Paleolimnological analysis of Nicola Lake, B.C -- Final Report (March 1999).

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Fig. 2 Stratigraphic distribution of diatom taxa in the Nicola Lake core.

Appendix A: Summary of <sup>210</sup>Pb and LOI data, and diatom analyses. Appendix B: Summary of data used in calculating <sup>210</sup>Pb dates and <sup>210</sup>Pb output.

Appendix C: Summary of relative abundances of diatom taxa in Nicola Lake.

### BACKGROUND

Nicola Lake was cored on July 20, 1998 by Rick Nordin and Bob Grace. The core was retrieved using a modified K-B corer (internal diameter ~ 6.35 cm) from the deep basin. On shore the core was sectioned into 0.5-cm intervals into 120-ml plastic containers. These samples were shipped on ice to Queen's University where they were stored in our coldroom at 4°C. Each container was weighed to determine the total wet weight of sediment then subsampled for <sup>210</sup>Pb, diatom and pigment analyses. Twenty intervals (every 2 cm) were subsampled for diatom and pigment analyses, and sixteen intervals for <sup>210</sup>Pb analysis. Subsamples for analysis of pigments were sent to Prof. Leavitt at University of Regina. Prepared samples for <sup>210</sup>Pb analysis (see below) were sent to MYCORE Ltd.

### METHODS

### 210-Pb Dating and Percent Organic Matter

The wet weight of the sediment was determined for all the subsections of the core. Sixteen subsamples of wet sediment from each core were weighed and oven-dried (24 hr at 105°C) and reweighed to determine percent water and dry weight of the sediment. Samples that were submitted for <sup>210</sup>Pb analysis were ground to a fine dust by use of a pestle and redried overnight at 105°C. The weight of this dried sediment was recorded to four decimal places after it was put in a tared plastic digestion

tube for determination of <sup>210</sup>Pb activity that was shipped to MYCORE Ltd.

Percent organic matter for each of the 16 210Pb samples was determined using standard loss-on-ignition methods (Dean, 1974). A known quantity of dried sediment (recorded to four decimal places) was heated to 550°C for 2 hours. The difference between the original weight of the sediment and the weight of sediment remaining after ignition was used to estimate the percent of organic matter in each sediment sample.

<sup>210</sup>Pb activities were estimated from determination of 209-Po and a tracer of known activity by alpha spectroscopy. Unsupported <sup>210</sup>Pb is calculated by subtracting supported <sup>210</sup>Pb (the baseline activity determined from bottom samples of the core) from the total activity at each level. The sediment chronology and sedimentation rates were calculated using the constant rate of supply (CRS) model (Appleby and Oldfield, 1978) from the estimates of <sup>210</sup>Pb activities and estimates of cumulative dry mass (Binford, 1990). See Appendix B for summaries of <sup>210</sup>Pb analyses by MYCORE (B-1), summary of <sup>210</sup>Pb calculations (B-1,2), and output from the CRS model (B-3).

### Diatom Preparation and Enumeration

Slides for diatom analysis were prepared using standard techniques (Cumming, Wilson, Smol and Hall, 1995). Briefly, a small amount of wet sediment was suspended in a 50:50 (molar) mixture of sulfuric and nitric acid in a 20-ml glass vial for 24 hr. prior to being submersed at 70°C in a hot water bath for 5 The remaining sediment material was settled for a period of 24 hr, at which time the acid above sample was removed. sample was rinsed with distilled water and allowed to settle once again for 24 hrs. The procedure was repeated approx. 10 times until the sample was acid free (litmus test). The samples were settled onto coverslips in a series of four 100% dilutions, which when dry, were mounted onto glass slides using a high-resolution mounting media called Naphrax®. For each sample, at least 400 diatom taxa were enumerated under oil immersion at 1000X magnification using an objective with a numerical aperture of These analyses were based on the references of Krammer and Lange-Bertalot (1986, 1988, 1991a,b), Patrick and Reimer (1966, 1975) and Cumming et al. (1995).

### Cluster Analysis

Cluster analysis, which groups similar diatom assemblages, was run on the taxa represented in Fig. 2. Cluster analysis on the diatom assemblage composition was constrained to the depth of the core samples to provide an unbiased assessment of changes in diatom assemblages through time. A squared chord was used to determine similarity between samples in the cluster analysis (Fig.2). Zones were placed based on these analyses to represent distinct groups in diatom assemblages through time (dashed lines on Fig. 2).

Environmental Reconstructions from diatom assemblages

Inferences of total phosphorus downcore were based on a total phosphorus model based on the 111 freshwater lakes from the 219 lakes sampled by Wilson, Cumming & Smol (1996). This model is based on estimates of taxa optima from weighted-averaging regression on non-transformed relative percentage data. The coefficient of determination  $(r^2)$  of this model is 0.66, and the jackknifed  $r^2$  is 0.47. This model is superior to the earlier models developed by Reavie, Hall & Smol (1995) for several reasons including its better predictive ability and the larger number of samples which provide more analogs for downcore reconstructions.

The total phosphorus inferences (Fig. 1E) were critically assessed to determine: 1) if they tracked the main direction of variation in the diatom species assemblages (Fig. 1D); and 2) to assess if the assemblages encountered downcore are well represented in the modern-day samples (Fig. 1F). If the diatombased phosphorus reconstruction matches the main direction of variation in the diatom assemblages downcore, then we can be fairly confident that the diatoms are tracking changes correlated to phosphorus. If the directions of variation do not match, then the diatom-inferred phosphorus reconstructions do not fully represent the changes, if any occurred, in diatom species composition downcore. Presumably, other environmental variables, or interactions between environmental variables, are contributing to the changes in diatom assemblages.

The main direction of variation in the diatom assemblages downcore in Nicola Lake was determined from the first axis scores from a principal components analysis (PCA) ordination using a covariance matrix and non-transformed species abundance data. A PCA was chosen to represent the main direction of variation in this core since only minor changes in diatom assemblages occurred and thus a linear ordination technique would more effectively capture changes in this core then an approach based on unimodal techniques.

The reliability of the downcore total phosphorus inferences assumes that the diatom assemblages encountered downcore are well represented in our modern diatom assemblages. To determine if appropriate analogs existed for the core samples, we determined which samples in our present-day dataset of 111 lakes most resembled each of the downcore samples. This determination was based on a squared chord dissimilarity coefficient between all species found in the core samples. The best match between downcore and modern samples was compared with the distribution of best match between modern samples. Any downcore sample that was more dissimilar than 80% of the modern distribution were deemed to be a 'poor analog'. Similarly, any downcore sample that was more dissimilar than 95% of the modern distribution were deemed to have 'no analog' in our present-day dataset. If the downcore assemblages have good representation in modern samples, more confidence can be placed in the reconstruction. If modern analogs do not exist or are poor, then caution must be placed in

reconstructions from these downcore samples.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

210 Pb Profile, Sedimentation Rates and Organic Matter The <sup>210</sup>Pb profile from Nicola Lake shows fluctuations in activity in the upper 10 cms(Fig. 1A). This could be due to changes in sedimentation rates that could cause changes in the dilution of the 210Pb activity or possibly sediment mixing. fluctuations in 210Pb activity resulted in inferred changes in sedimentation rates (Fig. 1B). In times of low 210 Pb activity sedimentation rates were inferred to have increased and vice However, changes in sedimentation rates are best assessed on multiple cores due to the potentially large variation in sedimentation patterns within a basin. Percent organic matter is low throughout the core and fairly stable from approximately 1750 to 1950 (Fig. 1C). Since 1950 percent organic matter has fluctuated between 9 to 13%. Increases in organic matter can be attributed to several factors including increased in-lake production of organic matter, increased inwash of organic matter, or decreases in the load of inorganic matter to the lake.

### Diatom Assemblage Changes and Analyses

Approximately 87 diatom taxa were encounter in the sediment core from Nicola Lake (Appendix C-1). There is little directional change in the floristic composition of diatoms, with the exception of a distinct increase in Aulacoseira subarctica starting at approximately 1967 (Fig. 2). This lack of directional change is mirrored by the PCA sample scores (which accounts for 57% of the variation in the core). Dominant taxa throughout the core are Stephanodiscus parvus and Stephanodiscus minutulus, both of which are indicative of meso- to eutrophic conditions (Fig. 2). Other taxa which reach relatively high abundances include Fragilaria capucina, Aulacoseira subarctica, Aulacoseira granulata, Fragilaria pinnata, Asterionella formosa and Fragilaria crotonensis. Both S. parvus and S. minutulus can be classified as generalists to the total phosphorus gradient (i.e. occurs in high abundance over a wide range of TP values), in comparison to other taxa such as A. formosa and F. crotonensis which have a narrower distribution of high abundances along the TP gradient (information from the 111 B.C. freshwater lake modern-day calibration set). At present our knowledge of the phosphorus optima of A. subarctica is based on a relatively small number of occurrences in the modern samples.

Cluster analysis suggests the changes in diatom assemblages through time can be divided into three primary zones (Fig. 2). S. parvus and S. minutulus fluctuate at relatively high abundances throughout all three zones (10-60%). F. pinnata, F. crotonensis, and A. formosa fluctuate from approximately 2-3%, up to approx. 10% throughout the core. Whereas, F. capucina decreases in Zone A, A. granulata is at its highest abundance in Zone B and A. subarctica increases in abundance in Zones A and B.

Even though there are changes in the diatom assemblages, inferred total phosphorus (TP) has not changed in a directional fashion since preindustrial times (Fig. 1E). This is not surprising since S. parvus and S. minutulus are dominant throughout the core as are other meso- to eutrophic taxa. The distinct decrease in F. capucina and increase in A. subarctica in the upper part of the core suggests, however, that conditions in Nicola Lake may have become slightly more eutrophic.

The correlation between the reconstructed TP and the main direction of variation in taxa(represented by PCA axis 1 scores) is 0.6 when all 20 points are considered, which suggests that some of the changes seen in the diatom assemblages are related to changes in inferred total phosphorus. All samples have good analogs (Fig.1F). Diatom-inferred salinity has increased slightly since approximately 1960 (see Appendix A) and thus climate and potentially associated changes in lake level may account for some of the variation seen in the diatom assemblages. The correlation between estimated total phosphorus and salinity is 0.73, with both variables increasing slightly in more recent sediments, suggesting that some of the phosphorus changes may be linked to climatic changes.

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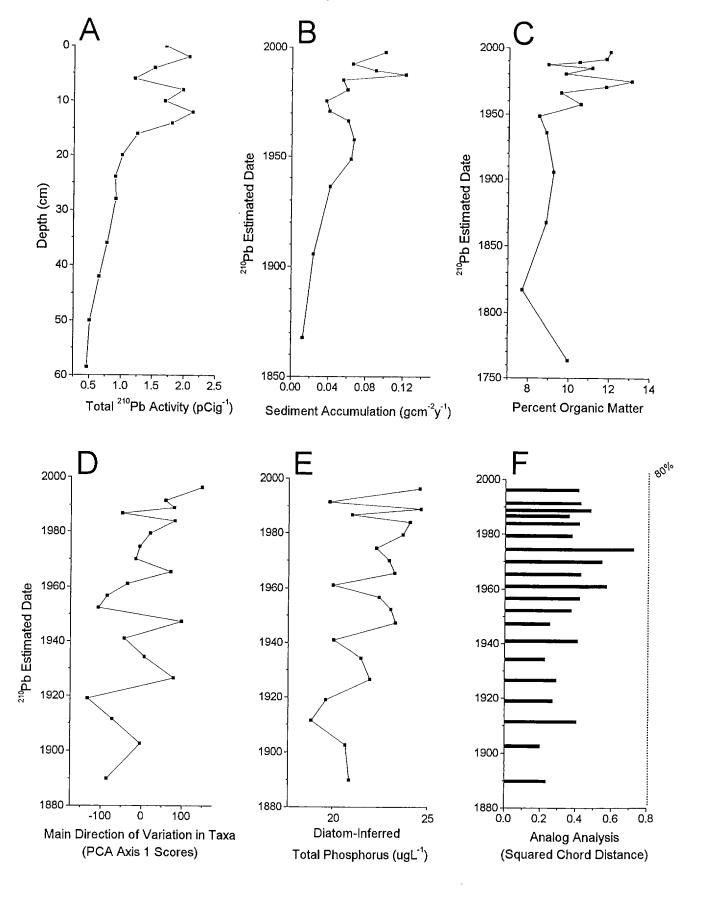
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### Figure Captions

Figure 1. Summary diagram for the sediment core from Nicola lake showing: A) total <sup>210</sup>Pb activity from which the chronology of the core is based; B) the sediment accumulation rate; C) the change in the percent of organic matter in the core; D) the main direction of variation in the diatom assemblage data; E) diatom-based estimated late-summer total phosphorus; and F) analog analysis showing the dissimilarity between present-day and downcore samples (any sample that has a squared chord distance > 0.8 was determined to be a poor analog, whereas any sample with a squared chord distance greater than 1.1 was determined to have no analog in the modern dataset).

Figure 2. Diatom stratigraphy of the diatom taxa that were present in at least ~2% relative abundance in the sediment core from Nicola Lake, B.C. (see Appendix C for a complete list of taxa and the relative percentage data). The diatom taxa are arranged in order of increasing late-summer total phosphorus optima which is indicated in parentheses for those taxa with known optima. The dotted lines separate the stratigraphy into three zones that were identified by a cluster analysis on the diatom assemblage composition that was constrained to the depth of the core samples.

## Nicola Lake, British Columbia



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APPENDIX A

Diatom analyses summary  Depth(cm Depth(cm Estimated TP TOP BOTTOM AD-DATE LogTP (ug/L) 0.5 1 1996.3 1.389 24. 6.5 7 1988.8 1.39 24. 6.5 7 1986.7 1.32 20. 8.5 9 1983.9 1.379 23. 10.5 11 1979.4 1.372 23. 12.5 13 1974.5 1.345 22. 14.5 15 1970.0 1.358 22. 14.5 15 1970.0 1.358 22. 18.5 19 1961.1 1.301 20. 20.5 21. 1965.5 1.364 23. 18.5 22. 1965.7 1.348 22. 22. 25. 22. 25. 22. 1947.3 1.365 23. 26.5 27 1941.0 1.302 20. 28.5 29 1934.3 1.36 22. 23. 30.5 31 1926.7 1.339 21. 33. 32. 33. 31. 31. 1294 19. 33. 35. 39 1890.0 1.318 20. 80. 1318 20. 131	Estimated TP AD-DATE LogTP (ug/L) Logsalinit 1996.3 1.389 24.49 2.194 1991.6 1.297 19.82 2.157 1988.8 1.39 24.55 2.216 1986.7 1.32 20.89 2.145 1979.4 1.372 23.55 2.166 1974.5 1.345 22.13 2.152 1970.0 1.358 22.80 2.171 1965.5 1.364 23.12 2.159 1961.1 1.301 20.00 2.163 1956.7 1.348 22.28 2.107 1952.2 1.36 22.91 2.144 1947.3 1.365 23.17 2.148 1941.0 1.302 20.04 2.13 1934.3 1.33 21.38 2.129 1916.7 1.339 21.83 2.129 1916.7 1.339 21.83 2.142 1919.1 1.294 19.68 2.09 1911.5 1.279 19.01 2.094 1890.0 1.318 20.80 2.11	Estimated TP AD-DATE LogTP (ug/L) Lc 1996.3 1.389 24.49 1991.6 1.297 19.82 1988.8 1.39 24.55 1986.7 1.32 20.89 1983.9 1.379 23.93 1979.4 1.372 23.55 1974.5 1.345 22.13 1970.0 1.358 22.80 1965.5 1.364 23.12 1961.1 1.301 20.00 1956.7 1.348 22.28 1952.2 1.36 22.91 1947.3 1.365 23.17 1941.0 1.302 20.04 1934.3 1.33 21.38 1926.7 1.339 21.83 1919.1 1.294 19.68 1911.5 1.279 19.01 1902.6 1.314 20.61 1890.0 1.318 20.80		36.50.77769.231905.842.50.65528.881867.850.50.50707.701817.2590.46289.981763.4	1.2462 9.58 1966.6 1.0124 10.55 1957.9 0.9029 8.50 1948.8 0.9153 8.87 1936.2	10.5 12.5 14.5 14.5 14.5	nary Pb210ACt LOI(550C) Est (pCilg) %organics AD 1.6999 12.00
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4.0 4.5 98 10 1 98 7 20 6.0 6.5 98 10 1 98 7 20 8.0 8.5 98 10 1 98 7 20 10.0 10.5 98 10 1 98 7 20 12.0 12.5 98 10 1 98 7 20 14.0 14.5 98 10 1 98 7 20	88888888888888888	SUMMARY PB210 CALCULATIONS FOR DETERMINING DATES - NICOLA LAKE  Back calculate to coring (KRL)  Section of Core Date Po Sample Extracte Date of coring  Top Bottom
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## CALCULATIONS FOR INPUT INTO BINFORD PROGRAM

Nicola Pb210

# BINFORD FILE FOR CALCULATION OF DATES AND SEDIMENTATION RATES

Nicola Lake C1 16 0.0313

	58.5	50.0	42.0	36.0	28.0	24.0	20.0	16.0	14.0	12.0	10.0	8.0	6.0	4.0	2.0	0.0	(cm)	N I OF		
	59.0	50.5	42.5	36.5	28.5	24.5	20.5	16.5	14.5	12.5	10.5	8.5	6.5	4.5	2.5	0.5	(cm)	NTBOT		
	0.0171	0.0188	0.0242	0.0288	0.0339	0.0334	0.0375	0.0461	0.0666	0.0786	0.0624	0.0730	0.0447	0.0564	0.0766	0.0629	activity	(Bq/g)	Pb-210	Back calcu
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d Pb210	0.1930	0.1826	0.1277	0.1033	0.1429	0.1853	0.1165	0.1572	0.0801	0.0941	0.1521	0.0974	0.0874	0.1148	0.1183	0.3598	(g cm-3)	Rho		
	58.5	50.0	42.0	36.0	28.0	24.0	20.0	16.0	14.0	12.0	10.0	8.0	6.0	4.0	2.0	0.0	(cm)	INTTOP		

g cm-3)	INTTOP (cm)	INTBOT (cm)	Pb210 Total (pCig-1)	Pb210 Unsup. (pCig-1)	Rho (g cm-3)	OM proportion	CUMTOP		std CUMBOT Pb210 (g cm-2) (pCig-1)
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0.1826	50.0	50.5		0.0000	0.1826		0.08	6.5699	6.5699 6.6612
0.1930	58.5	59.0		0.0000	0.1930		0.10	8.1648	8.1648 8.2613

### YOU ARE ANALYZING CORE C1

### FROM LAKE Nicola Lake

	A ARE:							
INTTOP	INTBOT	PB210ACT	UNSUPACT	RHO	PERCORG	CUMMASST	CUMMASSB	SDACT
0.0	0.5	1.69990	1.21500	0.35980	0.120	0.0000	0.1799	0.0651
2.0	2.5	2.06980	1.58490	0.11830	0.120	0.3711	0.4303	0.0797
4.0	4.5	1.52320	1.03830	0.11480	0.100	0.5817	0.6390	0.0783
6.0	6.5	1.20690	0.72210	0.08740	0.090	0.7791	0.8228	0.0771
8.0	8.5	1.97360	1.48880	0.09740	0.110	0.9739	1.0226	0.0908
10.0	10.5	1.68660	1.20170	0.15210	0.100	1.2121	1.2882	0.0690
12.0	12.5	2.12460	1.63970	0.09410	0.130	1.4678	1.5149	0.0803
14.0	14.5	1.80080	1.31590	0.08010	0.120	1.6457	1.6857	0.0668
16.0	16.5	1.24620	0.76130	0.15720	0.100	1.8520	1.9306	0.0529
20.0	20.5	1.01240	0.52750	0.11650	0.110	2.3765	2.4347	0.0480
24.0	24.5	0.90290	0.41800	0.18530	0.090	2.8945	2.9871	0.0477
28.0	28.5	0.91530	0.43040	0.14290	0.090	3.5185	3.5899	0.0473
36.0	36.5	0.77760	0.29270	0.10330	0.090	4.5510	4.6026	0.0551
42.0	42.5	0.65520	0.17030	0.12770	0.090	5.3049	5.3688	0.0456
50.0	50.5	0.50700	0.00000	0.18260	0.080	6.5699	6.6612	0.0506
58.5	59.0	0.46280	0.00000	0.19300	0.100	8.1648	8.2613	0.0488

STANDARD DEVIATION OF SUPPORTED PB-210 = 0.0313

Pb-210 dates for Lake Nicola Lake core	a Lake core C1	Nicola	Lake	for	dates	Pb-210
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INTTOP	INTBOT	MIDINT	TTOP	SDTTOP	TBOT	SDTBOT	SEDRATE	SDSEDRT	CIMMOD
0.0		· · · · · · · -		· <del></del>					SUMTOP
	0.5	0.2	0.00	0.54	1.80	0.54	0.1001	0.0139	4.0148
2.0	2.5	2.2	5.78	0.57	6.69	0.58	0.0650	0.0107	3.3538
4.0	4.5	4.2	9.00	0.60	9.63	0.60	0.0901	0.0153	3.0339
6.0	6.5	6.2	11.09	0.62	11.45	0.62	0.1219	0.0211	2.8420
8.0	8.5	8.2	13.19	0.64	14.07	0.65	0.0549	0.0107	2.6628
10.0	10.5	10.2	17.26	0.69	18.54	0.71	0.0596	0.0111	2.3455
12.0	12.5	12.2	22.35	0.77	23.61	0.79	0.0373	0.0082	2.0019
14.0	14.5	14.2	26.99	0.85	27.98	0.87	0.0404	0.0088	1.7323
16.0	16.5	16.2	31.38	0.95	32.68	0.98	0.0606	0.0128	1.5110
20.0	20.5	20.2	40.28	1.16	41.15	1.19	0.0667	0.0155	1.1455
24.0	24.5	24.2	49.01	1.43	50.47	1.48	0.0636	0.0170	0.8727
28.0	28.5	28.2	61.48	1.95	63.19	2.04	0.0417	0.0139	0.5919
36.0	36.5	36.2	91.71	4.07	93.89	4.33	0.0238	0.0138	0.2309
42.0	42.5	42.2	128.22	11.18	133.32	12.97	0.0125	0.0142	0.0741
Executi	on termi	nated :	0						

C:\pb210>