

The dataRetrieval R package

Laura De Cicco¹ and Robert Hirsch¹

¹*United States Geological Survey*

January 27, 2014

Contents

1	Introduction to dataRetrieval	2
2	General USGS Web Retrievals	3
2.1	Introduction	3
2.2	Site Information	5
2.2.1	getSiteFileData	5
2.2.2	getDataAvailability	5
2.3	Parameter Information	6
2.4	Daily Values	7
2.5	Unit Values	10
2.6	Water Quality Values	11
2.7	STORET Water Quality Retrievals	13
2.8	URL Construction	13
3	Data Retrievals Structured For Use In The EGRET Package	14
3.1	INFO Data	14
3.2	Daily Data	14
3.3	Sample Data	15
3.4	Censored Values: Summation Explanation	16

3.5	User-Generated Data Files	17
3.5.1	getDailyDataFromFile	18
3.5.2	getSampleDataFromFile	19
3.6	Merge Report	20
3.7	EGRET Plots	21
4	Summary	23
5	Getting Started in R	24
5.1	New to R?	24
5.2	R User: Installing dataRetrieval	24
6	Creating tables in Microsoft from R	25

1 Introduction to dataRetrieval

The dataRetrieval package was created to simplify the process of getting hydrologic data in the R environment. It has been specifically designed to work seamlessly with the EGRET R package: Exploration and Graphics for RivEr Trends (EGRET). See: <https://github.com/USGS-R/EGRET/wiki> for information on EGRET. EGRET is designed to provide analysis of water quality data sets using the WRTDS method of data analysis (WRTDS is Weighted Regressions on Time, Discharge and Season) as well as analysis of discharge trends using robust time-series smoothing techniques. Both of these capabilities provide both tabular and graphical analyses of long-term data sets.

The dataRetrieval package is designed to retrieve many of the major data types of United States Geological Survey (USGS) hydrologic data that are available on the web, but also allows users to make use of other data that they supply from spreadsheets. Section 2 provides examples of how one can obtain raw data from USGS sources on the web and ingest them into data frames within the R environment. The functionality described in section 2 is for general use and is not tailored for the specific uses of the EGRET package. The functionality described in section 3 is tailored specifically to obtaining input from the web and structuring them for use in the EGRET package. The functionality described in section 4 is for converting hydrologic data from user-supplied spreadsheets and structuring them specifically for use in the EGRET package.

For information on getting started in R and installing the package, see (5): Getting Started.

Quick workflow for major dataRetrieval functions:

```

library(dataRetrieval)
# Site ID for Choptank River near Greensboro, MD
siteNumber <- "01491000"
ChoptankInfo <- getSiteFileData(siteNumber)
parameterCd <- "00060"

#Raw data:
rawDailyData <- retrieveNWISData(siteNumber,parameterCd,
                                "1980-01-01", "2010-01-01")
# Data compiled for EGRET analysis
Daily <- getDVDData(siteNumber,parameterCd,
                    "1980-01-01", "2010-01-01")

# Sample data Nitrate:
parameterCd <- "00618"
Sample <- getSampleData(siteNumber,parameterCd,
                        "1980-01-01", "2010-01-01")

# Metadata on site and nitrate:
INFO <- getMetaData(siteNumber,parameterCd)

# Merge discharge and nitrate data to one dataframe:
Sample <- mergeReport()

```

2 General USGS Web Retrievals

In this section, we will run through 5 examples, which document how to get raw data from the web. This includes site information (2.2), measured parameter information (2.3), historical daily values(2.4), unit values (which include real-time data but can also include other sensor data stored at regular time intervals) (2.5), and water quality data (2.6) or (2.7). We will use the Choptank River near Greensboro, MD as an example. The site-ID for this gage station is 01491000. Daily discharge measurements are available as far back as 1948. Additionally, forms of nitrate have been measured dating back to 1964. The functions/examples in this section are for raw data retrieval. In the next section, we will use functions that retrieve and process the data in a dataframe that may prove more friendly for R analysis, and specifically tailored to EGRET analysis.

2.1 Introduction

The USGS organizes their hydrological data in a standard structure. Streamgages are located throughout the United States, and each streamgage has a unique ID. Often (but not always), these ID's are 8 digits. The first step to finding data is discovering this 8-digit ID. There are many ways to do this,

one is the National Water Information System: Mapper <http://maps.waterdata.usgs.gov/mapper/index.html>.

Once the site-ID is known, the next required input for USGS data retrievals is the 'parameter code'. This is a 5-digit code that specifies what measured parameter is being requested. A complete list of possible USGS parameter codes can be found at <http://go.usa.gov/bVDz>.

Not every station will measure all parameters. A short list of commonly measured parameters is shown in Table 1.

	pCode	shortName
1	00060	Discharge [cfs]
2	00065	Gage height [ft]
3	00010	Temperature [C]
4	00045	Precipitation [in]
5	00400	pH

Table 1: Common USGS Parameter Codes

A complete list (as of September 25, 2013) is available as data attached to the package. It can be accessed by the following:

```
library(dataRetrieval)
parameterCdFile <- parameterCdFile
names(parameterCdFile)

[1] "parameter_cd"      "parameter_group_nm"
[3] "parameter_nm"      "casrn"
[5] "srsname"           "parameter_units"

# Sorting out some common values:
subset(parameterCdFile, parameter_cd %in% c("00060", "00010", "00400"))

      parameter_cd parameter_group_nm
1179          00010          Physical
1206          00060          Physical
1266          00400          Physical

      parameter_nm casrn
1179 Temperature, water, degrees Celsius
1206 Discharge, cubic feet per second
1266 pH, water, unfiltered, field, standard units
      srsname parameter_units
1179 Temperature, water          deg C
1206 Stream flow, mean. daily          ft3/s
1266 pH          std units
```

For unit values data (sensor data), the parameter code and site ID will suffice. For most variables that are measured on a continuous basis, the USGS stores the historical data as daily values. These daily values may be in the form of statistics such as the daily mean values, but they can also include daily maximums, minimums or medians. These different statistics are specified by a 5-digit "stat code". A complete list of stat codes can be found here:

http://nwis.waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/help/?read_file=stat&format=table

Some common stat codes are shown in Table 2.

	StatCode	shortName
1	00001	Maximum
2	00002	Minimum
3	00003	Mean
4	00008	Median

Table 2: Commonly used USGS Stat Codes

2.2 Site Information

2.2.1 `getSiteFileData`

Use the `getSiteFileData` function to obtain all of the information available for a particular USGS site such as full station name, drainage area, latitude, and longitude:

```
# Site ID for Choptank River near Greensboro, MD
siteNumber <- "01491000"
ChoptankInfo <- getSiteFileData(siteNumber)
```

Pulling out a specific example piece of information, in this case station name can be done as follows:

```
ChoptankInfo$station.nm

[1] "CHOPTANK RIVER NEAR GREENSBORO, MD"
```

Site information is obtained from <http://waterservices.usgs.gov/rest/Site-Test-Tool.html>

2.2.2 `getDataAvailability`

To find out the available data at a particular USGS site, including measured parameters, period of record, and number of samples (count), use the `getDataAvailability` function. It is also possible to only

request parameter information for a subset of variables. In the following example, we retrieve just the daily mean parameter information from the Choptank data availability dataframe (excluding all unit value and water quality values).

```
# Continuing from the previous example:
# This pulls out just the daily data:

ChoptankAvailableData <- getDataAvailability(siteNumber)

ChoptankDailyData <- subset(ChoptankAvailableData,
                             "dv" == service)

# This pulls out the mean:
ChoptankDailyData <- subset(ChoptankDailyData,
                             "00003" == statCd)
```

	shortName	Start	End	Count	Units
1	Temperature, water	2010-10-01	2012-05-09	529	deg C
2	Stream flow, mean. daily	1948-01-01	2014-01-26	24133	ft3/s
3	Specific conductance	2010-10-01	2012-05-09	527	uS/cm @25C
4	Suspended sediment concentration (SSC)	1980-10-01	1991-09-30	3651	mg/l
5	Suspended sediment discharge	1980-10-01	1991-09-30	3652	tons/day

Table 3: Daily mean data available at the Choptank River near Greensboro, MD

See 6 for instructions on converting an R dataframe to a table in Microsoft Excel or Word.

2.3 Parameter Information

To obtain all of the available information concerning a measured parameter, use the `getParameterInfo` function:

```
# Using defaults:
parameterCd <- "00618"
parameterINFO <- getParameterInfo(parameterCd)
colnames(parameterINFO)

[1] "parameter_cd"      "parameter_group_nm"
[3] "parameter_nm"      "casrn"
[5] "srsname"           "parameter_units"
```

Pulling out a specific example piece of information, in this case parameter name can be done as follows:

```
parameterINFO$parameter_nm
```

```
[1] "Nitrate, water, filtered, milligrams per liter as nitrogen"
```

Parameter information is obtained from <http://nwis.waterdata.usgs.gov/nwis/pmcodes/>

2.4 Daily Values

To obtain historic daily records of USGS data, use the `retrieveNWISData` function. The arguments for this function are `siteNumber`, `parameterCd`, `startDate`, `endDate`, `statCd`, and a logical (`TRUE/FALSE`) `interactive`. There are 2 default arguments: `statCd` (defaults to "00003"), and `interactive` (defaults to `TRUE`). If you want to use the default values, you do not need to list them in the function call. Setting the "interactive" option to `TRUE` will walk you through the function. It might make more sense to run large batch collections with the `interactive` option set to `FALSE`.

The dates (start and end) need to be in the format "YYYY-MM-DD" (note: the user does need to include the quotes). Setting the start date to "" will indicate to the program to ask for the earliest date, setting the end date to "" will ask for the latest available date.

```
# Continuing with our Choptank River example
parameterCd <- "00060" # Discharge (cfs)
startDate <- "" # Will request earliest date
endDate <- "" # Will request latest date

discharge <- retrieveNWISData(siteNumber,
                              parameterCd, startDate, endDate)
```

The variable `datetime` is automatically imported as a `Date`. Each requested parameter has a value and remark code column. The names of these columns depend on the requested parameter and stat code combinations. USGS remark codes are often "A" (approved for publication) or "P" (provisional data subject to revision). A more complete list of remark codes can be found here: http://waterdata.usgs.gov/usa/nwis/help?codes_help

Another example that doesn't use the defaults would be a request for mean and maximum daily temperature and discharge in early 2012:

```
parameterCd <- c("00010", "00060") # Temperature and discharge
statCd <- c("00001", "00003") # Mean and maximum
startDate <- "2012-01-01"
endDate <- "2012-05-01"

temperatureAndFlow <- retrieveNWISData(siteNumber, parameterCd,
                                       startDate, endDate, statCd=statCd)
```

```
temperatureAndFlow <- renameColumns(temperatureAndFlow)
```

Daily data is pulled from <http://waterservices.usgs.gov/rest/DV-Test-Tool.html>.

An example of plotting the above data (Figure 1):

```
par(mar=c(5, 5, 5, 5))

with(temperatureAndFlow, plot(
  datetime, Temperature_water_degrees_Celsius_Max_01,
  xlab="Date", ylab="Temperature [C]"
))
par(new=TRUE)
with(temperatureAndFlow, plot(
  datetime, Discharge_cubic_feet_per_second,
  col="red", type="l", xaxt="n", yaxt="n", xlab="", ylab="", axes=FALSE
))
axis(4, col="red", col.axis="red")
mtext("Discharge [cfs]", side=4, line=3, col="red")
title(paste(ChoptankInfo$station.nm, "2012", sep=" "))
```

There are occasions where NWIS values are not reported as numbers, instead there might be text describing a certain event such as "Ice". Any value that cannot be converted to a number will be reported as NA in this package.

CHOPTANK RIVER NEAR GREENSBORO, MD 2012

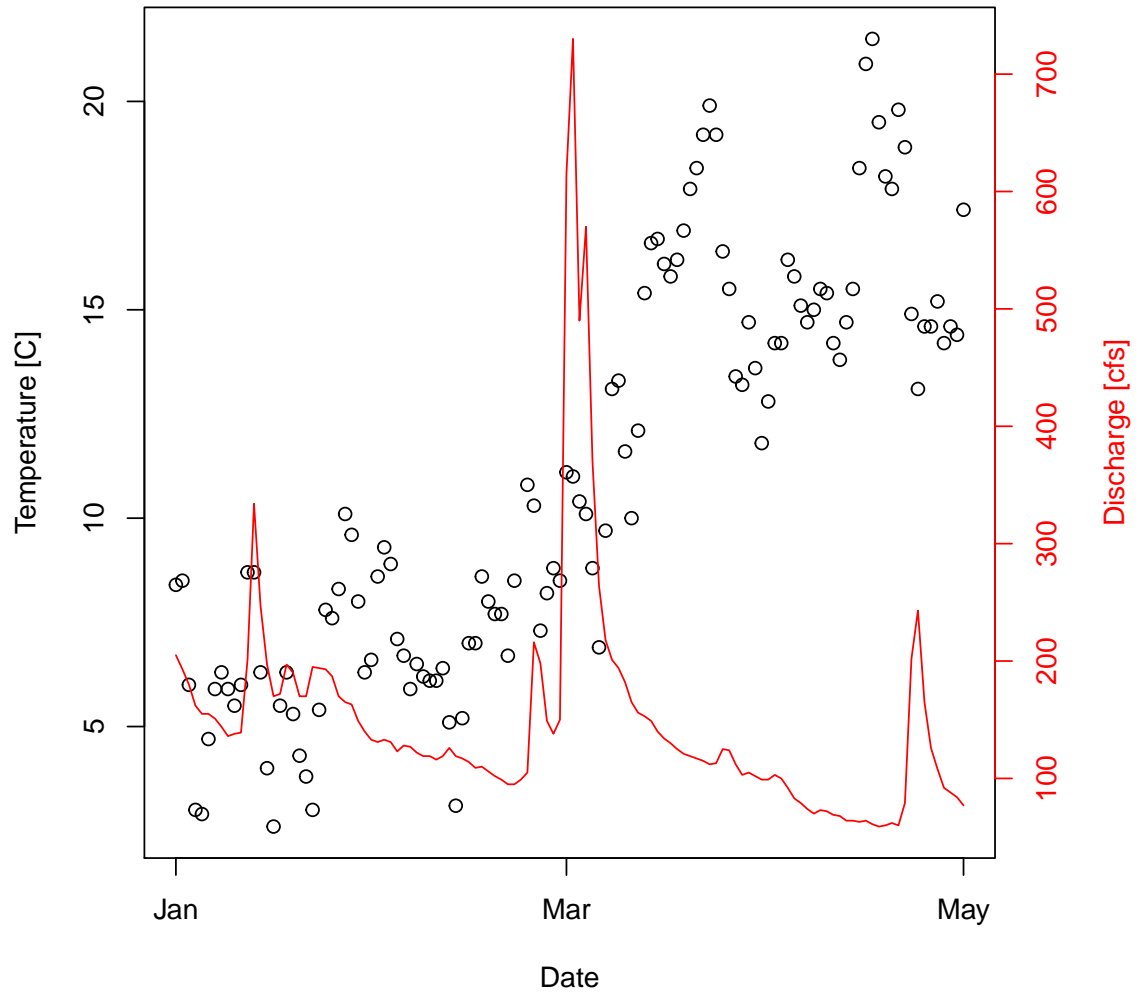


Figure 1: Temperature and discharge plot of Choptank River in 2012.

2.5 Unit Values

Any data that are collected at regular time intervals (such as 15-minute or hourly) are known as "Unit Values" - many of these are delivered on a real time basis and very recent data (even less than an hour old in many cases) are available through the function `retrieveUnitNWISData`. Some of these Unit Values are available for the past several years, and some are only available for a recent time period such as 120 days or a year. Here is an example of a retrieval of such data.

```
parameterCd <- "00060" # Discharge (cfs)
startDate <- "2012-05-12"
endDate <- "2012-05-13"
dischargeToday <- retrieveUnitNWISData(siteNumber, parameterCd,
                                       startDate, endDate)
```

Error: invalid 'file' argument

Which produces the following dataframe:

Error: object 'dischargeToday' not found

Note that time now becomes important, so the variable `datetime` is a `POSIXct`, and the time zone is included in a separate column. Data is pulled from <http://waterservices.usgs.gov/rest/IV-Test-Tool.html>. There are occasions where NWIS values are not reported as numbers, instead a common example is "Ice". Any value that cannot be converted to a number will be reported as NA in this package.

2.6 Water Quality Values

To get USGS water quality data from water samples collected at the streamgage (as distinct from unit values collected through some type of automatic monitor) we can use the Water Quality Data Portal: <http://www.waterqualitydata.us/>. The raw data are obtained from the function `getRawQWData`, with the similar input arguments: `siteNumber`, `parameterCd`, `startDate`, `endDate`, and `interactive`. The difference is in `parameterCd`, in this function multiple parameters can be queried using a vector, and setting `parameterCd` to `" "` will return all of the measured observations. The raw data may be overwhelming, a simplified version of the data can be obtained using `getQWData`. There is a large amount of data returned for each observation.

```
# Dissolved Nitrate parameter codes:
parameterCd <- c("00618", "71851")
startDate <- "1979-10-11"
endDate <- "2012-12-18"

dissolvedNitrate <- getRawQWData(siteNumber, parameterCd,
                                startDate, endDate)

dissolvedNitrateSimple <- getQWData(siteNumber, parameterCd,
                                   startDate, endDate)
names(dissolvedNitrateSimple)

[1] "dateTime"          "qualifier.71851" "value.71851"
[4] "qualifier.00618" "value.00618"
```

Note that in this dataframe, `dateTime` is imported as `Dates` (no times are included), and the `qualifier` is either blank or `"<"` signifying a censored value. A plotting example is shown in Figure 2.

```
with(dissolvedNitrateSimple, plot(
  dateTime, value.00618,
  xlab="Date", ylab = paste(parameterINFO$srsname,
    " [", parameterINFO$parameter_units, "]" )
))
title(ChoptankInfo$station.nm)
```

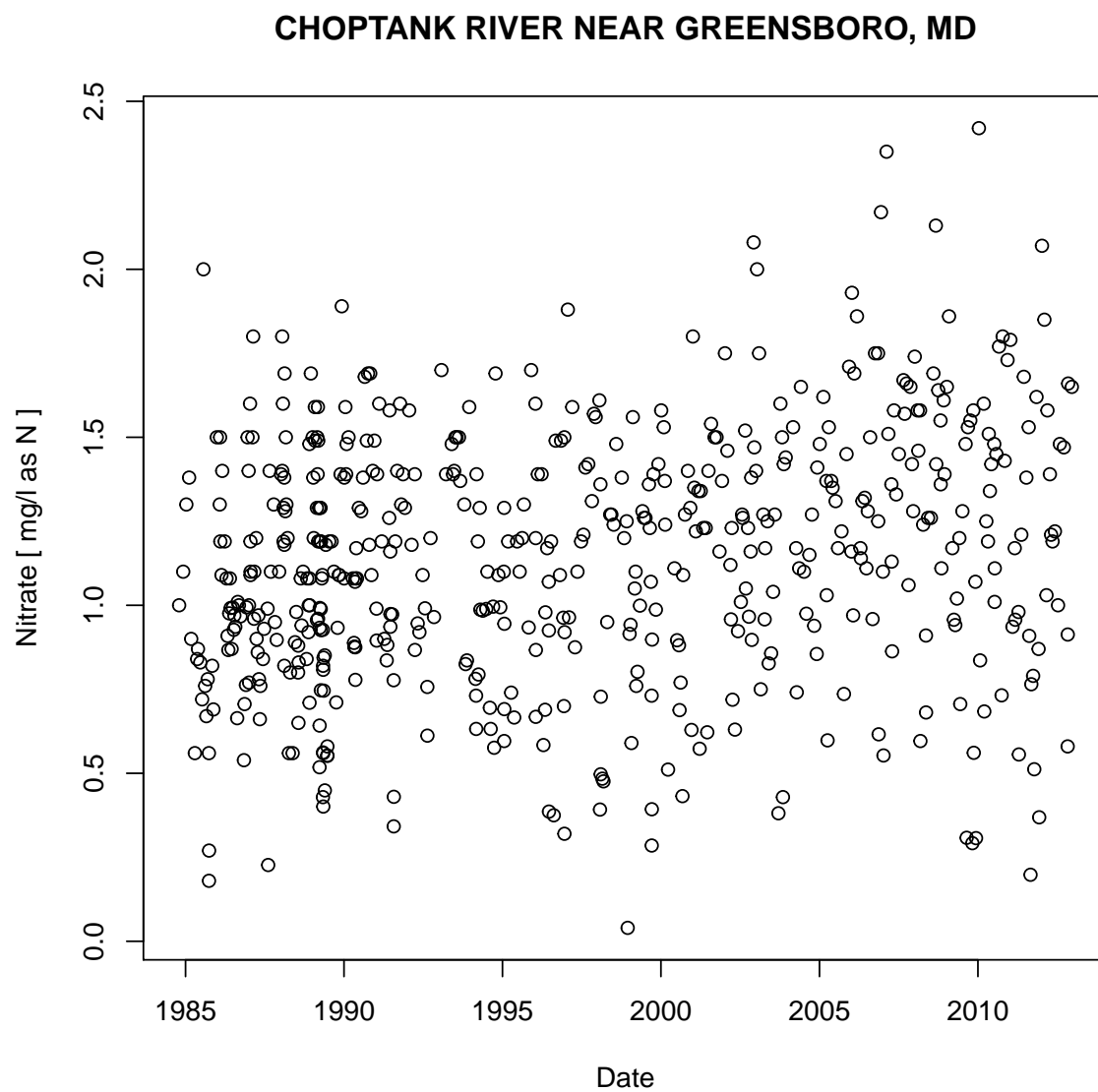


Figure 2: Nitrate plot of Choptank River.

2.7 STORET Water Quality Retrievals

There are additional data sets available on the Water Quality Data Portal (<http://www.waterqualitydata.us/>). These data sets can be housed in either the STORET (data from EPA) or NWIS database. Since STORET does not use USGS parameter codes, a "characteristic name" must be supplied. The following example retrieves specific conductance from a DNR site in Wisconsin.

```
specificCond <- getWQPData('WIDNR_WQX-10032762',
                           'Specific conductance', '', '')
head(specificCond)
```

	dateTime	qualifier.Specific conductance
1	2011-02-14	
2	2011-02-17	
3	2011-03-03	
4	2011-03-10	
5	2011-03-29	
6	2011-04-07	
	value.Specific conductance	
1		1360
2		1930
3		1240
4		1480
5		1130
6		1200

2.8 URL Construction

There may be times when you might be interested in seeing the URL (web address) that was used to obtain the raw data. The `constructNWISURL` function returns the URL. Aside from input variables that have already been described, there is a new argument "service". The service argument can be "dv" (daily values), "uv" (unit values), "qw" (NWIS water quality values), or "wqp" (general Water Quality Portal values).

```
# Dissolved Nitrate parameter codes:
pCode <- c("00618", "71851")
startDate <- "1964-06-11"
endDate <- "2012-12-18"
url_qw <- constructNWISURL(siteNumber, pCode, startDate, endDate, 'qw')
url_dv <- constructNWISURL(siteNumber, "00060", startDate, endDate,
                           'dv', statCd="00003")
url_uv <- constructNWISURL(siteNumber, "00060", startDate, endDate, 'uv')
```

3 Data Retrievals Structured For Use In The EGRET Package

Rather than using the raw data as retrieved by the web, the dataRetrieval package also includes functions that return the data in a structure that has been designed to work with the EGRET R package (<https://github.com/USGS-R/EGRET/wiki>). In general, these dataframes may be much more 'R-friendly' than the raw data, and will contain additional date information that allows for efficient data analysis.

In this section, we use 3 dataRetrieval functions to get sufficient data to perform an EGRET analysis. We will continue analyzing the Choptank River. We will be retrieving essentially the same data that were retrieved in the previous section, but in this case it will be structured into three EGRET-specific dataframes. The daily discharge data will be placed in a dataframe called Daily. The nitrate sample data will be placed in a dataframe called Sample. The data about the site and the parameter will be placed in a dataframe called INFO. Although these dataframes were designed to work with the EGRET R package, they can be very useful for a wide range of hydrologic studies that don't use EGRET.

3.1 INFO Data

The function to obtain metadata, or data about the streamgage and measured parameters is getMetaData. This function combines getSiteFileData and getParameterInfo, producing one dataframe called INFO.

```
parameterCd <- "00618"
INFO <- getMetaData(siteNumber, parameterCd, interactive=FALSE)
```

3.2 Daily Data

The function to obtain the daily values (discharge in this case) is getDVData. It requires the inputs siteNumber, ParameterCd, StartDate, EndDate, interactive, and convert. Most of these arguments are described in the previous section, however "convert" is a new argument (defaults to TRUE), and it tells the program to convert the values from cubic feet per second (cfs) to cubic meters per second (cms). For EGRET applications with NWIS web retrieval, do not use this argument (the default is TRUE), EGRET assumes that discharge is always in cubic meters per second. If you don't want this conversion and are not using EGRET, set convert=FALSE in the function call.

```
siteNumber <- "01491000"
startDate <- "2000-01-01"
endDate <- "2013-01-01"
# This call will get NWIS (cfs) data , and convert it to cms:
Daily <- getDVData(siteNumber, "00060", startDate, endDate)
```

There are 4750 data points, and 4750 days.

Details of the Daily dataframe are listed below:

	ColumnName	Type	Description	Units
1	Date	Date	Date	date
2	Q	number	Discharge in cms	cms
3	Julian	number	Number of days since January 1, 1850	days
4	Month	integer	Month of the year [1-12]	months
5	Day	integer	Day of the year [1-366]	days
6	DecYear	number	Decimal year	years
7	MonthSeq	integer	Number of months since January 1, 1850	months
8	Qualifier	string	Qualifying code	character
9	i	integer	Index of days, starting with 1	days
10	LogQ	number	Natural logarithm of Q	numeric
11	Q7	number	7 day running average of Q	cms
12	Q30	number	30 running average of Q	cms

Table 4: Daily dataframe

If there are discharge values of zero, the code will add a small constant to all of the daily discharges. This constant is 0.001 times the mean discharge. The code will also report on the number of zero and negative values and the size of the constant. EGRET should only be used if the number of zero values is a very small fraction of the total days in the record (say less than 0.1% of the days), and there are no negative discharge values. Columns Q7 and Q30 are the 7 and 30 day running averages for the 7 or 30 days ending on this specific date.

3.3 Sample Data

The function to obtain USGS sample data from the water quality portal is `getSampleData`. The arguments for this function are also `siteNumber`, `ParameterCd`, `StartDate`, `EndDate`, `interactive`. These are the same inputs as `getRawQWData` or `getQWData` as described in the previous section.

```
parameterCd <- "00618"
Sample <- getSampleData(siteNumber, parameterCd,
  startDate, endDate)
```

The function to obtain STORET sample data from the water quality portal is `getStoretSampleData`. The arguments for this function are also `siteNumber`, `ParameterCd`, `StartDate`, `EndDate`, `interactive`. These are the same inputs as `getRawQWData` or `getQWData` as described in the previous section.

```
site <- 'WIDNR_WQX-10032762'
characteristicName <- 'Specific conductance'
Sample <- getSTORETSampleData(site, characteristicName,
  startDate, endDate)
```

Details of the Sample dataframe are listed below:

Table 5: Sample dataframe

ColumnName	Type	Description	Units
Date	Date	Date	date
ConcLow	number	Lower limit of concentration	mg/L
ConcHigh	number	Upper limit of concentration	mg/L
Uncen	integer	Uncensored data (1=true, 0=false)	integer
ConcAve	number	Average of ConcLow and ConcHigh	mg/L
Julian	number	Number of days since January 1, 1850	days
Month	integer	Month of the year [1-12]	months
Day	integer	Day of the year [1-366]	days
DecYear	number	Decimal year	years
MonthSeq	integer	Number of months since January 1, 1850	months
SinDY	number	Sine of DecYear	numeric
CosDY	number	Cosine of DecYear	numeric
Q ¹	number	Discharge	cms
LogQ ¹	number	Natural logarithm of discharge	numeric

The next section will talk about summing multiple constituents, including how interval censoring is used. Since the Sample data frame is structured to only contain one constituent, when more than one parameter codes are requested, the `getSampleData` function will sum the values of each constituent as described below.

3.4 Censored Values: Summation Explanation

In the typical case where none of the data are censored (that is, no values are reported as "less-than" values) the `ConcLow` = `ConcHigh` = `ConcAve` all of which are equal to the reported value and `Uncen`=0. In the typical form of censoring where a value is reported as less than the reporting limit, then `ConcLow` = NA, `ConcHigh` = reporting limit, `ConcAve` = 0.5 * reporting limit, and `Uncen` = 1.

As an example to understand how the `dataRetrieval` package handles a more complex censoring problem, let us say that in 2004 and earlier, we computed a total phosphorus (tp) as the sum of dissolved phosphorus (dp) and particulate phosphorus (pp). From 2005 and onward, we have direct measurements of total phosphorus (tp). A small subset of this fictional data looks like ??.

The `dataRetrieval` package will "add up" all the values in a given row to form the total for that sample. Thus, you only want to enter data that should be added together. For example, we might know the value for dp on 5/30/2005, but we don't want to put it in the table because under the rules of this data set, we are not suppose to add it in to the values in 2005.

For every sample, the EGRET package requires a pair of numbers to define an interval in which the true value lies (`ConcLow` and `ConcHigh`). In a simple non-censored case (the reported value is above

¹Discharge columns are populated from data in the Daily dataframe after calling the `mergeReport` function.

	cdate	rdp	dp	rpp	pp	rtp	tp
1	2003-02-15		0.02		0.50		
2	2003-06-30	<	0.01		0.30		
3	2004-09-15	<	0.00	<	0.20		
4	2005-01-30						0.43
5	2005-05-30					<	0.05
6	2005-10-30					<	0.02

Table 6: Example data

the detection limit), ConcLow equals ConcHigh and the interval collapses down to a single point. In a simple censored case, the value might be reported as <0.2 , then ConcLow=NA and ConcHigh=0.2. We use NA instead of 0 as a way to elegantly handle future logarithm calculations.

For the more complex example case, let us say dp is reported as <0.01 and pp is reported as 0.3. We know that the total must be at least 0.3 and could be as much as 0.31. Therefore, ConcLow=0.3 and ConcHigh=0.31. Another case would be if dp is reported as <0.005 and pp is reported <0.2 . We know in this case that the true value could be as low as zero, but could be as high as 0.205. Therefore, in this case, ConcLow=NA and ConcHigh=0.205. The Sample dataframe for the example data would be:

Sample							
	Date	ConcLow	ConcHigh	Uncen	ConcAve	Julian	Month
1	2003-02-15	0.52	0.520	1	0.5200	55927	2
2	2003-06-30	0.30	0.310	0	0.3050	56062	6
3	2004-09-15	NA	0.205	0	0.1025	56505	9
4	2005-01-30	0.43	0.430	1	0.4300	56642	1
5	2005-05-30	NA	0.050	0	0.0250	56762	5
6	2005-10-30	NA	0.020	0	0.0100	56915	10
	Day	DecYear	MonthSeq	SinDY	CosDY		
1	46	2003	1838	0.70407	0.7101		
2	182	2003	1842	0.02575	-0.9997		
3	259	2005	1857	-0.96251	-0.2712		
4	30	2005	1861	0.48506	0.8745		
5	151	2005	1865	0.52943	-0.8484		
6	304	2006	1870	-0.87861	0.4775		

The next section will talk about inputting user-generated files. `getSampleDataFromFile` and `getSampleData` assume summation with interval censoring inputs, as will be discussed in those sections.

3.5 User-Generated Data Files

Aside from retrieving data from the USGS web services, the `dataRetrieval` package includes functions to generate the Daily and Sample data frame from local files.

3.5.1 getDailyDataFromFile

`getDailyDataFromFile` will load a user-supplied text file and convert it to the Daily dataframe. The file should have two columns, the first dates, the second values. The dates should be formatted either mm/dd/yyyy or yyyy-mm-dd. Using a 4-digit year is required. This function has the following inputs: `filePath`, `fileName`, `hasHeader` (TRUE/FALSE), `separator`, `qUnit`, and `interactive` (TRUE/FALSE). `filePath` is a string that defines the path to your file. This can either be a full path, or path relative to your R working directory. The input `fileName` is a string that defines the file name (including the extension).

Text files that contain this sort of data require some sort of a separator, for example, a 'csv' file (comma-separated value) file uses a comma to separate the date and value column. A tab delimited file would use a tab ("`\t`") rather than the comma ("`,`"). The type of separator you use can be defined in the function call in the "`separator`" argument, the default is "`,`". Another function input is a logical variable: `hasHeader`. The default is TRUE. If your data does not have column names, set this variable to FALSE.

Finally, `qUnit` is a numeric argument that defines the discharge units used in the input file. The default is `qUnit = 1` which assumes discharge is in cubic feet per second. If the discharge in the file is already in cubic meters per second then set `qUnit = 2`. If it is in some other units (like liters per second or acre-feet per day), the user will have to pre-process the data with a unit conversion that changes it to either cubic feet per second or cubic meters per second.

So, if you have a file called "`ChoptankRiverFlow.txt`" located in a folder called "`RData`" on the C drive (this is a Window's example), and the file is structured as follows (tab-separated):

```
date    Qdaily
10/1/1999  107
10/2/1999   85
10/3/1999   76
10/4/1999   76
10/5/1999  113
10/6/1999   98
...
```

The call to open this file, convert the discharge to cubic meters per second, and populate the Daily data frame would be:

```
fileName <- "ChoptankRiverFlow.txt"
filePath <- "C:/RData/"
Daily <- getDailyDataFromFile(filePath, fileName,
                              separator="\t")
```

3.5.2 getSampleDataFromFile

Similarly to the previous section, `getSampleDataFromFile` will import a user-generated file and populate the `Sample` dataframe. The difference between sample data and discharge data is that the code requires a third column that contains a remark code, either blank or "<", which will tell the program that the data was 'left-censored' (or, below the detection limit of the sensor). Therefore, the data is required to be in the form: date, remark, value. An example of a comma-delimited file would be:

```
cdate;remarkCode;Nitrate
10/7/1999,,1.4
11/4/1999,<,0.99
12/3/1999,,1.42
1/4/2000,,1.59
2/3/2000,,1.54
...
```

The call to open this file, and populate the `Sample` dataframe would be:

```
fileName <- "ChoptankRiverNitrate.csv"
filePath <- "C:/RData/"
Sample <- getSampleDataFromFile(filePath, fileName,
                                separator=",")
```

If multiple constituents are going to be summed, the format can be date, remark_A, value_A, remark_b, value_b, etc... A tab-separated example might look like this, where the columns are remark dissolved phosphate (rdp), dissolved phosphate (dp), remark particulate phosphorus (rpp), particulate phosphorus (pp), remark total phosphate (rtp), and total phosphate (tp):

```
date  rdp dp rpp pp rtp tp
2003-02-15 0.02 0.5
2003-06-30 <0.01 0.3
2004-09-15 <0 <0.2
2005-01-30 0.43
2005-05-30 <0.05
2005-10-30 <0.02
...
```

```
fileName <- "ChoptankPhosphorus.txt"
filePath <- "C:/RData/"
Sample <- getSampleDataFromFile(filePath, fileName,
                                separator="\t")
```

3.6 Merge Report

Finally, there is a function called `mergeReport` that will look at both the `Daily` and `Sample` dataframe, and populate `Q` and `LogQ` columns into the `Sample` dataframe. The default arguments are `Daily` and `Sample`, however if you want to use other similarly structured dataframes, you can specify `localDaily` or `localSample`. Once `mergeReport` has been run, the `Sample` dataframe will be augmented with the daily discharges for all the days with samples. None of the water quality functions in EGRET will work without first having run the `mergeReport` function.

```
siteNumber <- "01491000"
parameterCd <- "00631" # Nitrate
startDate <- "2000-01-01"
endDate <- "2013-01-01"
```

```
Daily <- getDVDData(siteNumber, "00060", startDate, endDate)
```

There are 4750 data points, and 4750 days.

```
Sample <- getSampleData(siteNumber, parameterCd, startDate, endDate)
Sample <- mergeReport()
```

```
Discharge Record is 4750 days long, which is 13 years
First day of the discharge record is 2000-01-01 and last day is 2013-01-01
The water quality record has 222 samples
The first sample is from 2000-01-04 and the last sample is from 2012-12-18
Discharge: Minimum, mean and maximum 0.00991 4.55 246
Concentration: Minimum, mean and maximum 0.2 1.2 2.4
Percentage of the sample values that are censored is 0 %
```

```
head(Sample)
```

	Date	ConcLow	ConcHigh	Uncen	ConcAve	Julian	Month
1	2000-01-04	1.59	1.59	1	1.59	54789	1
2	2000-02-03	1.54	1.54	1	1.54	54819	2
3	2000-02-15	1.37	1.37	1	1.37	54831	2
4	2000-02-19	1.24	1.24	1	1.24	54835	2
5	2000-03-23	0.52	0.52	1	0.52	54868	3
6	2000-06-05	1.11	1.11	1	1.11	54942	6

	Day	DecYear	MonthSeq	SinDY	CosDY	Q	LogQ
1	4	2000	1801	0.06005	0.9982	2.747	1.0104
2	34	2000	1802	0.54392	0.8391	3.936	1.3702
3	46	2000	1802	0.70407	0.7101	10.845	2.3837

4	50	2000	1802	0.75113	0.6602	15.518	2.7420
5	83	2000	1803	0.98809	0.1539	56.917	4.0416
6	157	2000	1806	0.43940	-0.8983	1.812	0.5946

3.7 EGRET Plots

As has been mentioned, the data is specifically formatted to be used with the EGRET package. The EGRET package has powerful modeling capabilities using WRTDS, but also has a variety of graphing and tabular tools to explore the data without using the WRTDS algorithm. See the EGRET vignette, user guide, and/or wiki (<https://github.com/USGS-R/EGRET/wiki>) for detailed information. The following figure is an example of one of the plotting functions that can be used directly from the dataRetrieval dataframes.

```
# Continuing Choptank example from the previous sections
library(EGRET)
multiPlotDataOverview()
```

CHOPTANK RIVER NEAR GREENSBORO, MD **Nitrate**

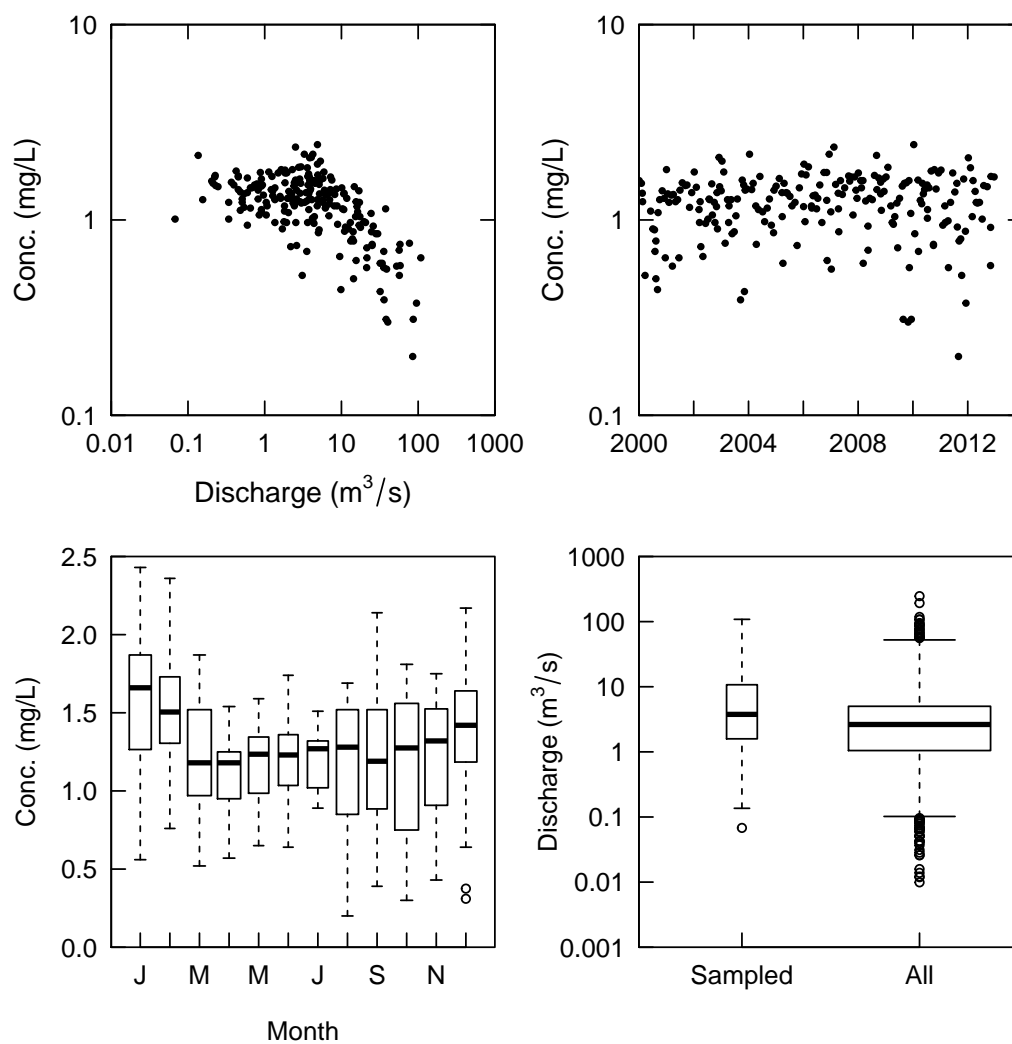


Figure 3: Default multiPlotDataOverview

4 Summary

The following table summarizes the data retrieval functions:

Table 7: dataRetrieval functions

Data Type	Function Name	Description
Daily	retrieveNWISData	Raw USGS daily data
Daily ¹	getDVData	USGS daily values
Daily ¹	getDailyDataFromFile	User generated daily data
Sample	retrieveNWISqwData	Raw USGS water quality data
Sample	getRawQWData	Raw Water Quality Data Portal data
Sample	getQWDataFromFile	Raw user generated water quality data
Sample	getQWData	USGS Water Quality Portal data
Sample	getWQPData	General Water Quality Portal
Sample ¹	getSampleData	USGS water quality data
Sample ¹	getSTORETSampleData	STORET Water Quality Data Portal data
Sample ¹	getSampleDataFromFile	User generated sample data
Unit	retrieveUnitNWISData	Raw USGS instantaneous data
Information ¹	getMetaData	USGS station and parameter code information
Information	getParameterInfo	USGS parameter code information
Information	getSiteFileData	USGS station information
Information	getDataAvailability	Data available at USGS stations

Table 8: dataRetrieval miscellaneous functions

Function Name	Description
compressData	Converts value/qualifier into ConcLow, ConcHigh, Uncen
getRDB1Data	Retrieves and converts RDB data to dataframe
getWaterML1Data	Retrieves and converts WaterML1 data to dataframe
getWaterML2Data	Retrieves and converts WaterML2 data to dataframe
mergeReport	Merges flow data from the daily record into the sample record
populateDateColumns	Generates Julian, Month, Day, DecYear, and MonthSeq columns
removeDuplicates	Removes duplicated rows
renameColumns	Renames columns from raw data retrievals

¹Indicates that function creates a data frame suitable for use in EGRET software

5 Getting Started in R

This section describes the options for downloading and installing the dataRetrieval package.

5.1 New to R?

If you are new to R, you will need to first install the latest version of R, which can be found here: <http://www.r-project.org/>.

There are many options for running and editing R code, one nice environment to learn R is RStudio. RStudio can be downloaded here: <http://rstudio.org/>. Once R and RStudio are installed, the dataRetrieval package needs to be installed as described in the next section.

At any time, you can get information about any function in R by typing a question mark before the functions name. This will open a file (in RStudio, in the Help window) that describes the function, the required arguments, and provides working examples.

```
?removeDuplicates
```

To see the raw code for a particular code, type the name of the function:

```
removeDuplicates

function (localSample = Sample)
{
  Sample1 <- localSample[!duplicated(localSample[c("DecYear",
    "ConcHigh")]), ]
  return(Sample1)
}
<environment: namespace:dataRetrieval>
```

Additionally, many R packages have vignette files attached (such as this paper). To view the vignette:

```
vignette(dataRetrieval)
```

5.2 R User: Installing dataRetrieval

Before installing dataRetrieval, the zoo packages must be installed from CRAN:


```
install.packages(c("zoo", "XML", "RCurl", "plyr"))
install.packages("dataRetrieval", repos="http://usgs-r.github.com")
```

It is a good idea to re-start R after installing the package, especially if installing an updated version. Some users have found it necessary to delete the previous version's package folder before installing newer version of dataRetrieval. If you are experiencing issues after updating a package, trying deleting the package folder - the default location for Windows is something like this: C:/Users/userA/Documents/R/win-library/2.15/dataRetrieval, and the default for a Mac: /Users/userA/Library/R/2.15/lib. Then, re-install the package using the directions above. Moving to CRAN should solve this problem.

After installing the package, you need to open the library each time you re-start R. This is done with the simple command:

```
library(dataRetrieval)
```

6 Creating tables in Microsoft from R

There are a few steps that are required in order to create a table in a Microsoft product (Excel, Word, Powerpoint, etc.) from an R dataframe. There are certainly a variety of good methods, one of which is detailed here. The example we will step through here will be to create a table in Microsoft Word based on the dataframe tableData:

```
availableData <- getDataAvailability(siteNumber)
dailyData <- availableData["dv" == availableData$service,]
dailyData <- dailyData["00003" == dailyData$statCd,]

tableData <- with(dailyData,
  data.frame(
    shortName=srsname,
    Start=startDate,
    End=endDate,
    Count=count,
    Units=parameter_units)
)
tableData
```

	shortName	Start
1	Temperature, water	2010-10-01
2	Stream flow, mean. daily	1948-01-01
3	Specific conductance	2010-10-01
4	Suspended sediment concentration (SSC)	1980-10-01

```

5           Suspended sediment discharge 1980-10-01
      End Count      Units
1 2012-05-09    529      deg C
2 2014-01-26 24133      ft3/s
3 2012-05-09    527 uS/cm @25C
4 1991-09-30  3651      mg/l
5 1991-09-30  3652      tons/day

```

First, save the dataframe as a tab delimited file (you don't want to use comma delimited because there are commas in some of the data elements):

```

write.table(tableData, file="tableData.tsv", sep="\t",
            row.names = FALSE, quote=FALSE)

```

This will save a file in your working directory called tableData.tsv. You can see your working directory by typing `getwd()` in the R console. Opening the file in a general-purpose text editor, you should see the following:

```

shortName  Start  End Count Units
Temperature, water 2010-10-01 2012-06-24 575 deg C
Stream flow, mean. daily 1948-01-01 2013-03-13 23814 cfs
Specific conductance 2010-10-01 2012-06-24 551 uS/cm @25C
Suspended sediment concentration (SSC) 1980-10-01 1991-09-30 3651 mg/l
Suspended sediment discharge 1980-10-01 1991-09-30 3652 tons/day

```

To open this file in Excel:

1. Open Excel
2. Click on the File tab
3. Click on the Open option
4. Browse to the working directory (as shown in the results of `getwd()`)
5. Next to the File name text box, change the dropdown type to All Files (*.*)
6. Double click tableData.tsv
7. A text import wizard will open up, in the first window, choose the Delimited radio button if it is not automatically picked, then click on Next.
8. In the second window, click on the Tab delimiter if it is not automatically checked, then click Finished.
9. Use the many formatting tools within Excel to customize the table

From Excel, it is simple to copy and paste the tables in other Microsoft products. An example using one of the default Excel table formats is here.

shortName	Start	End	Count	Units
Temperature, water	10/1/2010	6/24/2012	575	deg C
Stream flow, mean. daily	1/1/1948	3/13/2013	23814	cfs
Specific conductance	10/1/2010	6/24/2012	551	uS/cm @25C
Suspended sediment concentration (SSC)	10/1/1980	9/30/1991	3651	mg/l
Suspended sediment discharge	10/1/1980	9/30/1991	3652	tons/day

Figure 4: A simple table produced in Microsoft Excel

References

- [1] Helsel, D.R. and R. M. Hirsch, 2002. Statistical Methods in Water Resources Techniques of Water Resources Investigations, Book 4, chapter A3. U.S. Geological Survey. 522 pages. <http://pubs.usgs.gov/twri/twri4a3/>
- [2] Hirsch, R. M., Moyer, D. L. and Archfield, S. A. (2010), Weighted Regressions on Time, Discharge, and Season (WRTDS), with an Application to Chesapeake Bay River Inputs. JAWRA Journal of the American Water Resources Association, 46: 857-880. doi: 10.1111/j.1752-1688.2010.00482.x <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1752-1688.2010.00482.x/full>
- [3] Sprague, L. A., Hirsch, R. M., and Aulenbach, B. T. (2011), Nitrate in the Mississippi River and Its Tributaries, 1980 to 2008: Are We Making Progress? Environmental Science & Technology, 45 (17): 7209-7216. doi: 10.1021/es201221s <http://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es201221s>