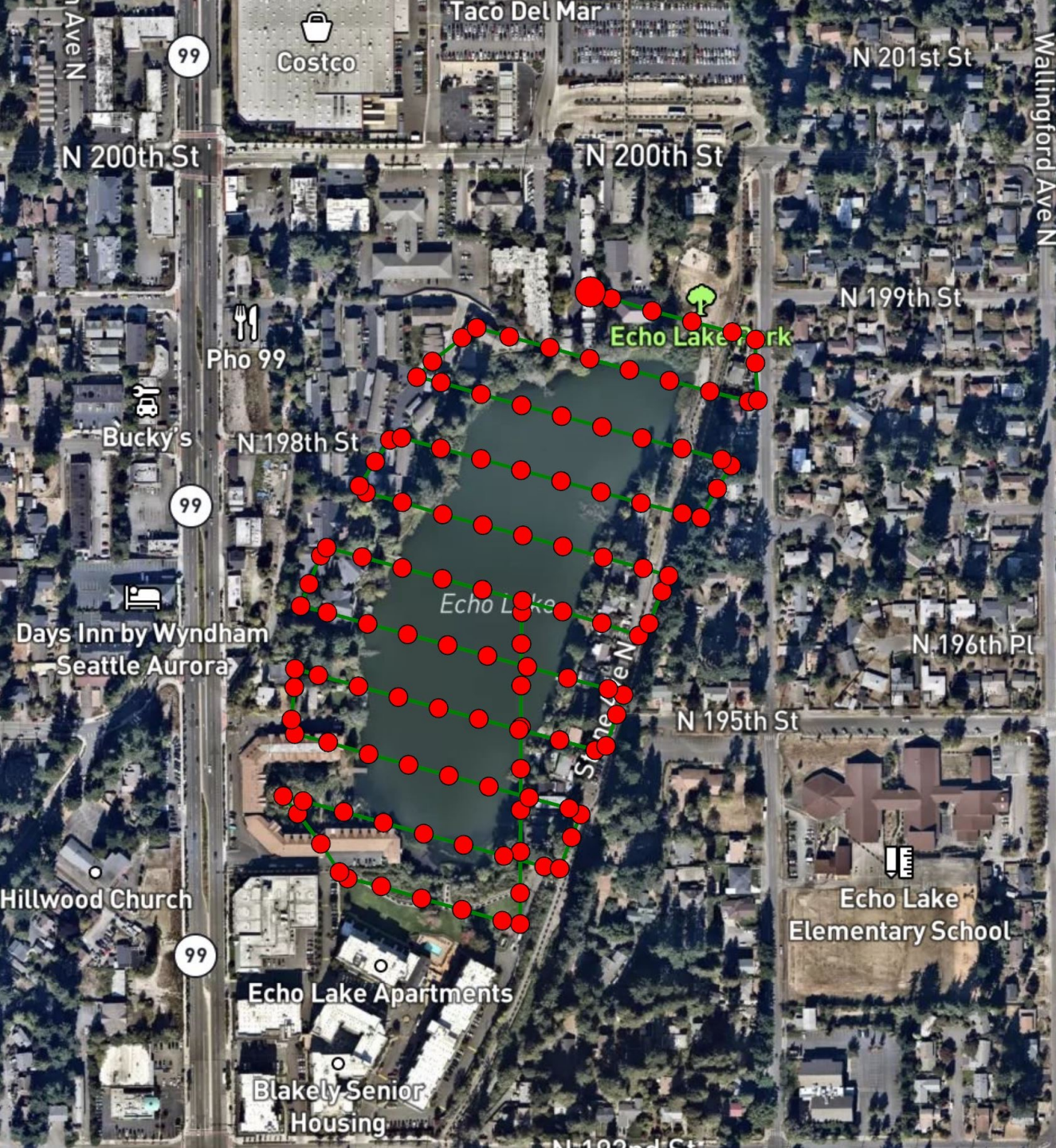


RAPID NHERI
Natural Hazards Reconnaissance

Parameter	DJI Phantom 4 Pro+ RTK	DJI Matrice 210
Sensor Type	1" CMOS RGB Camera	Micasense Altum Multispectral Sensor
Spatial Resolution	20 MP	2064 x 1544 pixels (3.2 MP x 5 imagers)
Focal Length	24 mm	8 mm
Field of View	84° 8.8 mm/24 mm	48° x 36.8°
Retail Value	(included with platform)	\$16,000 USD

Methods





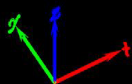
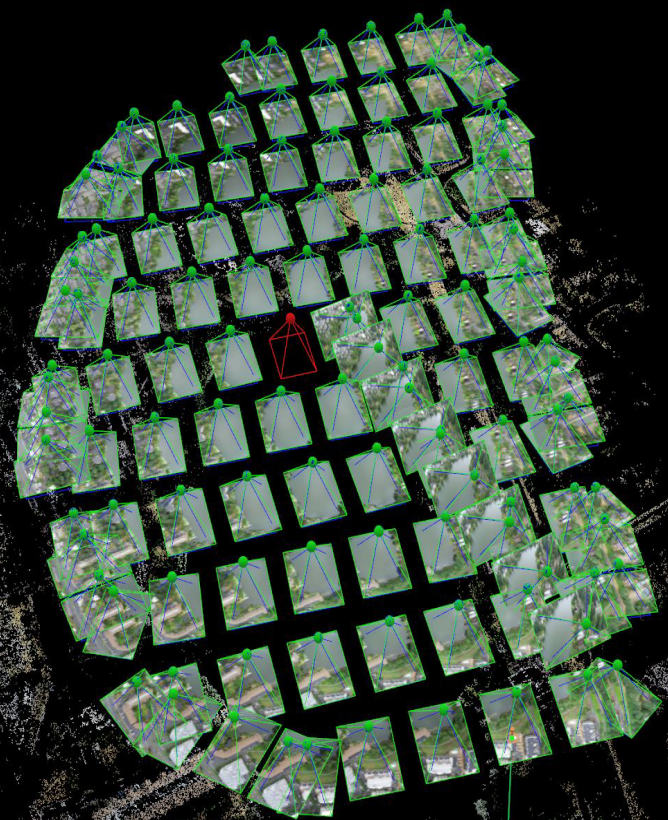
Processing Area



PIX4Dmapper



Raycloud



PIX4Dmapper



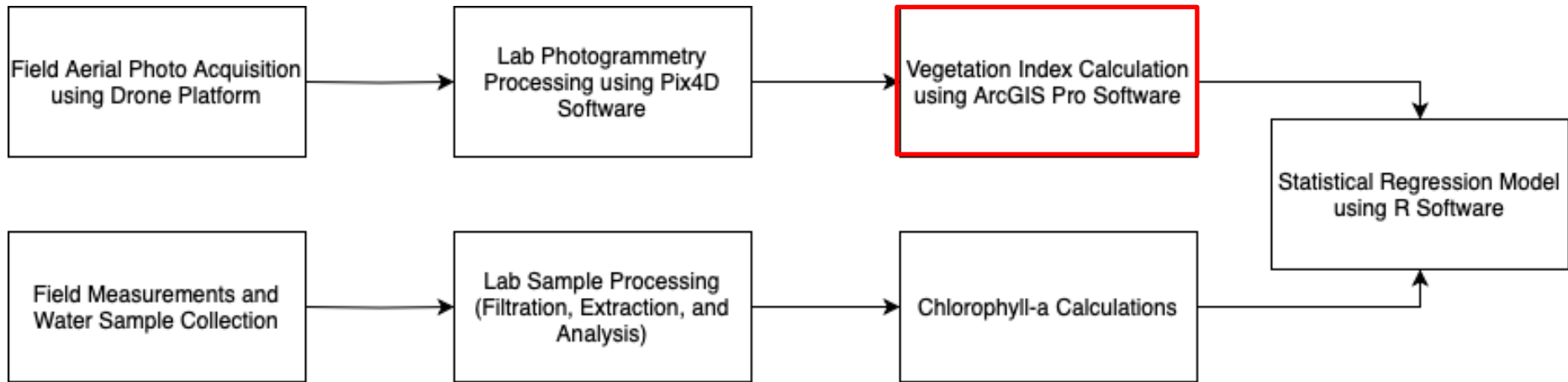
Orthomosaic



PIX4D**mapper**



Methods



Methods

- > **Vegetation Index (VI):** image transformation in which the individual spectral bands (R/G/B, NIR) of an original image are manipulated to highlight vegetation properties in the new image.

Vegetation Index	Equation	Application
Color Index of Vegetation Extraction (CIVE)	$(0.441 * R) - (0.881 * G) + (0.385 * B) + 18.787$	Agricultural crop health
Excess Green Index (EXG)	$(2 * G) - R - B$	Green algae biomass
KIVU	$(B - R) / G$	Lake phytoplankton chlorophyll concentration
Normalized Green-Red Difference Index (NGRDI)	$(G - R) / (G + R)$	Green algae biomass
Visible Band Difference VI (VDVI)	$(2 * G - R - B) / (2 * G + R + B)$	Green algae biomass
Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (NDVI)	$(NIR - R) / (NIR + R)$	Terrestrial vegetation chlorophyll
Band Ratio (B/G)	B / G	Ocean color changes of chlorophyll
Ratio Vegetation Index (RVI)	NIR / R	Drinking water reservoir chlorophyll concentration
Green Normalized Difference Vegetation Index (GNDVI)	$(NIR - G) / (NIR + G)$	Terrestrial vegetation chlorophyll
2-Band Enhanced Vegetation Index (EVI2)	$2.5 * [(NIR - R) / (NIR + 2.4 * R + 1)]$	Terrestrial vegetation chlorophyll

Fernandez-Figueroa et al. (2022); Kataoka et al. (2003); Sunoj et al. (2021); Xue & Su (2017); Bunyon et al. (2023); Wu et al. (2023); Zeng et al. (2016)



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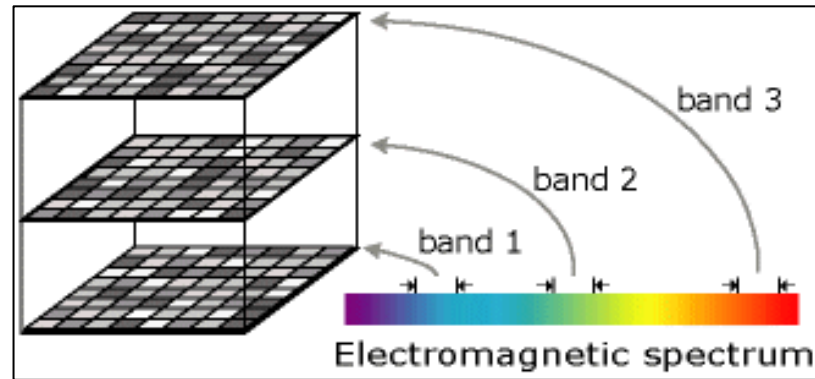
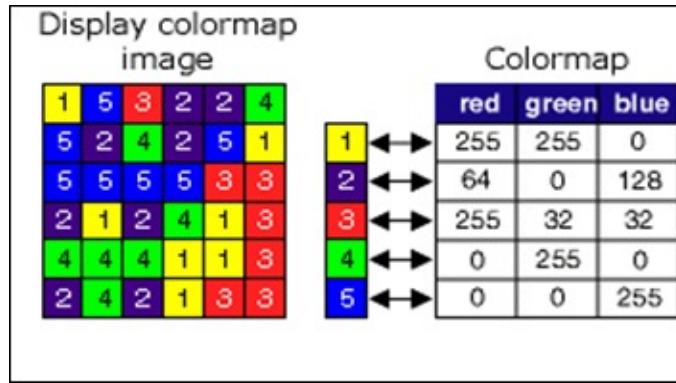
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Methods

<https://pro.arcgis.com/en/pro-app/latest/help/data/imagery/raster-bands-pro.htm>

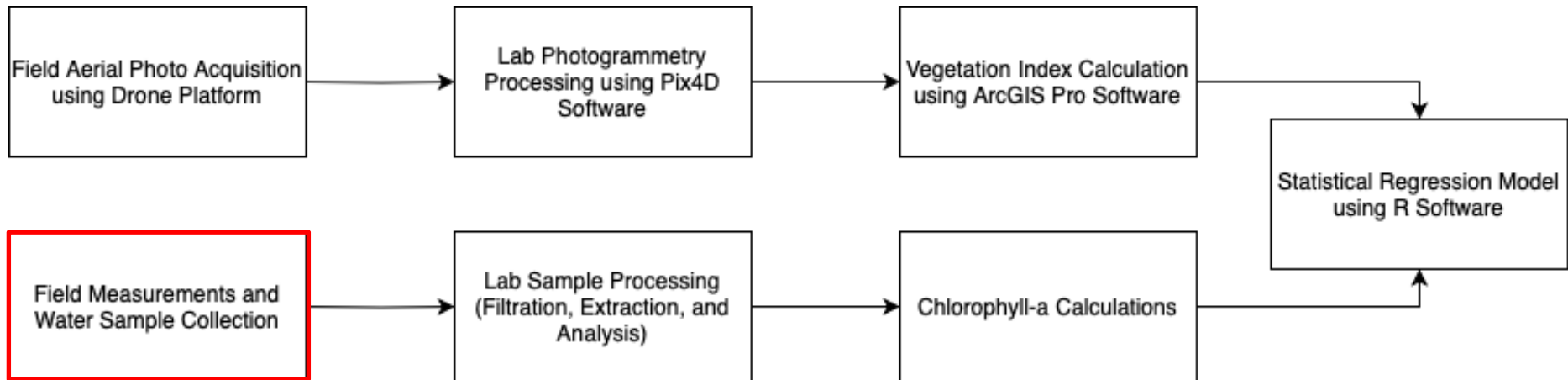


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Methods

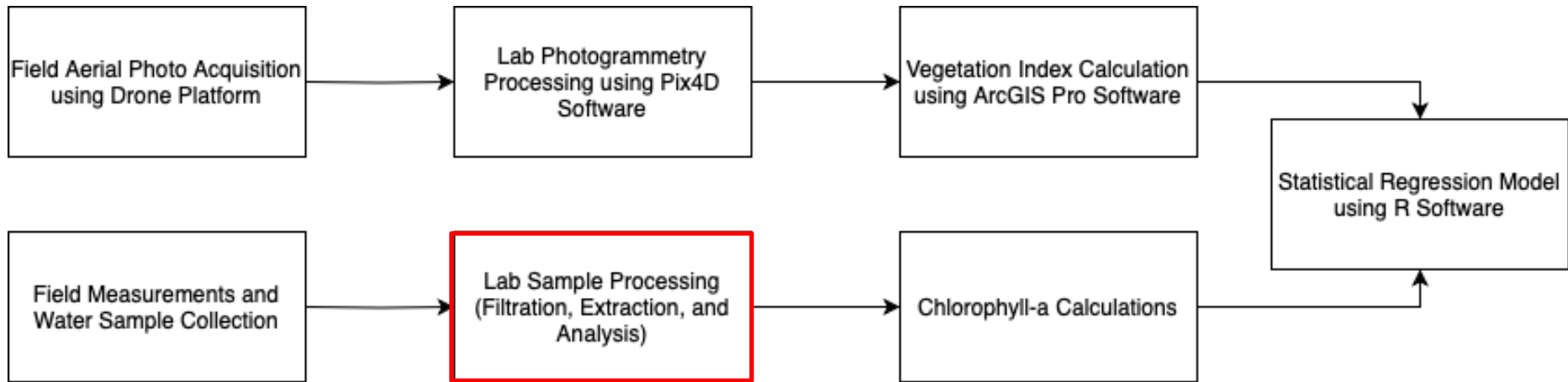


Field Methods

- > USEPA *Standard Operating Procedure for Chlorophyll a Sampling Method Field Procedure* (2013) and state SOPs
- > All water samples were analyzed in duplicate
- > Meteorological and environmental conditions recorded

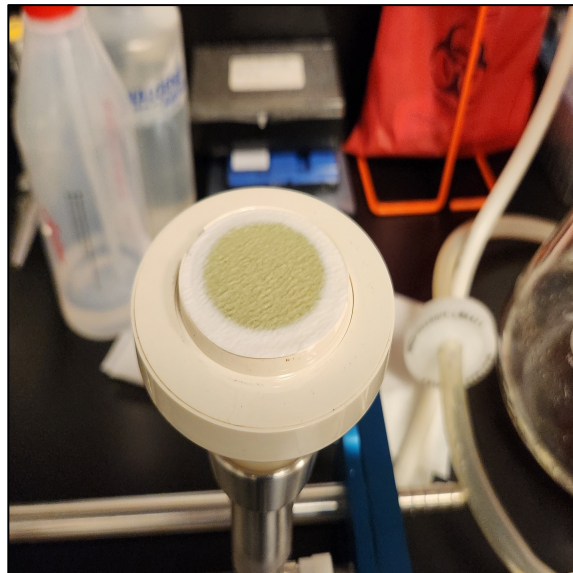


Methods



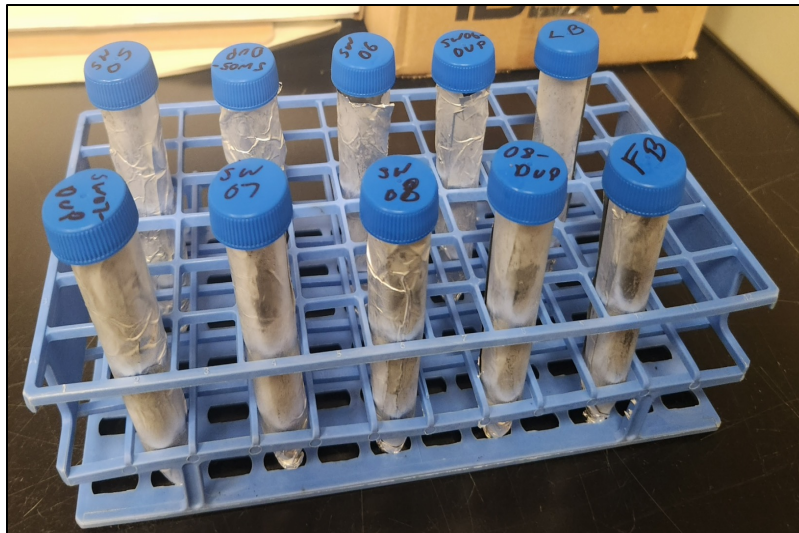
Lab Methods

- > **USEPA Method 446.0:** In Vitro Determination of Chlorophylls a, b, c₁ + c₂ and Pheopigments in Marine And Freshwater Algae by Visible Spectrophotometry
- > **APHA Method 10200H:** Spectrophotometric Determination of Chlorophyll

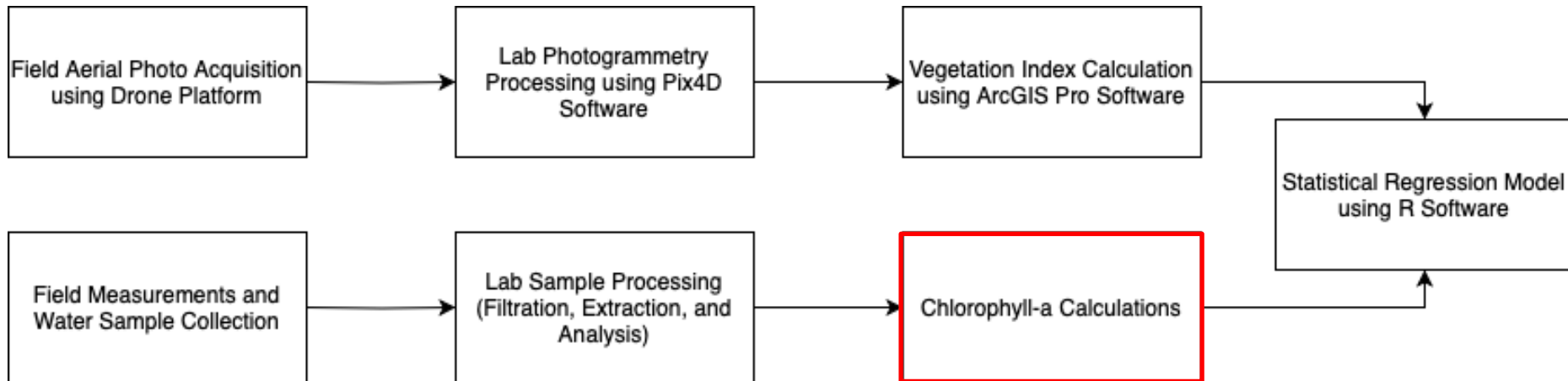


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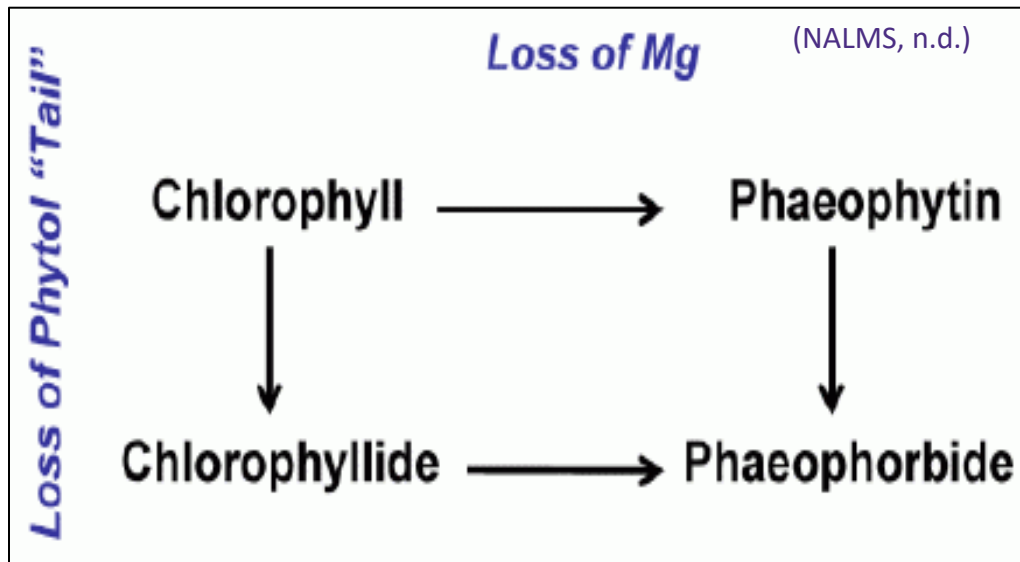


Methods



Chlorophyll a Calculations

- > **USEPA Method 446.0**
- > Uncorrected/Unacidified Chlorophyll a
 - Jeffrey and Humphrey's Trichromatic Equations
- > Corrected/Acidified Chlorophyll a
 - Lorenzen's Modified Monochromatic Equations

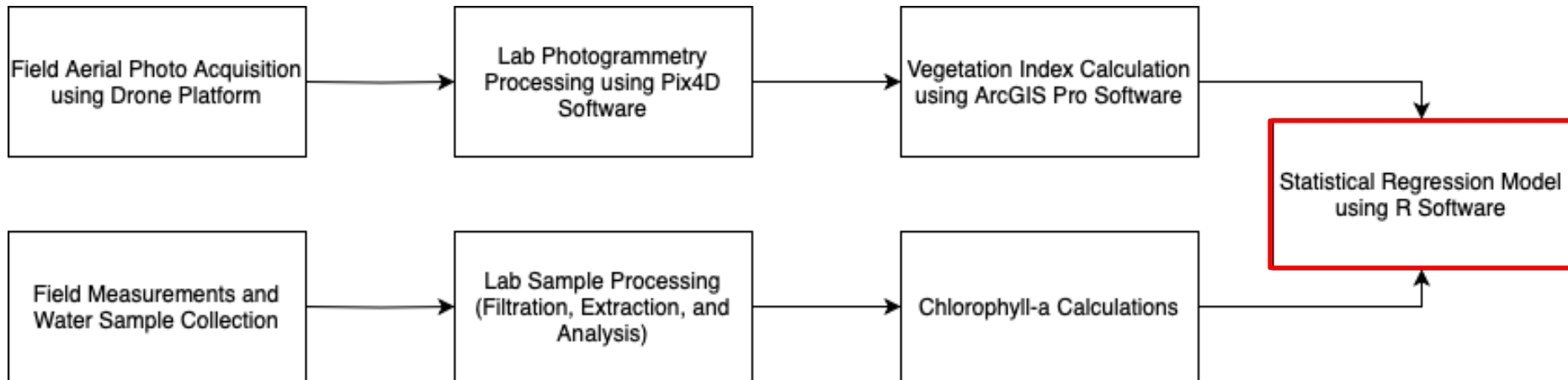


Quality Assurance and Quality Control

- > Sample Preservation
 - Temperature, acidity, sunlight exposure, time
- > Decontamination Procedures
- > Negative Controls
 - Field Blank, Laboratory Blank
- > Positive Controls
 - Stock Standard Solution of known chlorophyll a concentration



Methods





Results

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Results - Aims 1 and 3

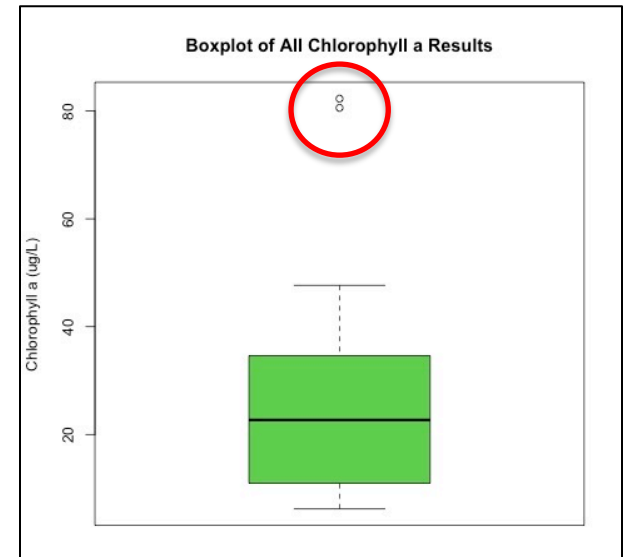
- > Aim 1 – Literature Review and Local Agency Meetings
 - Synthesized 15 review articles and 5 experimental studies published across 14 academic journals
 - Local agency needs and challenges identified

- > Aim 3 – Data Collection Guidance Document
 - Deliverable highlights cost and logistics encountered as well as considerations of environmental factors and flight settings needed for optimal performance



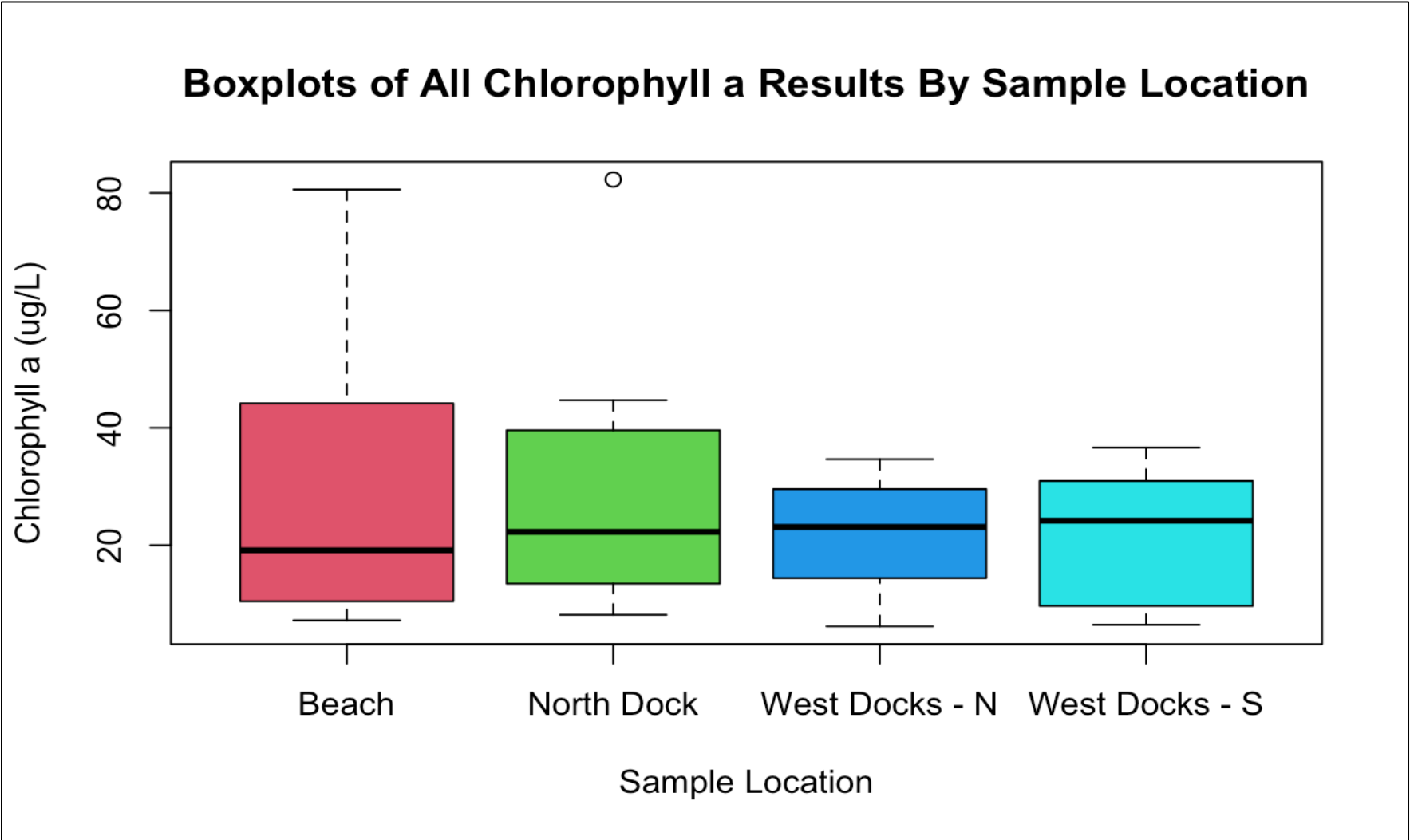
Results - Aim 2

Trophic State Indices			
	TP ($\mu\text{g/L}$)	Chl ($\mu\text{g/L}$)	Secchi (m)
Oligotrophic	<8	<2	>8
Mesotrophic	8-20	2-7	8-3
Eutrophic	20-100	7-40	1-3
Hypereutrophic	>100	>40	<1

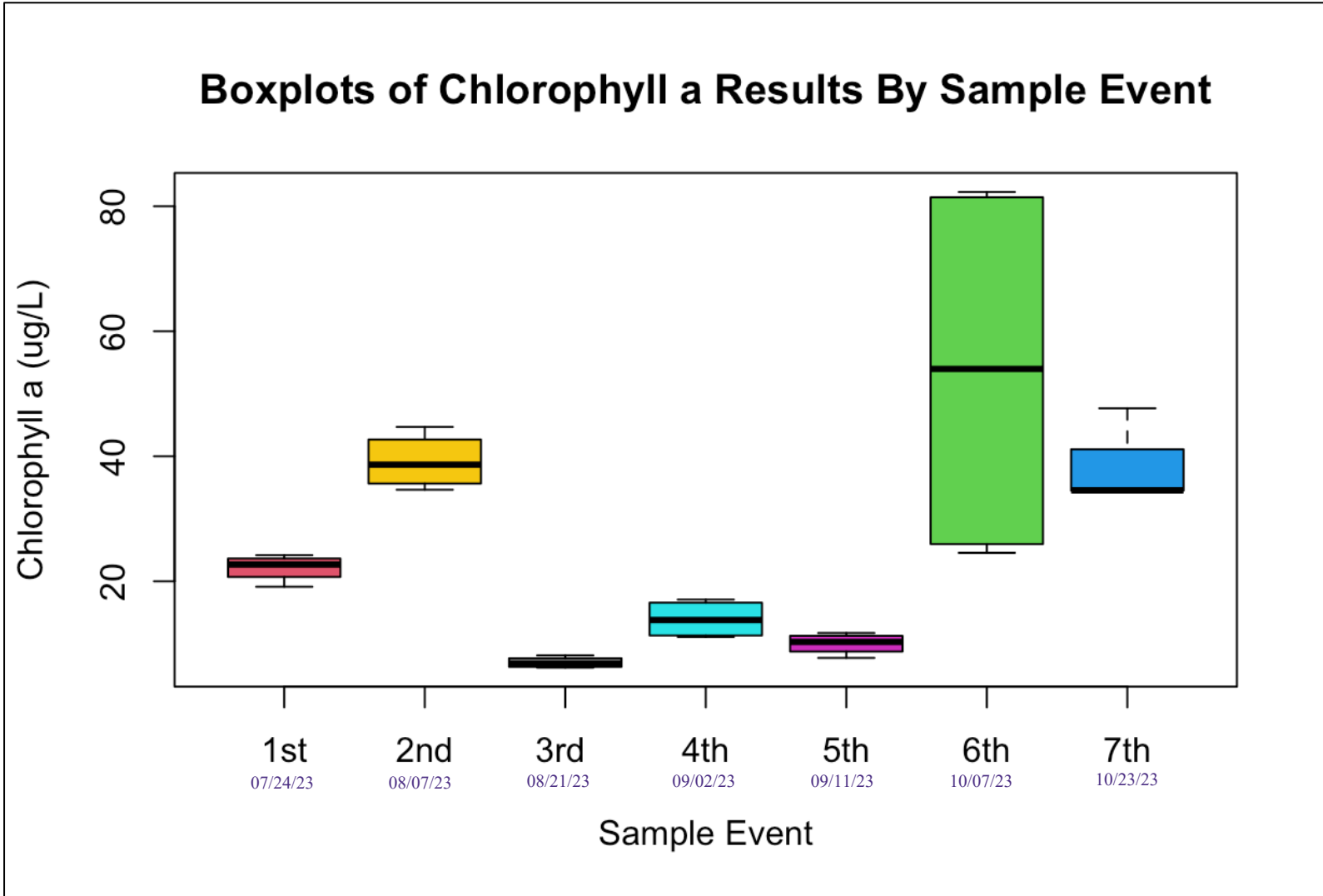


Category	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max
All Samples (n=28)	26.26	19.95	22.70	6.19	82.28
Beach (n=7)	30.88	27.02	19.13	7.22	80.58
North Dock (n=7)	31.26	26.00	22.27	8.15	82.28
West Docks - North (n=7)	21.70	10.84	23.12	6.19	34.65
West Docks - South (n=7)	21.21	12.61	24.18	6.45	36.64
First Event (n=4)	22.18	2.18	22.70	19.13	24.18
Second Event (n=4)	39.16	4.46	38.66	34.65	44.70
Third Event (n=4)	7.00	0.88	6.84	6.19	8.15
Fourth Event (n=4)	13.96	3.07	13.81	11.12	17.08
Fifth Event (n=4)	10.03	1.71	10.31	7.75	11.73
Sixth Event (n=4)	53.70	32.05	53.97	24.56	82.28
Seventh Event (n=4)	37.82	6.58	34.55	34.49	47.68

Results - Aim 2



Results - Aim 2





Dated 06/23/2023



Dated 10/07/2023



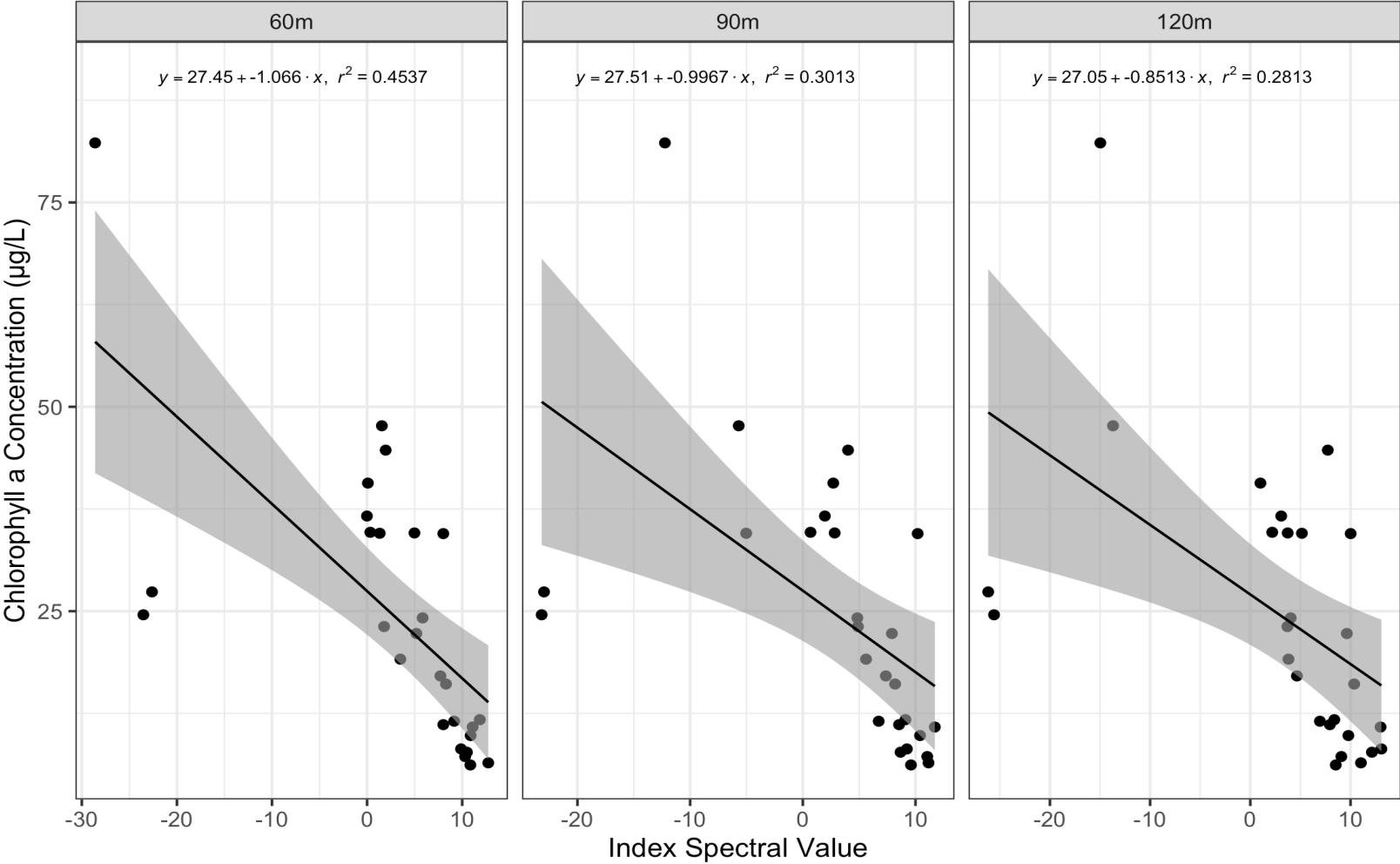
Linear Regression Models - RGB VIs

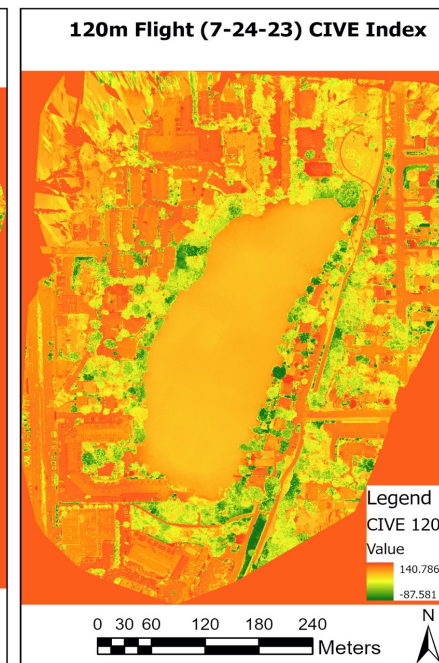
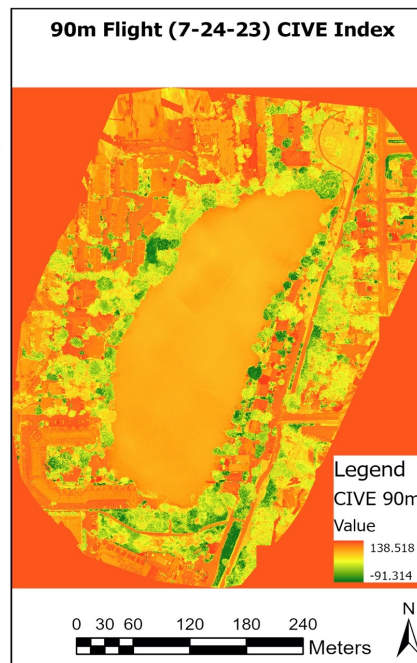
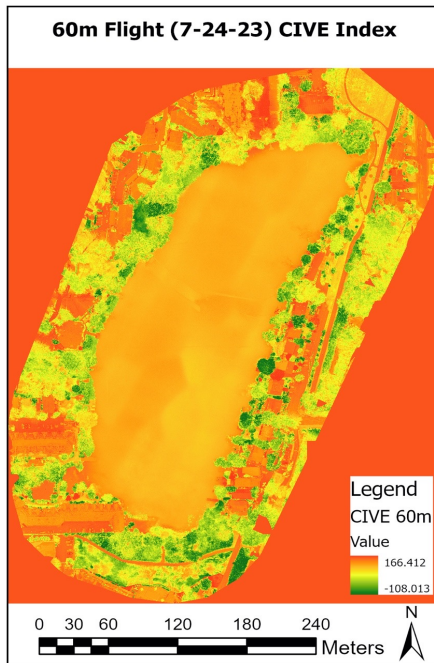
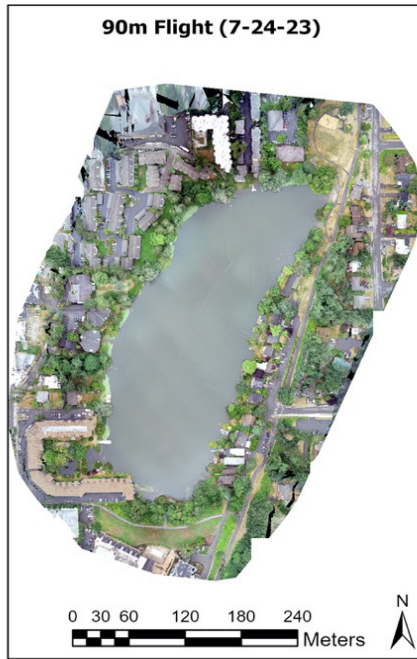
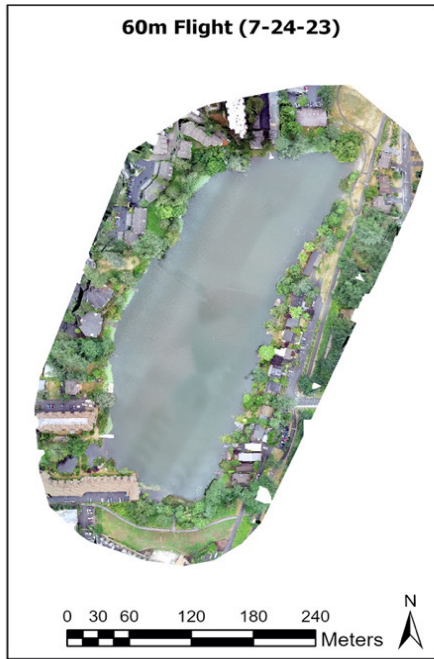
N = 27 (all flight altitudes)

Vegetation Index	Intercept Estimate	Slope Estimate	95% CI	R ² value (p value)
Flight Altitude	60m			
CIVE	27.45	-1.066	[-1.549, -0.5844]	0.4537 (0.0001*)
EXG	16.07	0.4192	[0.2029, 0.6356]	0.3892 (0.0005*)
KIVU	29.38	-40.25	[-88.02, 7.511]	0.1075 (0.095)
NGRDI	17.78	87.59	[-41.95, 217.1]	0.0720 (0.176)
VDVI	17.38	178.7	[63.32, 294.2]	0.2892 (0.004*)
Flight Altitude	90m			
CIVE	27.51	-0.9967	[-1.622, -0.3715]	0.3013 (0.003*)
EXG	17.11	0.3882	[0.1192, 0.6572]	0.2611 (0.006*)
KIVU	27.52	-25.00	[-82.65, 32.64]	0.0309 (0.380)
NGRDI	15.89	113.2	[-8.086, 234.4]	0.1288 (0.066)
VDVI	17.64	178.0	[54.18, 301.9]	0.2596 (0.007*)
Flight Altitude	120m			
CIVE	27.05	-0.8513	[-1.412, -0.2908]	0.2813 (0.004*)
EXG	17.89	0.3431	[0.09489, 0.5913]	0.2448 (0.009*)
KIVU	28.62	-33.28	[-76.22, 9.663]	0.0925 (0.123)
NGRDI	20.74	48.22	[-68.32, 164.8]	0.0282 (0.402)
VDVI	17.83	181.4	[53.10, 309.6]	0.2533 (0.007*)

Results

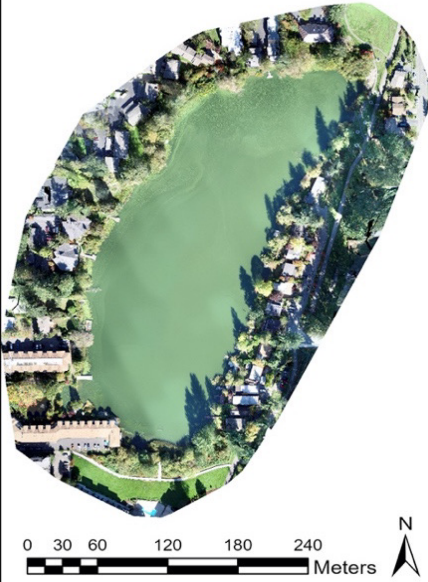
CIVE Vegetation Index Regression Analysis



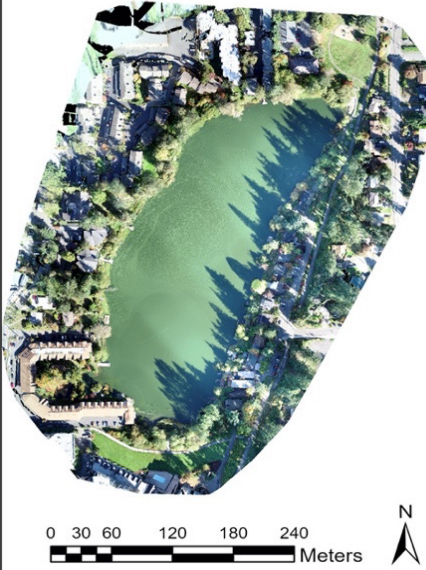


10/07/2023

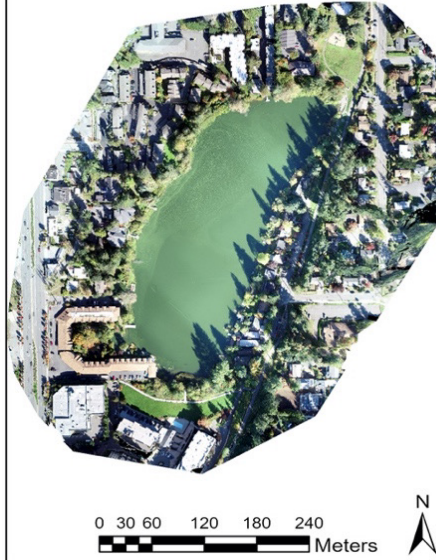
60m Flight (10-7-23)



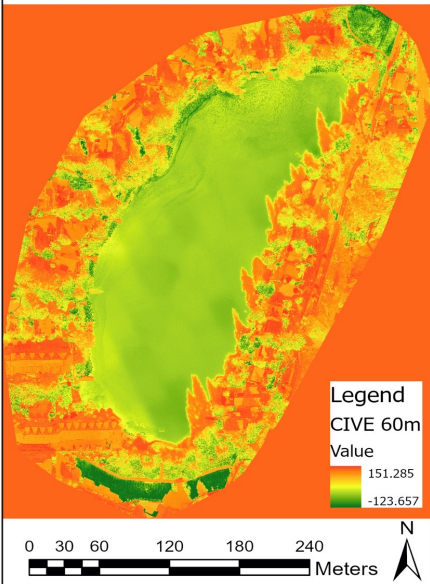
90m Flight (10-7-23)



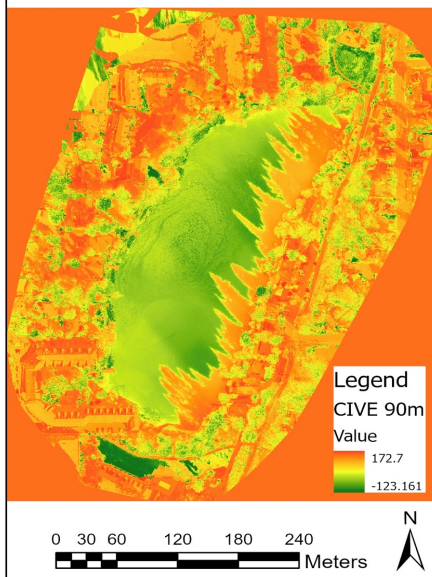
120m Flight (10-7-23)



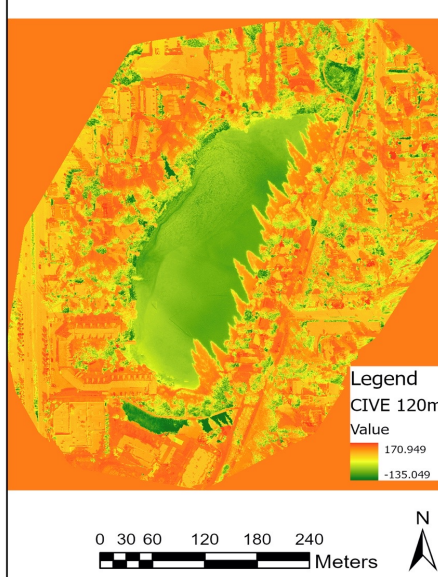
60m Flight (10-7-23) CIVE Index



90m Flight (10-7-23) CIVE Index

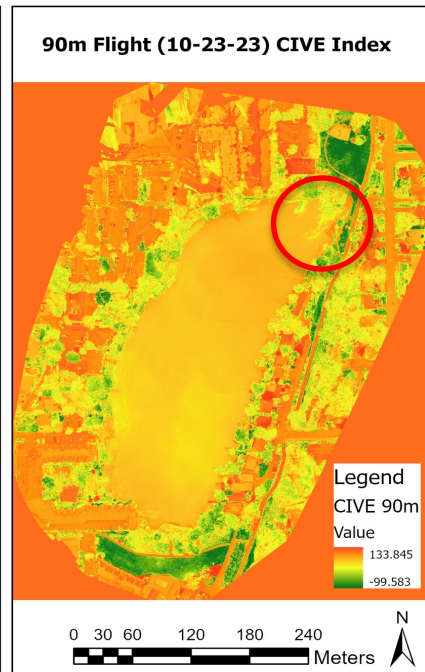
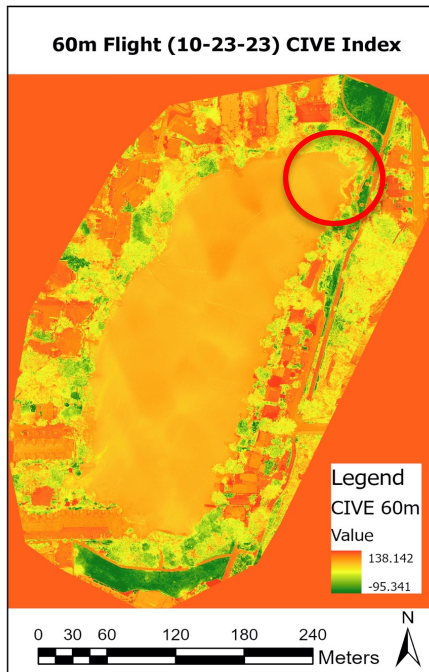
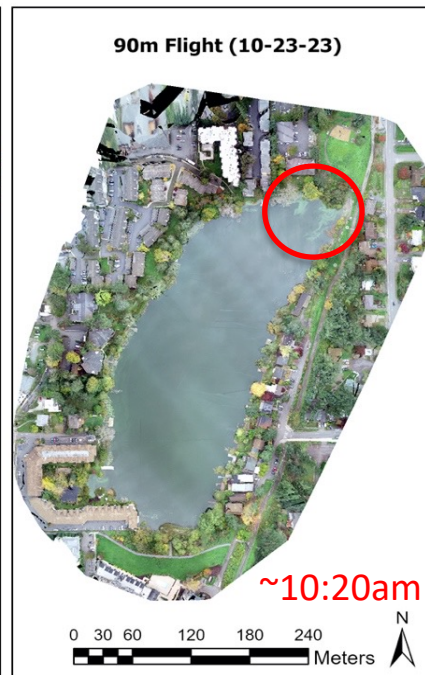


120m Flight (10-7-23) CIVE Index



10-07-23 - 6th Sampling Event	
Sample	Chlorophyll a ($\mu\text{g/L}$)
SW21 Public Beach	80.58
SW22 North Dock	82.28
SW23 West Docks - N	24.56
SW24 West Docks - S	27.36

10/23/2023



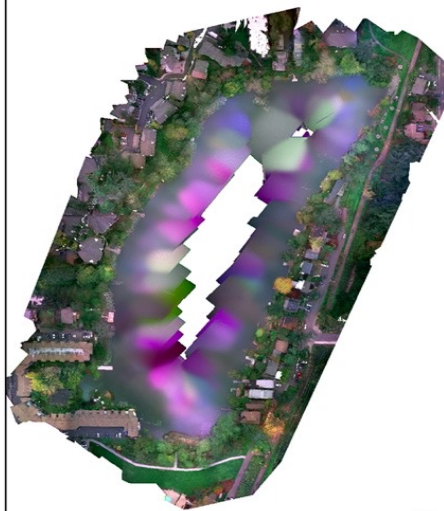
Linear Regression Models - Multispectral VIs

N = 8 (60m and 90m), N = 4 (120m)

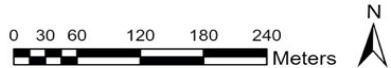
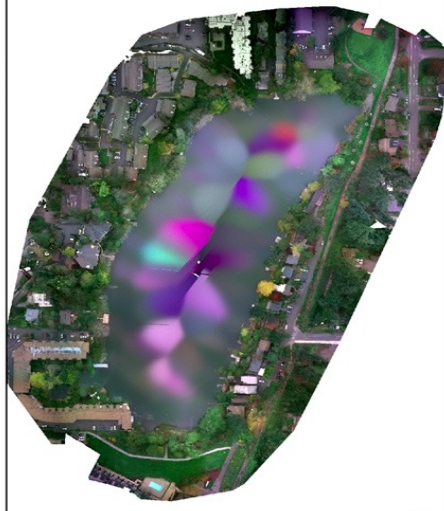
Vegetation Index	Intercept Estimate	Slope Estimate	95% CI	R ² value (p value)
Flight Altitude	60m			
NDVI	2.638	-70.86	[-249.3, 107.5]	0.136 (0.369)
B/G	47.78	-19.90	[-103.3, 63.55]	0.0537 (0.581)
RVI	53.98	-55.29	[-198.5, 87.93]	0.1295 (0.381)
GNDVI	11.80	-41.94	[-143.6, 59.71]	0.1452 (0.352)
EVI2	0.9801	-58.74	[-208.7, 91.25]	0.1327 (0.375)
Flight Altitude	90m			
NDVI	-2.397	-85.40	[-346.1, 175.3]	0.0968 (0.453)
B/G	17.76	5.266	[-132.9, 143.4]	0.0014 (0.929)
RVI	59.96	-67.81	[-295.2, 159.6]	0.0815 (0.493)
GNDVI	-1.802	-83.58	[-308.1, 140.9]	0.1215 (0.397)
EVI2	-4.663	-71.30	[-298.8, 156.2]	0.0893 (0.472)
Flight Altitude	120m			
NDVI	64.48	97.39	[-453.8, 648.6]	0.2242 (0.527)
B/G	-37.48	65.17	[-143.6, 274.0]	0.4741 (0.311)
RVI	-8.773	81.59	[-373.3, 536.5]	0.2295 (0.521)
GNDVI	19.70	-61.43	[-426.3, 303.4]	0.2079 (0.544)
EVI2	67.92	83.28	[-384.7, 551.3]	0.2267 (0.524)

10/23/2023

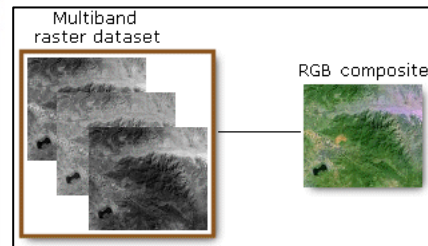
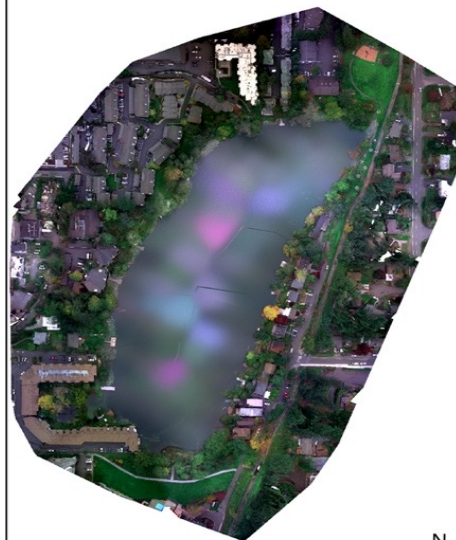
60m Flight (10-23-23)



90m Flight (10-23-23)

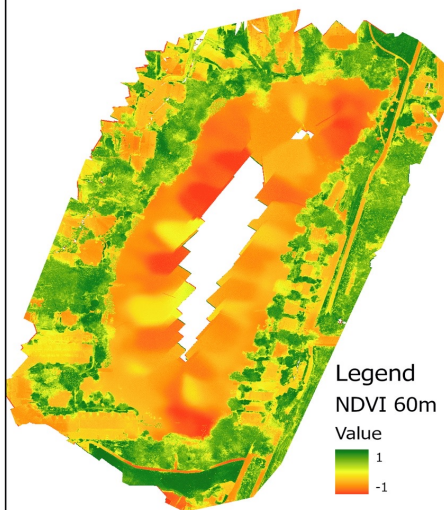


120m Flight (10-23-23)

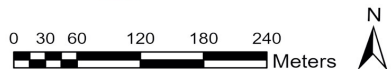
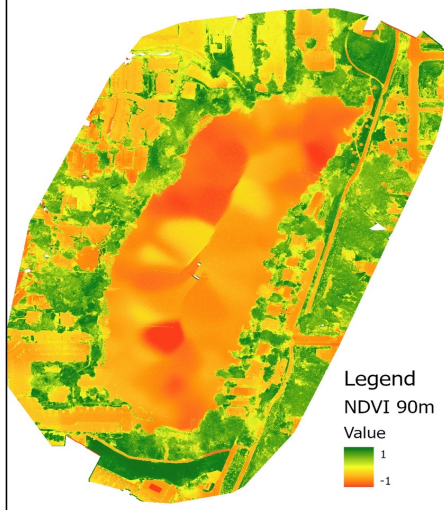


<https://pro.arcgis.com/en/pro-app/latest/help/data/imagery/raster-bands-pro.htm>

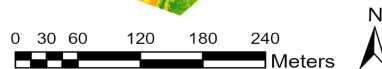
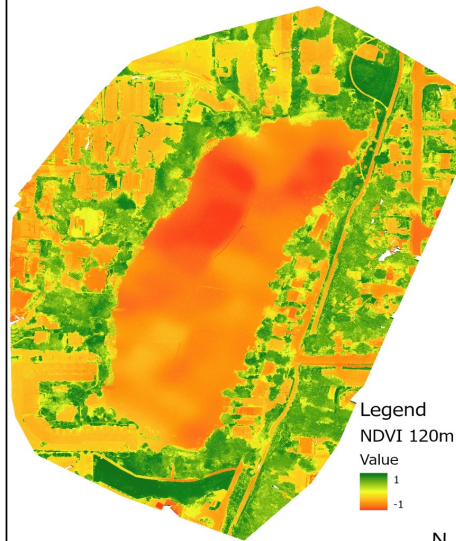
60m Flight (10-23-23) NDVI Index



90m Flight (10-23-23) NDVI Index



120m Flight (10-23-23) NDVI Index





Discussion



Discussion

- > Phantom platform - CIVE 60m index ($R^2 = 0.45$, $p < 0.001$)
 - Comparable results with similar studies
 - More frequent flight data acquisition can enhance monitoring

- > Limitations with multispectral platform
 - Lower sample size
 - Costs and scheduling associated with equipment use

- > Optimal drone settings and environmental conditions
 - Flight altitude impacts image resolution and consequent chlorophyll a-vegetation index associations
 - Sky conditions



Discussion

- > Formation of October HCB
 - Sources and timing
 - Prevention and treatment strategies

- > Benefits of incorporating drones
 - Implementation at small scale lakes
 - Accessibility and ease of use, greater lake access
 - Frequent and flexible data collection
 - Relatively lower costs (depending on platform/sensor)





Limitations



Study Limitations

- > Possible sample degradation
- > Misalignment with water sample collection and imagery
- > Interferences (pigments, light angle)
- > Drone limitations (weather, sun glint, and shadows)
- > Lack of standardized methodology
- > Insufficient sample sizes
- > Limitations of linear regression models



Concluding Remarks



Concluding Remarks and Future Directions

- > Toxic blooms threaten environmental public health outcomes and will worsen with the current climate crisis
- > Integration of drones into routine HCB surveillance programs can provide timely information for local public health and environmental resource agencies to act
- > Future work can assess different drone platforms, sensors, vegetation indices, lakes of varying sizes and trophic levels, phycocyanin measurements, and collect additional samples for more robust statistical analysis



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> Groups

- Echo Lake Neighborhood Association
- UW RAPID Facility
- UW Environmental and Occupational Health Microbiology Laboratory (EOHML)
- UW Collaborative on Extreme Event Resilience (CEER)



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THANK YOU!

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