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Controlling Suspended Sediment Samplers by Programmable Calculator and Interface Circuitry

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A programmable calculator connected to an interface circuit can control automatic samplers and record streamflow data. The circuit converts a voltage representing water stage to a digital signal. The sampling program logs streamflow data when there is a predefined deviation from a linear trend in the water elevation. The calculator estimates suspended sediment discharge from rating coefficients for the gauging site. When a threshold value of accumulated suspended sediment discharge is reached, the calculator sends a signal to the interface circuit that activates a pumping sampler. The sampling program is easily updated, and data are transferred to a computer by using a digital cassette recorder. This system increases sampling flexibility and efficiency.

Retrieval Terms: automatic pumping samplers, streamflow, suspended sediment, sampling, water quality, data logger, programmable calculator

Gauging sites located in steep terrain are often subjected to short-duration runoff events. These events reduce the probability of collecting samples during high flow conditions. Automatic pumping samplers can improve the collection of suspended sediment data when operated at fixed time intervals. Although such intervals can range from minutes to hours, long intervals are often used to limit the number of samples and reduce laboratory expense. As a result, high flow conditions are missed or undersampled. Sampling frequencies adequate for uncommon large runoff events, however, oversample low flow conditions.

A programmable calculator can improve the quality of sampling by skewing it towards important events. Moreover, the sampling program is easily updated, and field records, containing streamflow data and sampling times, can be transferred directly to a computer. Commercial controller/data loggers have been available for several years. They are often preprogrammed for a specific site, however, and generally emphasize data logging, instead of handling complex equations. Also, the cost of these devices may be prohibitive.

This note describes a system that can control the collection of pumped suspended sediment samples and record streamflow data, and includes detailed wiring schematic, component list, and program listing. The general theory of operation and software development is described in an earlier publication.¹

METHODS

Hardware

Two commercial calculators²—the Hewlett Packard HP-41CV and HP-41CX—can activate pumping samplers and log streamflow data under program control. In addition to the calculator, two plug-in modules and a general purpose interface are necessary to communicate with the external interface circuitry and devices (fig. 1). The HP-IL provides a physical two-wire link between the calculator and the general purpose interface. The HP-IL Module codes and decodes messages and commands between the HP-IL and the calculator. The Extended I/O Module supplies additional instructions that enhance the input/output functions of the HP-IL Module. The HP-IL Converter is a general purpose interface that provides communication between the HP-IL and external circuitry supplied by the user. In addition, it provides two eight-bit parallel data buses, a bidirectional data buffer, and data transfer logic for "handshaking." Input 1 supplies a 0- to 5-VDC signal to the analog-to-digital converter that sends an eight-bit representation of stage to data bus A (fig. 2). Data bus B supplies output signals through the calculator and HP-IL that control the start of analog-to-digital conversion, and activate the pumping sampler. The circuit board can control two samplers: outputs 7 and 8 control sampler A, and outputs 9 and 10 control sampler B. In

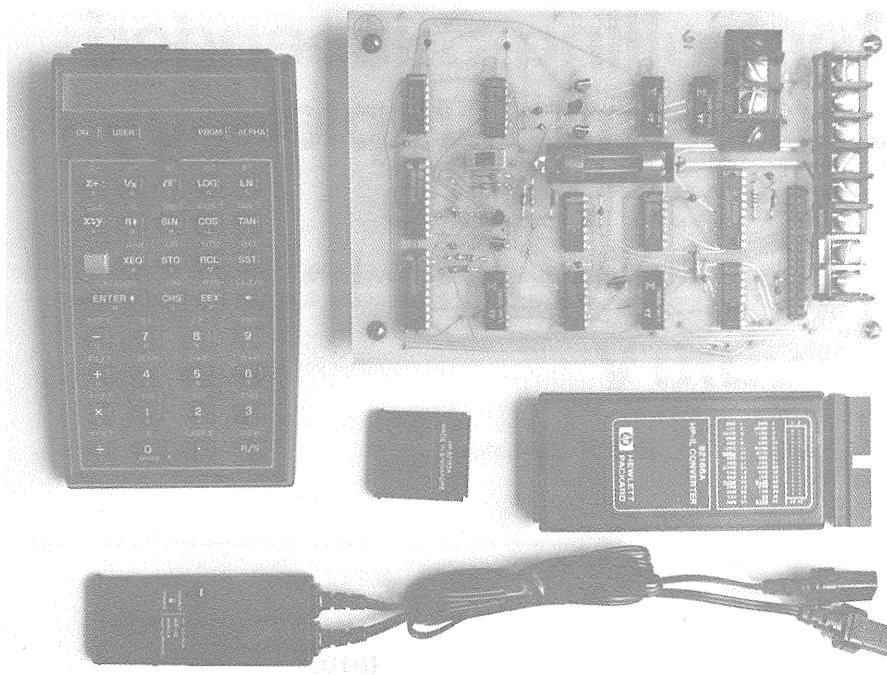


Figure 1—The sediment sampling system consists of a programmable calculator, plug-in mod-

ules, and general purpose interface to connect with the interface circuitry.

addition, output 3 provides a 12-VDC signal for an event marker. The handshake lines control the input from the analog-to-digital converter, power-up and -down circuitry, and latch the data in the interface circuit (Appendix A).

To extend battery life in remote areas, the circuit components that consume the most power are powered down when not in use (this includes the converter, analog-to-digital converter, and potentiometer which are connected to output 2). In our application, the HP-IL Converter uses negative control logic, which implies that all signals go true when power is removed. This complicates interface circuit design by requiring support circuitry to prevent false signals from triggering undesired events. The line for powering-up external circuitry (WKUP) is an output of the converter and functions under calculator control, even when power is off to the converter. WKUP pulses whenever an IL command is sent from the calculator, in-

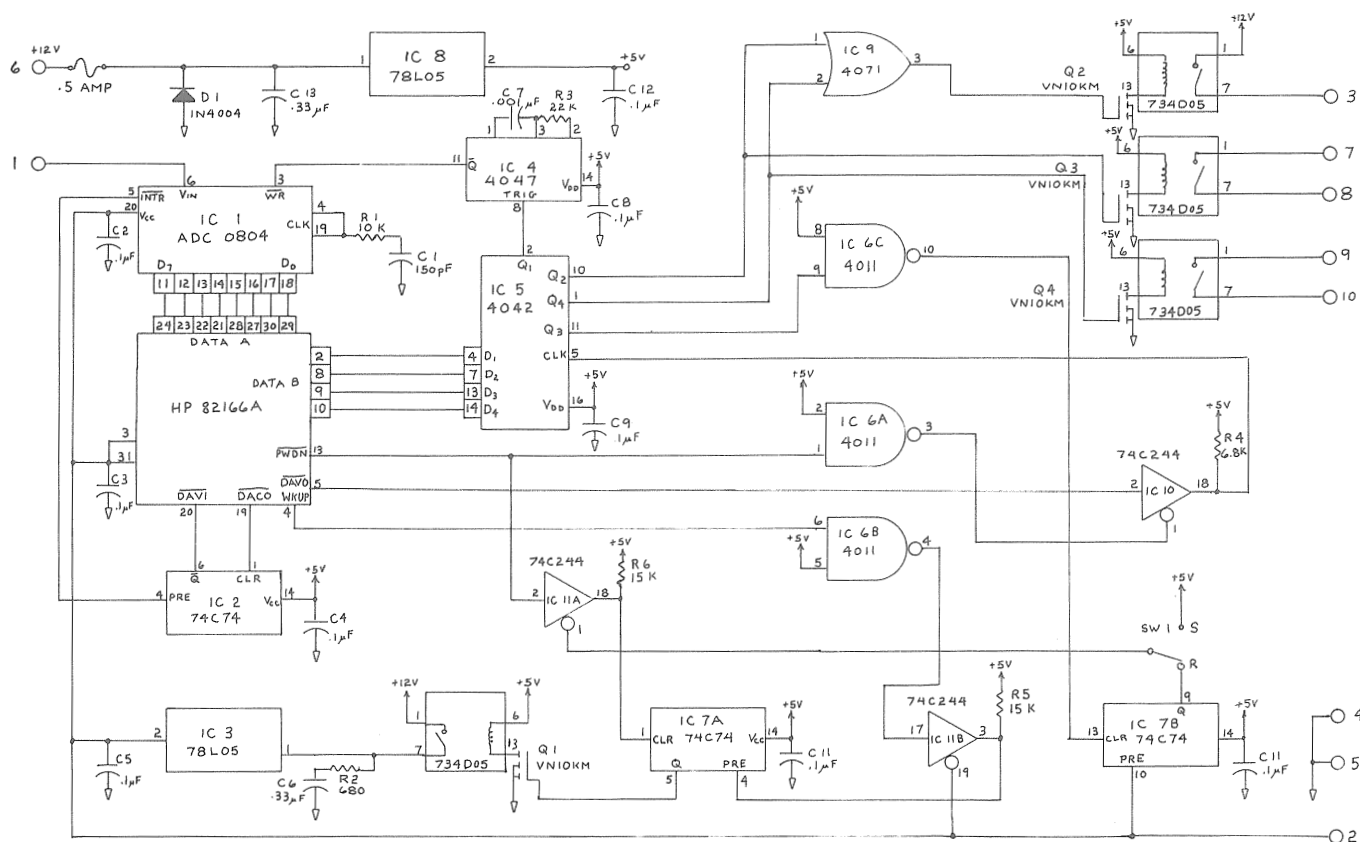


Figure 2—Electrical circuitry for the automatic sediment sampling system using a programmable calculator.

cluding the command for powering-down the external circuitry. Because the flip-flop (IC 7A) that switches power to output 2 has both the power-up and power-down lines as inputs, tri-stating the lines is necessary to prevent the signals from interfering with one another.

Data bus B on the converter is used for internal communication when it is not being used for output. Therefore, the data lines must be latched. A handshake line on the converter *DAVO* is used to latch the data. Since *DAVO* goes true when the converter is powered down, a tri-state is used with a pull-up resistor to prevent false latching.

Additionally, the circuit allows serial sampling using two pumping samplers. When the last bottle in the first sampler has been filled, the program changes control lines to permit sampling in the second sampler.

Software

We developed the software to control a pumping sampler based on estimated suspended sediment discharge. Although specific to our application, modifications of the program for similar situations would not require extensive changes.

The software for the HP-41 system consists of three programs: (a) the sampling program (Appendix B), (b) the data dump routine, and (c) the program for transferring data from the calculator to the computer.

The sampling program controls the pumping sampler and event marker, performs the necessary calculations, and records streamflow data. The system is fully automated and requires no operator intervention, except for the initial calculator installation and performing data dumps. The sampling program, along with the registers containing equation coefficients and constants, is stored on a cassette tape. Using the HP Digital Cassette Drive, the program and register contents are loaded into the calculator at the office or in the field.

When a calculator is first installed at a site, the subroutine COLD is executed (fig. 3). It blanks memory and sets the variable data registers to appropriate values. The subroutine then applies power to the external circuitry, initializes the converter, and records the stage and time. It also sets

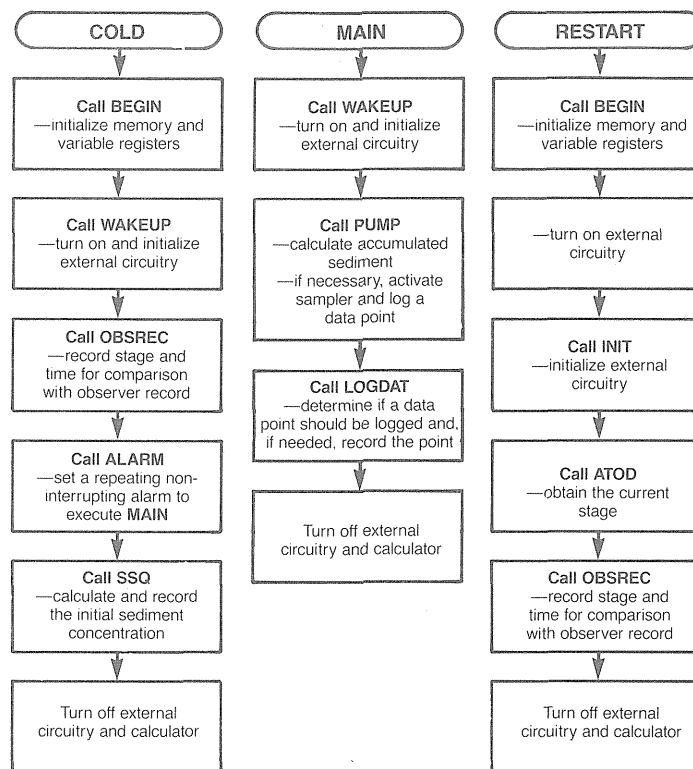


Figure 3—The routine COLD is executed when the programmable calculator begins operations. It subsequently activates the sampling routine

an alarm in the calculator that will execute the sampling program (MAIN). In our application, the alarm is set to repeat once every 10 minutes (the interval can be any integral divisor of 60). Finally, COLD turns off external circuitry and then turns off the calculator.

The subroutine RESTART is executed each time a data dump is performed. RESTART executes essentially the same operations as COLD, with one exception: it does not set an alarm. The alarm set by COLD continues operating. An alarm will not activate if the calculator is on; thus it is possible to perform data dumps and service the sampler without interruption. When RESTART has completed the initialization it turns off both the external circuitry and the calculator.

When the alarm time is due, the calculator turns on and executes the subroutine MAIN. MAIN estimates the current rate of sediment discharge and accumulates the estimated amount of sediment which passed the gauging station since the last wake-up period. After a threshold amount of sediment has been exceeded, MAIN activates the pumping sampler.

MAIN. The RESTART routine is similar to COLD, but does not set up an alarm to execute MAIN.

MAIN also determines if a data point should be logged. A data point, consisting of time and stage, requires two bytes of memory. It is recorded if the current stage deviates by more than a predetermined tolerance from the line defined by the two previously recorded data points. Stage is read from the analog-to-digital converter and time is the number of wake-up intervals since the last recorded data point. The maximum number of wake-up intervals between recorded data points is never allowed to exceed 255 (without recording a point). A total of 408 data points can be stored.

The data dump program is a short series of instructions that retrieve data from the calculator and write them onto a cassette tape. Performing a data dump does not interfere with normal operation except for delaying (by one or two wake-up intervals) pumping sampler activation or data logging. The cassette tape is then taken to the office for analysis.

At the office, data from the cassette are reloaded onto a calculator for transfer to a computer. Data transfer, from calculator to computer, takes place under calculator pro-

gram control. The calculator is connected to the computer through the HP-IL/RS-232-C Interface. The interface is programmable and can be configured to "talk" to any computer that uses the RS-232-C protocol. Although data are stored in binary format in the calculator, the program transfers them in ASCII format.

DISCUSSION

Automatic collection of suspended sediment samples can be improved by using a programmable calculator capable of controlling a pumping sampler. This system provides the flexibility to update program coefficients and perform data dumps in the field by persons with minimal training. Data logging occurs only when the stage hydrograph deviates from a linear trend. Data are removed from the calculator in the field by using a digital cassette re-

recorder. Records are then transferred to a computer without intermediate data reduction or manual entry. Reliability, low cost (less than \$1000), and flexibility make this system attractive for many types of environmental sampling studies.

Implementation of this system will require several levels of knowledge. A computer programmer would be required to write programs for removing data from the digital cassette and transferring it to the computer. Interface circuit building, modification, and repair would require a basic understanding of digital electronics.

We are developing and testing a new sampling system that incorporates the HP-71B portable computer (programmable in Basic with 17.5- to 33.5-k of available memory). The interface hardware, developed for the HP-41CX, is compatible and requires no modification for similar sampling requirements.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT:

Steve Hankin, formerly with the Station staff and now with the Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory, U.S. Department of Commerce, Seattle, Washington, proposed the original concept, and assisted in the design and development of the software and interface circuitry.

END NOTES AND REFERENCES

¹Eads, R. E.; Hankin, S. C.; Boolootian, M. R. *A programmable calculator improves automatic sampling of suspended sediment*. Water Resour. Res. (In press.)

²Trade names and commercial enterprises or products are mentioned for information only. No endorsement by the U.S. Department of Agriculture is implied.

³This device has been discontinued and replaced by the HP 82166C HP-IL Interface kit. This kit contains the individual components necessary to construct the converter.

APPENDIX A—Components to Construct System

The commercial components necessary to construct this system are manufactured by Hewlett-Packard and include:

- HP-41 CV or HP-41 CX calculator
- HP-IL Module (HP 82160A)
- Time Module (HP 82182A)—HP-41 CV only
- Extended I/O Module (HP 82183A)
- HP-IL Converter (HP 82166A)¹
- Digital Cassette Drive (HP 82161A)
- HP-IL/RS-232-C Interface (HP 82164A)

Battery exchanges for the interface circuit, using a 12-VDC, 9.5 Ah gelled electrolyte battery, and the calculator, using 1.5-VDC, size N alkaline batteries, are necessary at about 8-week intervals, depending on temperature, when using a 10-minute wake-up interval.

The temperature limits for operating the calculator are 0 to 45 °C. Temperatures below 0 °C may affect program execution, resulting in temporary system failure which requires the assistance of a field technician. The use of this system outside of the operating limits may require insulation, or in extreme conditions, heating or cooling.

Information on circuit construction and program is available from the authors at Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station, 1700 Bayview Drive, Arcata, California 95521.

APPENDIX B—System Software

LBL AL	:ALARM
	:set a repeating non-interrupting
	:alarm that will execute the Main program
RCL 06	:get wakeup interval
100	
/	:make into repeat interval
ENTER	
ENTER	:place it in the Z-reg
RCL 13	:get number of wakeup intervals since truncated restart
2	
+	
*	:calculate number minutes past the hour for the first alarm
RCL 07	:get time of restart
INT	:truncate it
+	:starting time of first alarm
HR	
HMS	:fix time if it's incorrect
0	:start today
X<>Y	:put into proper register
"MA"	:program to execute on alarm
XYZALM	
RTN	
LBL AT	:ATOD
	:read in value from A to D and
	:leave in the X-reg
0	

OUTXB		DDAYS	;compute difference
1	;fire the A to D	1440	
OUTXB	;needs a rising pulse	*	;convert to minutes
INXB	;input data point	X<>Y	;place current time back in X-reg
RTN		RCL 07	;get time of restart
LBL BE	BEGIN	INT	;calculate difference between truncated time of restart and
	;initialize memory and variable registers		;current exact time
TIME		HR	;convert to decimal hours
STO 28	;save time	X<>Y	
INT	;hours only	HR	;convert to decimal hours
XEQ DE		-	;get difference
ST - 09	;time of last wakeup after a restart	HMS	;back to clock form (hours, minutes, seconds)
RCL 28	;get time	STO 27	;save it
STO 07	;save as time of restart	INT	;integer part is hours
DATE	;get today's date	60	
STO 08	;save as date of restart	*	;in minutes
144	;max number of bytes for pumped samples	RCL 27	;fractional part is minutes
STO 11	;save	FRC	
- 9	;force logging of next two data points	100	;move decimal point
STO 12	;save false stage	*	
0	;initialize selected variables	+	;minutes and seconds
STO 23	;number of intervals since last logging	HMS +	;total minutes
STO 24	;slope at last logging	STO 27	;save it
STO 25	;stage at last logging	RCL 06	;get number minutes in a wakeup interval
STO 26	;number samples taken	MOD	;compute error (how far from wakeup interval are we)
30.17001		CF 09	;clear 'badtime' flag
STO 27	;blank memory: reg 30-170	.03	;allowed error is 3 seconds
CLA		X<=Y?	;is error <= 3 seconds
LBL 01	;top of loop	SF 09	;yes! set 'badtime' flag
ASTO IND 27		RCL 27	;get difference in time
ISG 27	;increment and skip if greater	RCL 06	;get wakeup interval
GTO 01	;bottom of loop	/	;calculate number of wakeup intervals
FIX 4	;4 places to right of decimal point	INT	;whole intervals only
RTN		STO 13	;save
LBL CO	;COLD	RTN	;X-reg contains number of wakeup intervals since last restart
	;initial program run upon installation.	LBL IN	;INIT
	;set up calculator environment and set alarm		;perform converter set up
TIME	;DATE and TIME executed	CLRLOOP	;clear devices on loop
STO 07	;in order to prevent	64	
DATE	;blow-ups during	FINDAID	;get converter ID
STO 08	;a COLD start	SELECT	;make primary device
XEQ BE		CLA	;load alpha register with ASCII values for converter setup
RCL 07	;get time of restart	50	
XEQ WA		XTOAR	
XEQ OR		64	
STO 29	;save record	XTOAR	
RCL 13	;get number wakeup intervals since truncated restart	0	
1		XTOAR	
+	;increment	90	
STO 09	;save as time of last wakeup	XTOAR	
XEQ AL		ADROFF	;turn off auto addressing
0		1	
STO 22	;accumulated sediment is 0	LAD	;make converter a listener
XEQ SS		0	;ready for control register setup
STO 10	;save sediment concentration for next wakeup	DDL	
4	;prepare for the PWRDN command	3	
OUTXB		OUTAN	;set register
0		UNL	;unlisten converter
OUTXB		ADRON	;auto addressing back on
PWRDN	;turn off peripherals	XEQ AT	
OFF	;put the calculator to sleep	2	
END		DEVL	;clear transfer buffer
LBL DE	;DELTIME	RTN	
	;calculate the number of wakeup	LBL LO	;LOGDAT
	;intervals since the truncated restart		;determine if we should log a data point
	;on entry: X-reg = current time		
RCL 08	;get DATE of restart		
DATE	;get today's date		

RCL 11	;get number bytes stored so far	4	;prepare for PWRDN command
6		OUTXB	
/		0	
RCL 05	;get maximum register number we can store in	OUTXB	
INT	;make number bytes into a register number	PWRDN	;power down peripherals
X>Y?	;is memory full	OFF	;put calculator to sleep
RTN	;yes! return	END	
144	;put max number intervals allowed between loggings in X-reg	LBL OR	;OBSREC
RCL 13	;get number wakeup intervals since trunc restart		;make a calculator interpolation record
RCL 23	;get number wakeup intervals since last logged point		;format is SSSHHMM where SSS is stage in feet
-	;compute difference		;and HHMM is time
STO 28	;save	CF 29	;no commas in display
X>Y?	;exceeded number allowed intervals	TIME	;get current time
GTO 01	;yes! force a logging	100	
FS? C 08	;no! has a pumped sample been taken	*	
GTO 01	;yes! force a logging	INT	;convert time into 2400 hour integer form
RCL 25	;get stage at last logging	STO 27	;save
RCL 28	;get number wakeup intervals since last logging	CLA	
RCL 24	;get slope at last logging	ARCL 27	;recall time into alpha register
*		LBL 01	
+	;calculate a predicted value for current stage	ATOXR	;get rightmost char in alpha register
RCL 12	;get actual current stage	46	
-	;compute difference	X=Y?	;is it a period
ABS	;absolute value	GTO 02	;yes!
RCL 03	;get allowed tolerance	GTO 01	;no!—go back and keep looking
X>Y?	;is difference between predicted and actual less than allowed	LBL 02	
	;tolerance	ALENGIO	;length of string in alpha register
RTN	;yes! return	4	
LBL 01	;no! log a point	X=Y?	;is it 4 characters
RCL 12	;get current stage	GTO 03	;yes!
11	;register number containing number of bytes stored so far	48	;no!—insert a 0 in front of string
XEQ ST		XTOAL	
RCL 28	;get number of wakeup intervals since last logging	LBL 03	;save string in alpha register
11	;register number containing number of bytes stored so far	ASTO 27	
XEQ ST		CLA	
RCL 12	;get current stage	RCL 12	;get stage
RCL 25	;get stage at last logging	XEQ TO	;convert to meters
-	;compute difference	100	
RCL 28	;get number wakeup intervals since last logging	*	;shift decimal point
/	;calculate slope between this stage and previous	ARCL X	;move contents of X-reg into alpha register
STO 24	;save slope	LBL 04	
RCL 12	;get current stage	ATOXR	;get rightmost character in alpha register
STO 25	;save as old stage	46	
RCL 13	;get number wakeup intervals since trunc restart	X=Y?	;is it a period
STO 23	;save as number intervals at last logging since trunc restart	GTO 05	;yes!
RTN		GTO 04	;no!—keep looking
LBL LR	;LASTREC	LBL 05	
	;make a calculator interpolating record	ALENGIO	;get length of string in alpha register
	;execute during a data dump	3	
XEQ WA		X=Y?	;is it 3 characters
XEQ OR		GTO 06	;yes!
STO 28	;save record	48	;no!—place a 0 in front of string
END		XTOAL	
LBL MA	;MAIN	LBL 06	
	;main program—executed each wakeup	49	;place a 1 in front of string
TIME		XTOAL	
STO 28	;save time	ARCL 27	;get time and append to string in alpha register
XEQ WA		ANUMDEL	;move alpha string into X-reg
FS? 09	;is 'Badtime' flag set	SF 29	;turn commas on
GTO 01	;yes! This is not a routine wakeup	RTN	
XEQ PU		LBL PU	;PUMP
XEQ LO			;determine if a pumped sample should
LBL 01			;be taken and do so
		XEQ TS	
		ST + 22	;sum sediment
		RCL 04	;get threshold sediment value
		RCL 22	;get accumulated sediment value
		X<=Y?	;is accum. sed. value less than or equal to threshold

	value		
RTN	;yes! No sample yet	XEQ OR	
72	;no!—max number samples in sampler A	STO 29	;save record
RCL 26	;get number samples taken	4	;set up for power down
X<Y?	;number samples taken less than number samples held by sampler A	OUTXB	
GTO 01	;yes!—pump from pumping sampler A	0	
144	;Max number samples to be taken in sampler B	OUTXB	
X<>Y	;swap X and Y	PWRDN	;turn off external circuitry
X<Y?	;number samples taken less than number samples held by both	OFF	;turn off calculator
	;samplers	END	
GTO 02	;yes!—pump from pumping sampler B	LBL SS	;SSQ
RCL 04	;no bottles left—get threshold value		;compute sediment concentration
ST - 22	;subtract threshold value from accumulated value and save		;Q = AQ*(stage - KQ)**BQ
		RCL 12	;get current stage
		XEQ TO	;convert to meters
		RCL 16	;get KQ
		-	
RTN		X>0?	;is stage—KQ > 0
LBL 01	;fire pumping sampler A	GTO 01	;yes!
0		0	;no! return 0 for concentration
OUTXB		RTN	
2		LBL 01	
OUTXB	;set data line high	RCL 15	;get BQ
PSE	;hold high for a moment	Y^X	;form (stage - KQ)**BQ
0		RCL 14	;get AQ
OUTXB		*	;= Q
GTO 03		ENTER	
LBL 02	;fire pumping sampler B	ENTER	;place in Z-reg
0			;C = AC*(Q - KC)**BC
OUTXB		RCL 19	;get KC
8		X>0?	;is Q - KC > 0
OUTXB	;set data line high	GTO 02	;yes!
PSE	;hold high for a moment	0	;no! return 0 for concentration
0		RTN	
OUTXB		LBL 02	
LBL 03		RCL 18	;get BC
RCL 04	;get threshold sed value	Y^X	;form (Q - KC)**BC
ST - 22	;subtract threshold sed value from accumulated value and save	RCL 17	;get AC
		*	;= C
RCL 12	;get current stage	*	;= QC
26	;register number containing number pumped samples taken so far	#####	;constant to adjust units
		*	
XEQ ST		RTN	;Q*C in X-reg
RCL 13	;get number wakeup intervals since trunc restart	LBL ST	;STORE
256			;store 1 byte in data array
MOD	; (number intervals since trunc restart) modulo 256		;on entry
26	;reg. number containing number pumped samples taken so far		;X-reg = register number containing address
			;to store into
XEQ ST		STO 27	;save register number
RCL 13	;get number wakeup intervals	RDN	;rotate registers
256		RCL IND 27	;get contents of register number
/		6	;number of bytes per register
INT	;INT (number wakeup intervals/256)	/	
256		INT	;discard fractional part
XEQ ST		30	;FIRSTREG—offset into array
SF 08	;set flag indicating pumped sample was taken (will force logging of data point)	+	;register number into which we store
		1	
XEQ LO		ST + IND 27	;increment count
RTN		RDN	;rotate registers
LBL RE	;RESTART	STO 27	;register to store into
	;restart program—performed after every data dump	RDN	;rotate registers thus move data into X-reg
	;resets calculator environment	CLA	
XEQ BE		ARCL IND 27	;get existing string
SF 25	;ignore errors	XTOAR	;append character to ALPHA register
PWRUP	;turn on external circuitry	ASTO IND 27	;put it back
XEQ IN		RTN	
XEQ AT		LBL TO	;TOMETER
X=0?	;can not have 0 stage		;convert stage from A to D units to meters
1			;on entry: X-reg = STAGE
STO 12	;save stage		

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RCL 21      ;get slope
*           ;multiply by stage
RCL 20      ;get Y intercept
+
RTN
LBL TS      ;stage (meters) = A + B* stage (A to D)
            ;TSED
            ;compute total accumulated sediment since last
            ;sample was taken
            ;we use the trapezoidal method
            ;result in X - reg.
XEQ SS      ;get current concentration
RCL 10      ;get sediment concentration at last wakeup
X<>Y
STO 10      ;save current sediment concentration
+
2
/           ;take the mean of the two concentrations
RCL 09      ;get number wakeup intervals since trunc restart at last
            ;wakeup
RCL 13      ;get number wakeup intervals since trunc restart
            ;currently
STO 09      ;save number wakeup intervals now for next time
X<>Y
-           ;swap X and Y registers
            ;compute number intervals since now and last wakeup
            ;(usually 1)
*           ;multiply interval difference by concentration mean
RCL 06      ;get number minutes in a wakeup interval
*
60
*           ;to obtain CMS
RTN         ;leave value in X - reg
LBL WA      ;WAKEUP
            ;perform power up initializations
            ;for external circuitry
            ;on entry: X - reg contains time
SF 25      ;ignore PWRUP error
PWRUP      ;turn on peripherals
XEQ DE
XEQ IN
XEQ AT
X=0?
1
STO 12      ;can not have 0 stage
RTN         ;save stage

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REGISTERS

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00  program revision number
01  observer record
02  observer record
03  allowed error in stage prediction
04  threshold volume of sediment discharge
05  relative number of last useable data register
06  TIME interval (in minutes) to elapse between wakeups
07  TIME of restart
08  DATE of restart
09  numbers of wakeup intervals since truncated restart at last wakeup
10  sediment discharge rate at last wakeup
11  number of logged data points so far ( × 2)
12  current stage
13  number of wakeup intervals between truncated restart and this wakeup
14  discharge rating equation coefficient
15  discharge rating equation coefficient
16  discharge rating equation coefficient
17  concentration rating equation coefficient
18  concentration rating equation coefficient
19  concentration rating equation coefficient
20  conversion to meters coefficient
21  conversion to meters coefficient
22  accumulated sediment discharge
23  number of wakeup intervals since truncated restart and last logging
24  slope of hydrograph at last logging
25  stage at last logging
26  number of pumped samples taken so far ( × 3)
27  scratch register
28  scratch register
29  initial calculator record
30-53 pumped sample data
54-190 logged data

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The Authors:

are assigned to the Station's research unit studying Pacific Coastal Forests, with headquarters at the Redwood Sciences Laboratory, Arcata, Calif. **RAND E. EADS** is a hydrologic technician. He has been a member of the staff since 1975. Native of Los Angeles, he earned a biology degree (1974) at Humboldt State University, Arcata. **MARK R. BOOLOOTIAN** is a computer programmer analyst. He earned a mathematics degree (1983) at Humboldt State University. He joined the Station staff in 1982.