

FINAL REPORT

Texas High School Coastal Monitoring Program: 2022–2023

Tiffany L. Caudle



Bureau of Economic Geology

Scott W. Tinker, Director

Jackson School of Geosciences

The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78713-8924

September 2023



F I N A L R E P O R T

Texas High School Coastal Monitoring Program: 2022–2023

Tiffany L. Caudle

This report was funded by a Texas Coastal Management Program grant approved by the Texas Land Commissioner, providing financial assistance under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, awarded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office for Coastal Management, pursuant to NOAA Award No. NA22NOS4190148. The views expressed herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA, the U.S. Department of Commerce, or any of their subagencies.

Bureau of Economic Geology
Scott W. Tinker, Director
Jackson School of Geosciences
The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, Texas 78713-8924

September 2023



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	i
Tables	ii
Figures	ii
Introduction	1
Program Description.....	3
Goals	3
Methods.....	4
Data Management, Data Analysis, and Dissemination of Information	6
Student, Teacher, and Scientist Interactions	7
High Island High School	10
Ball High School	11
Brazosport High School	12
Matagorda Area Schools	13
Port Aransas High School.....	14
Cunningham Middle School.....	15
Port Isabel High School	16
Effects on Scientific Research, Coastal Management, and Public Awareness	17
Scientific Results and Texas Coastal Changes: 1997–2023	22
Bolivar Peninsula.....	23
Galveston Island.....	25
Surfside Beach and Quintana Beach.....	30
Matagorda Peninsula.....	31
Mustang Island	35
North Padre Island.....	39

South Padre Island	41
Conclusions.....	43
Acknowledgments	44
References.....	45
Appendix A: Profile Information.....	48
Appendix B: Graphs of Volume, Shoreline, and Vegetation-Line Change.....	49
Appendix C: Graphs of Beach Profiles.....	61
Appendix D: Maps Of Gps Shoreline And Vegetation Line Positions	125

TABLES

Table 1. Schools involved in the THSCMP.	8
--	---

FIGURES

Figure 1. Location map of participating schools.	2
Figure 2. Students using (A) a sighting level to determine vertical offset between Emery rods and (B) a metric tape to measure horizontal distance.....	6
Figure 3. Students mapping (A) the shoreline (wet/dry line) using handheld GPS units and (B) using wind meters to determine wind speed.	6
Figure 4. Students (A) throwing an orange to determine longshore current speed and direction and (B) measuring how far along the shoreline the orange drifted to calculate longshore current speed.	6
Figure 5. Location map of High Island High School monitoring sites.....	11
Figure 6. Location map of Ball High School monitoring sites.....	12
Figure 7. Location map of Brazosport High School monitoring sites.	13
Figure 8. Location map of sites monitored by Matagorda-area schools.	14
Figure 9. Location map of Port Aransas High School monitoring sites.	15
Figure 10. Location map of Cunningham Middle School monitoring sites.	16

Figure 11. Location map of Port Isabel High School monitoring sites.	17
Figure 12. Lidar topographic-relief image of Galveston Island State Park and Pirates Beach subdivision. Note the difference in beach width between the natural beach and the area in front of the subdivision. From Gibeaut and others (2003).	19
Figure 13. Shoreline position comparison at Surfside Beach site SURF2. Shorelines include the wet-beach/dry-beach boundary mapped on April 24, 2019, by THSCMP students and Bureau staff using ground GPS and the 1 m (3.3 ft) above mean sea level shoreline proxy extracted from airborne lidar data acquired in spring 2019, superimposed on 2019 Bureau imagery. From Paine and others (2021).	20
Figure 14. Changes at HIB01 and HIB01 Reset monitored by High Island High School students.	24
Figure 15. Changes to the position of the (A) shoreline and (B) vegetation line at HIB01 between February 2016 and May 2023.	25
Figure 16. Profile volume, shoreline, and vegetation-line changes at Galveston Island State Park, September 1994–April 2008.....	26
Figure 17. Beach-profile plots from BEG02 in Galveston Island State Park comparing the post–Hurricane Ike profile with a pre-storm profile from early 2008 and the post–Tropical Storm Frances profile from September 1998. Data from September 2009 (1-year post-storm) is also included.	28
Figure 18. BEG02 datum-reset post–Hurricane Ike profile, plus data collected by Ball High School students. Students are monitoring recovery of the beaches and dunes at this site.....	29
Figure 19. Erosion of the dune at DEL01 in the Dellanera RV Park due to the 2020 hurricane season.	30
Figure 20. GPS mapping by Brazosport HS students of vegetation line positions at QUIN1 from April 2019 through May 2023.....	31
Figure 21. Pre– and post–Hurricane Ike profile data collected by Van Vleck High School students at (A) MAT01 and Palacios High School students at (B) MAT02. Students are monitoring recovery and growth of the foredune at these sites.	33
Figure 22. Shoreline position change at Matagorda Peninsula.	34

Figure 23. Changes in beach and dune volume, shoreline position, and vegetation-line position at MAT03 on Matagorda Peninsula.	34
Figure 24. Changes at MUI01 on Mustang Island. (A) Expansion of the foredune between 2001 and 2009. (B) Changes in the foredune due to the beach-maintenance practice of dune notching.	36
Figure 25. Excavated dune at MUI01 on Mustang Island looking (A) north toward Horace Caldwell Pier and (B) landward.	37
Figure 26. Student monitoring at MUI02 documents an increase in volume of the dune system and seaward migration of the vegetation line.	38
Figure 27. Foredune crest changes at NPI08 monitored by Cunningham Middle School students.	39
Figure 28. Shoreline position change between 2015 and 2022 along southern end of North Padre Island seawall and adjacent beach.	40
Figure 29. Changes in sand volume and in shoreline and vegetation-line positions at SPI02 on South Padre Island due to beach nourishment project, installation of sand fences, and beach maintenance practices.	42
Figure 30. Beach profiles from before and after the latest nourishment project at SPI08.	43

INTRODUCTION

The Texas High School Coastal Monitoring Program (THSCMP) is designed to help students and communities living on the Texas coast develop a better understanding of their natural environment. Students, teachers, and scientists work together to gain a better understanding of dune and beach dynamics in their regions. Scientists from The University of Texas at Austin's Bureau of Economic Geology (the Bureau) lead the research and outreach program by providing the tools and training needed for scientific investigation. Students and teachers learn how to measure topography, map vegetation lines and shorelines, and observe weather and wave conditions. Coastal processes, the beach and dune environment, and public access and private property rights provide an ideal setting for teaching middle school and high school students basic and applied science and for illustrating the roles that science and good data-collection practices play in public policy decision-making.

By participating in an actual research project, the students obtain an enhanced science education and provide coastal decision-makers with valuable data about the Texas shoreline. Students monitor changes in beaches, dunes, and vegetation-line position on Bolivar Peninsula, Galveston Island, Follets Island, Matagorda Peninsula, Mustang Island, North Padre Island, and South Padre Island (**Fig. 1**). In support of coastal-management issues, data collected by students are useful in explaining beach cycles and defining short-term versus long-term trends. Defining these trends is important in decision-making regarding coastal development, beach nourishment, and dune restoration projects. The THSCMP observes beaches in several coastal parks: Mustang Island and Galveston Island State Parks, overseen by the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD); the Lower Colorado River Authority's Matagorda Bay Nature Park; Cameron County's Isla Blanca Park; Brazoria County's Quintana Beach County Park, and the City of Galveston's Dellanera RV Park. The data collected within these park systems help managers develop a better understanding of their local coastal environments, which allows managers to make wise decisions in long-term management and future park development.

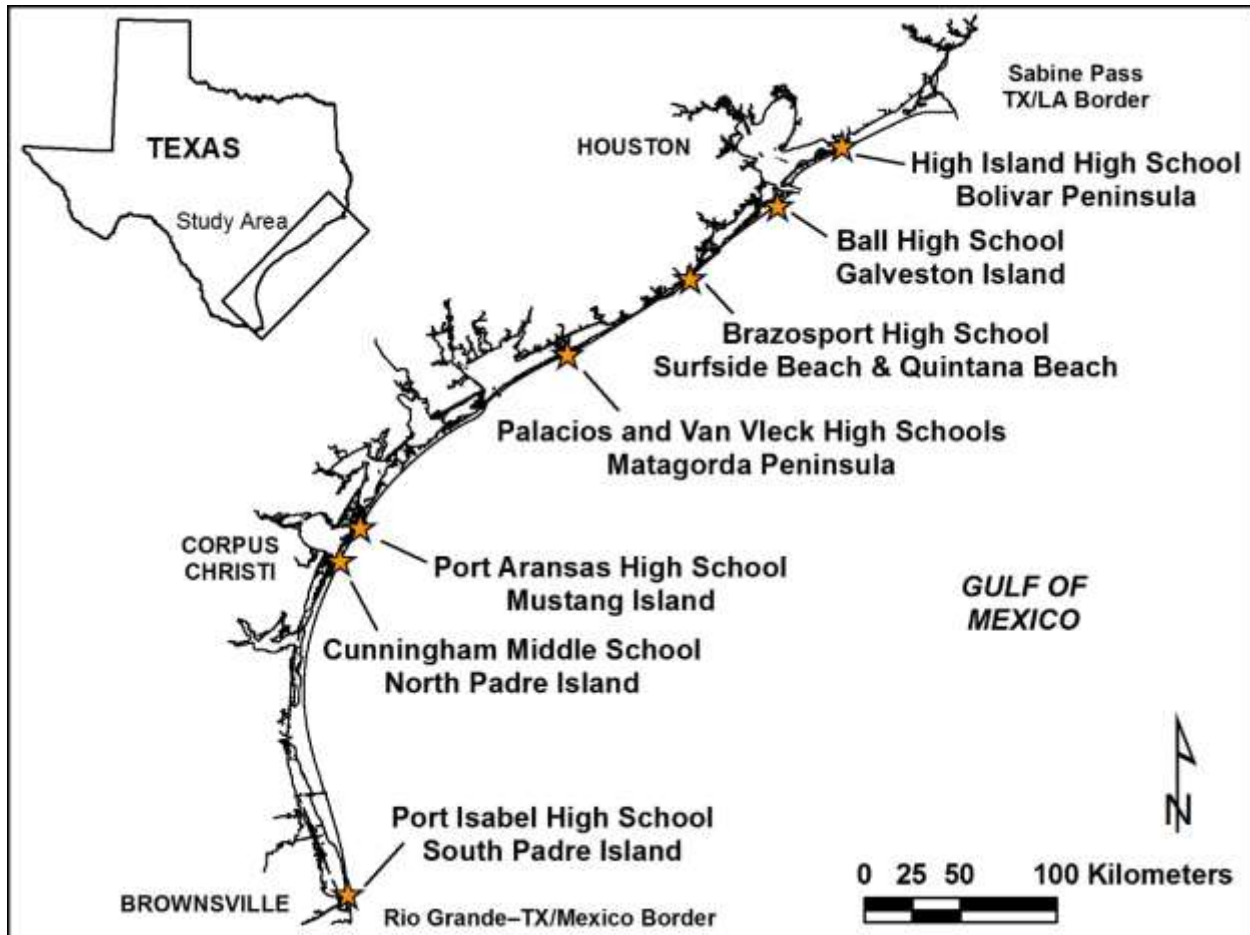


Figure 1. Location map of participating schools.

This report describes the program and our experiences at the eight participating schools during the 2022–2023 academic year. Normal field trip operations resumed during this academic year but were complicated in all of the school districts due to teacher injuries, shortages of substitute teachers and school bus drivers, and general scheduling issues. During the 2022–2023 academic year, Ball High School on Galveston Island completed its 24th year in the program, and Port Aransas and Port Isabel High Schools completed their 23rd year. Through collaboration with the Lower Colorado River Authority, the program works with two schools in the Matagorda area: Van Vleck High School completed their 18th year in the program and Palacios High School completed its 16th year. Cunningham Middle School at South Park in the Corpus Christi Independent School District marked its 14th year in the program. High Island High School on Bolivar Peninsula completed their 7th year in THSCMP. Brazosport High School in Freeport

completed their 4th year in THSCMP monitoring beaches in Quintana and Surfside Beach.

The eight schools participating in THSCMP collect data along the easily accessible developed sections of the Texas coast. During the 2022–2023 academic year we had 21 field trips with approximately 200 students participating. Since the program began in 1997, a total of 390 field trips have been completed. An analysis of data collected by the students is included in this report. The program is also enhanced by a continuously updated website (<http://www.beg.utexas.edu/thscmp/>).

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Goals

The coastal monitoring program has three major goals:

(1) Provide students with an inquiry-based learning experience. Students make several field trips to their study sites during the school year. Working in teams, they conduct topographic surveys (beach profiles) of the foredune and beach, map the vegetation line and shoreline, collect sediment samples, and observe weather and wave conditions. Back in the classroom, students analyze their data and look for relationships among the observed phenomena. Bureau scientists provide background information and guide inquiries about the data, but students are encouraged to form and test their own hypotheses. Through their collaboration with working scientists on an actual research project, the students gain an enhanced science education.

(2) Increase public awareness and understanding of coastal processes and hazards. All data collected by the students and analyses made by Bureau scientists are publicly available for use by coastal managers, scientists, decision-makers, and the general public. The THSCMP website (<http://www.beg.utexas.edu/thscmp/>) containing the latest data, analysis, photos, and educational resources is central to the project's community outreach aspect. Further aspects of the program conducted to improve public awareness include presentations at conferences by Bureau scientists, student

presentations and data-collection demonstrations at community outreach events, the annual report, and scientific journal articles.

(3) *Achieve a better understanding of the relationship between coastal processes, beach morphology, and shoreline change, and make data and findings available for solving coastal management problems.* The Bureau has conducted a 50-year research program to monitor shorelines and investigate coastal processes. An important part of this program is repeated shoreline mapping and beach profile measuring. Over time, these data are used to determine the rate of shoreline change. A problem we face is the limited temporal resolution of our shoreline data. The beach is a dynamic environment where significant changes in shape and sand volume can occur over periods of days or even hours. Tides, storms, and seasonal wind patterns cause large, periodic or quasiperiodic changes in the shape of the beach. If coastal data are not collected often enough, periodic variations in beach morphology could be misinterpreted as secular changes. The THSCMP helps address this problem by providing scientific data at key locations along the Texas coast. These data are integrated into the ongoing coastal research program at the Bureau and are made available to other researchers and coastal managers.

Methods

The central element of the monitoring program is at least three class field trips during the academic year, weather permitting. During each trip, students visit several locations and apply scientific procedures to measure beach morphology and to make observations on beach, weather, and wave conditions. These procedures were developed during the program's pilot year (1997–1998) and are available on our website, which also includes field forms. A general discussion of the field measurements follows.

Beach profile: Students use a pair of Emery rods, a metric tape, and a hand level to accurately survey a shore-normal beach profile from behind the foredunes to the waterline (**Fig. 2**; Emery, 1961; Krause, 2004; O'Connell, 2001). The students begin the profile at a pre-surveyed datum stake so that they can compare each new profile with

earlier profiles. Consistently oriented photographs are taken with a digital camera. The beach profiles provide detailed data on the volume of sand and the shape of the beach.

Shoreline and vegetation-line mapping: Using handheld Global Positioning System (GPS) units, students walk along the shoreline and vegetation line, mapping these features for display on Geographic Information System (GIS) software (**Fig. 3A**). GPS mapping can be used to measure the rates of change to these features. By comparing positions determined through GPS mapping over time, students are able to visualize shoreline and vegetation-line changes.

Beach processes observations: Students measure wind speed and direction (**Fig. 3B**), estimate the width of the surf zone, and observe breaker type. They note wave direction, height, and period and they estimate longshore current speed and direction using a float, stopwatch, and tape measure (**Fig. 4**). From these measurements, they can infer relationships between physical processes and beach changes in time and space. Students also learn to obtain weather and oceanographic data from online resources.

Bureau scientists provide teachers and students with all the training, information, field forms, and equipment needed to conduct the field measurements. During the academic year, Bureau scientists accompany students on at least one field trip. The scientists and students discuss general and theoretical issues regarding scientific research, as well as coastal issues relevant to their community and the State of Texas. These visits also provide scientists with an opportunity to ensure the quality of the data.



Figure 2. Students using (A) a sighting level to determine vertical offset between Emery rods and (B) a metric tape to measure horizontal distance.



Figure 3. Students mapping (A) the shoreline (wet/dry line) using handheld GPS units and (B) using wind meters to determine wind speed.



Figure 4. Students (A) throwing an orange to determine longshore current speed and direction and (B) measuring how far along the shoreline the orange drifted to calculate longshore current speed.

Data Management, Data Analysis, and Dissemination of Information

All THSCMP data since the inception of the program have been analyzed and archived by Bureau scientists. The THSCMP produces several data products: topographic profiles representing the beach and dune system; GIS shapefiles mapping shorelines and vegetation lines; and photographs of shorelines, vegetation lines, and foredune crests from each data collection site. All scientific data, analyses, and results from the THSCMP are publicly available either through the THSCMP website or by request to Bureau staff.

The THSCMP website (<http://www.beg.utexas.edu/thscmp/>), housed and maintained on a Bureau server, is central to the dissemination of data collected for this program. The website was implemented toward the end of the 1998–1999 academic year. It provides all the information needed to begin a beach-monitoring program and curriculum materials for high school teachers. Each school in the program has a page dedicated to data, observations, and photos related to their study area. Numerous educational resources are curated on the website that have been developed for use by students and teachers to enhance learning about coastal environments, processes, issues, and hazards. The website also hosts the 3D coastal visualization model to supplement in-class or at-home learning about coastal change.

STUDENT, TEACHER, AND SCIENTIST INTERACTIONS

In 1997, Bureau researchers developed a pilot beach-monitoring program with Ball High School on Galveston Island (Caudle and Paine, 2012; Hepner and Gibeaut, 2004). The THSCMP has since expanded several times to now include a total of eight schools (**Fig. 1, Table 1**). Expansion of the program has not only increased the number of schools in the THSCMP but also included middle school students. Students in the program are enrolled in classes such as physics, environmental science, biology, aquatic science, and general science.

Table 1. Schools involved in the THSCMP.

School	Location	Year Started
Ball HS	Galveston Island	1997
Brazosport HS	Surfside & Quintana	2018
Cunningham MS	North Padre Island	2009
High Island HS	Bolivar Peninsula	2016
Palacios HS	Matagorda Peninsula	2006
Port Aransas HS	Mustang Island	1999
Port Isabel HS	South Padre Island	1999
Tidehaven MS	Matagorda Peninsula	2005
Van Vleck HS	Matagorda Peninsula	2005

Bureau researchers work with the same teachers each academic year unless changes occur such as a teacher's retirement or reassignment. Researchers communicate directly with teachers to schedule field trips in the fall (September or October), winter (January or February), and spring (April or May). The teacher arranges transportation to the study sites (via bus or SUV, depending on class size) and a substitute teacher to cover their classroom for the day. To encourage school districts to continue participating in the THSCMP, project support provides funding to cover the cost of student transportation and substitute teachers. A stipend is also provided to the participating teachers.

The most heavily used segments of the Texas coast are monitored two or three times a year (**Fig. 1**). Students monitor beaches, dunes, and vegetation lines on the following sandy barrier islands and peninsulas: Bolivar Peninsula, Galveston Island, Follets Island, Quintana Beach, Matagorda Peninsula, Mustang Island, and North and South Padre Islands. Staff from the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) at Matagorda Bay Nature Park help facilitate field trips on Matagorda Peninsula, and occasionally

graduate students from the Harte Research Institute, Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi help with the Cunningham Middle School field trips.

A Bureau scientist participated in all field trips during the 2022—23 academic year. During field trips, scientists discuss coastal issues pertaining to the area that the students are visiting, coastal issues concerning the entire State of Texas, and any interesting observations or changes at the beach monitoring sites. These visits serve not only to enhance scientific instruction but also to give students insight into science as a career and the chance to discuss coastal community concerns.

During field trips, students are divided into two or three teams of five to eight, depending on the size of the class. One team measures the beach profile while the others collect data on weather and waves or conduct a GPS survey of the shoreline and vegetation line. Team members have specific tasks, and after each team completes its tasks at the first location, the teams switch roles so that everyone has an opportunity to collect each type of measurement. Aside from conducting the beach profile and measuring processes and the shoreline, additional tasks can be assigned to the team that finishes first. It is important to assign each student a job to keep them focused and interested, although time for a little fun is also allowed. People normally think of the beach as a place of recreation, and participation in this project should not change that. In fact, it is hoped that program participants will enjoy going to the beach even more because of their newly acquired knowledge and observation skills.

The day of the field trip, students meet in their teacher's classroom to organize equipment and gather additional materials that they may need for the day (coolers with ice and water, lunches, and so on). Throughout the day, data are collected from one to three locations, with sufficient time allotted for lunch. All trips allow ample time for careful data collection while ensuring that students are back at school about 1 hour before the end of the school day. During this hour, equipment is cleaned and stored, and datasheets are copied, and GPS files and photos are downloaded to a computer.

Schools participating in the THSCMP face challenges that sometimes hinder the data collection process. Access to sites is sometimes prohibited because of elevated water

levels, flooded access roads, beach nourishment activities and equipment, or coastal construction such as dune walkover replacement. Even roadway construction can hinder access to sites. Weather conditions (such as heat, cold, or rain) or wildlife sightings (rattlesnakes) can present challenges to the data collection process. All possible attempts are made to overcome challenges, but the safety of students, teachers, and staff is always the highest priority, and sometimes a dataset must be missed.

High Island High School

High Island High School joined the THSCMP during the 2015–2016 academic year. Ms. Caudle works with High Island High School science teacher Maria Skewis. Science students collected data from three Bolivar Peninsula sites on October 18, 2022; February 22, 2023; and May 16, 2023. Two of the monitoring sites are adjacent to Rollover Pass—BOL02 to the west of the pass and BOL03 to the east (**Fig. 5**). A third site (HIB01), seaward of High Island, is located just past the eastern end of Highway 87 (**Fig. 5**). The original HIB01 datum point was lost due to erosion. A new datum point was established 38 meters landward from the original point. Students began collecting shoreline positions across the mouth of the now closed Rollover Pass.

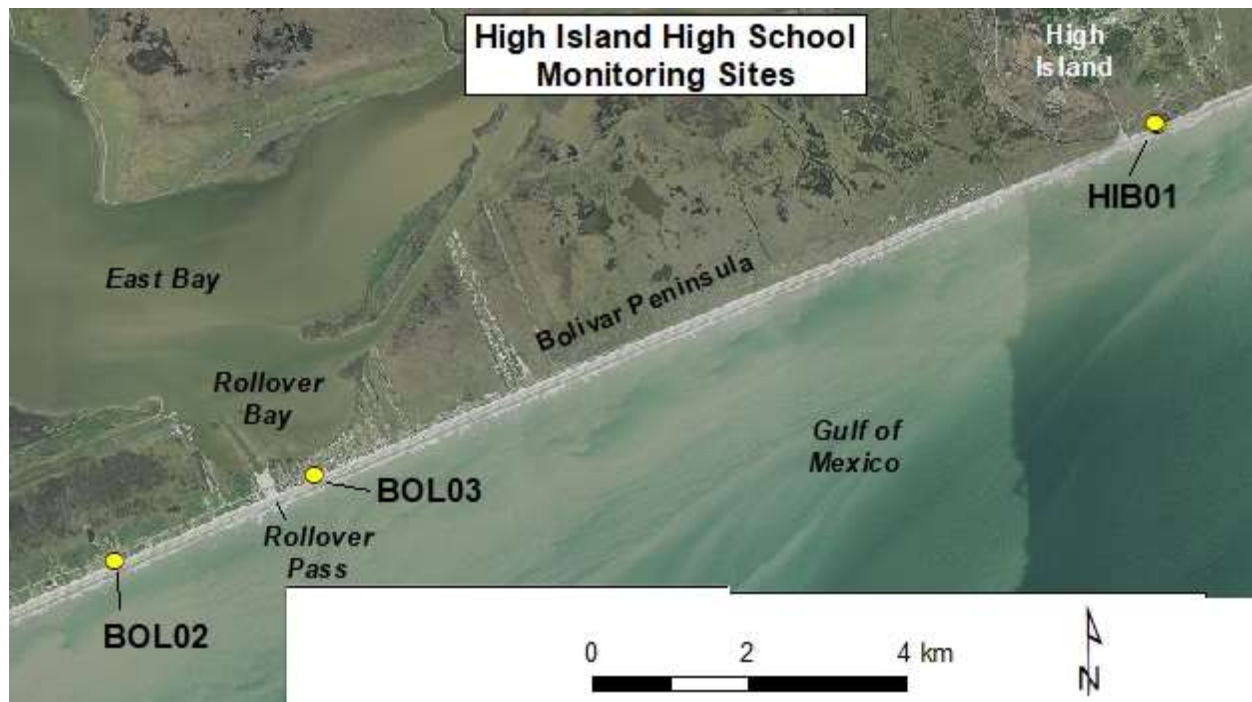


Figure 5. Location map of High Island High School monitoring sites.

Ball High School

Dr. Daniel Hochman's Advanced Placement (AP) Environmental Science classes at Ball High School conduct surveys at JAM02 in Jamaica Beach and DEL01 in the Dellanera RV Park (**Fig. 6**). Both of these sites monitor beach nourishment and Coastal Erosion Planning and Response Act (CEPRA) beach and dune restoration activities. A new monitoring site was established in Galveston Island State Park (GISP1) to replace BEG02. The new site is easier and safer to access for students especially with the new beachfront access at the Park. GPS mapped shoreline positions are collected along the Babe's Beach section of Galveston Island (west of 61st Street) as well. Ball High School students collected data on October 19, 2022 and January 27, 2023. A third field trip was scheduled for mid-April but was cancelled due to a last-minute injury to the teacher. The students were not allowed to participate in the field trip without school sponsored substitute available to take his place. Unfortunately, the trip was unable to be rescheduled so close to the end of the academic year and graduation due to numerous scheduling conflicts mainly related to academic testing.



Figure 6. Location map of Ball High School monitoring sites.

Brazosport High School

Brazosport High School in Freeport, Texas, joined THSCMP during the 2018–2019 academic year. Ms. Caudle works with high school Science Content Specialist Mary Armstrong and senior AP Environmental Science students to collect data from sites at Surfside Beach and Quintana Beach. Field trips took place on October 20, 2022; February 23, 2023; and May 17, 2022. Three of the monitoring sites (SURF2, SURF4, and jetty park) are located in Surfside Beach on the southern end of Follets Island (**Fig. 7**). A fourth site (QUIN1) was established in Brazoria County's Quintana Beach County Park (**Fig. 7**) where students map the vegetation line and shoreline.

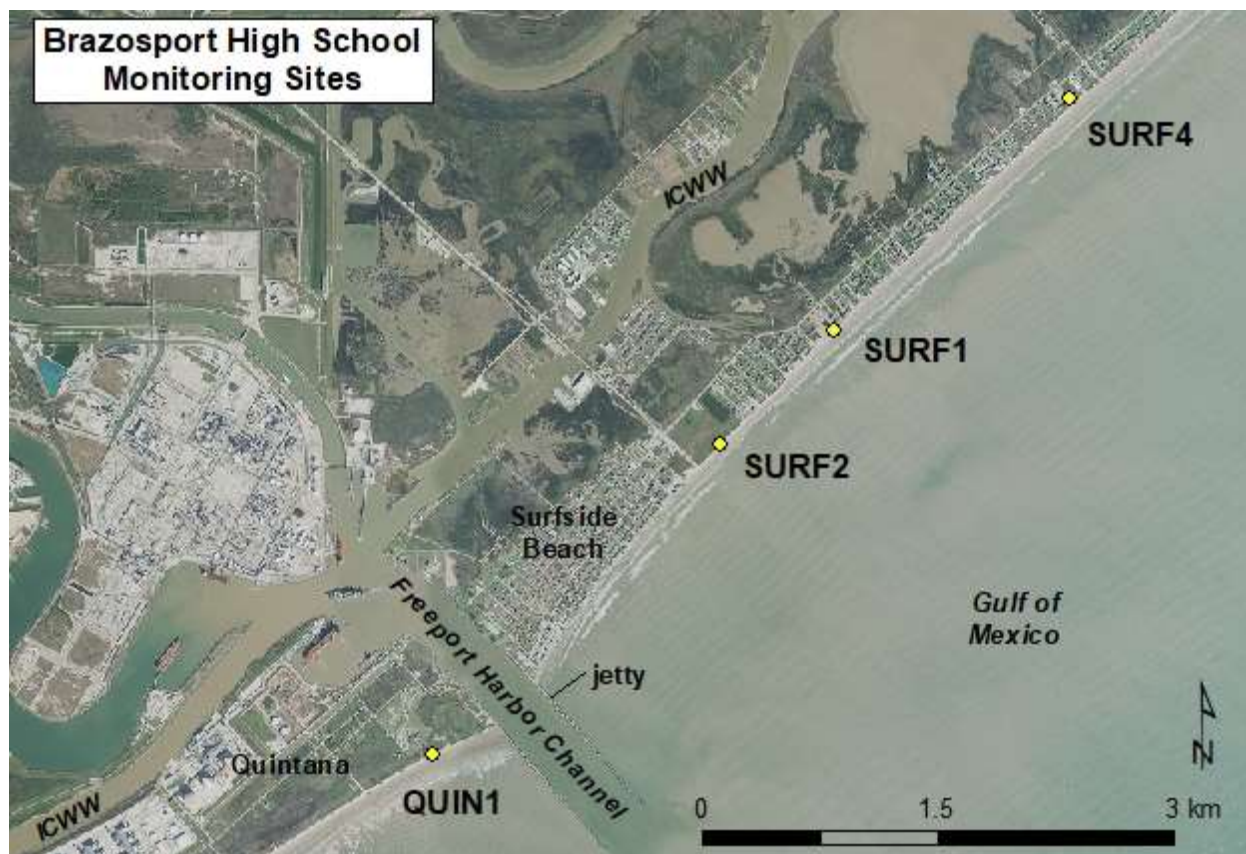


Figure 7. Location map of Brazosport High School monitoring sites.

Matagorda Area Schools

Van Vleck High School environmental science students participated in field trips on October 5, 2022; January 19, 2023; and April 13, 2023. Sherry Martinez's class collected data at MAT01 (**Fig. 8**). Physics students from Palacios High School participated in field trips on October 4, 2022; January 18, 2023; and April 14, 2023. McKaylie Reamy's students collected data at MAT02 (**Fig. 8**). The MAT03 profile location (**Fig. 8**) has seen a significant increase in beach width, including a coppice mound field with intermittent swales that usually contain water, marsh plants, and venomous snakes. It has become dangerous for students, teachers, and staff to collect profile data at this location without the proper protective gear. Though beach profile data is no longer collected at MAT03, Van Vleck and Palacios High Schools continue mapping via GPS of the shoreline and vegetation line positions at this site.



Figure 8. Location map of sites monitored by Matagorda-area schools.

Port Aransas High School

Port Aransas students participated in field trips on October 11, 2022; February 7, 2023; and April 26, 2023. Ryan Piwetz's students collected data at three profile locations on Mustang Island: MUI01 near Horace Caldwell Pier, MUI02 in Mustang Island State Park, and MUI03 at Beach Access Road 1 at the Palmilla Beach Golf Club (**Fig. 9**). Port Aransas High School has been measuring these profiles since 1999.



Figure 9. Location map of Port Aransas High School monitoring sites.

Cunningham Middle School

The Bureau worked with 8th grade students from Cunningham Middle School at South Park (Corpus Christi Independent School District) on October 6, 2022. Teacher Jennifer Juarez's students collect data at NPI08 on North Padre Island and NPC06 on the North Padre Island seawall (**Fig. 10**). Both sites monitor the impacts of beach restoration and maintenance activities. Cunningham students also map the shoreline position in front of the north end of the Padre seawall.



Figure 10. Location map of Cunningham Middle School monitoring sites.

Port Isabel High School

Port Isabel students participated in field trips on September 14, 2022; January 26, 2023; and April 27, 2023. Students from Dr. Michelle Zacher's AP Environmental Science class collected data at three profile locations on South Padre Island: SPI01 in Isla Blanca Park, SPI02 at Beach Access #13, and SPI08 at the Tiki Condominiums (E. White Sands Street) (**Fig. 11**). Port Isabel High School has been measuring SPI01 and SPI02 since 1999 and SPI08 since 2007.



Figure 11. Location map of Port Isabel High School monitoring sites.

EFFECTS ON SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, COASTAL MANAGEMENT, AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

The first goal of the THSCMP is to provide high school students with an inquiry-based learning experience, which is achieved by involving students in real-world research projects. We emphasize to students that they are collecting critical scientific data that will help scientists address coastal issues affecting their communities. The student-collected beach data can be and have been used by researchers at the Bureau to help respond to several beach-related issues. Data are available for coastal managers, decision-makers, scientists, students, and the public.

Long-term data collection is clearly useful in explaining beach cycles and defining short-term versus long-term trends. Defining these trends is important in decision-making regarding coastal development, beach nourishment, and dune restoration projects. The data collected within city, county, and state parks helps to develop a better understanding of the local coastal environment, which in turn allows managers to make wise decisions regarding long-term management and future park development. Coastal communities and managers throughout Texas—especially our partners at GLO, TPWD, and other coastal parks—benefit from having access to the beach monitoring data collected by this project for use in public-policy and coastal-management decision-making.

THSCMP-collected data has played a large role in important Bureau studies. In one study, site BEG02 has been used by Bureau scientists to investigate the effects of geotextile tubes installed along the upper Texas coast. BEG02, located in Galveston Island State Park (**Fig. 6**), is adjacent to a subdivision where these erosion-control devices have been installed. The study compared beach width (distance from the vegetation line or dune base to the waterline) in front of the geotextile tubes versus at a natural beach area in the adjacent state park. Beach width in the natural beach area was observed to be wider than in the subdivision—45.7 m on average compared to 20.4 m in the subdivision (Gibeaut and others, 2003; **Fig. 12**). The natural area allowed for the landward migration of the dunes as the shoreline retreated, whereas the geotextile tube created a fixed dune line (Caudle and Paine, 2017).

Data collected by THSCMP students are invaluable in verifying shoreline position for updates to Texas' long-term shoreline-change rates, which are widely used by public officials, corporations, and private citizens. These comparisons—in some cases from ground-based GPS data acquired within a few days to weeks of the imagery or lidar survey date—generally show good agreement (within a few meters) between boundaries interpreted from ground-based data and imagery and those extracted from lidar data. Small discrepancies in the position of the lidar-derived shorelines, imagery-derived shorelines, and the wet-beach/dry-beach boundary are likely to reflect real

differences in beach morphology between the dates of the lidar surveys, imagery acquisitions, and ground-based GPS surveys in these dynamic environments.



Figure 12. Lidar topographic-relief image of Galveston Island State Park and Pirates Beach subdivision. Note the difference in beach width between the natural beach and the area in front of the subdivision. From Gibeaut and others (2003).

Beach profiles and GPS-mapped shorelines (wet-beach/dry-beach boundaries) collected by THSCMP students were used to confirm the shoreline position digitized in 2007 aerial photography (Paine and others, 2011, 2012) and the shoreline positions extracted from aerial lidar data collected in 2012 (Paine and others, 2014), 2016 (Paine and Caudle, 2018), and 2019 (Paine and Caudle, 2020). The student-collected data proved vital in validating interpretations of the shoreline positions on Bolivar Peninsula, Galveston Island, Follets Island, Matagorda Peninsula, Mustang Island, and South Padre Island.

The latest update of long-term rates of Gulf shoreline movement along the Texas coast was calculated from 2019 data. The shoreline position extracted from 2019 lidar data was verified by visually comparing the shoreline proxy contour elevation with the wet-beach/dry-beach boundary as shown on georeferenced 2016 and 2018 NAIP aerial photographs and imagery acquired during the airborne survey. We used beach profiles and GPS-mapped shorelines acquired by the THSCMP near the dates of the lidar survey to compare the observed wet- and dry-beach positions. The Surfside Beach profile site SURF2 on Follets Island (**Fig. 13**; Paine and others, 2021) is representative of data comparison all along the Texas coast. At this site, there is excellent positional

agreement between the 2019 lidar-derived shoreline proxy; the wet-beach/dry-beach boundary mapped on April 24, 2019, by THSCMP participants and Bureau staff; 2018 NAIP imagery, and 2019 aerial imagery.



Figure 13. Shoreline position comparison at Surfside Beach site SURF2. Shorelines include the wet-beach/dry-beach boundary mapped on April 24, 2019, by THSCMP students and Bureau staff using ground GPS and the 1 m (3.3 ft) above mean sea level shoreline proxy extracted from airborne lidar data acquired in spring 2019, superimposed on 2019 Bureau imagery. From Paine and others (2021).

Posters were created from these updated long-term rates (1930s-2019) of shoreline movement along the Texas Gulf of Mexico coast. A poster for the island or shoreline segment studied was provided to all of the participating schools on their first field trip of the 2021–2022 academic year. Posters were also provided to Matagorda Bay Nature Park, Mustang Island State Park, and the Texas General Land Office.

The THSCMP has increased public awareness of coastal issues through numerous media reports, presentations at conferences, journal articles, and learning tools.

THSCMP has been featured in:

- Paper in the fall 2004 issue of ASBPA's *Shore & Beach* (Hepner and Gibeaut, 2004)
- 2006 and 2009 issues of TGLO's *On the Coast* newsletter
- Paper and presentation at 2012 Gulf Coast Association of Geological Societies annual meeting (Caudle and Paine, 2012)
- 2013 American Shore and Beach Preservation Association national coastal conference in South Padre Island
- 2015 Texas Chapter of the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association Symposium in Corpus Christi
- 2015 Texas Beach and Dune Forum in Corpus Christi in a panel discussion on coastal outreach activities
- 2017 Texas Chapter of the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association Symposium in Port Aransas
- Technical communication paper in May 2017 *Journal of Coastal Research* (Caudle and Paine, 2017)
- December 2019 Bureau's Research Program Profile (<http://www.beg.utexas.edu/node/5664>)
- July 2021 Bureau's Summer Seminar Series (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2SLLVBfX_n0)

The students themselves have also increased public awareness of coastal issues and the program. Port Isabel High School students have presented THSCMP to coastal visitors at the Winter Outdoor Wildlife Expo (WOWE) sponsored by the South Padre Island Birding Center since 2017. The 2023 WOWE presentation occurred on February 9. One student presents an overview of the program to the expo attendees while the rest of the students demonstrate THSCMP data collection activities in teams to smaller groups. Ms. Caudle, Dr. Zacher, and two Port Isabel High School students were invited to the annual Coastal States Organization meeting held in South Padre Island in

November 2019 to present the THSCMP to meeting attendees. High Island High School gave three presentations on THSCMP in the spring of 2022. Student Jordan Grubbs presented the study to the Children’s Environmental Literacy Foundation (CELF) Student Symposium on March 11, 2022

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r21uMDcGkM4>) and to the High Island School Board on March 28, 2022. CELF was a virtual event where students participating in citizen science research across the country shared their projects with their peers, communities, and decision makers. High Island teacher, Ms. Skewis, presented the program to the Bolivar Peninsula Special Utility District (BPSUD) on April 12, 2022.

The THSCMP website also continues to be instrumental in extending the reach of the program and increasing public awareness. The website provides direct access to data, analysis of coastal changes organized by school, field trip photos, and educational resources such as field guides, learning activities, and an interactive 3D model. The web-based 3D model was developed for visualizing beach and dune impacts and recovery from Hurricane Ike in 2008 and Hurricane Harvey 2017 can be accessed from the front page of the website <https://www.beg.utexas.edu/thscmp/> or the models direct website <https://www.beg.utexas.edu/visualizations/3d-coastal-model/>. This visualization project focuses on the geomorphological impacts of the hurricanes on their respective regions of the Texas Gulf Coast. The completed scenes of the model include: general overview of the Gulf of Mexico, Hurricanes Ike and Harvey overviews, and two detailed looks each at the beach and dune impacts produced by both storms. The Hurricane Ike focused scenes are located at High Island and Galveston Island State Park. The Harvey scenes are focused on Port Aransas and a segment of San Jose Island.

SCIENTIFIC RESULTS AND TEXAS COASTAL CHANGES: 1997–2023

Profile data collected by the students are entered into CEDAS v. 4.0 (Coastal Engineering Design and Analysis System)—a system originally developed by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and commonly used by coastal engineers and scientists in beach-profile analysis—using the BMAP (Beach Morphology and Analysis Package) module. Beach-volume calculations are then made using BMAP, and shoreline and

vegetation-line positions are determined from field notes made by students and scientists. The shoreline is designated by the wet-beach/dry-beach boundary or a berm crest (a prominent break in slope between the forebeach and backbeach) for consistency with historical measurements (Gibeaut and Caudle, 2009). Volume, shoreline, and vegetation-line plots for each monitoring site are found in Appendix B. Profile plots that contain all student-collected data for each monitoring site are found in Appendix C. GPS-mapped shoreline and vegetation-line data for each monitoring site are found in Appendix D.

Since the THSCMP began in 1997, data collected by students have been applied by scientists to investigate beach, dune, and vegetation-line recovery following several tropical cyclones, including Hurricanes Ike in 2008 and Harvey in 2017. Student-collected data are also used to monitor the effects of beach nourishment projects on South Padre, North Padre, and Galveston Islands; foredune changes on Mustang Island due to beach-maintenance practices; and jetty construction and vehicular traffic on Matagorda Peninsula. Through these real-world examples of scientific observation, students gain a better understanding of environmental issues affecting their communities.

Measurements by the schools involved in the THSCMP show the change through time at each location and highlight the spatial variation found along the Texas coast. The scientific observations documented by THSCMP students help scientists, decision-makers, coastal managers, and the students themselves gain a better understanding of relationships between coastal processes, beach morphology, and shoreline change affecting their local coastal communities. Key research results and coastal issues are presented within this report by region.

Bolivar Peninsula

The beach at HIB01 (**Fig. 5**) has seen significant changes during High Island High School's short monitoring period (**Fig. 14**). On the first field trip, the beach had a steep forebeach, high berm, and a backbeach wide enough for vehicles to travel up and down the beach. Large pieces of pavement that are remnants of Highway 87 were at the

upper reach of the swash zone. The October 2017 field trip took place about a month after Hurricane Harvey impacted the Texas Gulf coast. The beach had experienced significant erosion, pavement debris was deposited at the vegetation line, and the elevated berm and backbeach that had once allowed vehicular access to the north was gone. The beach width had recovered by spring 2018.

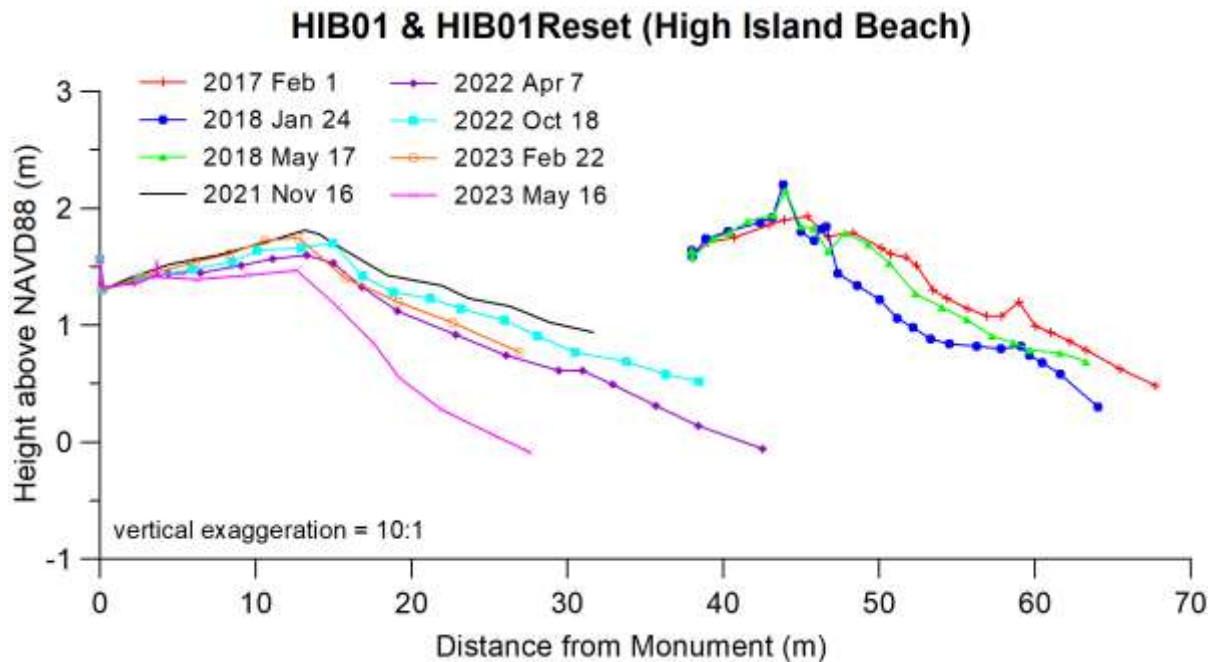


Figure 14. Changes at HIB01 and HIB01 Reset monitored by High Island High School students.

Between the fall of 2018 and spring of 2021, HIHS students were unable to access the site at High Island Beach because of roadway construction at the intersection of Highway 87 and Texas 124. During that time, the shoreline and vegetation line positions moved landward due to the impacts of the 2020 hurricane season. The original profile site datum was lost due to the erosion of the beach at High Island and reset during the fall 2021 field trip. Between May 2018 and April 2022, the shoreline position moved landward 25 meters (just landward of the original profile datum location) and the vegetation line moved 45 meters landward (**Figs. 14 & 15**).

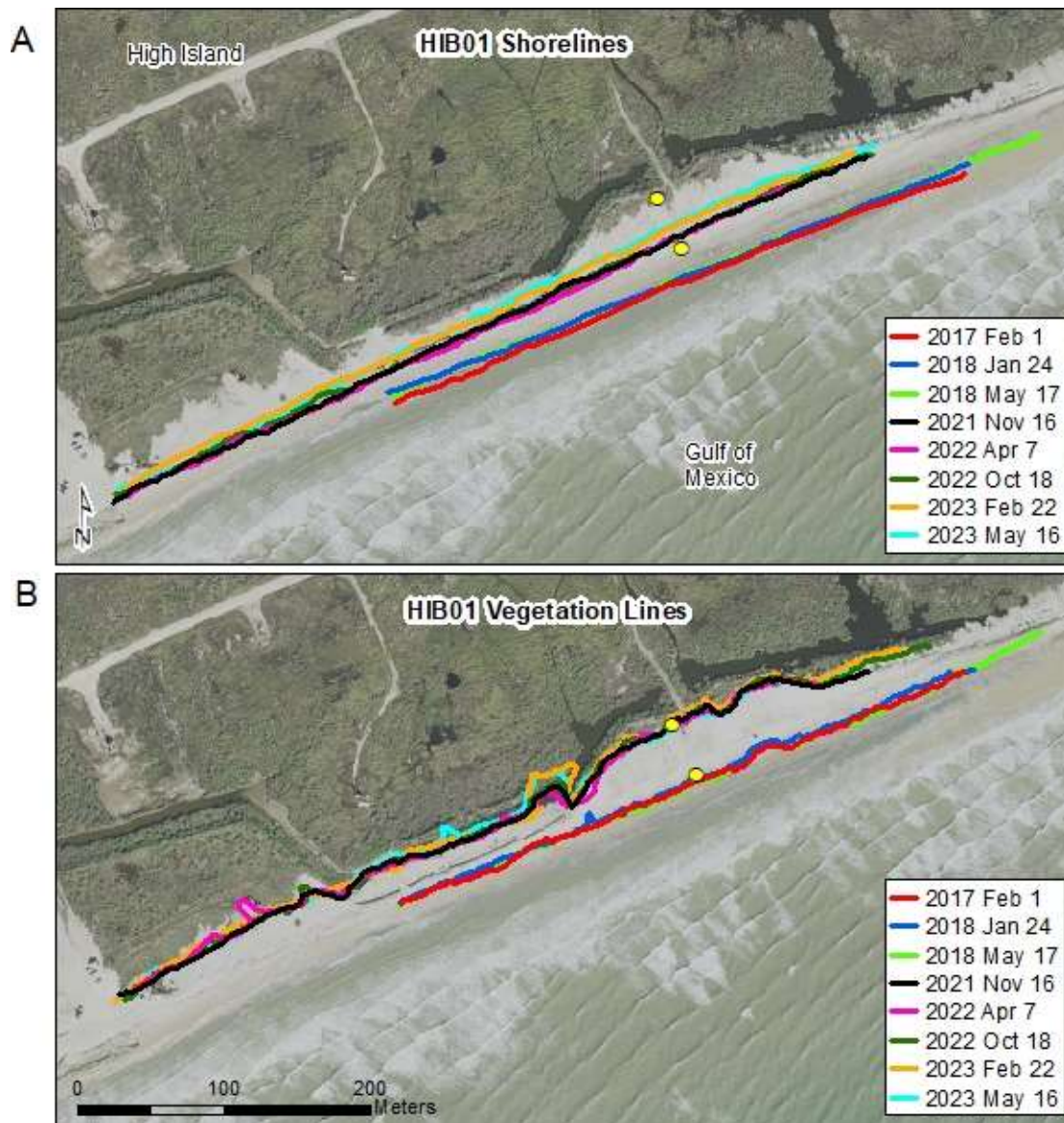


Figure 15. Changes to the position of the (A) shoreline and (B) vegetation line at HIB01 between February 2016 and May 2023.

High Island High School students also monitor sites BOL02 and BOL03 adjacent to Rollover Pass (**Fig. 5**). Rollover Pass was cut across Bolivar Peninsula in 1955 with the intention of improving water quality in Rollover Bay and Galveston East Bay. The opening of the pass caused significant erosion to the adjacent beaches and caused sand and sediment to be deposited in the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (ICW). For years, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers were required to dredge and remove sediment from the ICW adjacent to Rollover Bay annually at significant cost. Due to the issues caused

by Rollover Pass, the Texas Legislature authorized the General Land Office to close the pass. Construction began at the end of September 2019 and was completed in the spring of 2020. High Island students are monitoring how the closure of Rollover Pass impacts the beaches adjacent to the site as well as mapping the position of the shoreline where the pass has been closed.

Galveston Island

Since 1997, Ball High School students participating in the THSCMP have been collecting critical data that is used by scientists at the Bureau to increase understanding of beach and dune recovery stages following major storms. Storm damage to beaches and dunes are indicated by the landward movement of shoreline and vegetation-line positions and a decrease in sediment volume in the beach profile immediately after storms (**Fig. 16**). The gradual seaward migration of the shore and vegetation lines plus sediment volume increases track beach and dune recovery in the years following storms.

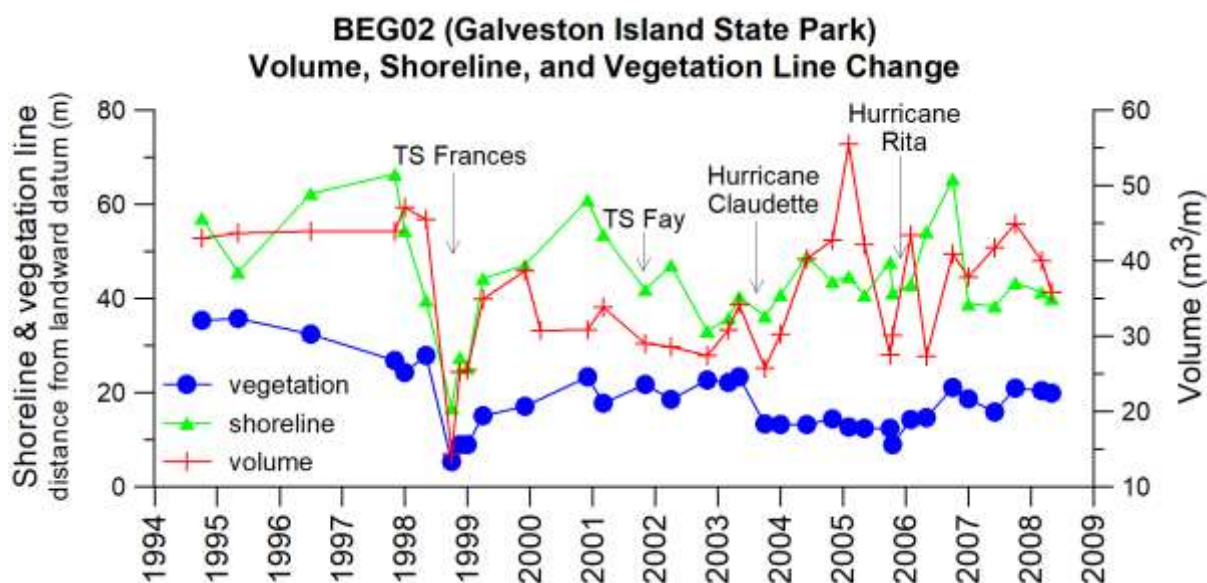


Figure 16. Profile volume, shoreline, and vegetation-line changes at Galveston Island State Park, September 1994–April 2008.

Tropical Storm Frances (September 1998) played a major role in reshaping the beaches on the upper Texas coast. Data collected by Ball High School students on Galveston

and Follets Islands documented the significant damage to beaches that Frances caused. The storm's damage was comparable to damage caused in 1983 by Hurricane Alicia (Gibeaut and others, 2002; Hepner and Gibeaut, 2004; Morton and Paine, 1985), a Category 3 hurricane on the Saffir/Simpson scale (Simpson and Riehl, 1981). Several other severe storms have also impacted the Galveston study area. Tropical Storm Fay (September 2002) and Hurricanes Claudette (July 2003) and Rita (September 2005) have each caused varying degrees of damage to beaches and dunes along the Texas coast (**Fig. 16**).

The upper Texas coast was severely affected by the landfall of Hurricane Ike in September 2008. Galveston Island experienced significant beach and dune erosion, as well as extensive damage to property and infrastructure. Ball High School students were unable to participate in the THSCMP during the 2008–2009 academic year because of safety concerns to accessing their monitoring sites. Bureau and TAMUCC scientists visited Galveston Island in early October 2008 to conduct ground surveys—beach profiles, photography, and observations of beach and dune conditions—of the area impacted by the hurricane. During this reconnaissance trip, scientists visited profile location BEG02 in Galveston Island State Park, where they discovered that the datum marker at BEG02 had been destroyed by the storm. Scientists used GPS techniques to navigate to the horizontal location of the datum marker, which post-storm was on the open beach. Before the storm, the marker had been at the corner of a concrete picnic pavilion landward of the foredunes. BEG02 (**Fig. 6**) was reset approximately 60 m landward of the old datum marker along the same azimuth line. The new marker (a buried metal pipe) is landward of a washover feature. Reestablishing the marker allowed students to continue to monitor activities and storm recovery and to compare pre- and post-storm profiles at this location.

Ball High School students from the 2007–2008 academic year provided extremely valuable pre-storm profile data that have been used to determine how much the beach and dunes changed after Hurricane Ike. **Figure 17** is a profile plot at BEG02 comparing the Ball High School pre-storm profile (April 2008) with the post–Hurricane Ike profile measured on October 7, 2008. The post–Tropical Storm Frances profile from

September 16, 1998, is also plotted for comparison. At Galveston Island State Park, the dune system was completely destroyed; the shoreline (wet-beach/dry-beach boundary) moved 53 m landward between April 23, 2008, and October 7, 2008; the vegetation line moved 56 m landward; and the old datum point was 1.14 m above the post-storm surface of the beach (**Fig. 17**; Caudle and Paine, 2017). Data from 1-year post-storm is also included. This profile shows that the elevation of the beach has been restored, the beach width (dunes to waterline) has increased, and incipient dunes are beginning to form (**Fig. 17**).

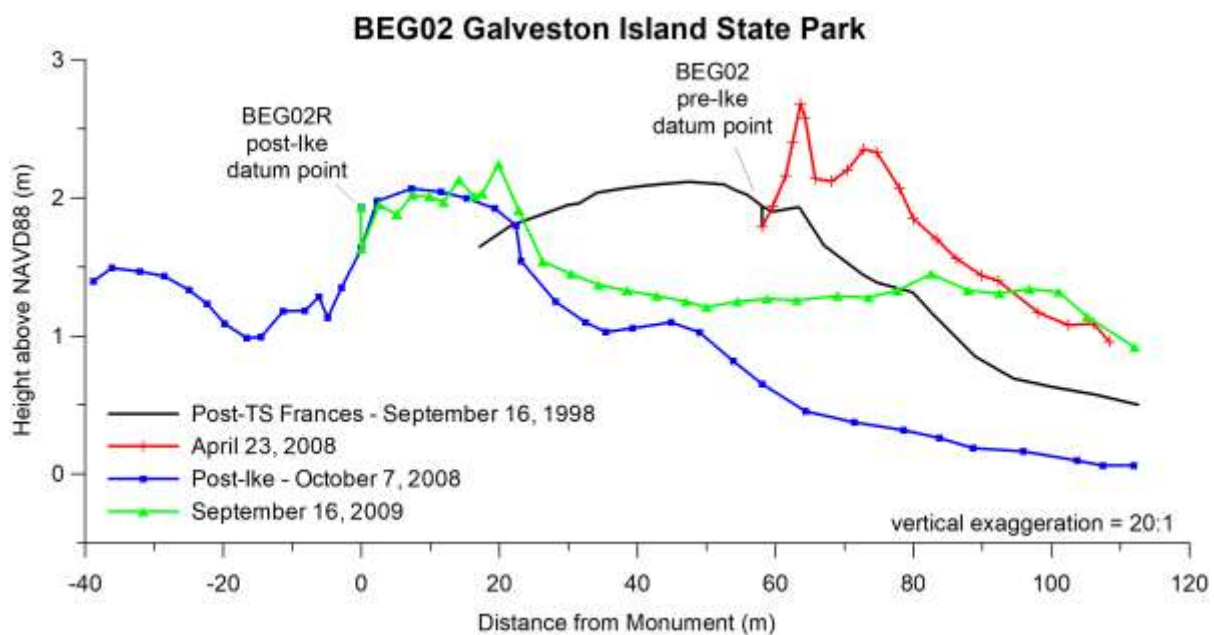


Figure 17. Beach-profile plots from BEG02 in Galveston Island State Park comparing the post-Hurricane Ike profile with a pre-storm profile from early 2008 and the post-Tropical Storm Frances profile from September 1998. Data from September 2009 (1-year post-storm) is also included.

Ball High School students resumed monitoring beaches at the start of the 2009–2010 academic year. Their data collection from BEG02 has documented the recovery of the beach and dune system (**Fig. 18**). Between September 2009 and January 2011, the foredunes at BEG02 had begun to grow. Whether initial growth of the foredunes is due to natural recovery processes or human intervention is unclear. The foredune ridge grew in the intervening years, stabilizing around 2015, and a wide, vegetated zone with

expanding coppice dunes developed between the seaward base of the foredunes and the landward extent of wave run-up (**Fig. 18**).

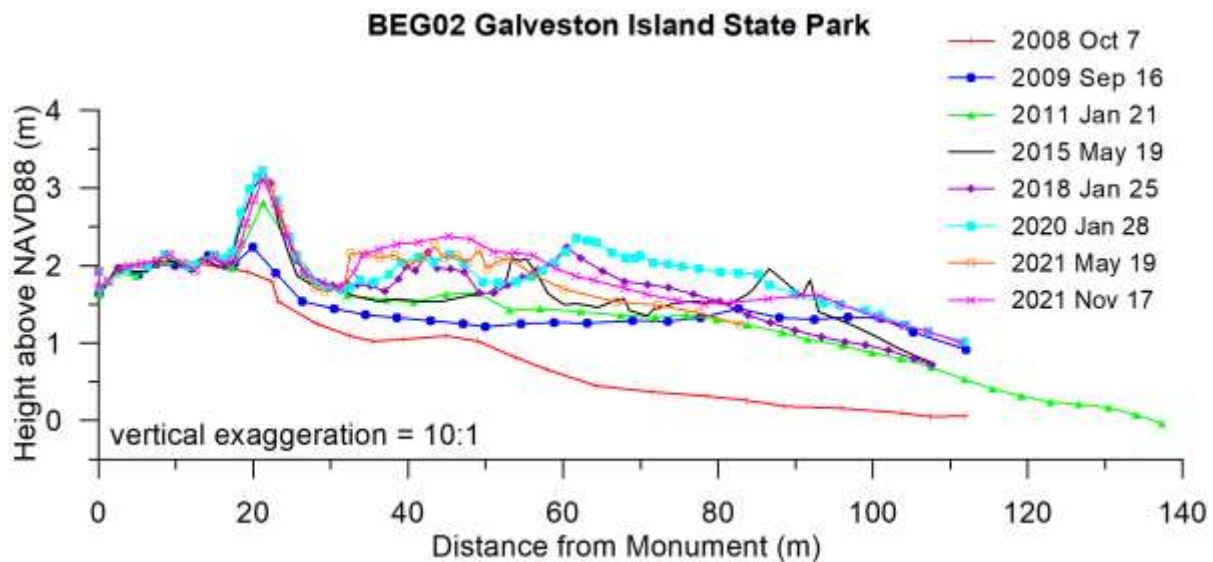


Figure 18. BEG02 datum-reset post-Hurricane Ike profile, plus data collected by Ball High School students. Students are monitoring recovery of the beaches and dunes at this site.

The 2020 hurricane season caused beach and dune erosion at the three sites Ball High School students monitor. At Galveston Island State Park (BEG02), the beach was eroded landward and a washover feature was deposited in the coppice dune area (**Fig. 18**). At the site JAM02 in Jamaica Beach (**Fig. 6**), a community just to the south of the State Park, the 2020 hurricane season caused erosion of the reconstructed dune and landward movement of the vegetation line. The dune at the Dellanera RV Park (**Fig. 6**) that was created as part of a large nourishment and dune restoration project that took place in 2015, experienced significant erosion between January 2020 and May 2021 (**Fig. 19**). Over half the volume of sand in the beach/dune system was removed. A beach and dune restoration project (nourishment) was taking place during January 2023 field trip and students were unable to access the site. Ball students will start monitoring the project when field trips resume in the next academic year.

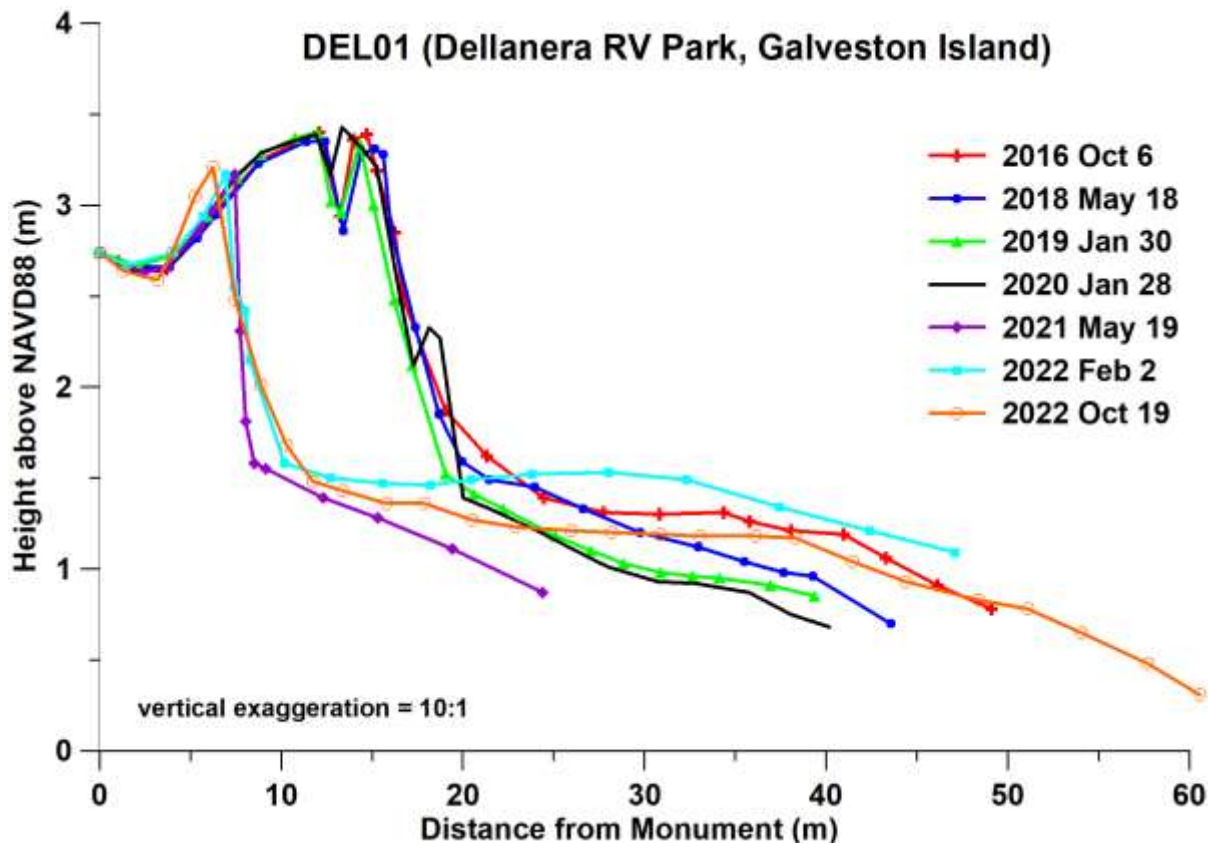


Figure 19. Erosion of the dune at DEL01 in the Dellanera RV Park due to the 2020 hurricane season.

Surfside Beach and Quintana Beach

Brazosport High School in Freeport, Texas, joined the THSCMP during the 2018–2019 academic year, allowing the program to expand to a section of the developed coast that was previously not monitored (**Fig. 7**). Significant changes to the beach and small dune system on Follets Island and Quintana Beach have been documented over the Brazosport’s short monitoring period. At the QUIN1 location in Quintana Beach County Park, the small foredune that was present when the profile was established had been destroyed and the vegetation line moved 15 meters landward between January 2020 and May 2021 (**Fig. 20**) due to the 2020 hurricane season. Hurricane Nichols in September 2021 also caused damage to the park and more erosion to the beach.

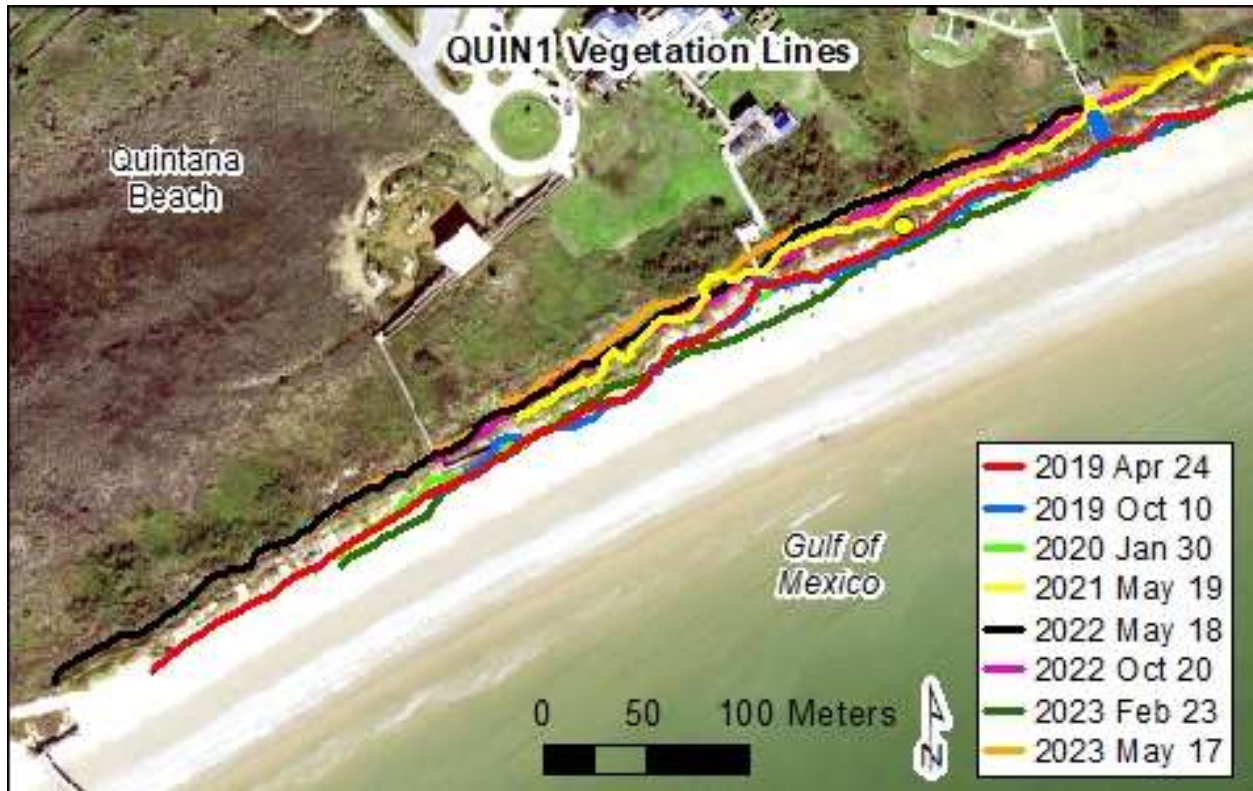


Figure 20. GPS mapping by Brazosport HS students of vegetation line positions at QUIN1 from April 2019 through May 2023.

At SURF2, the vegetation line also moved landward and the elevation of the profile was lowered at the datum point. Students map the shoreline position of a segment between Surfside Jetty County Park and a rock revetment protecting Beach Drive. At times, the shoreline position (wet/dry line) is beneath or behind structures that are located on the beach (Appendix D). During the 2021—22 academic year, a new site was established at Stahlman Park in Surfside Beach (SURF4) to replace the beach profile lost due to erosion at SURF1. Initial measurements at this new location created a baseline dataset to monitor changes in the beach and dune system into the future (Appendix C).

Matagorda Peninsula

Van Vleck High School students collect data at MAT01, which is adjacent to a washover channel—Three Mile Cut—that will occasionally open with the passage or landfall of a tropical storm or hurricane (**Fig. 8**). Students from Palacios High School collect data at MAT02, which is northeast of the vehicular beach access point on Matagorda Peninsula

(**Fig. 8**). Hurricane Ike made landfall on Galveston Island on September 13, 2008, as a Category 2 hurricane. Owing to the size of the storm, impacts from this hurricane were seen along the entire Texas coast, including on Matagorda Peninsula. The storm surge from Hurricane Ike briefly opened Three Mile Cut and caused vegetation line retreat and dune erosion at MAT01 and MAT02. Over the years since Ike's landfall, students from Van Vleck and Palacios have been monitoring the recovery and significant growth of the foredune system (**Fig. 21**) and the seaward movement of the vegetation line (Appendix B) on Matagorda Peninsula.

Palacios and Van Vleck students also measure the shoreline position adjacent to the fishing pier at Matagorda Bay Nature Park (MAT03, **Fig. 8**). The site is on the updrift side of the jetty at the mouth of the Colorado River and has limited vehicular traffic on the beach due to difficult driving conditions. The monitoring of this location is important because understanding the impacts of coastal structures are critical to coastal management. In 2009—2010, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers constructed a new east jetty at the mouth of the Colorado River. GPS-mapping of shorelines indicates that the shoreline position at MAT03 moved 125-m seaward over a decade, an average rate of 12.8 m per year (**Fig. 22** and Appendix D). The continued mapping has shown that the shoreline position has continued to advance seaward between 2018 and 2022 but at a reduced rate (**Figs. 22 & 23**). Throughout the study period, the vegetation-line position has also been continuously moving seaward and the volume of sediment in the beach profile increasing (**Fig. 23**).

The combination of the new jetty impounding sand on the updrift side and the limited vehicle activity at MAT03 has allowed for coppice dune formation to occur on the expanded backbeach area and for new vegetation to develop without being disturbed. On field trips during the 2015–2016 and 2016–2017 academic years, it was documented that in the swales between the coppice dunes, salt marsh areas had formed. Due to the increased width of the backbeach, the salt marsh environment in the swales, and the numerous venomous snakes in the area, profile data is no longer collected by students at this site; therefore, profile volume has not been calculated.

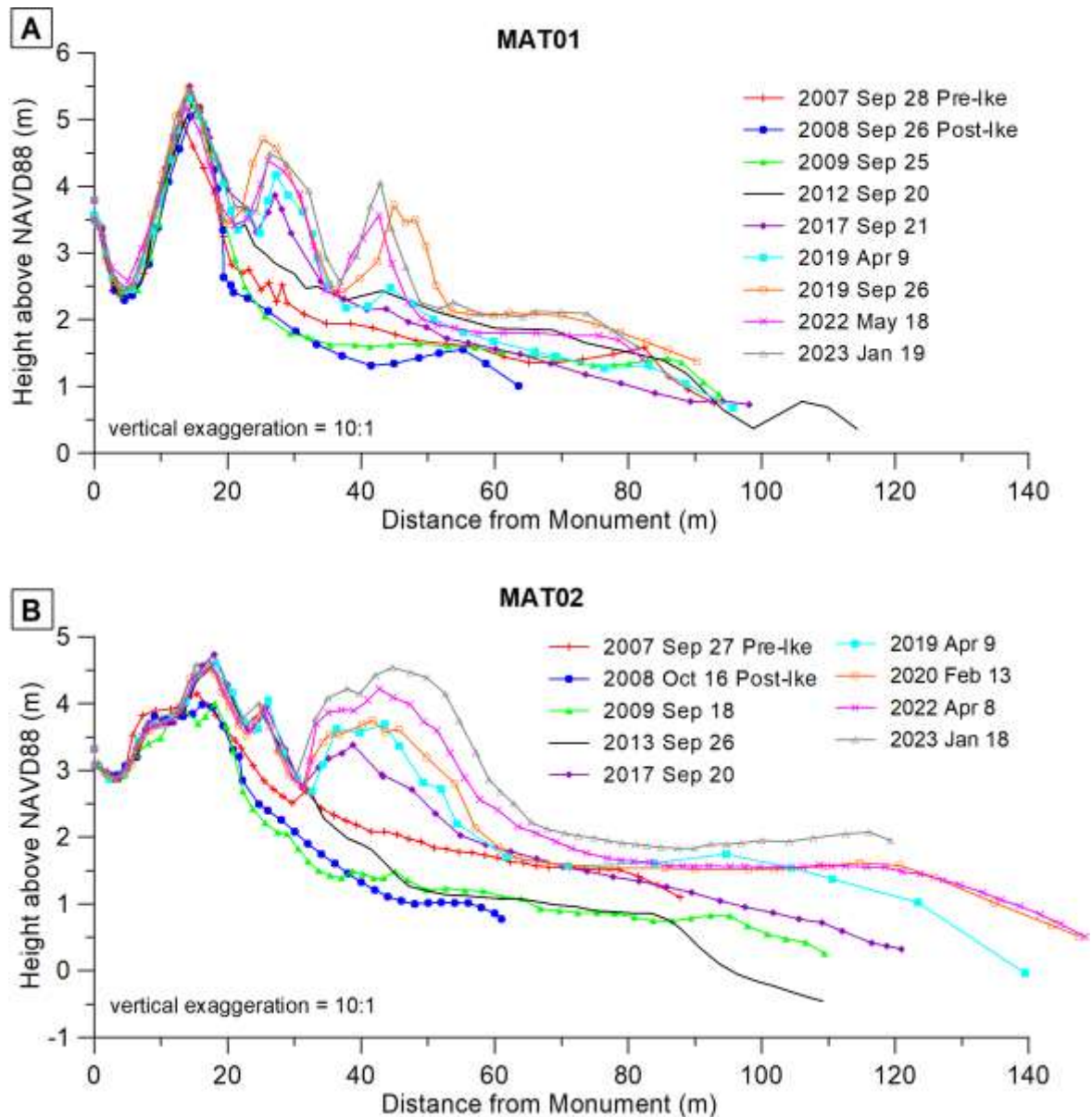


Figure 21. Pre– and post–Hurricane Ike profile data collected by Van Vleck High School students at (A) MAT01 and Palacios High School students at (B) MAT02. Students are monitoring recovery and growth of the foredune at these sites.

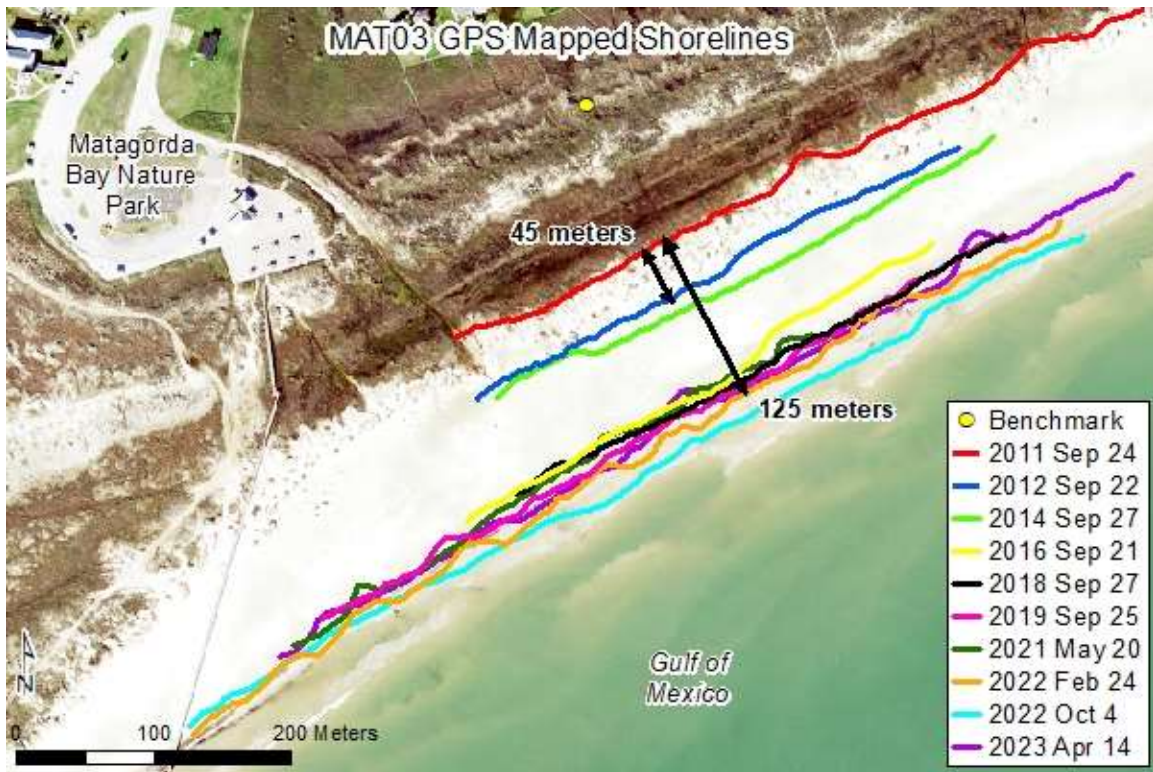


Figure 22. Shoreline position change at Matagorda Peninsula.

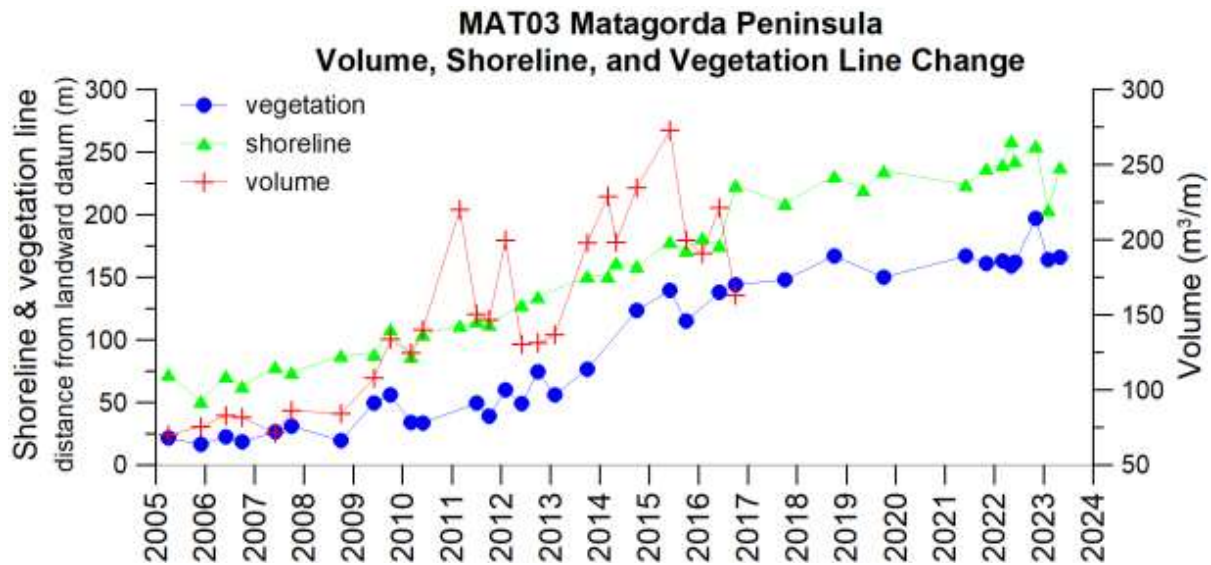


Figure 23. Changes in beach and dune volume, shoreline position, and vegetation-line position at MAT03 on Matagorda Peninsula.

Mustang Island

The beach-monitoring activities of Port Aransas High School students have provided beneficial information about the beach and dune system on Mustang Island (**Fig. 9**). The dune system on Mustang Island is healthy, with tall (> 3 m), wide foredunes along most of the island. The only breaks in the foredune system are at beach-access points and washover features. Beach maintenance practices vary along the island and have changed over time, which the students have documented through their data. Several beaches on Mustang Island, particularly within the City of Port Aransas boundaries, are regularly scraped to remove seaweed (*Sargassum*) from the forebeach. Since the beginning of the coastal monitoring program, Port Aransas students have been monitoring the growth of the foredune system at their profiling sites. **Figure 24A** is an example of foredune expansion at MUI01 (**Fig. 9**) near Horace Caldwell Pier in Port Aransas. Note that the width of the dunes increased between 2001 and early 2010, although the shoreline remained relatively stable.

When Port Aransas students arrived to collect profile data in October 2012, a large part of the dune face had been excavated for a beach-maintenance practice called dune notching (**Figs. 24B & 25**). Students documented that sand was replaced in the foredune by May 2013 and that the vegetation line has been reestablished at the toe of the dune. The dune was notched again during the 2014–2015 academic year. The current width of the foredune is still narrower, and the volume of sand in the profile is less than when the THSCMP began monitoring in 1999 (see change plot in Appendix B). Also, the crest of the foredune is lower in elevation because the dune crest was not stabilized by vegetation for a period of time, resulting in sand being carried away by the wind. The excavated area was slowly filled in between 2016 and 2018 (**Fig. 24B**). By the end of the 2018–19 academic year, the foredune was revegetated and stabilized. Between 2019 and 2023, beach profile volume, shoreline position, and vegetation line position has been stable.

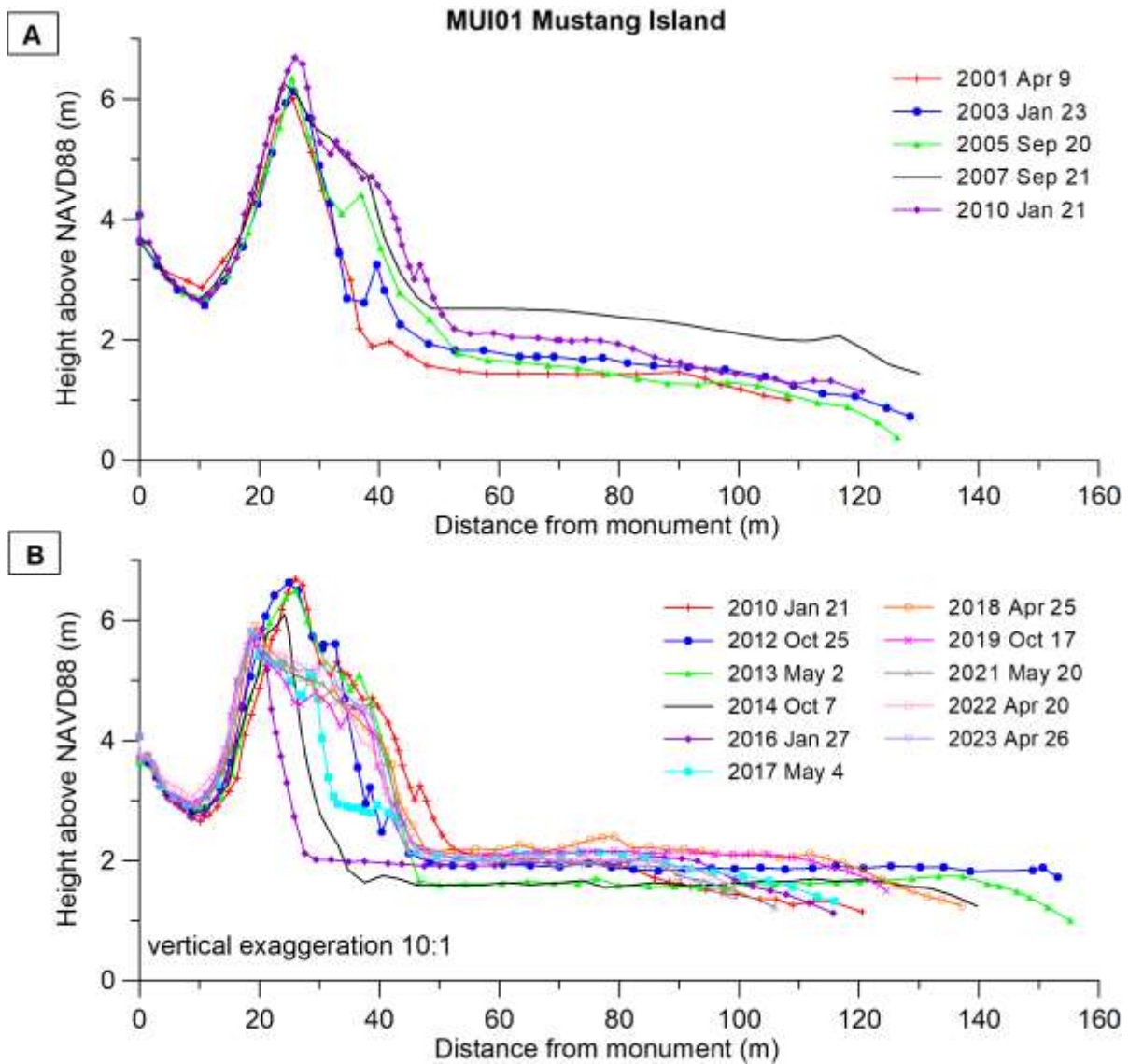


Figure 24. Changes at MUI01 on Mustang Island. (A) Expansion of the foredune between 2001 and 2009. (B) Changes in the foredune due to the beach-maintenance practice of dune notching.

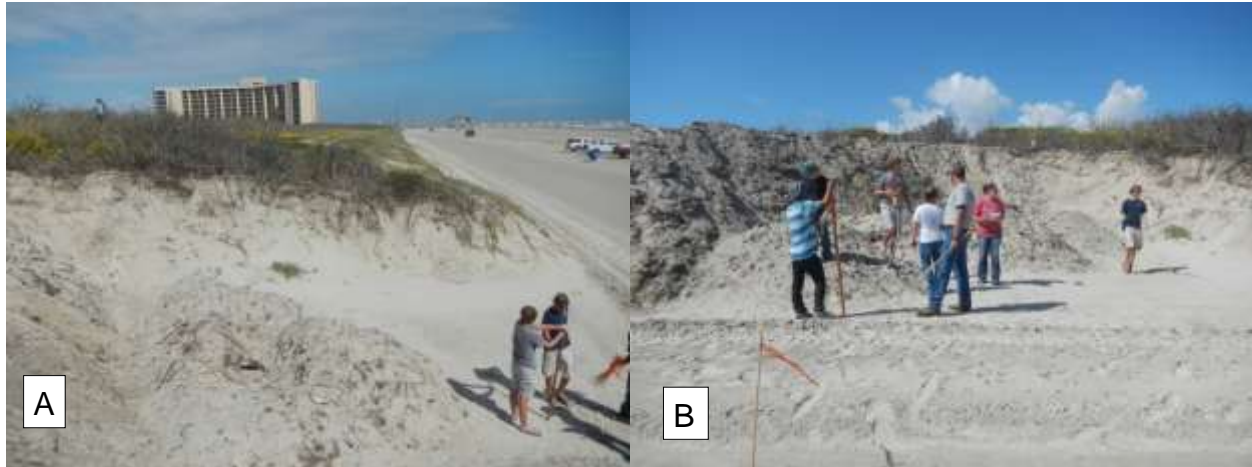


Figure 25. Excavated dune at MUI01 on Mustang Island looking (A) north toward Horace Caldwell Pier and (B) landward.

The MUI01 location also has shore-parallel bollards that have been installed on the backbeach to confine vehicles to the upper portion of the backbeach. The placement of these bollards has restricted further seaward advancement of the foredune complex and the vegetation line by maintaining a fixed location of the Mustang Island Beach Road starting at the toe of the dune (**Fig. 24B**, Appendix C and D). The beach road has also impacted the seaward extent of dune growth and vegetation line movement at MUI03 (**Fig. 9**, Appendix C and D). The foredune system expanded steadily during the monitoring period from 2000 to 2012. The Beach Road on the backbeach has stopped the expansion of the dunes creating a fixed position of the dune toe with minimal change between 2013 and 2023. The beach maintenance practices and the impacts of the fixed position of the Mustang Island Beach Road will continue to be monitored by Port Aransas students at MUI01 and MUI03 and compared with the natural processes that occur at MUI02 in Mustang Island State Park.

Hurricane Harvey made landfall on San Jose Island (northeast of Mustang Island) on August 25, 2017 as a category 4 storm. The City of Port Aransas was devastated by impacts from a storm surge from the bay and Aransas Pass and wind and rain damage. Despite the proximity to the landfall of a major hurricane, the beach and dune system monitored by THSCMP suffered minor impacts. The Mustang Island beaches were planed (lowered) but there is no evidence of scarping on the dunes (Appendix C). The

greatest impact to the Mustang Island beach was documented at MUI01, the profile closest to the south jetty at Aransas Pass and hurricane landfall. The beach recovered to pre-storm conditions at all three profile locations by January 2018 (Appendix C).

The MUI02 monitoring site is located within Mustang Island State Park, just to the south of Fish Pass where minimal beach maintenance is performed. This site has seen significant changes since student monitoring began in 2000. Port Aransas students have documented several lines of coppice dunes forming and coalescing into continuous dune ridges (**Fig. 26**). The dune system and vegetation-line position have expanded seaward, and total profile volume has increased at this location but shoreline position has remained stable throughout the monitoring program (Appendix B). The increased dune width and stable shoreline position have caused the beach width (distance between vegetation line and shoreline) to decrease (**Fig. 26**). There have been several field trips since 2020 where the wet/dry line is very close to the vegetation line or a scarp is present on the small, seaward-most dune crest. During the April 2023 field trip, the seaward-most dune crest had been removed and a large scarp was present on the next dune line (**Fig. 26**).

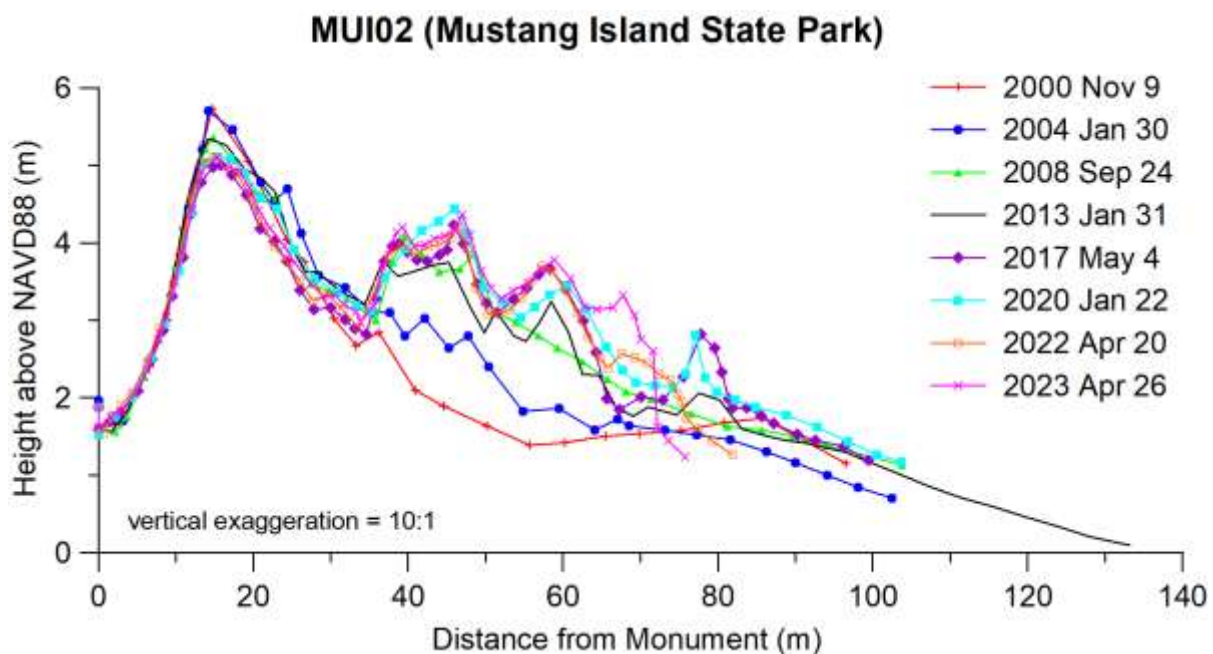


Figure 26. Student monitoring at MUI02 documents an increase in volume of the dune system and seaward migration of the vegetation line.

North Padre Island

Cunningham Middle School at South Park students monitor sites on North Padre Island (**Fig. 10**) that are interesting to compare with the well-vegetated foredunes on Mustang Island to the north. The students have documented many changes at the NPI08 profile location, which is located adjacent to the northern Padre Island seawall. The dune crest at this site is sparsely vegetated which creates an opportunity for prevailing winds to constantly rearrange and alter the shape and height of the dune crest (**Fig. 27**). Sand is often removed from the dune crest by the wind and deposited at the landward toe of the dune. Until vegetation covers the crest of this dune, it will remain a dynamic site.

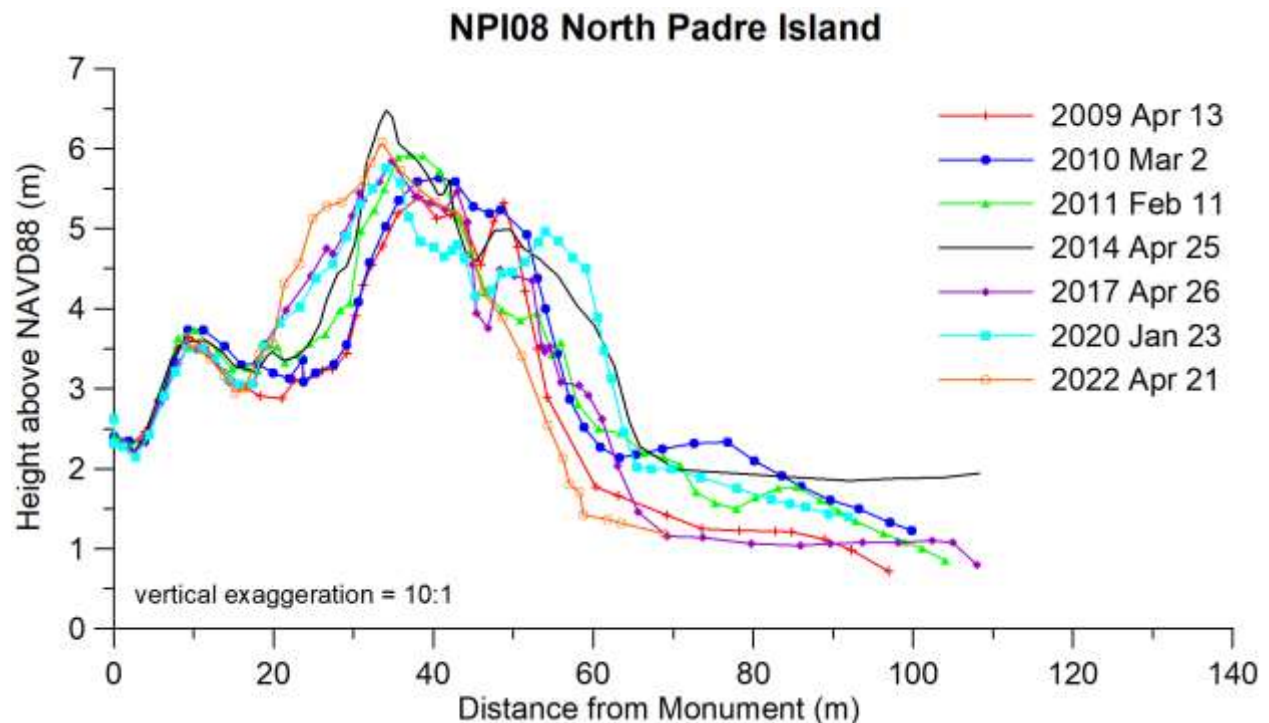


Figure 27. Foredune crest changes at NPI08 monitored by Cunningham Middle School students.

The site NPC06, near the southern end of the North Padre Island seawall (**Fig. 10**), was added in 2015 to track the effects of nourishment projects and maintenance activities on the beach in front of the seawall and the adjacent natural area (NPI08). The beach in front of the seawall is periodically nourished with beneficial use material from maintenance dredging of Packery Channel. Cunningham students have mapped the

landward movement of the shoreline position since the last beach nourishment (**Fig. 28**). Occasionally, the narrow beach in front of this southern end of the seawall is completely submerged at high tide.



Figure 28. Shoreline position change between 2015 and 2022 along southern end of North Padre Island seawall and adjacent beach.

South Padre Island

Brazos Santiago Pass, the southern border of South Padre Island, serves as the southern Gulf of Mexico access to the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and the Port of Brownsville. Sediment is dredged from the pass biannually and used to nourish the beaches of South Padre Island. The use of sediment dredged from the pass for beach nourishment or other restoration project is called beneficial use of dredged material or BUDM. The three sites monitored by Port Isabel High School students are typically within or adjacent to these nourishment areas.

The SPI02 (**Fig. 11**) monitoring site has been used by students and scientists to monitor the growth of dunes (sand volume) and shoreline movement. When SPI02 was established in August 2000, there were no dunes between the retaining wall and waterline at this location. Since that time, student-collected data has been quantifying the effects of sand fence installations, vegetation planting, beach maintenance practices, and numerous BUDM nourishment projects (**Fig. 29**). Port Isabel student collected data, have documented an overall trend of shoreline advancement and sediment-volume increase throughout the study period (Caudle and others, 2014, 2019). A new dune crossover was construct at this site in 2017. We were concerned the new crossover would interfere with the profile line. Fortunately, the line runs a few feet to the north of the crossover and the only documented impact to the site was a slight flattening of the profile in the dunes and loss of vegetation, which quickly recovered. The position of the shoreline and vegetation line has remained stable for the past several years while the volume of sediment in the beach profile has increased due growth of the foredune (**Fig. 29**). Beach maintenance activities at this site scraped seaweed and sand from the beach and placed it on the vegetation line to create a foredune. The dune has continued to grow due to windblown sand being captured by vegetation.

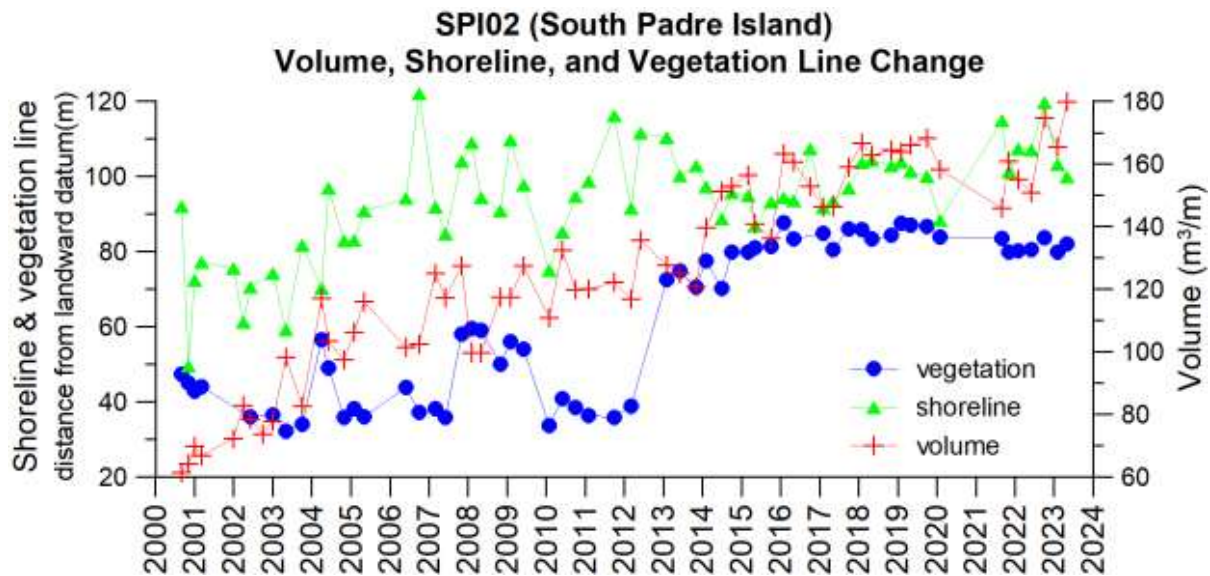


Figure 29. Changes in sand volume and in shoreline and vegetation-line positions at SPI02 on South Padre Island due to beach nourishment project, installation of sand fences, and beach maintenance practices.

SPI08 is a chronically eroding location in front of the Tiki Condominiums near the north end of the City of South Padre Island (**Fig. 11**). This site has a narrow beach backed by a retaining wall and regularly receives nourishment sand from road maintenance north of the City or from the dredging of Brazos Santiago Pass. The students from Port Isabel have been documenting cycles between beach nourishment, dune creation by beach maintenance practices, and the long-term shoreline erosion trend at this site (**Fig. 30**). The most recent nourishment took place between January 2020 and August 2021. The beach was much wider than had been previously documented. Fencing was installed and vegetation planted before the winter 2022 field trip. Students have documented that wind-blown sand is accumulating around the base of the sand fencing and vegetation is expanding to cover the coppice dune area. Port Isabel students will continue to monitor this rapidly changing and chronically eroding location.

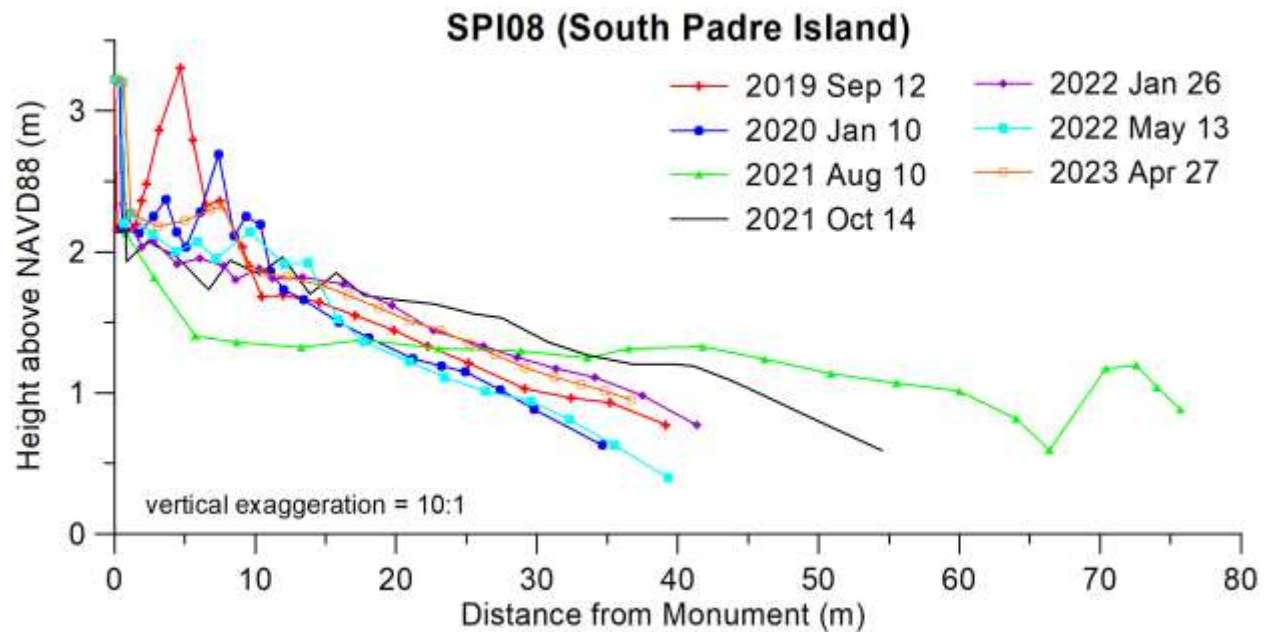


Figure 30. Beach profiles from before and after the latest nourishment project at SPI08.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of the Texas High School Coastal Monitoring Program is to provide middle and high school students with a real-world learning experience outside the everyday classroom. The program provides not only hands-on education for students but also valuable data for coastal researchers and decision-makers. During the 2022–2023 academic year, approximately 200 students from Ball, Brazosport, High Island, Palacios, Port Aransas, Port Isabel and Van Vleck High Schools and Cunningham Middle School at South Park collected data during 21 field trips.

In the 25 years since the inception of the program, work by students participating in the THSCMP has been beneficial to Bureau researchers and coastal managers in several research projects. Analysis of the data has been used to investigate storm effects and monitor recovery; to measure impacts to the beach and dune system from beach nourishment, construction of jetties, and beach maintenance practices; and to verify shoreline positions for calculating change rates. Through this successful student research program, scientists, students, and the public continue to gain a better understanding of processes and shoreline change along the Texas coast. Historical and

future measurements by the eight schools involved in the THSCMP show change through time at each location, but also highlights the geomorphic differences found along the Texas coast. Data collected from Bolivar Peninsula, Galveston Island, Follets Island, Quintana Beach, Matagorda Peninsula, Mustang Island, and North and South Padre Islands helps scientists better understand the relationships between coastal processes, beach morphology, and shoreline change at these locations. Coastal communities and managers—especially our partners at the Texas General Land Office, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and other coastal parks—benefit from having access to the beach monitoring data and analysis for use in public-policy and coastal-management decision-making.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was supported by grant number 23-020-015-D609 from the Texas General Land Office to the Bureau of Economic Geology, The University of Texas at Austin. Tiffany Caudle served as the Principal Investigator. This project was funded by a Texas Coastal Management Program grant approved by the Texas Land Commissioner, providing financial assistance under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended, awarded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office for Coastal Management, pursuant to NOAA Award No. NA22NOS4190148. The views expressed herein are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA, the U.S. Department of Commerce, or any of their sub agencies. Additional funds to support the project came from The Jackson School of Geosciences. Field trip support was provided by staff at Matagorda Bay Nature Park, Lower Colorado River Authority.

REFERENCES

- Caudle, T. L., and Paine, J. G., 2012, Pre-college student involvement in Texas coastal research: Gulf Coast Association of Geological Societies Transactions, v. 62, p. 27–38.
- Caudle, T. L., and Paine, J. G., 2017, Applications of Coastal Data Collected in the Texas High School Coastal Monitoring Program (THSCMP): Journal of Coastal Research, v. 33, no. 3, p. 738–746.
- Caudle, T.L., Paine, J.G., Andrews, J.R., and Saylam, K., 2019, Beach, Dune, and Nearshore Analysis of Southern Texas Gulf Coast Using Chiroptera LIDAR and Imaging System: Journal of Coastal Research, v. 35, no. 2, p. 251–268.
- Caudle, T.L., Tremblay, T.A., Paine, J.G., Andrews, J.R., and Saylam, K., 2014, Beach and Dune Analysis using Chiroptera Imaging System, South Padre and Brazos Islands, Texas Gulf Coast: The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Economic Geology, report prepared for the Texas General Land Office under GLO contract number 13-030-000-6895, 68 p.
- Emery, K. O., 1961, A simple method of measuring beach profiles: Limnology and Oceanography, v. 6, no. 1, p. 90–93.
- Gibeaut, J. C., and Caudle, T. L., 2009, Defining and Mapping Foredunes, the Line of Vegetation, and Shorelines along the Texas Gulf Coast. The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Economic Geology, report prepared for the Texas General Land Office under GLO contract number 07-005-22, 14 p.
- Gibeaut, J. C., Gutiérrez, R, and Hepner, T., 2002, Threshold conditions for episodic beach erosion along the southeast Texas coast. Gulf Coast Association of Geological Societies Transactions, v. 52, p. 323–335.
- Gibeaut, J. C., Hepner, T., Andrews, J., Gutierrez, R., and Smyth, R., 2008, Hurricane Rita impacts on the Texas shoreline: a summary report: The University of Texas at

Austin, Bureau of Economic Geology, report prepared for the Texas General Land Office under GLO contract number 02-267 C, 26 p.

Gibeaut, J. C., Hepner, T. L., Waldinger, R. L., Andrews, J. R., Smyth, R. C., and Gutiérrez, R., 2003, Geotextile tubes along the Upper Texas Gulf coast: May 2000 to March 2003: The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Economic Geology, final report prepared for Texas Coastal Coordination Council pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award No. NA07OZ0134, under GLO contract number 02-493 R, 37 p. plus appendices.

Hepner, T. L., and Gibeaut, J. C., 2004, Tracking post-storm beach recovery using data collected by Texas high school students: *Shore & Beach*, v. 72, no. 4, p. 5–9.

Krause, G., 2004, The “Emery-Method” Revisited: Performance of an Inexpensive Method of Measuring Beach Profiles and Modifications: *Journal of Coastal Research*, v. 20, no. 1, p. 340–346.

Morton, R.A. and Paine, J.G., 1985, Beach and Vegetation-Line Changes at Galveston Island, Texas: Erosion, Deposition, and Recovery from Hurricane Alicia. Austin, Texas: The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Economic Geology, Geological Circular 85-5, 66 p.

O’Connell, J., 2001, Beach and Dune Profiles: An Educational Tool for Observing and Comparing Dynamic Coastal Environments: *Marine Extension Bulletin*, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Sea Grant Program, Massachusetts, 6 p.

Paine, J.G., and Caudle, T. L., 2018, Shoreline movement along the Texas Gulf Coast, 1930s to 2016: The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Economic Geology, report prepared for the Texas General Land Office under GLO contract number 16-201-000, 59 p.

Paine, J. G., Caudle, T., and Andrews, J., 2014, Shoreline movement along the Texas Gulf Coast, 1930's to 2012: The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of

Economic Geology, report prepared for the Texas General Land Office under GLO contract number 09-074-000, 52 p.

Paine, J.G., Caudle, T., and Andrews, J.R., 2021, Shoreline Movement and Beach and Dune Volumetrics along the Texas Gulf Coast, 1930s to 2019: The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Economic Geology, report prepared for the Texas General Land Office under GLO contract number 16-201-000, 101 p.

Paine, J. G., Mathew, S., and Caudle, T., 2011, Gulf shoreline change rates through 2007: The University of Texas at Austin, Bureau of Economic Geology, report prepared for the Texas General Land Office under GLO contract number 10-041-000-3737, 38 p.

Paine, J. G., Mathew, S., and Caudle, T., 2012, Historical Shoreline Change Through 2007, Texas Gulf Coast: Rates, Contributing Causes, and Holocene Context, Gulf Coast Association of Geological Societies Journal, v. 1, p. 13–26.

Simpson, R. H., and Riehl, H., 1981, The hurricane and its impact: Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 398 p.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 2017, 2016 USACE NCMP topobathy lidar DEM: Gulf Coast (TX), Joint Airborne Lidar Bathymetry Technical Center of Expertise (JALBTCX), Charleston, SC.

APPENDIX A: PROFILE INFORMATION

All profile coordinates are in NAD83. Heights above the GRS80 Ellipsoid were converted to North American Vertical Datum 88 (NAVD88) using the Geoid12B ellipsoid model. Profile sites are listed in the order they appear along the Texas coast starting from the northeastern most site closest to the Texas-Louisiana border and traveling south.

Profile	Latitude (deg min)	Longitude (deg min)	Easting (m)	Northing (m)	HAE (m)	NAVD88 (m)	Azimuth (M)
HIB01¹	29 33.08	94 23.04	365917.69	3269868.01	-25.18	1.64	150
HIB01R	29 33.08	94 23.04	365901.27	3269902.24	-25.26	1.56	150
BOL03	29 30.60	94 29.64	355196.55	3265428.50	-23.26	3.54	150
BOL02	29 30.00	94 31.20	352663.65	3264343.08	-23.62	3.17	150
DEL01	29 14.44	94 52.38	317984.46	3236109.93	-23.84	2.74	150
BEG02²	29 11.64	94 57.09	310255.20	3231059.16	-24.75	1.79	139
BEG02R³	29 11.67	94 57.11	310228.82	3231110.58	-24.61	1.93	139
GISP1	29 11.47	94 57.39	309766.82	3230746.49	-23.75	2.79	139
JAM02	29 10.87	94 58.39	308128.50	3229670.91	-24.29	2.24	140
SURF4	28 58.29	95 15.68	279648.06	3206930.85	-21.62	4.70	135
SURF1	28 57.47	95 16.59	278154.49	3205457.56	-24.47	1.84	130
SURF2	28 57.08	95 17.03	277426.68	3204737.87	-22.00	4.30	130
QUIN1	28 55.99	95 18.13	275599.85	3202771.80	-24.47	1.82	150
MAT01	28 36.67	95 56.55	212269.82	3168453.65	-22.98	3.57	148
MAT02	28 36.31	95 57.47	210751.39	3167825.80	-23.25	3.32	148
MAT03	28 35.91	95 58.48	209090.26	3167112.23	-21.81	4.78	148
MUI01	27 49.53	97 03.40	691396.24	3079393.46	-22.29	4.07	123
MUI03	27 47.66	97 05.08	688697.38	3075882.46	-22.39	3.91	125
MUI02	27 40.42	97 10.19	680502.6	3062387.97	-24.22	1.88	120
NPC06	27 35.99	97 12.66	676557.71	3054150.56	-21.76	4.19	110
NPI08	27 35.86	97 12.78	676359.73	3053901.89	-23.32	2.62	110
SPI08	26 8.17	97 10.10	683116.29	2892056.38	-18.32	3.22	75
SPI02	26 6.79	97 9.93	683438.99	2889509.24	-18.11	3.39	78
SPI01⁴	26 4.57	97 9.46	684274.71	2885422.83	-18.48	2.97	70
SPI01R	26 4.58	97 9.46	684271.30	2885435.40	-16.95	4.48	70

¹HIB01 reset after 2020 hurricane season.

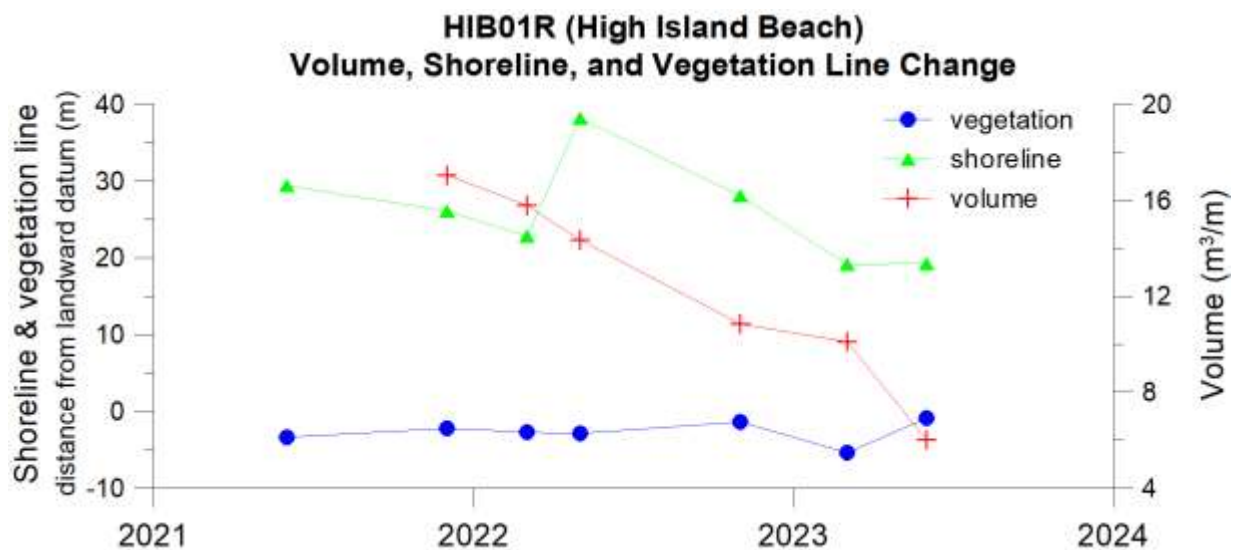
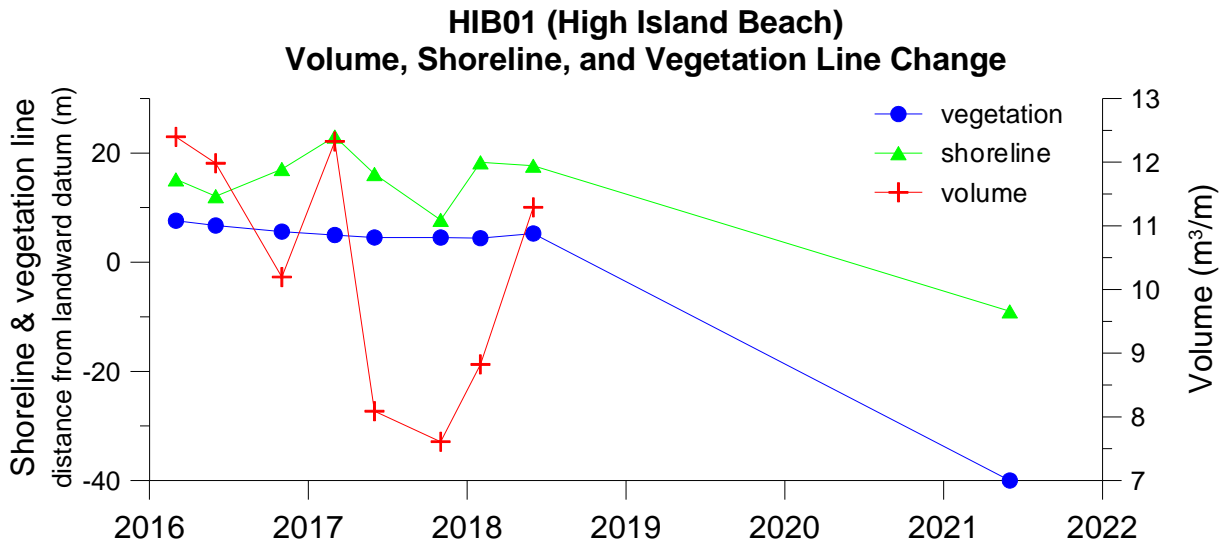
²BEG02 reset after Hurricane Ike.

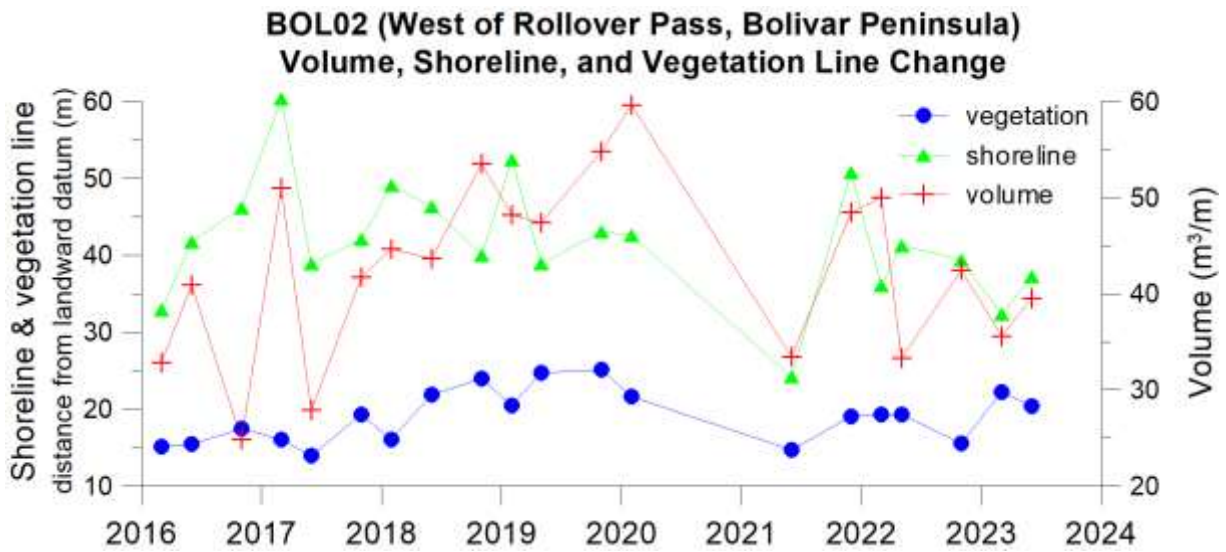
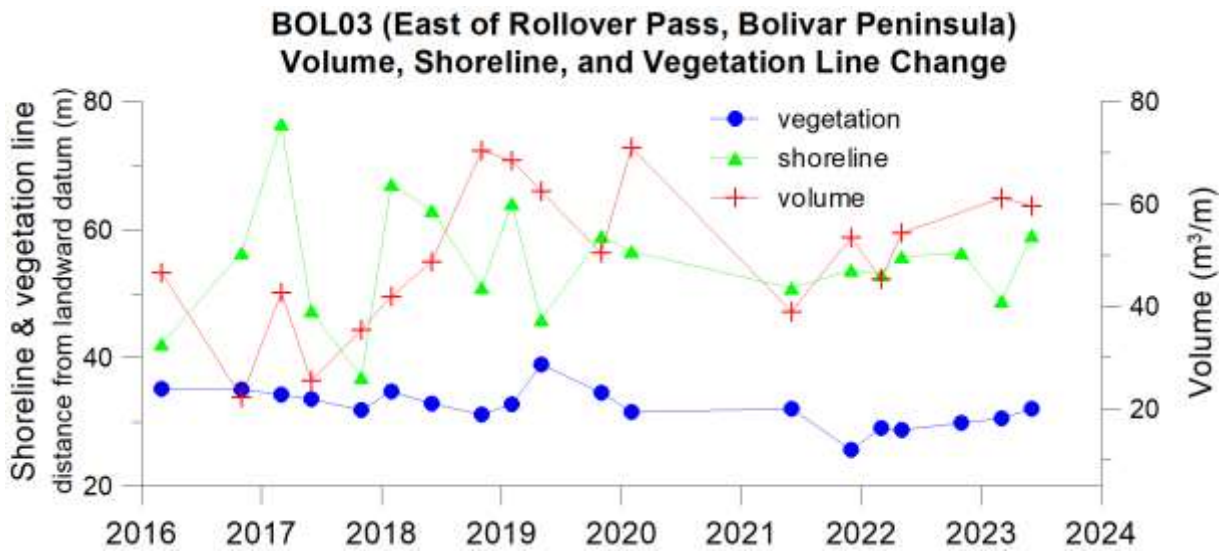
³BEG02R replaced by GISP1 due to construction in the State Park.

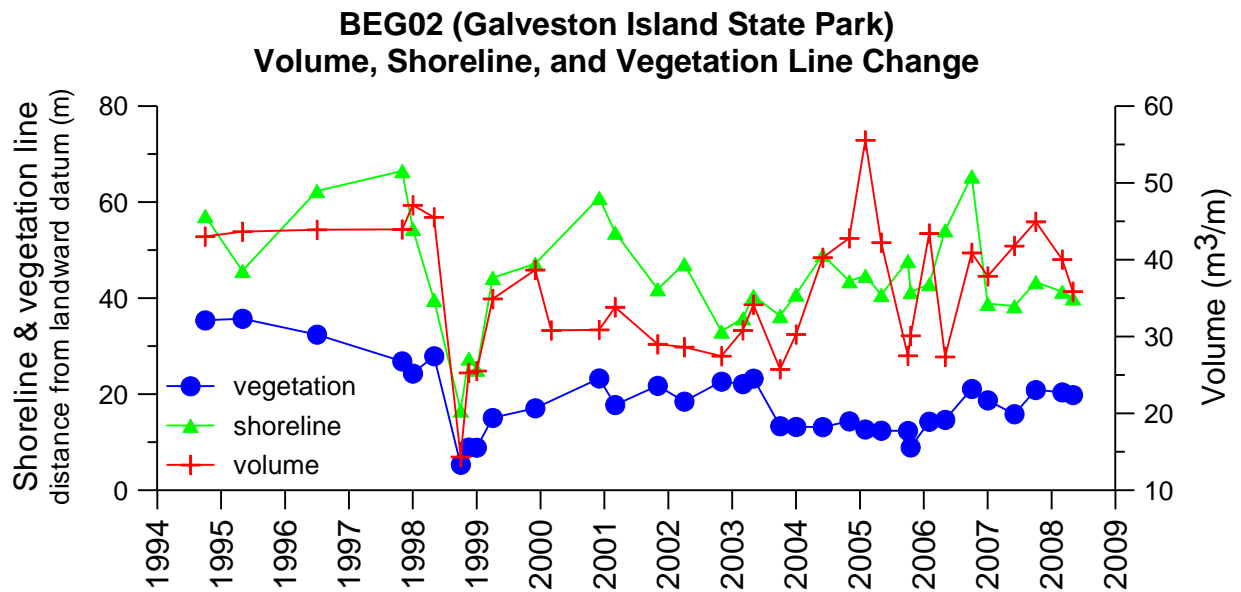
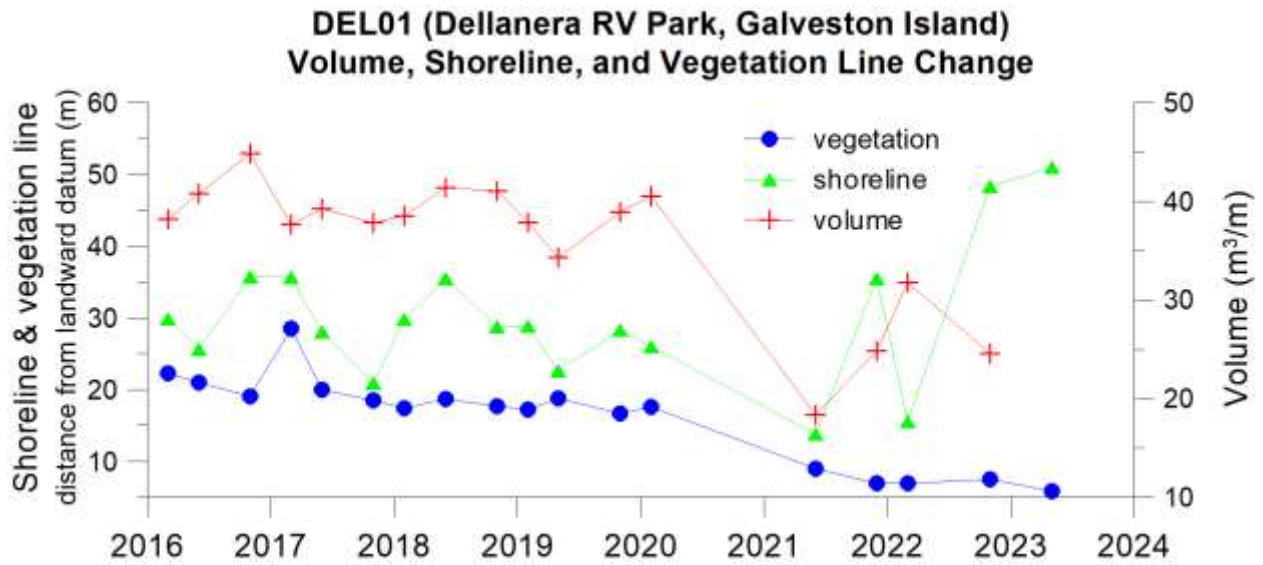
⁴SPI01 was lost due to construction at Isla Blanca Park.

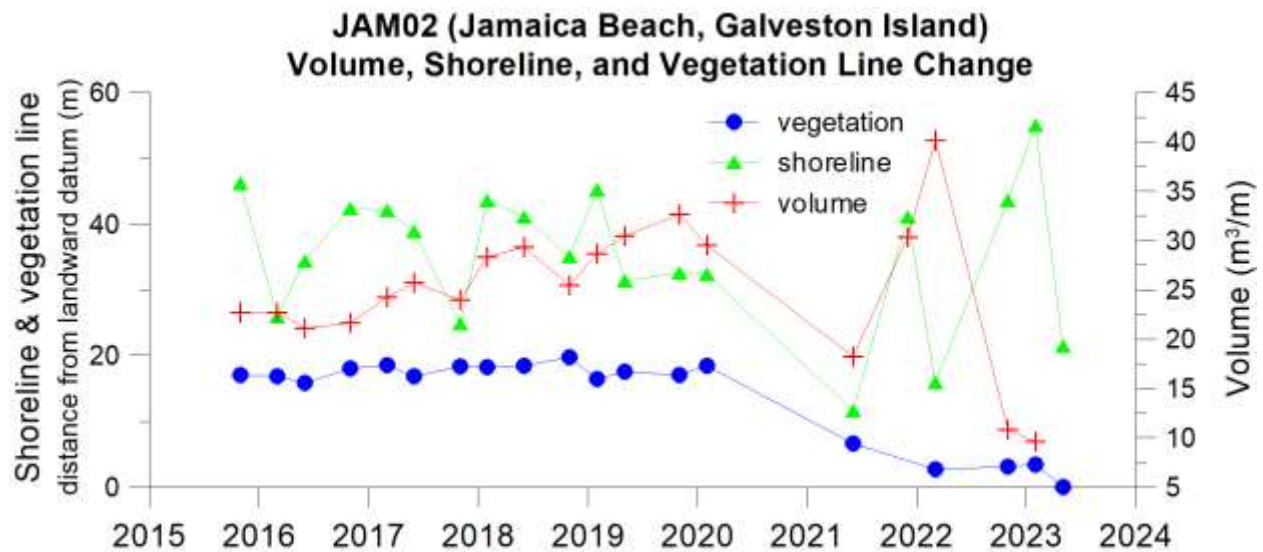
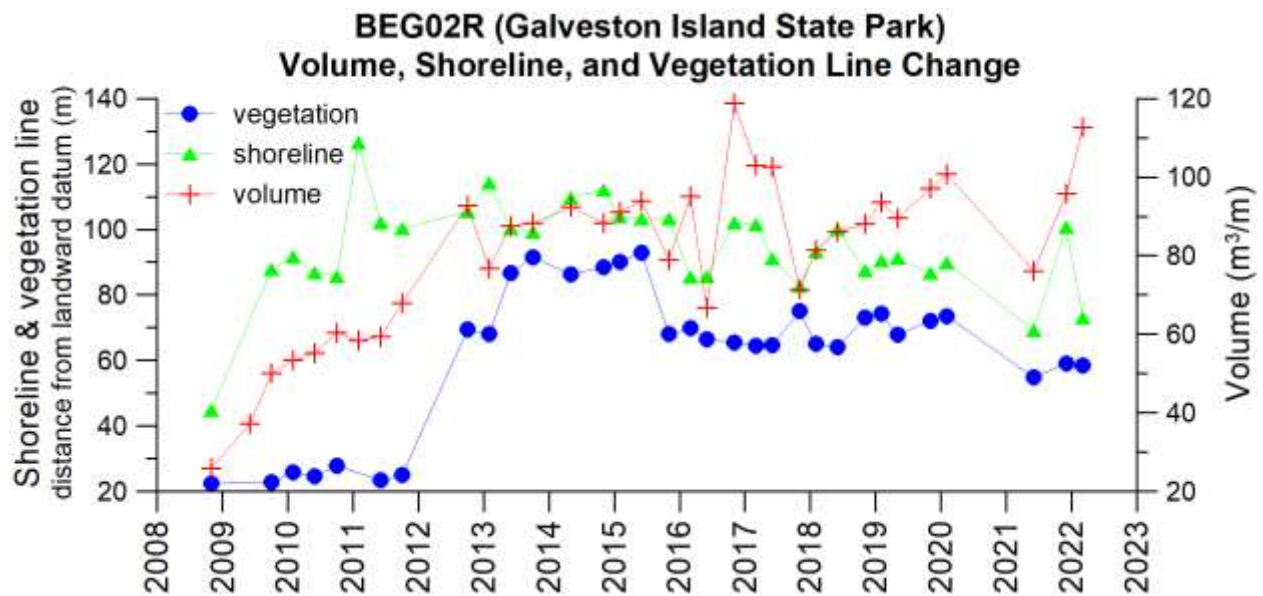
APPENDIX B: GRAPHS OF VOLUME, SHORELINE, AND VEGETATION-LINE CHANGE

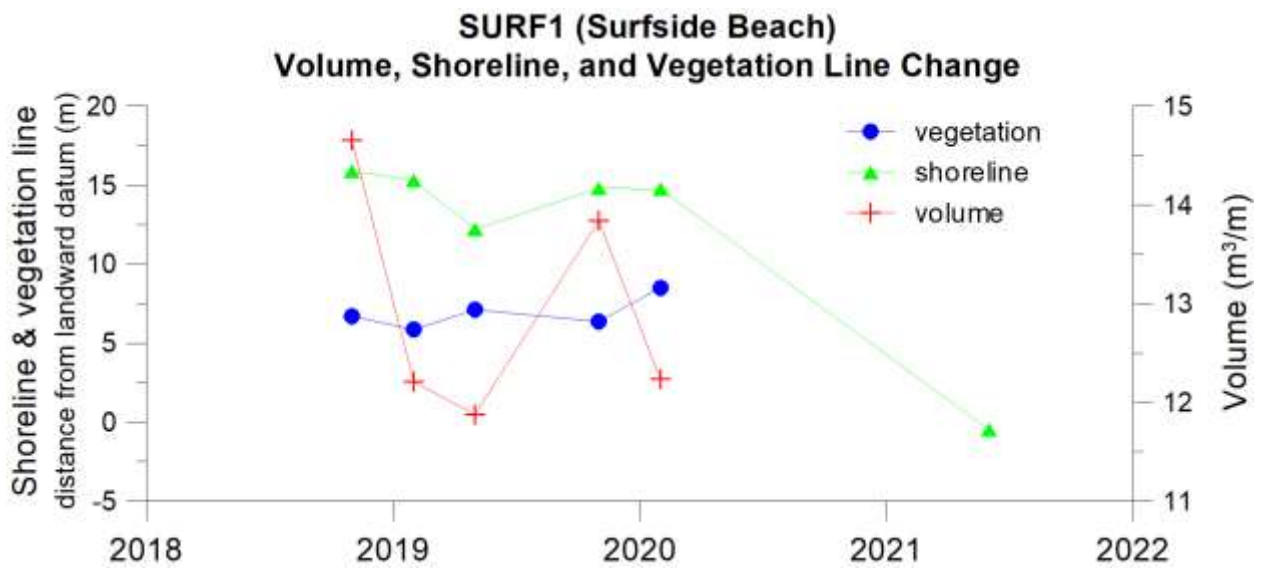
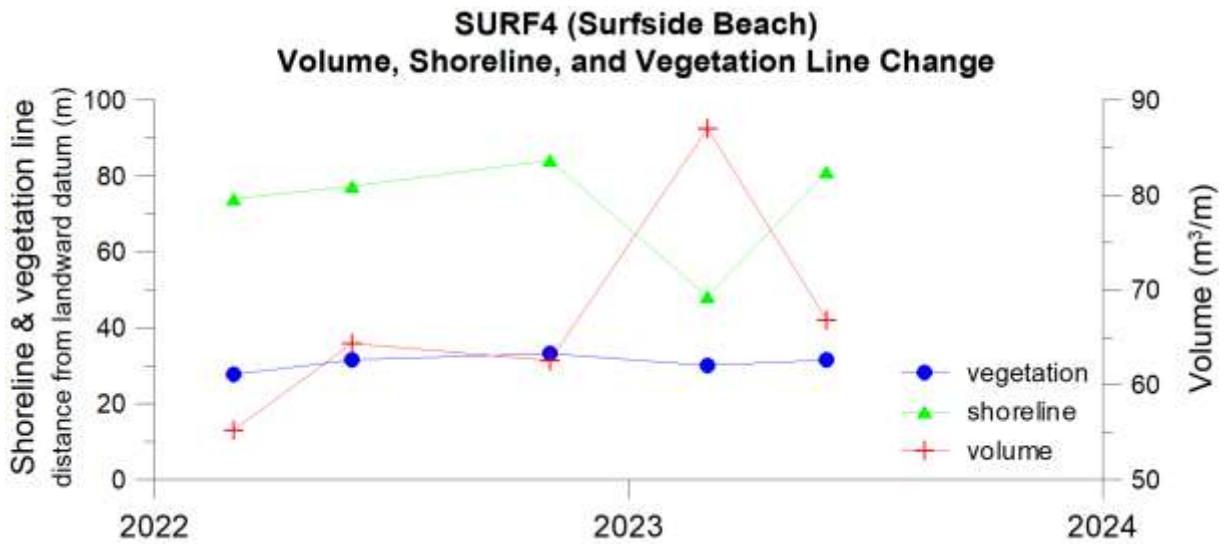
Sediment volume was calculated above 1 meter NAVD88 for all profiles unless otherwise indicated. Profiles that did not extend below the 1 meter NAVD88 elevation were extrapolated.

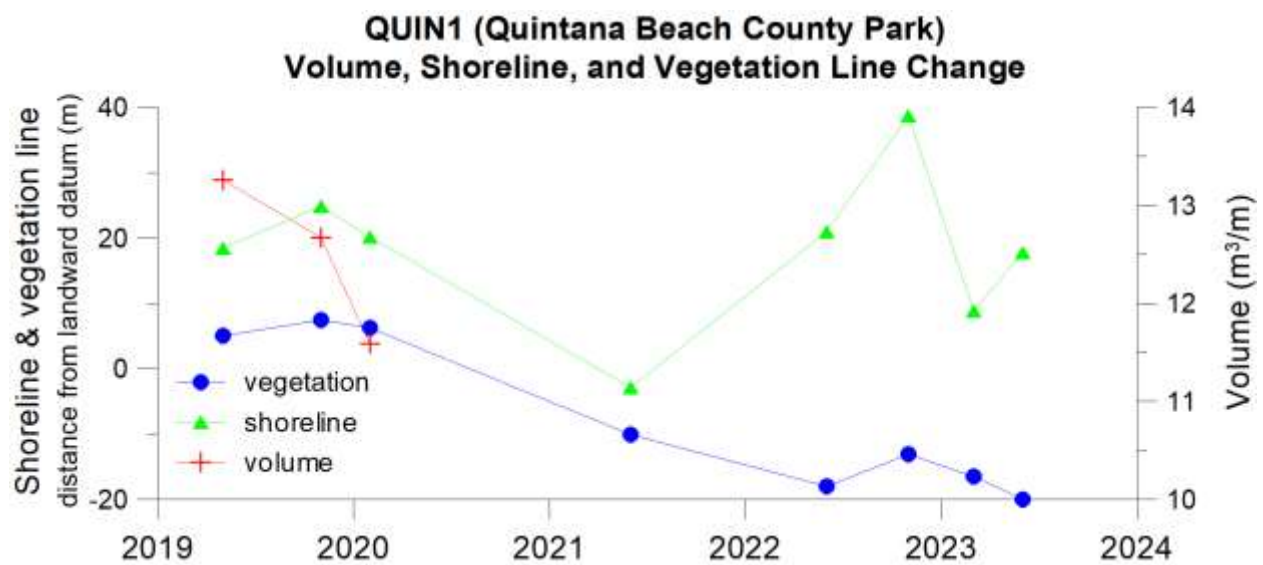
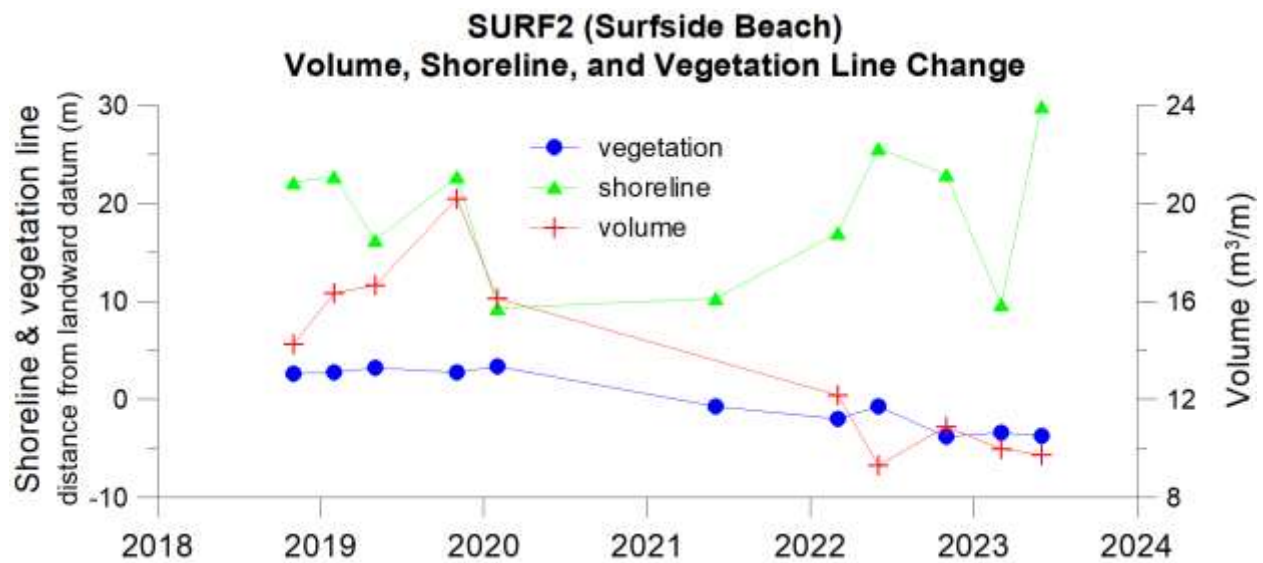




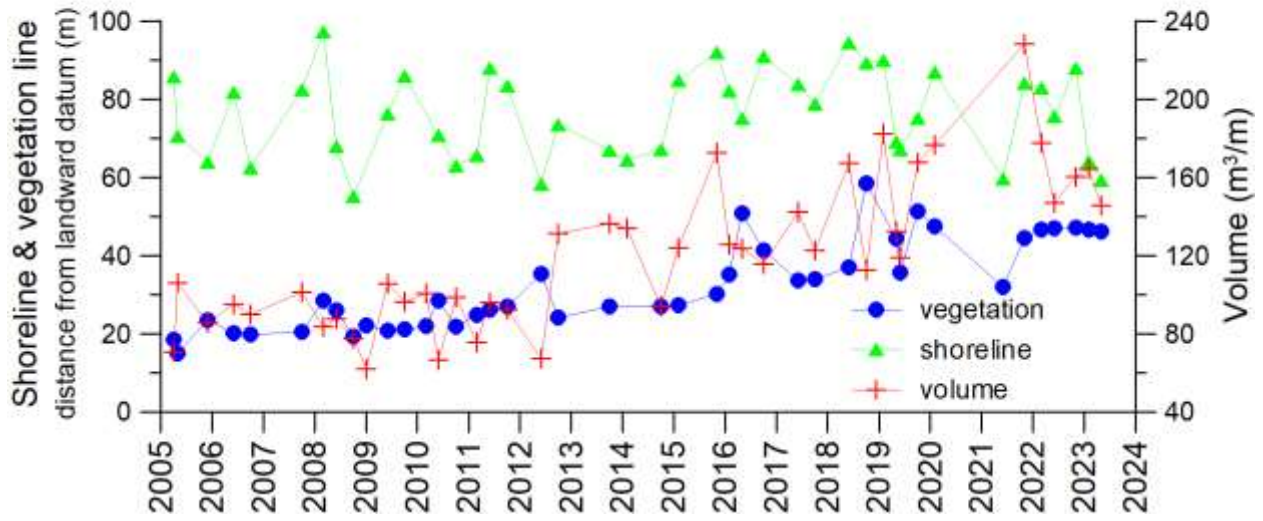




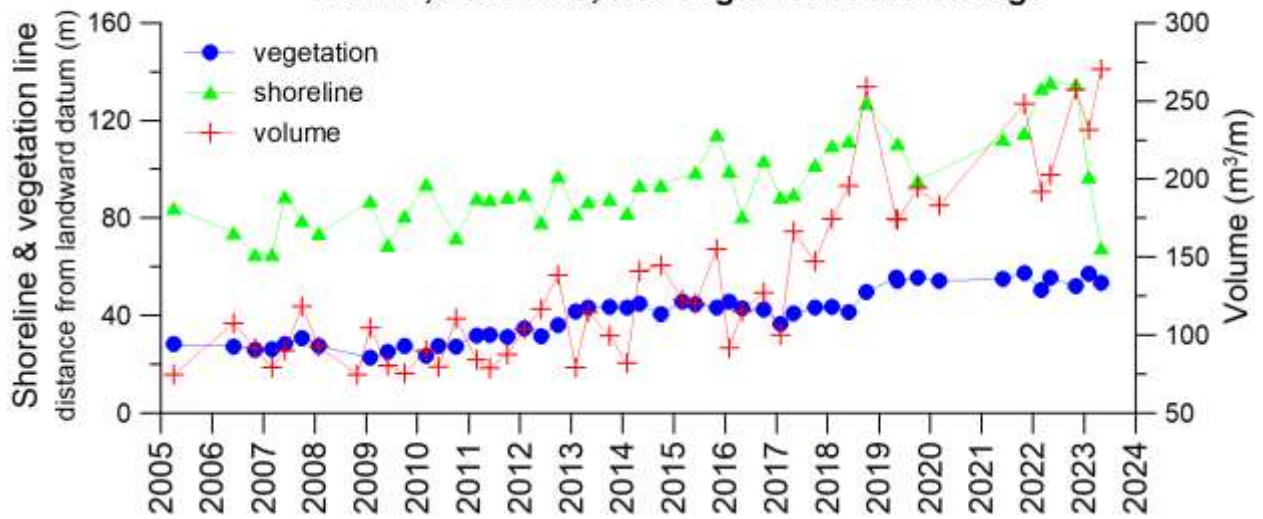


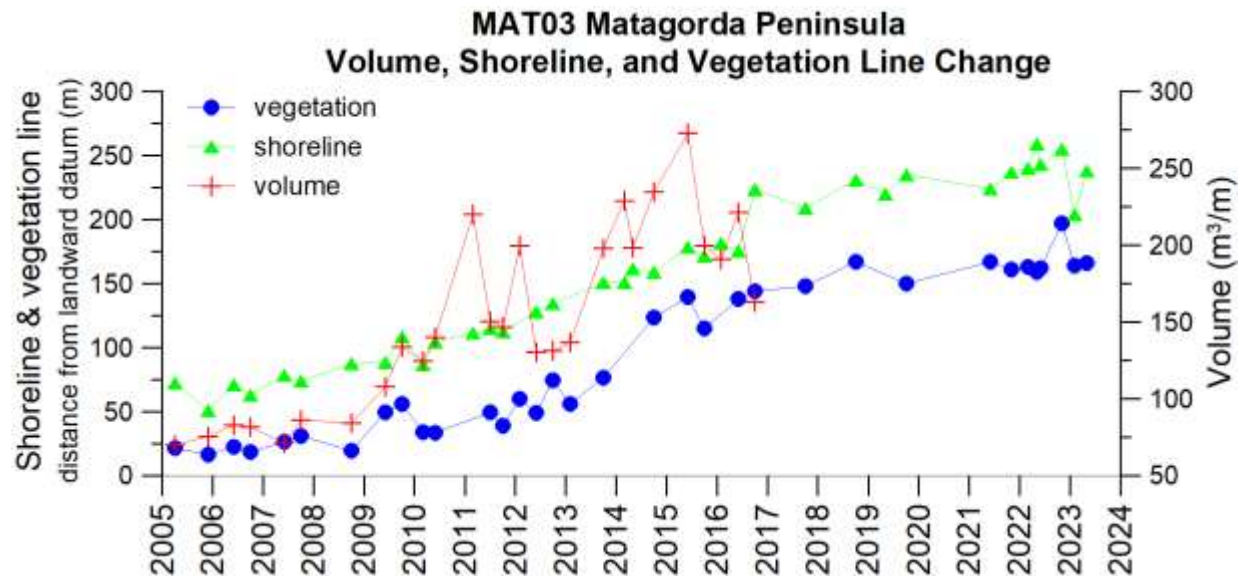


MAT01 (Matagorda Peninsula)
Volume, Shoreline, and Vegetation Line Change

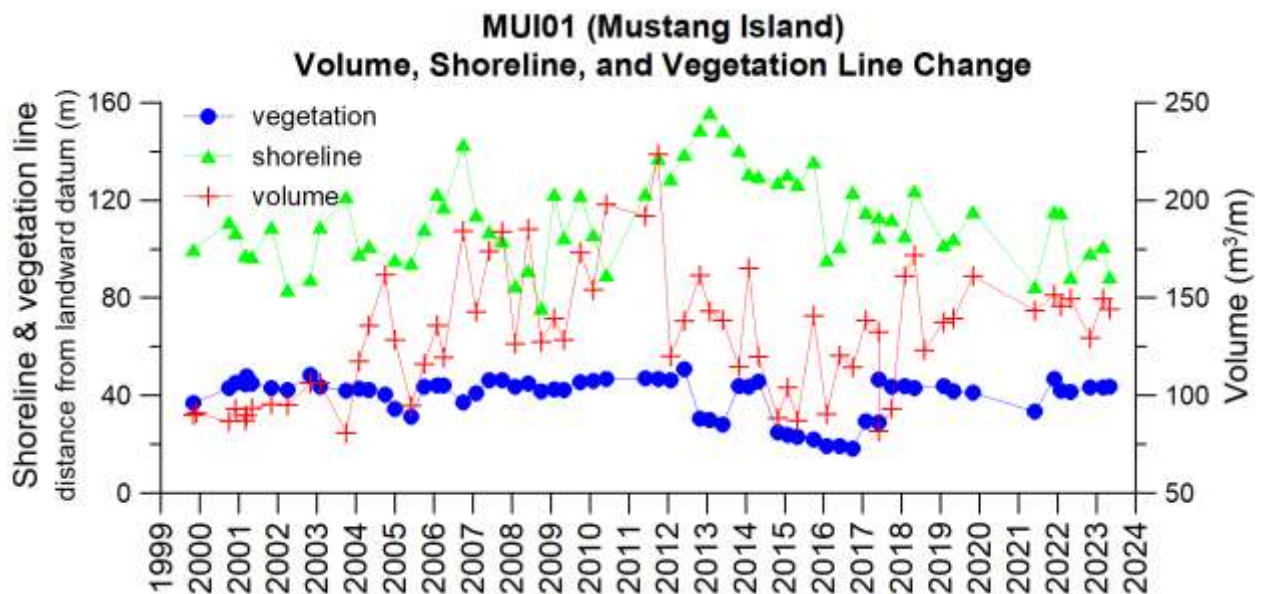


MAT02 (Matagorda Peninsula)
Volume, Shoreline, and Vegetation Line Change

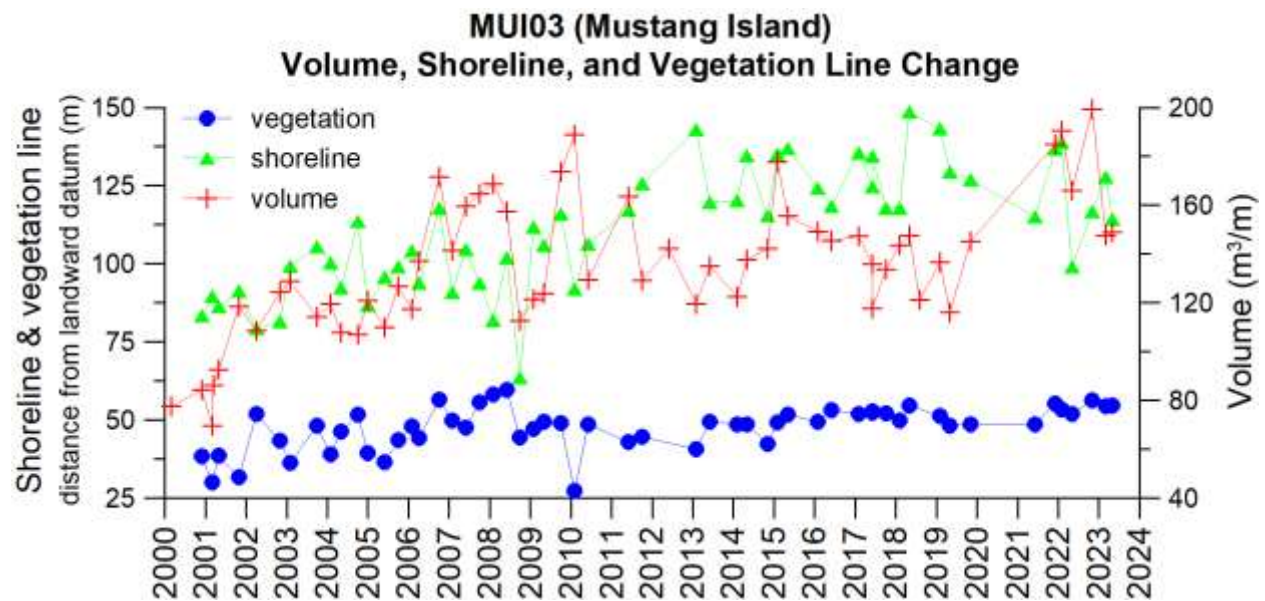




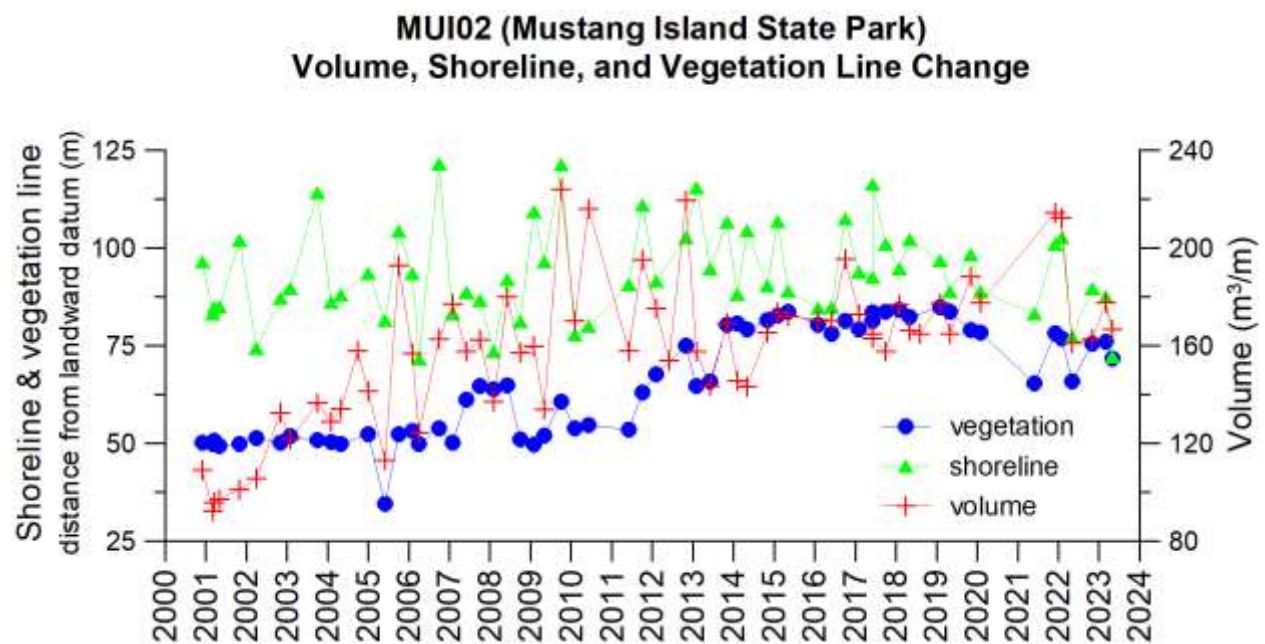
MUI01 volumes were calculated above 1.5 meters NAVD88. Profiles that did not extend below the 1.5-meter NAVD88 elevation were extrapolated.

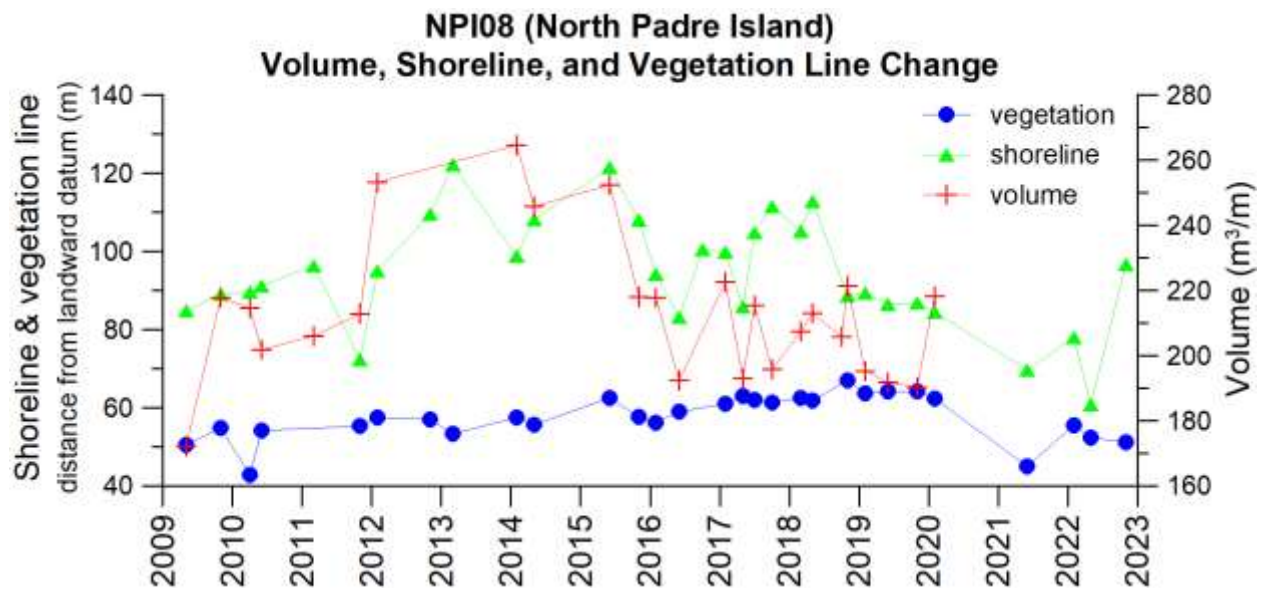
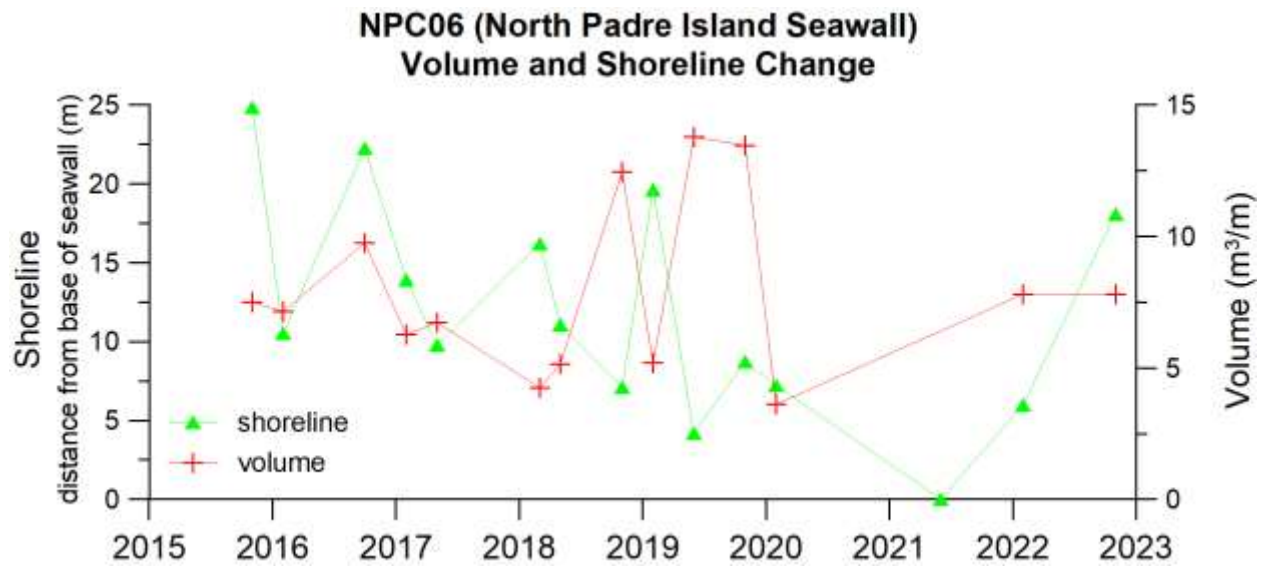


MUI03 volumes were calculated above 1.5 meters NAVD88. Profiles that did not extend below the 1.5-meter NAVD88 elevation were extrapolated.

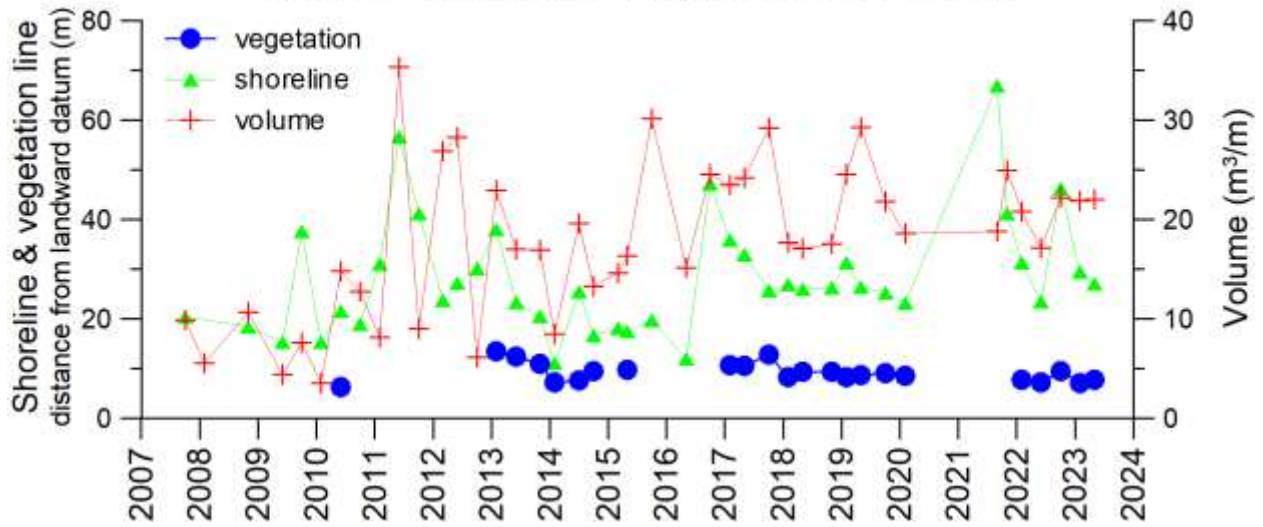


MUI02 volumes were calculated above 1.25 meters NAVD88. Profiles that did not extend below the 1.25-meter NAVD88 elevation were extrapolated.

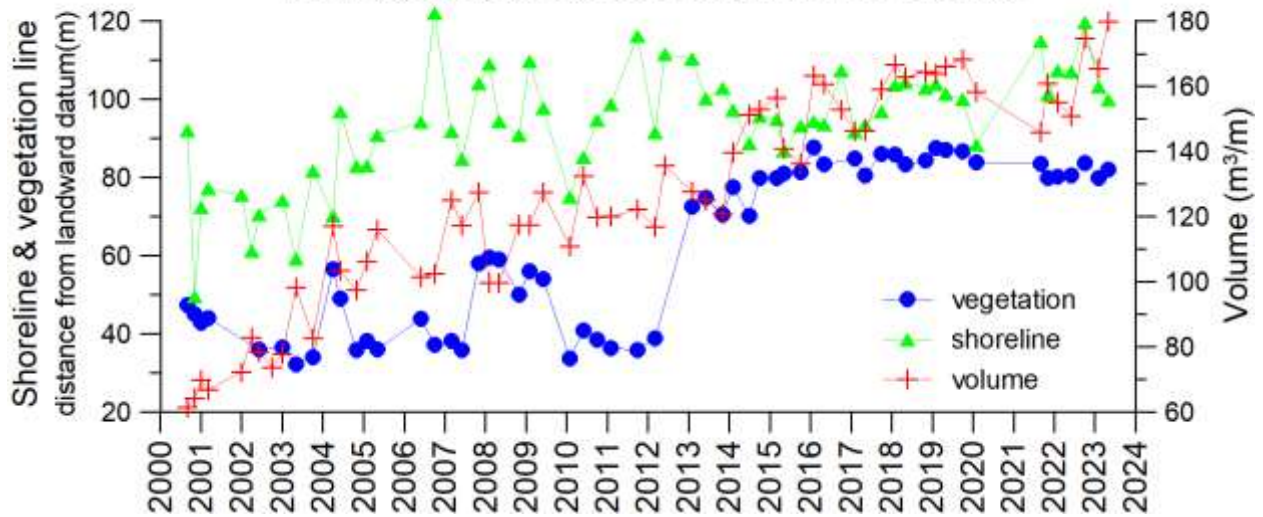


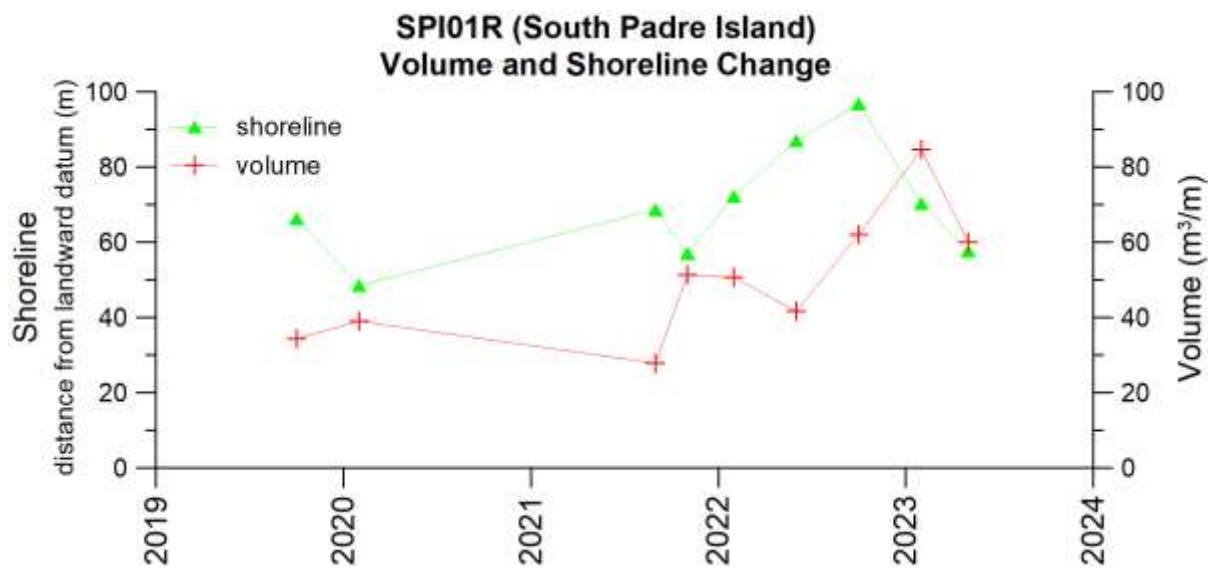
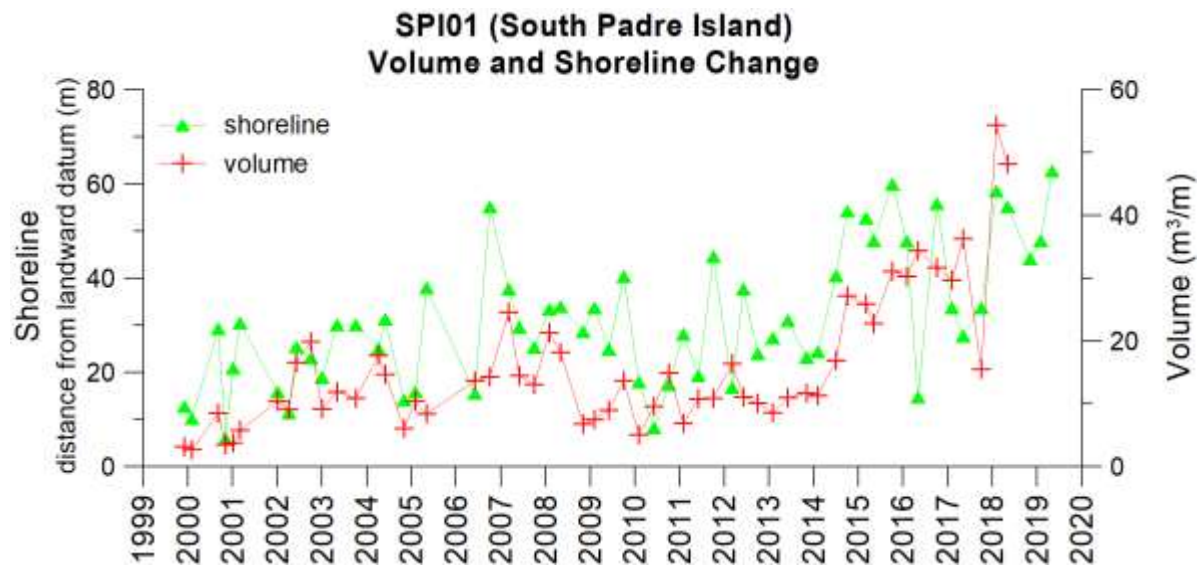


SPI08 (South Padre Island)
Volume, Shoreline, and Vegetation Line Change

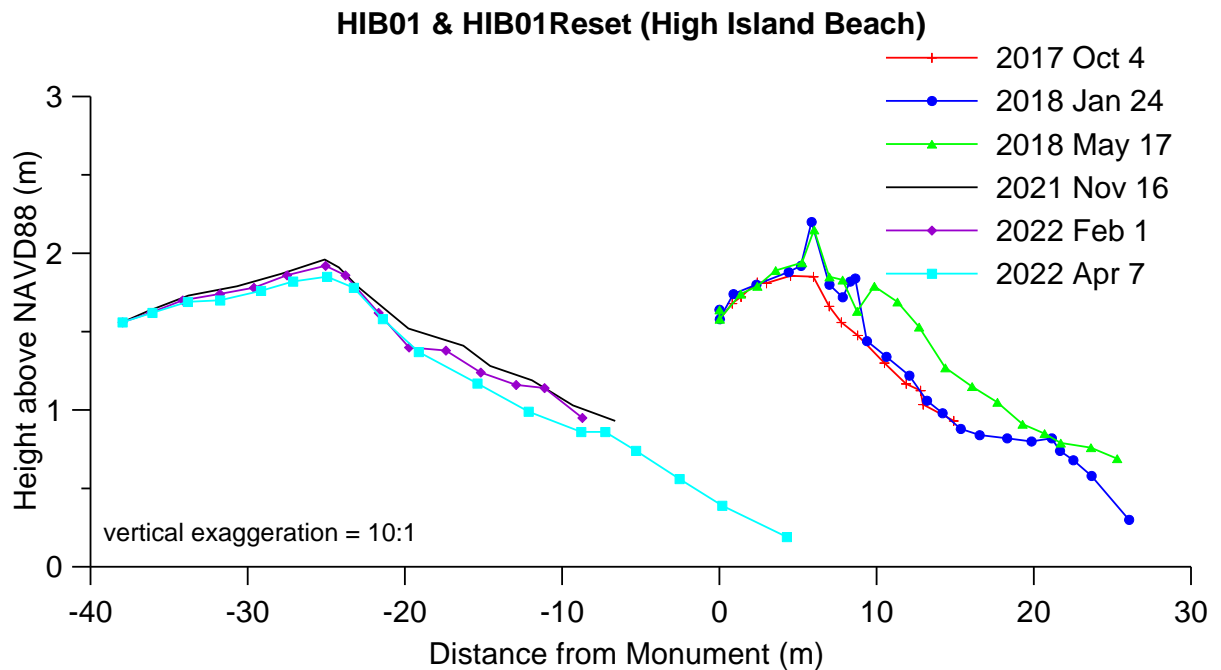
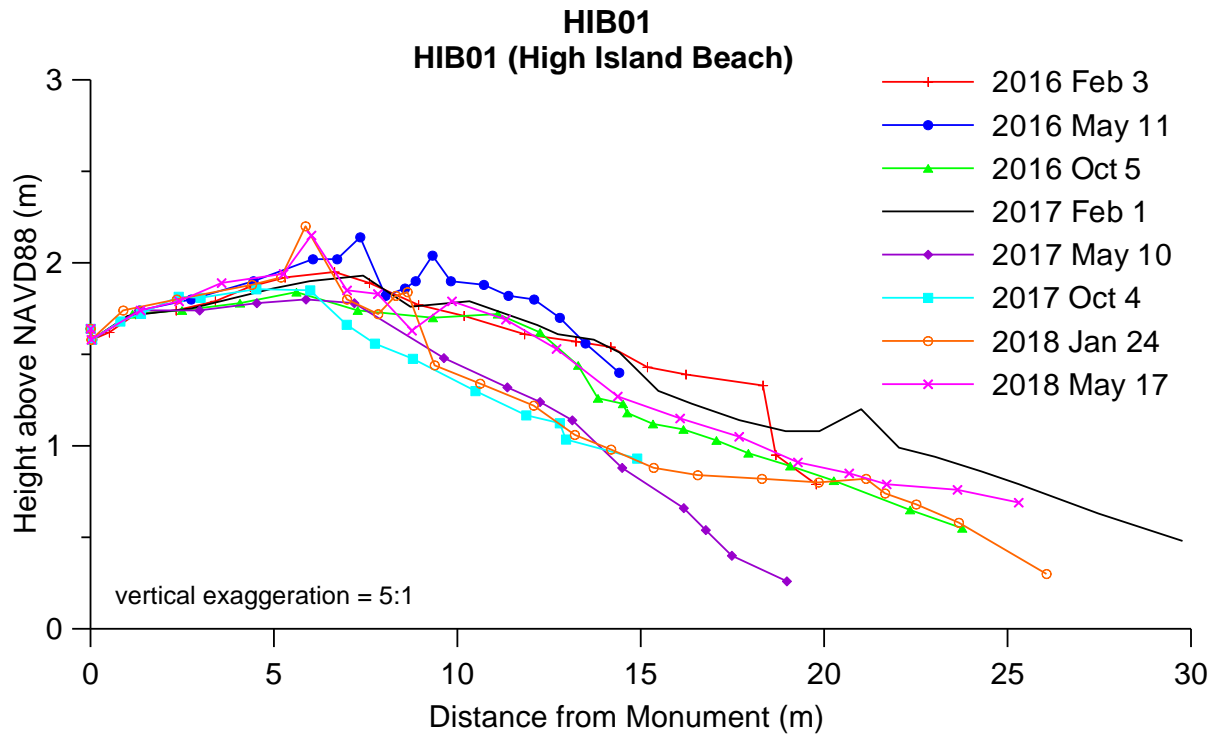


SPI02 (South Padre Island)
Volume, Shoreline, and Vegetation Line Change

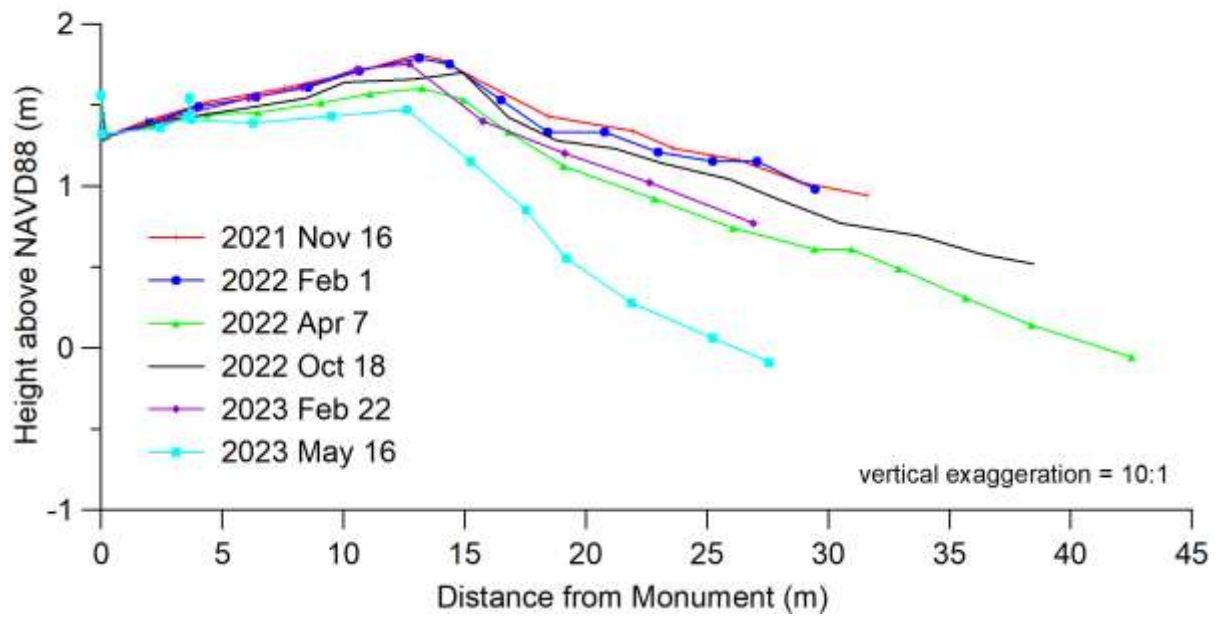




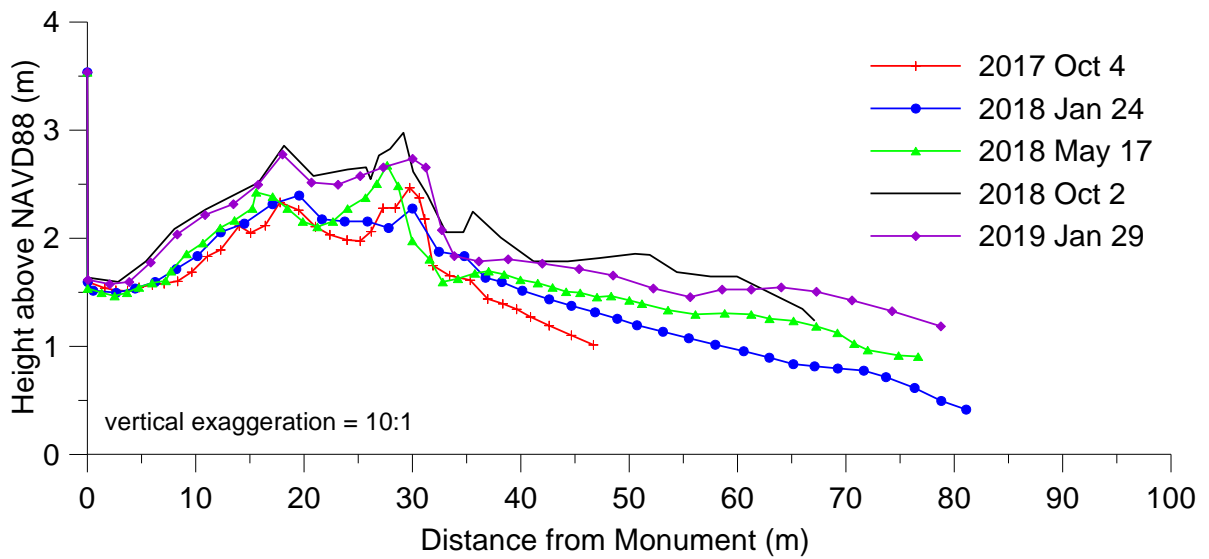
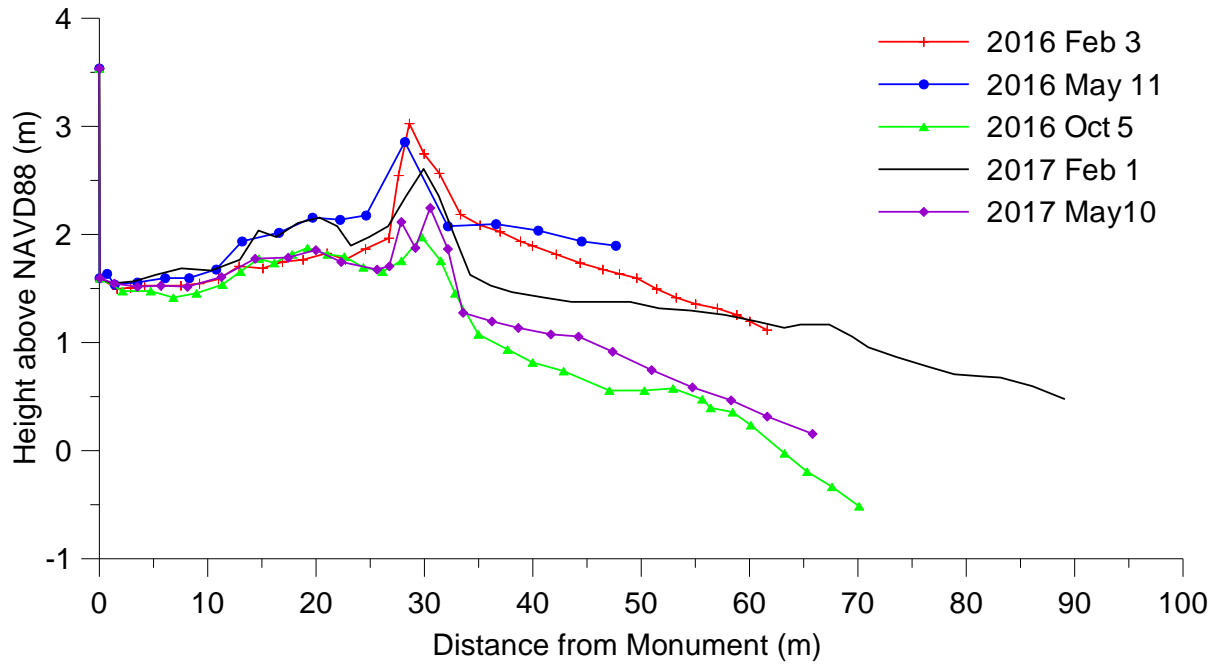
APPENDIX C: GRAPHS OF BEACH PROFILES



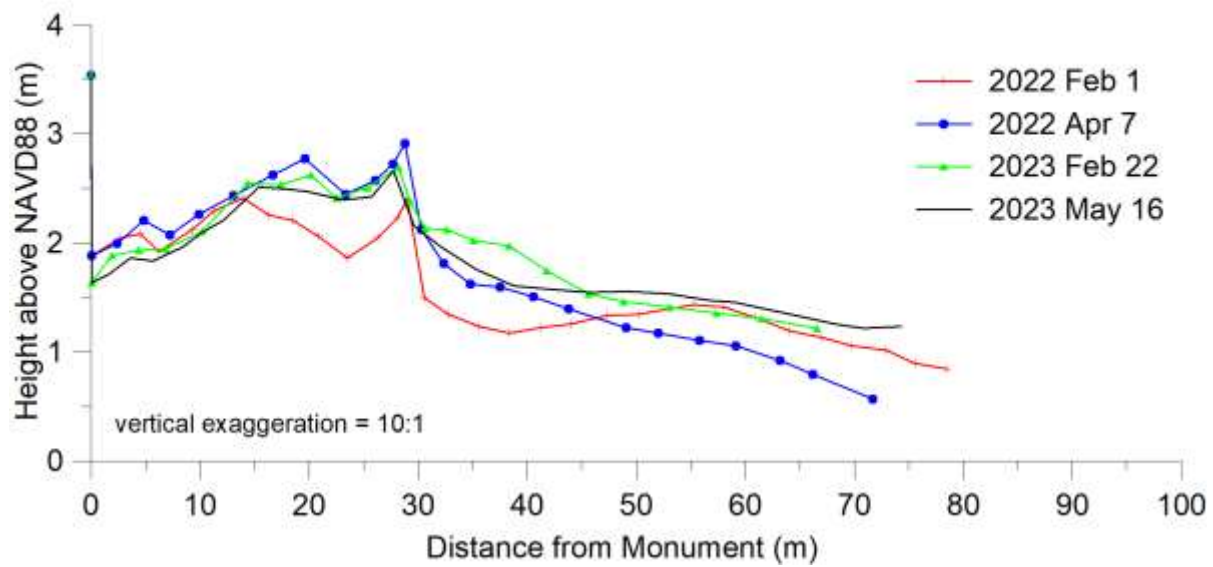
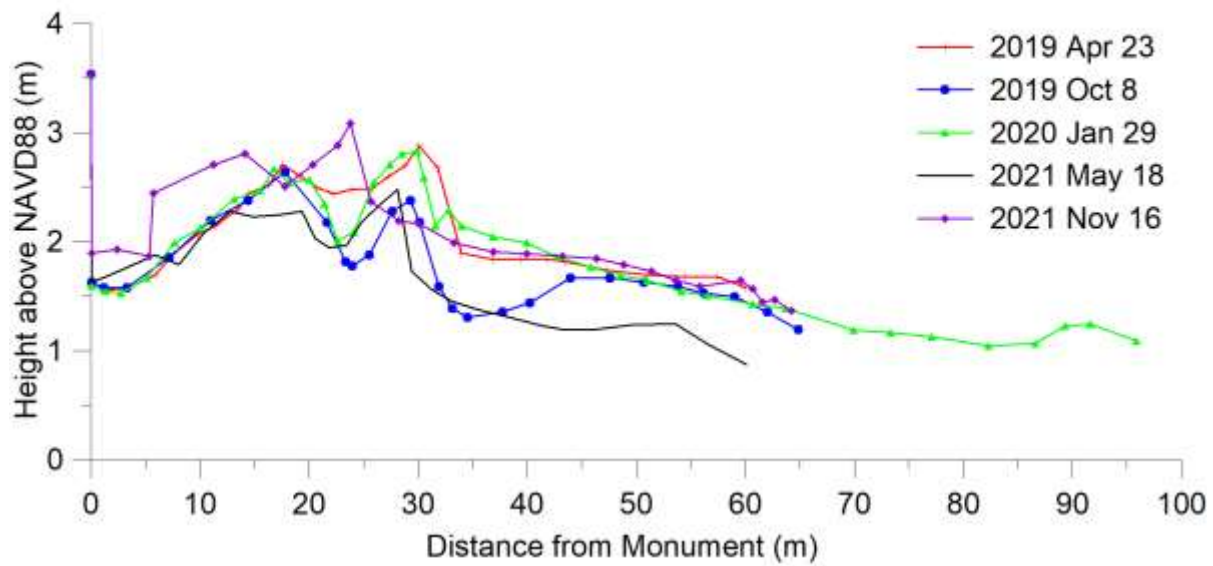
HIB01R HIB01 Reset (High Island Beach)



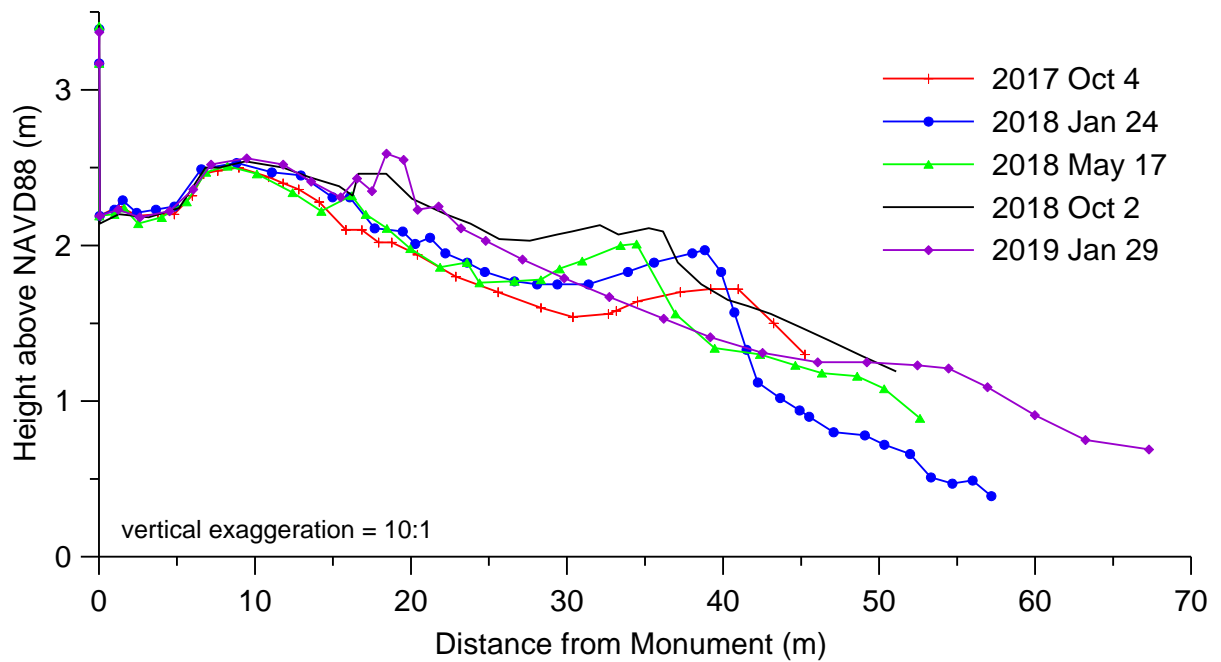
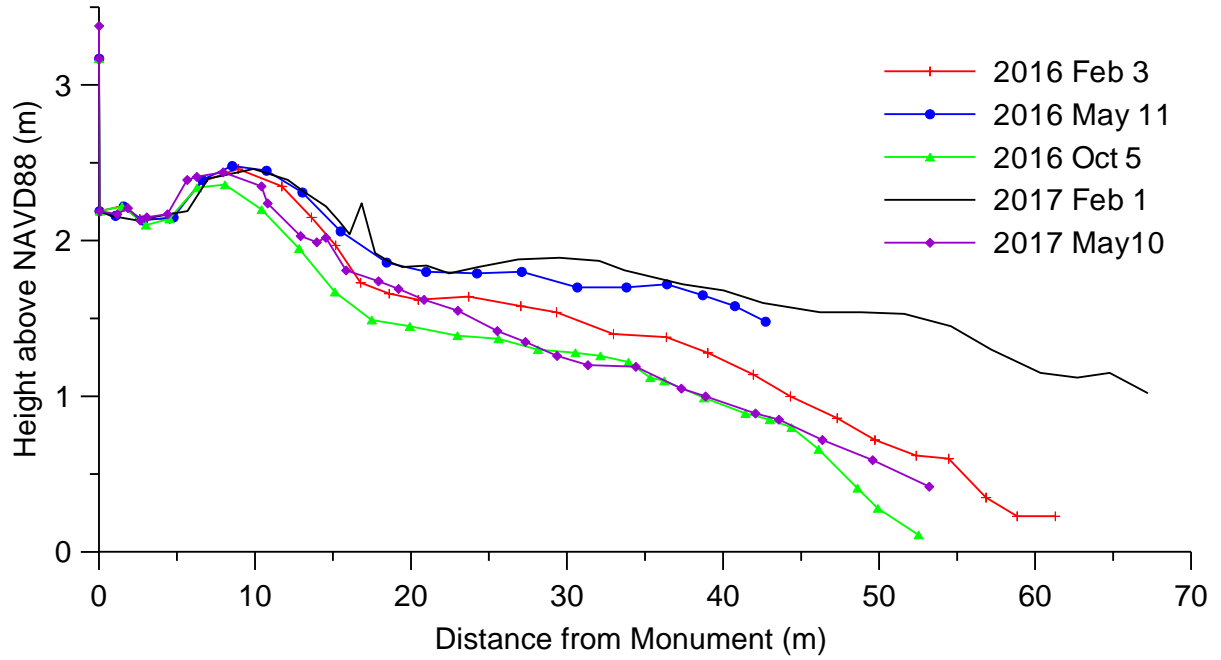
BOL03 **BOL03 (East of Rollover Pass, Bolivar Peninsula)**



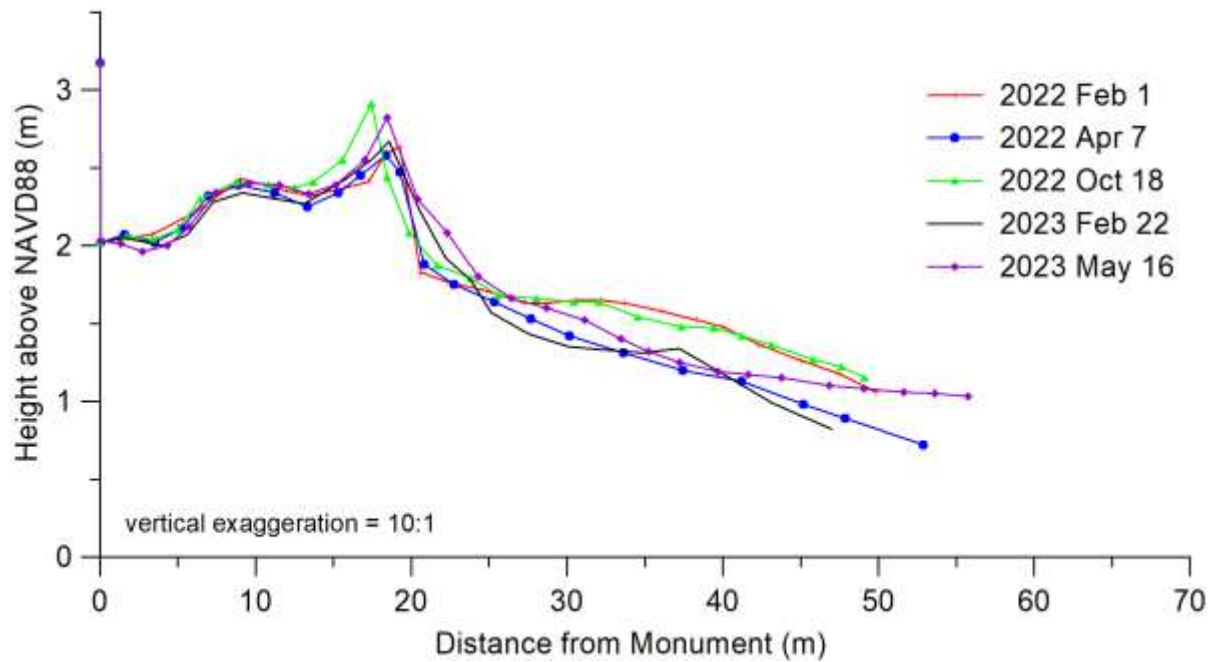
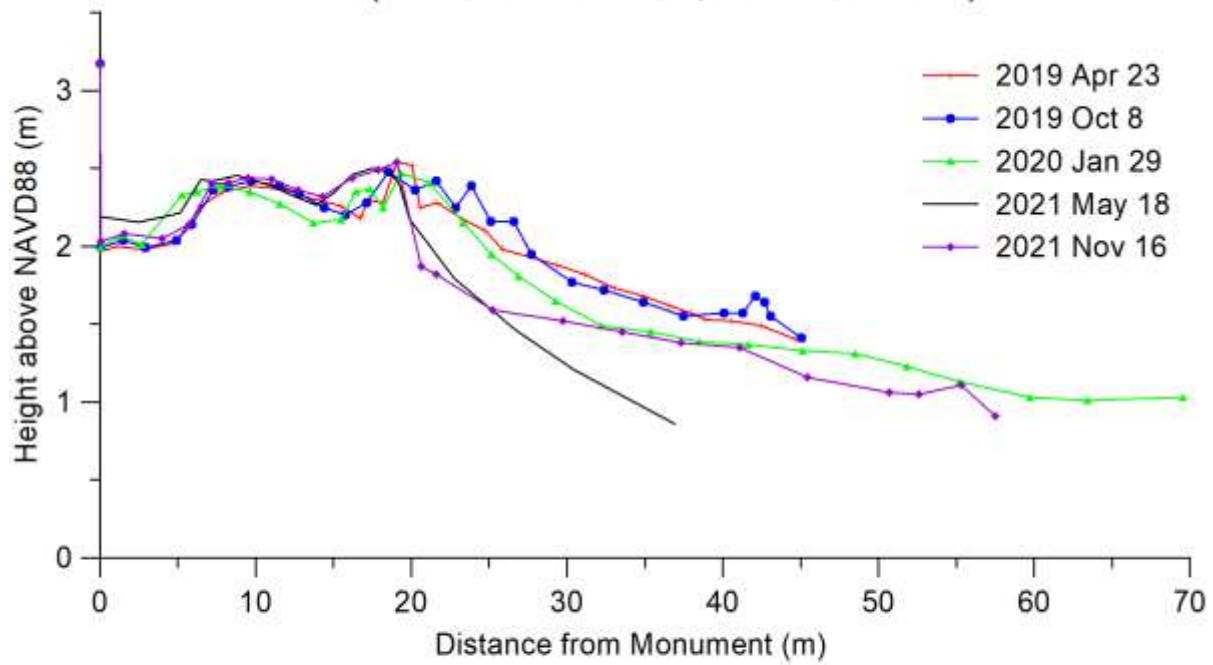
BOL03 (East of Rollover Pass, Bolivar Peninsula)

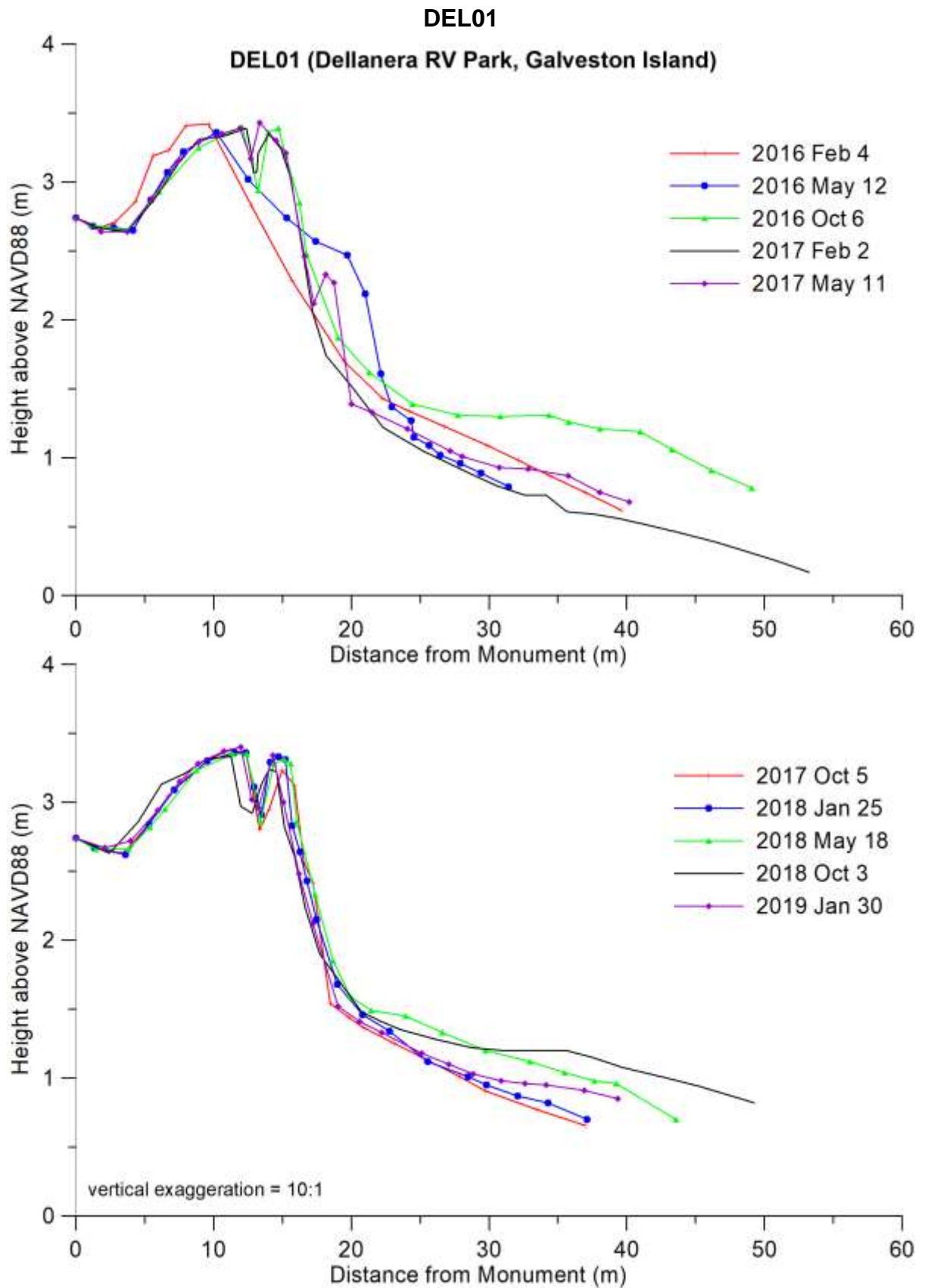


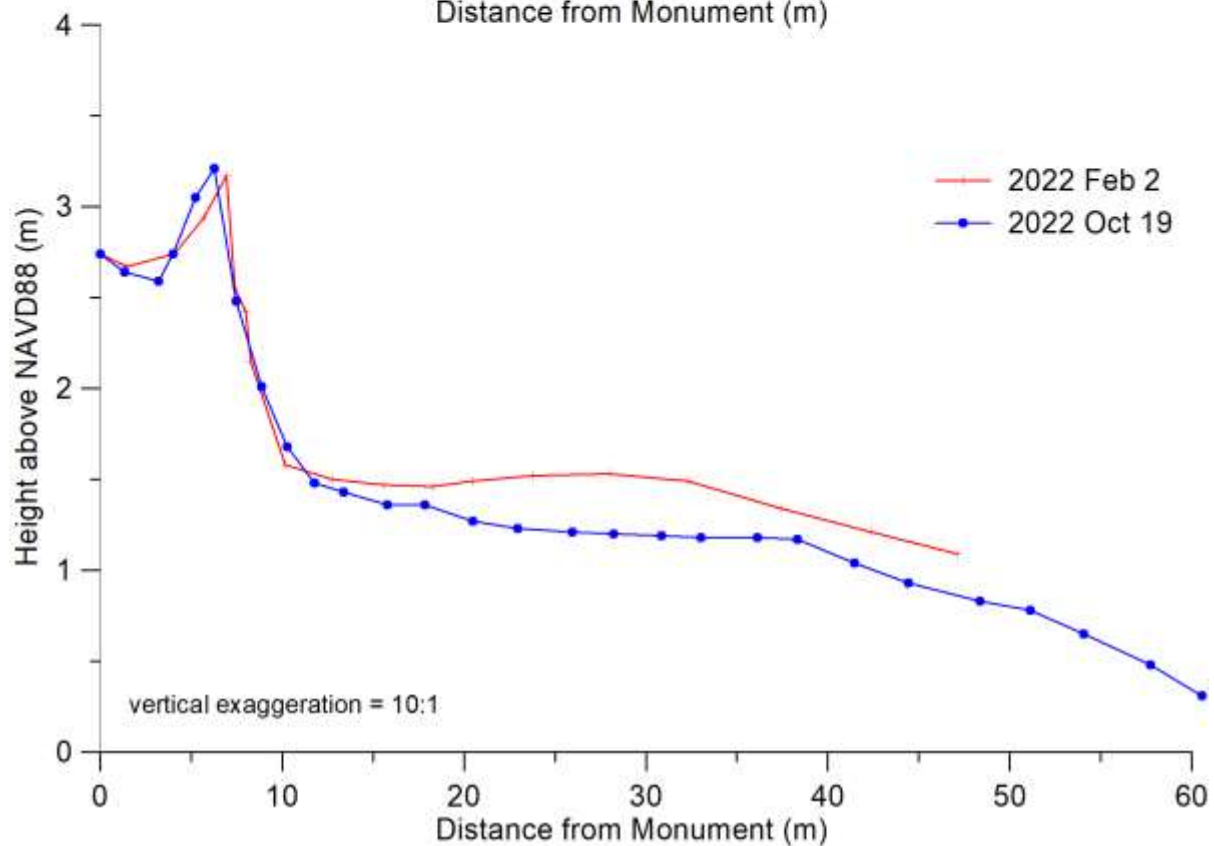
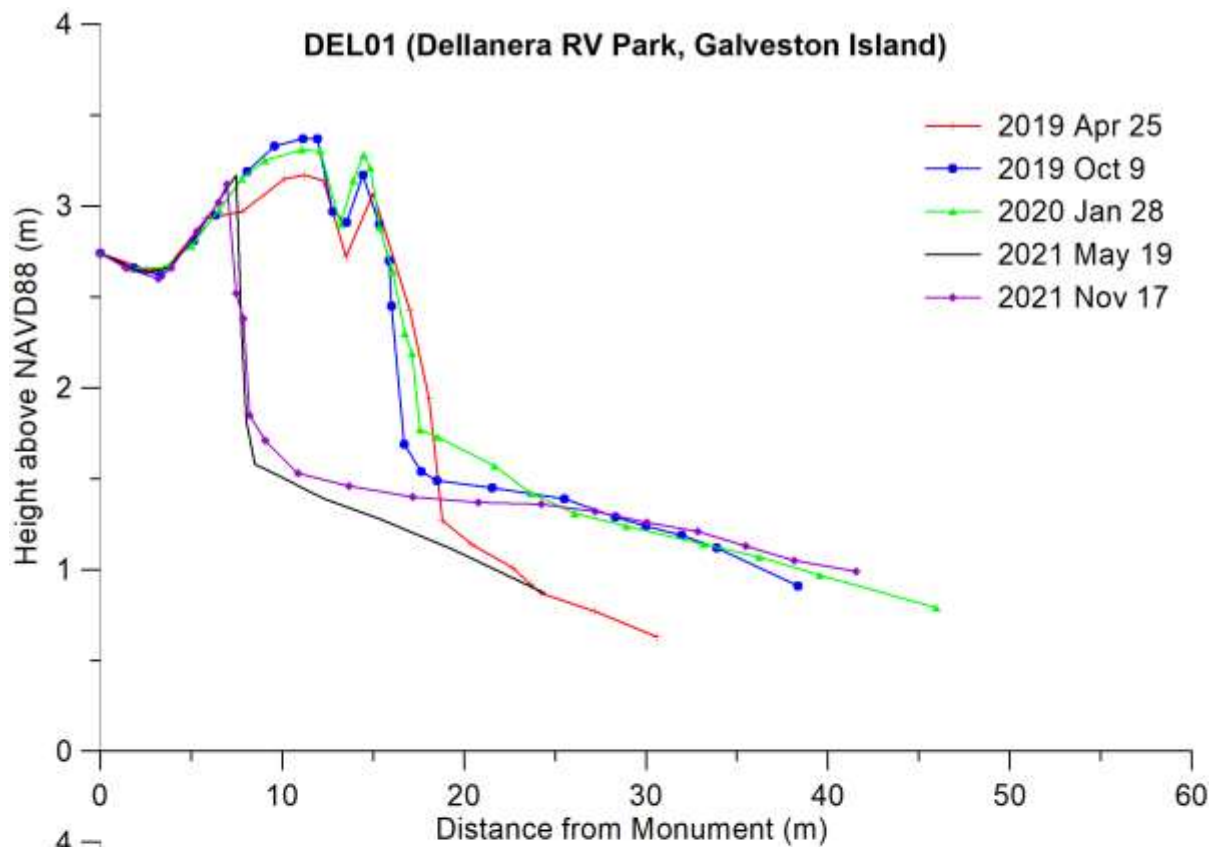
BOL02 **BOL02 (West Rollover Pass, Bolivar Peninsula)**



BOL02 (West of Rollover Pass, Bolivar Peninsula)

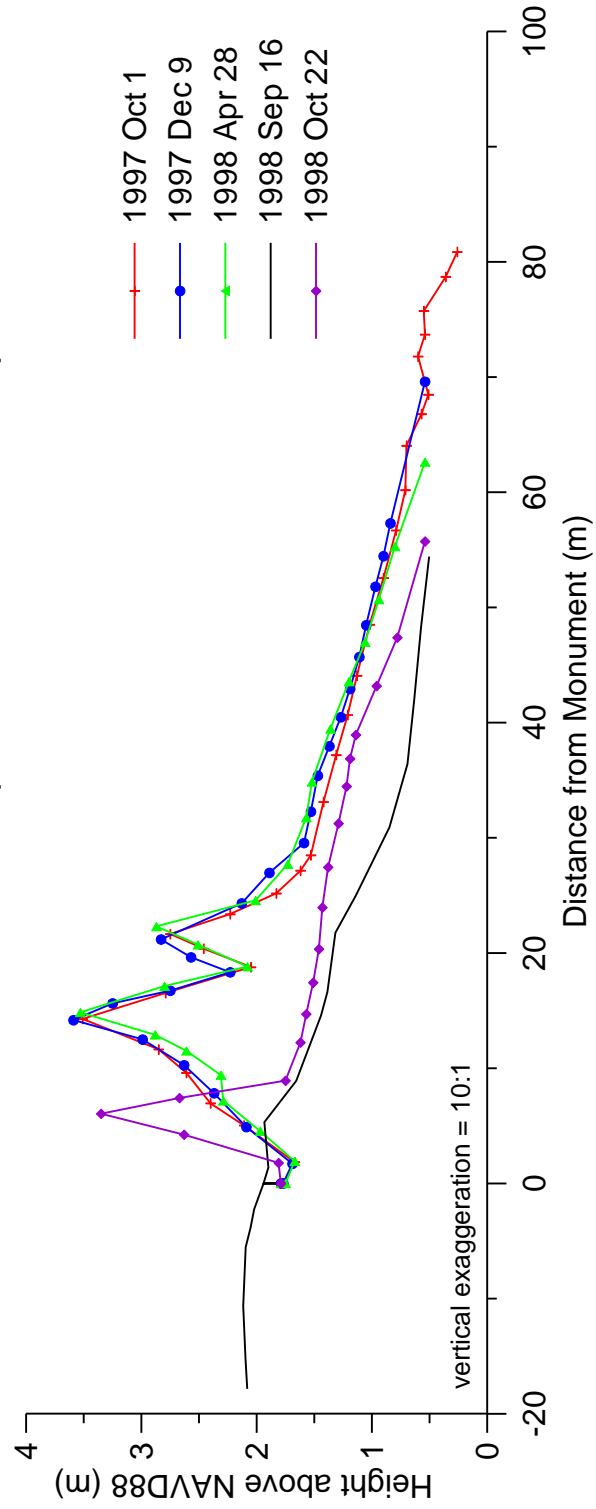


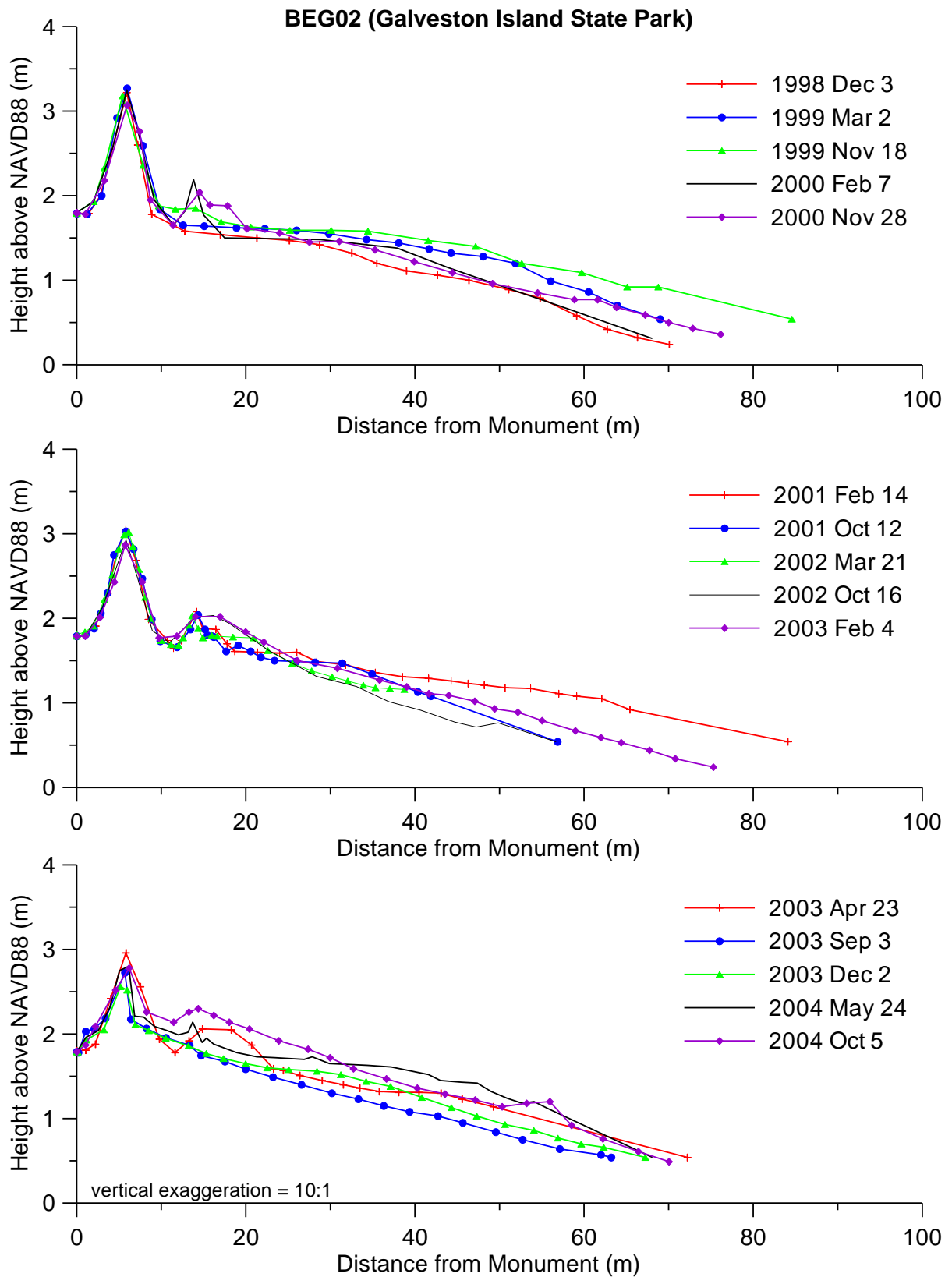


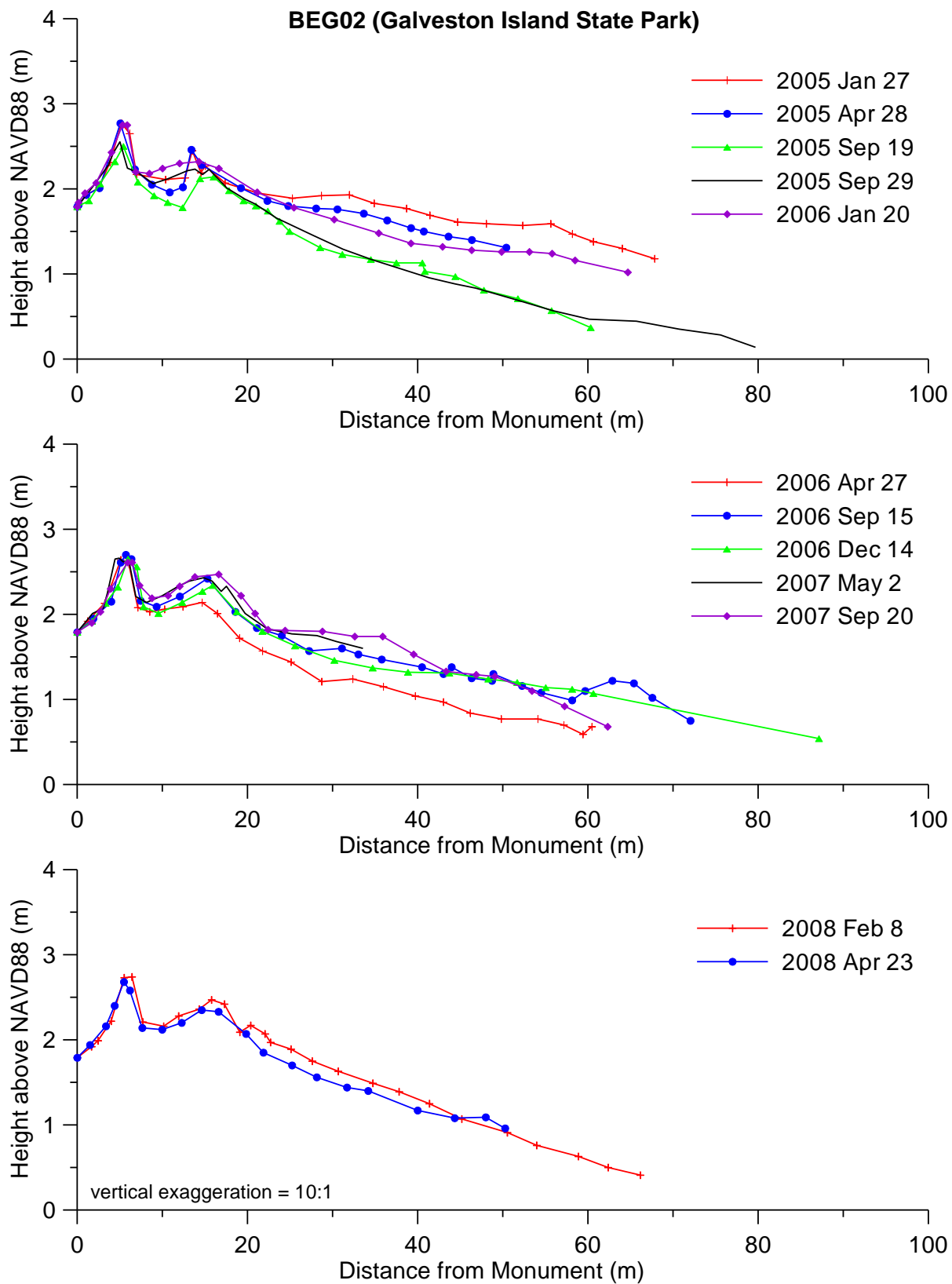


BEG02

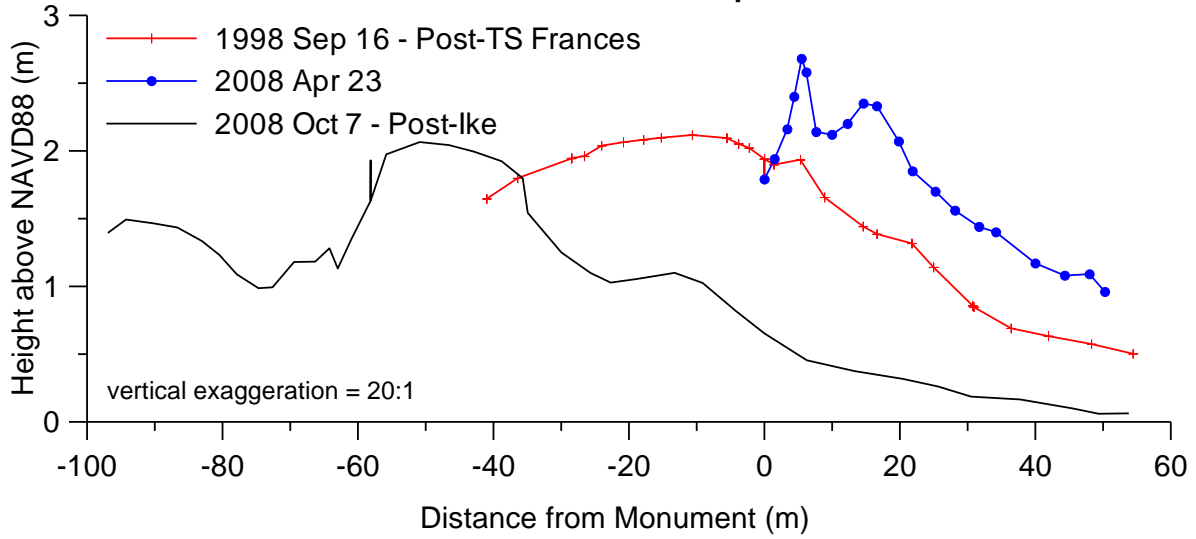
BEG02 (Galveston Island State Park)



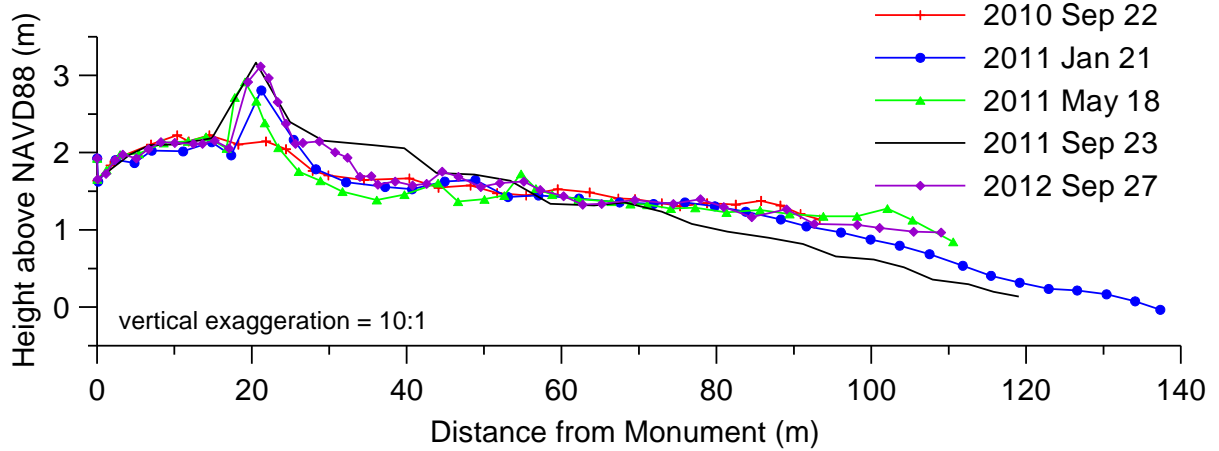
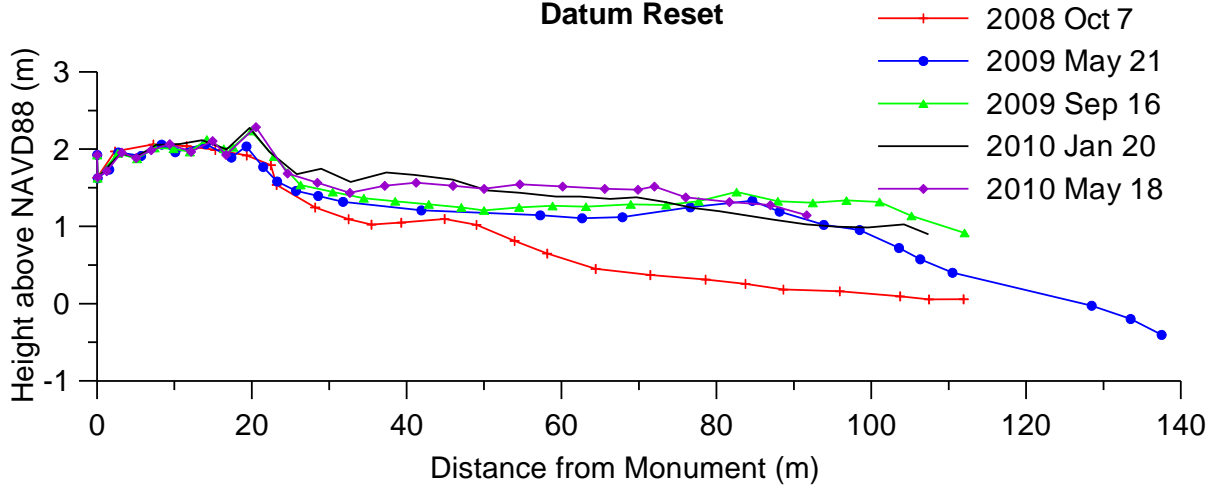




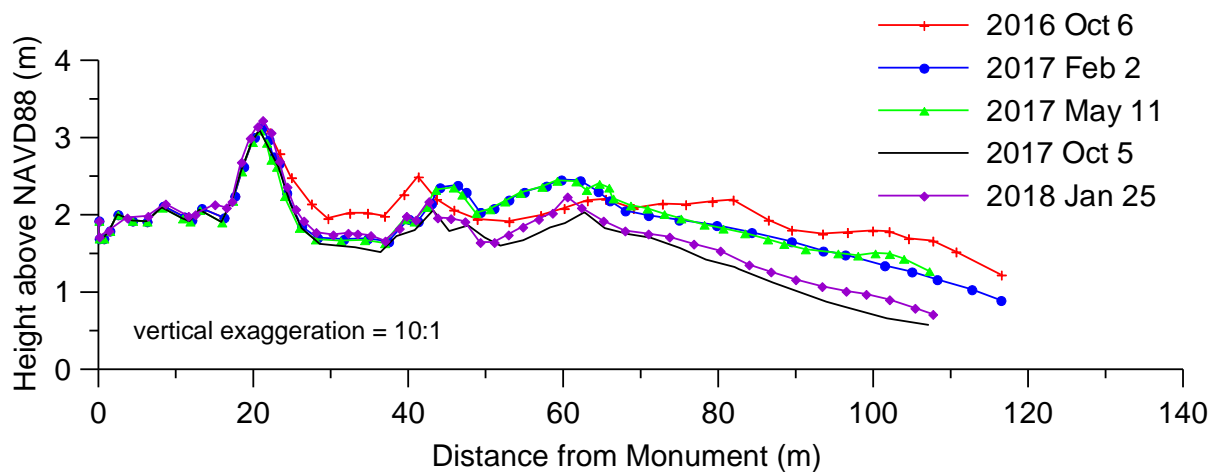
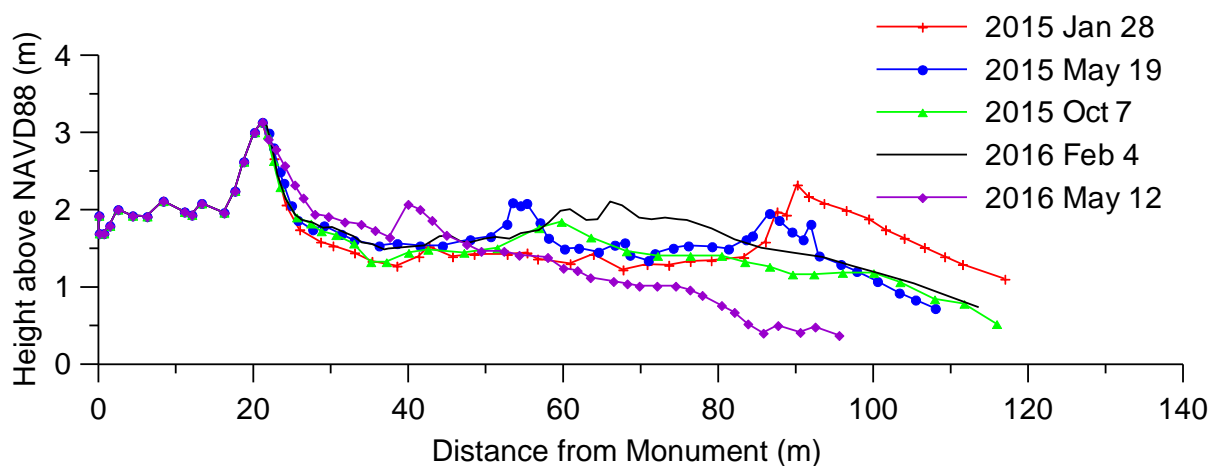
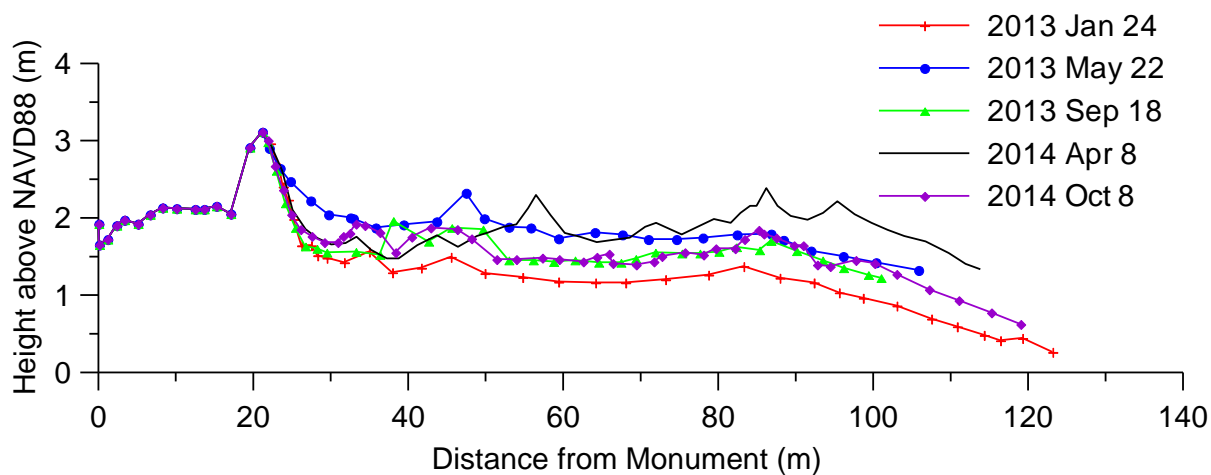
BEG02R **BEG02R (Galveston Island State Park)** **Pre- and Post-Ike Comparison**



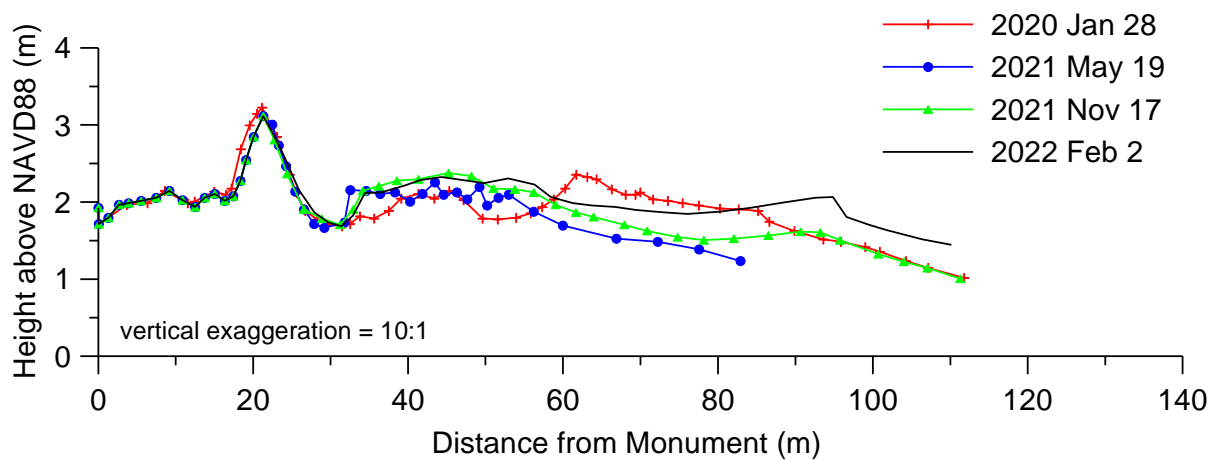
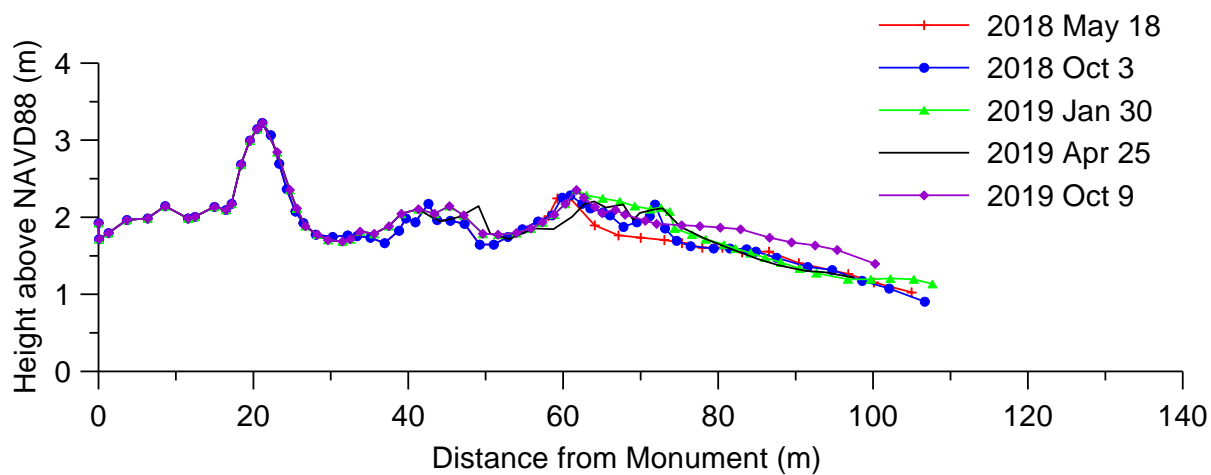
BEG02R (Galveston Island State Park) **Datum Reset**



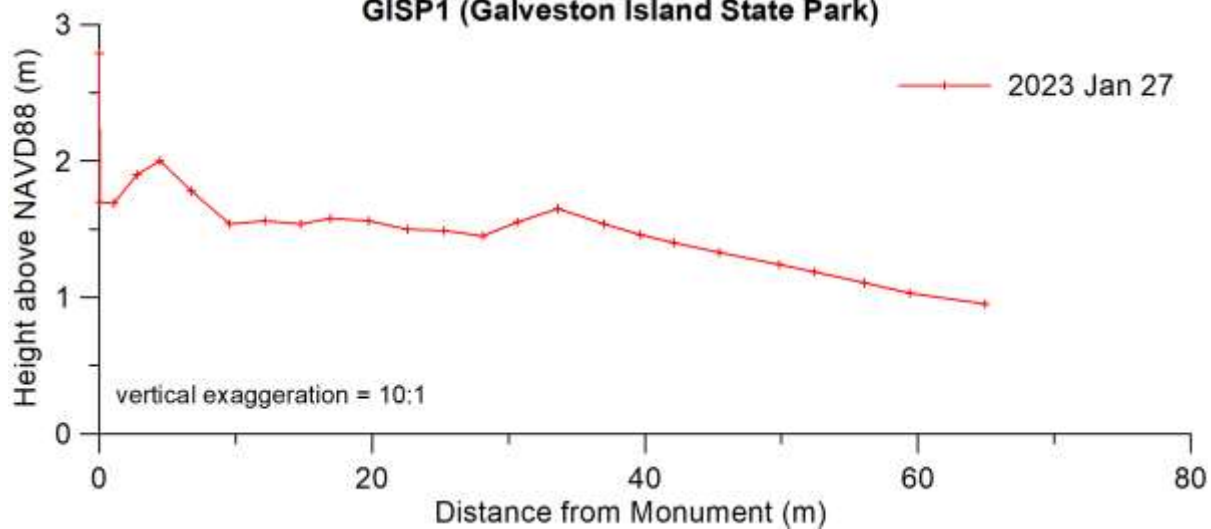
BEG02R (Galveston Island State Park) Datum Reset

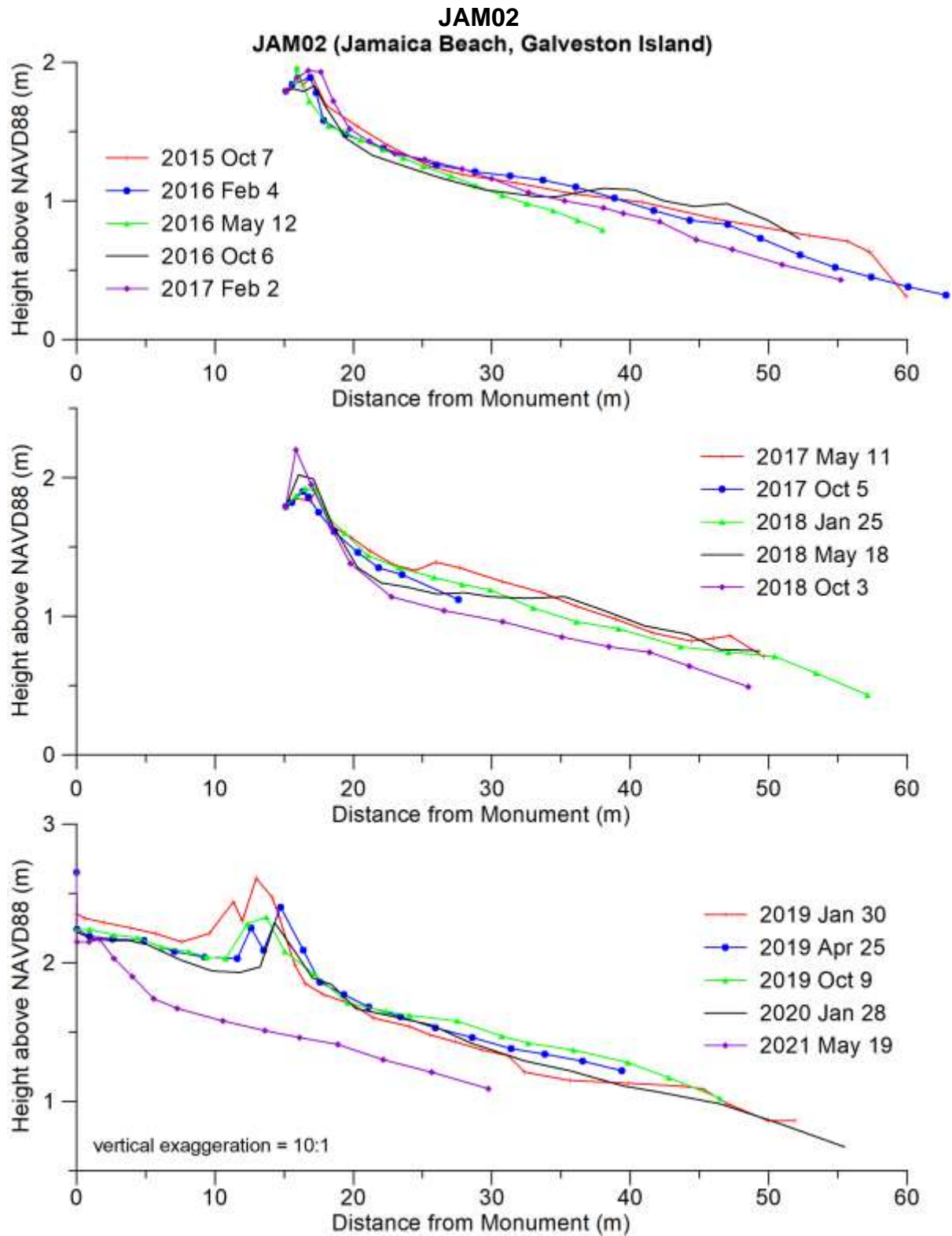


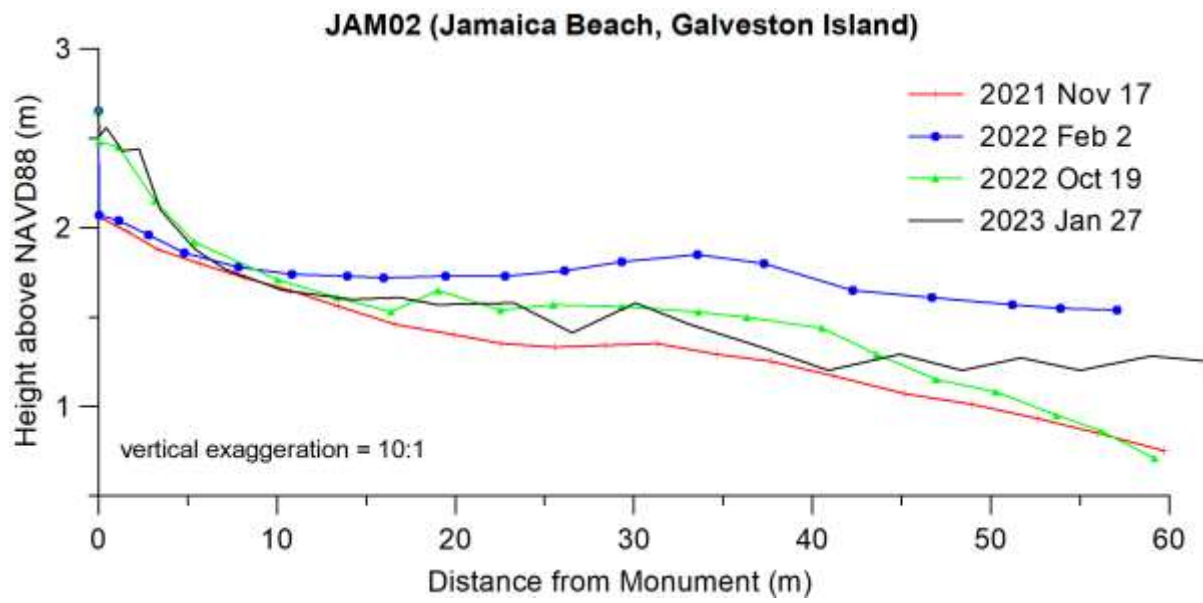
BEG02R (Galveston Island State Park) Datum Reset

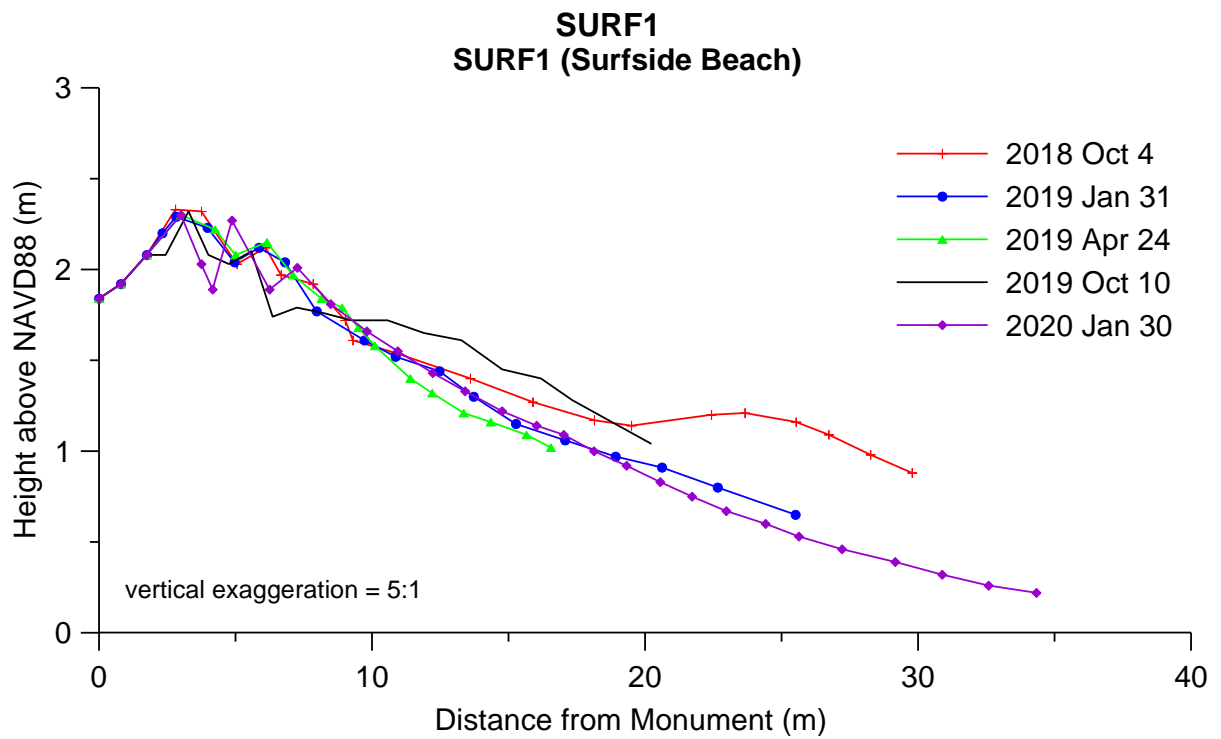
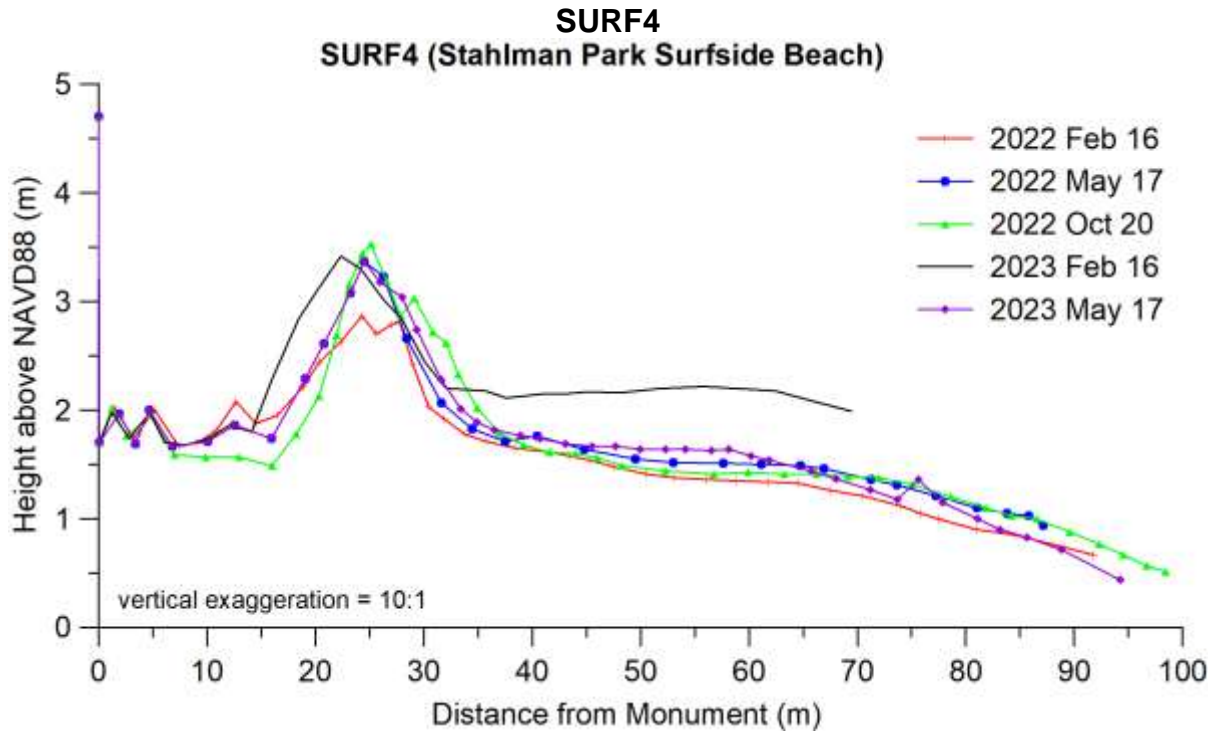


GISP1 GISP1 (Galveston Island State Park)

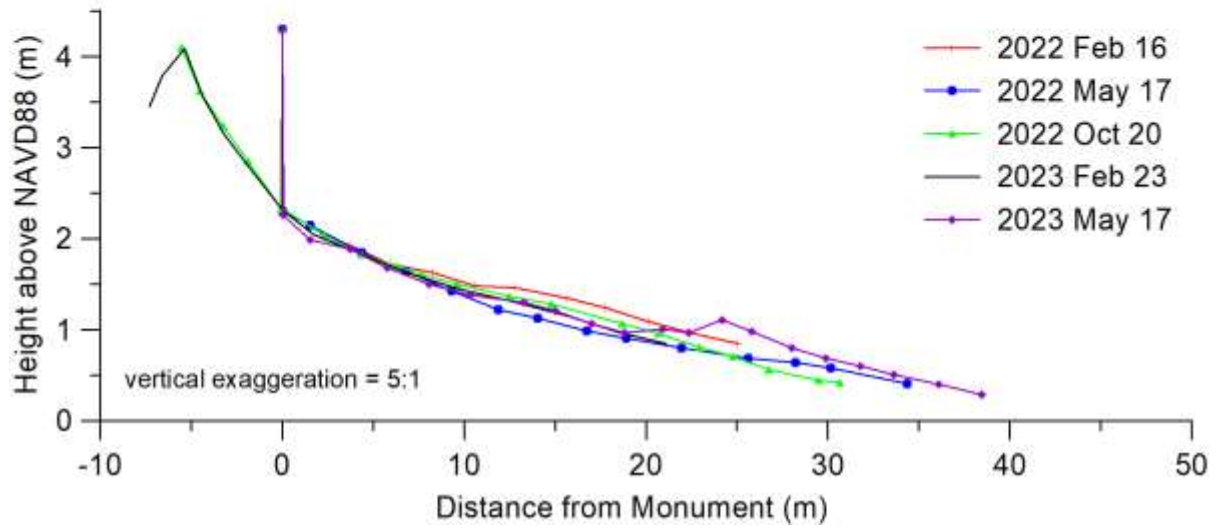
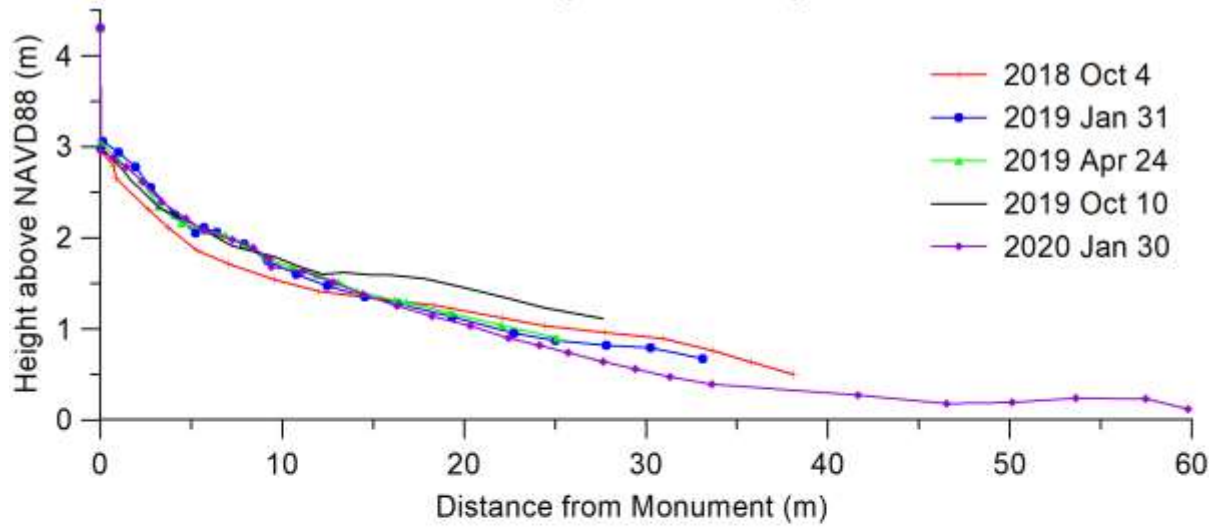




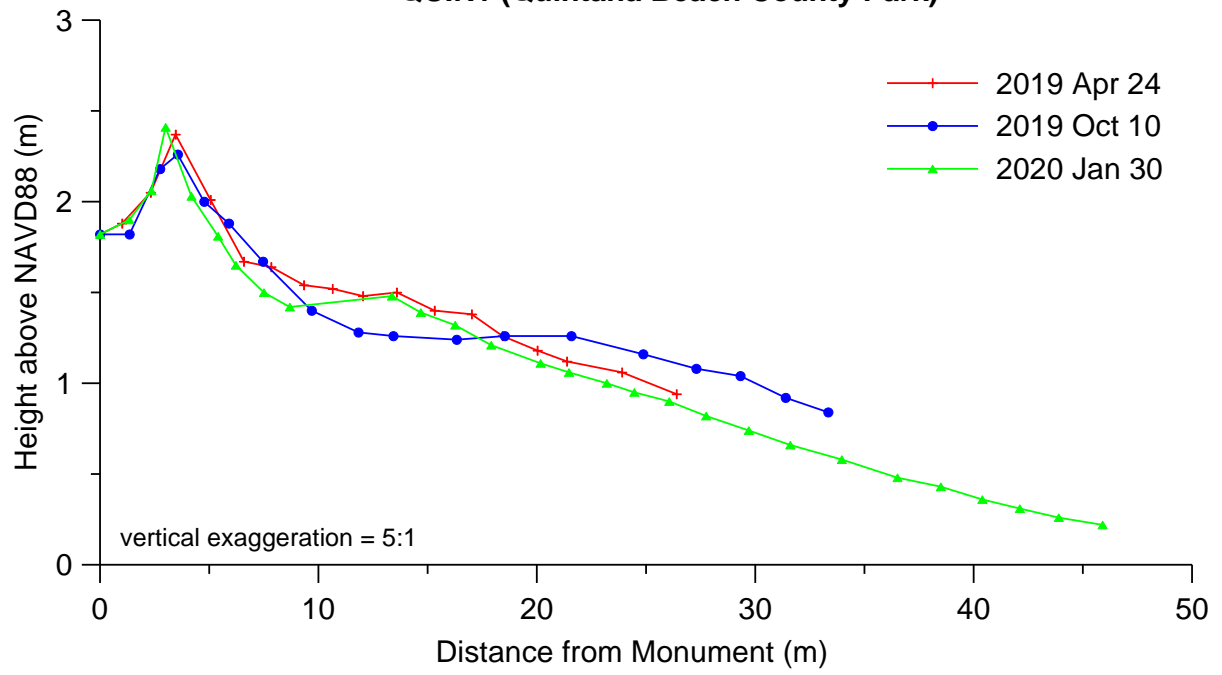




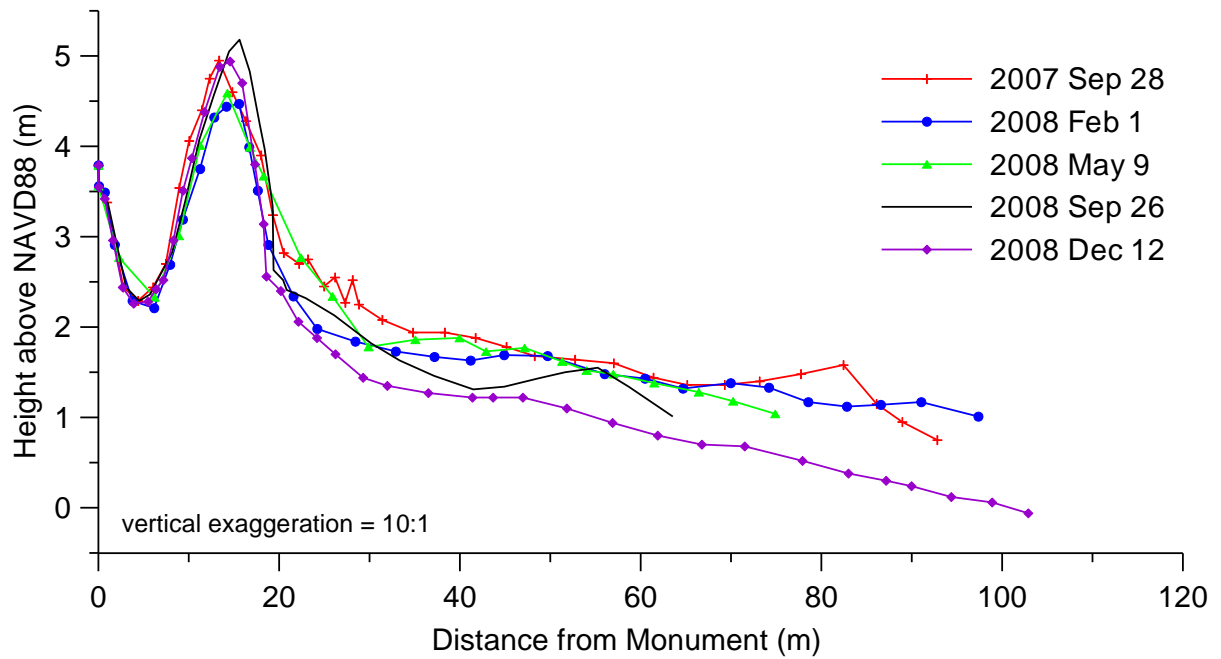
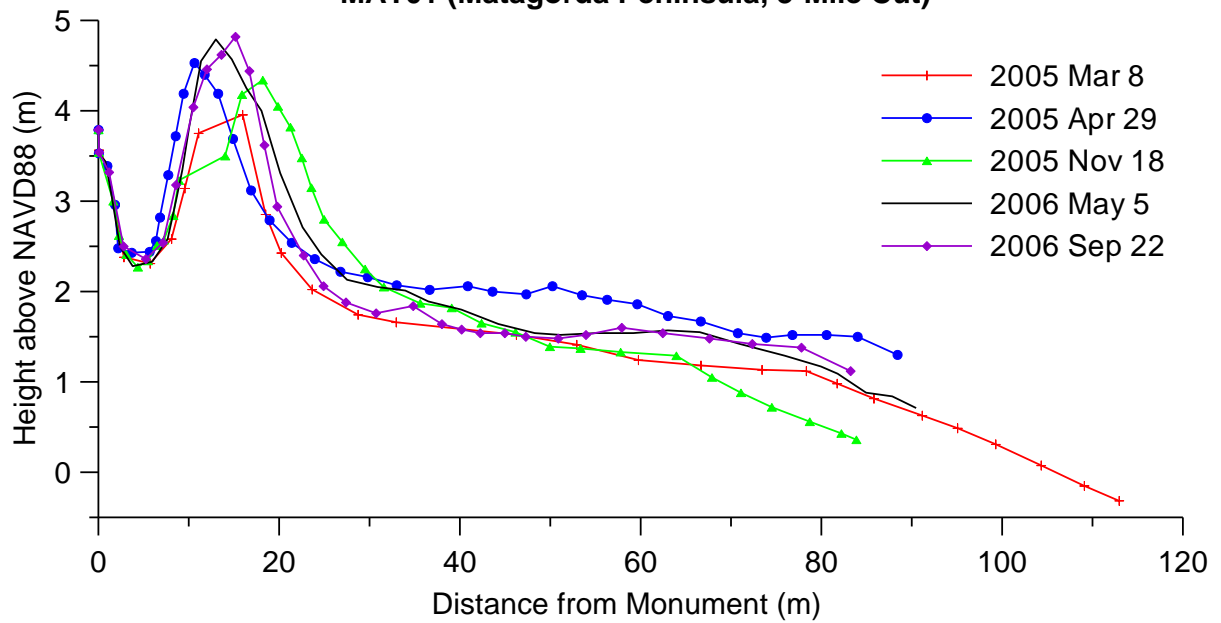
SURF2 **SURF2 (Surfside Beach)**



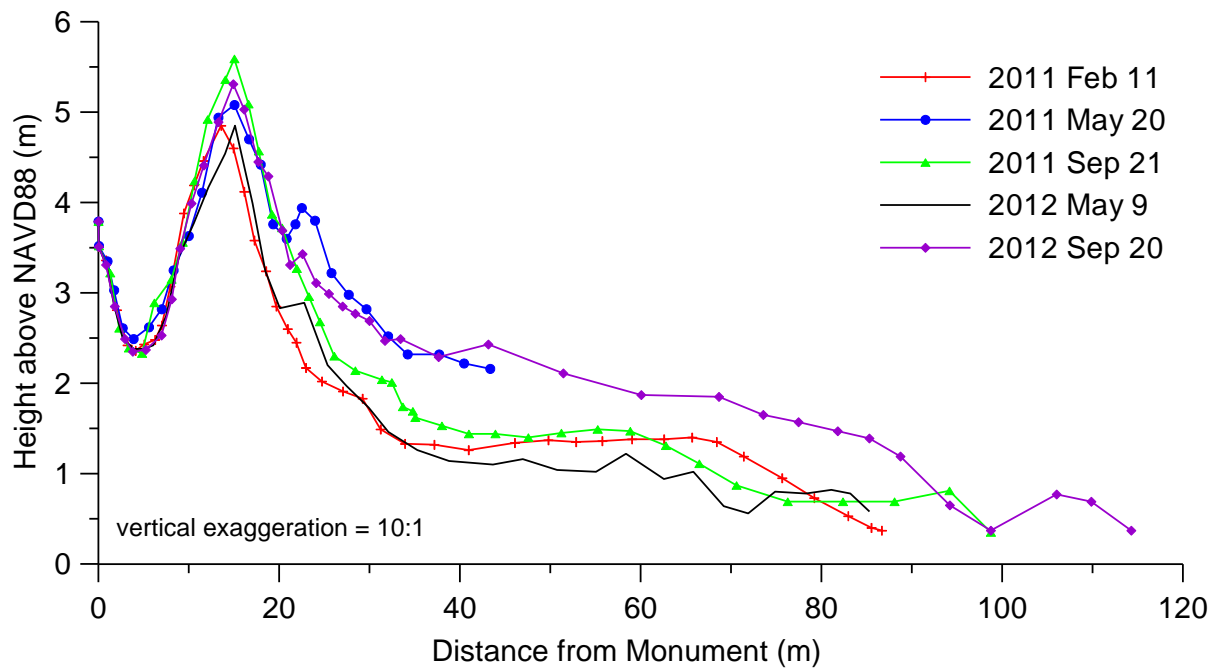
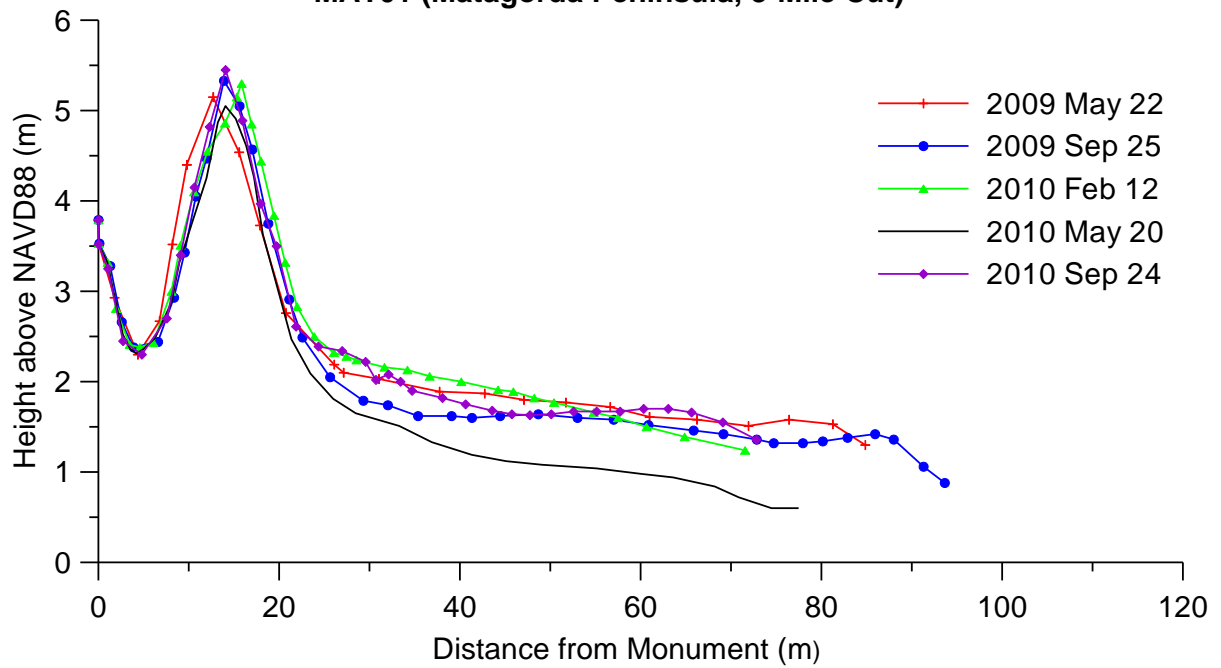
QUIN1
QUIN1 (Quintana Beach County Park)



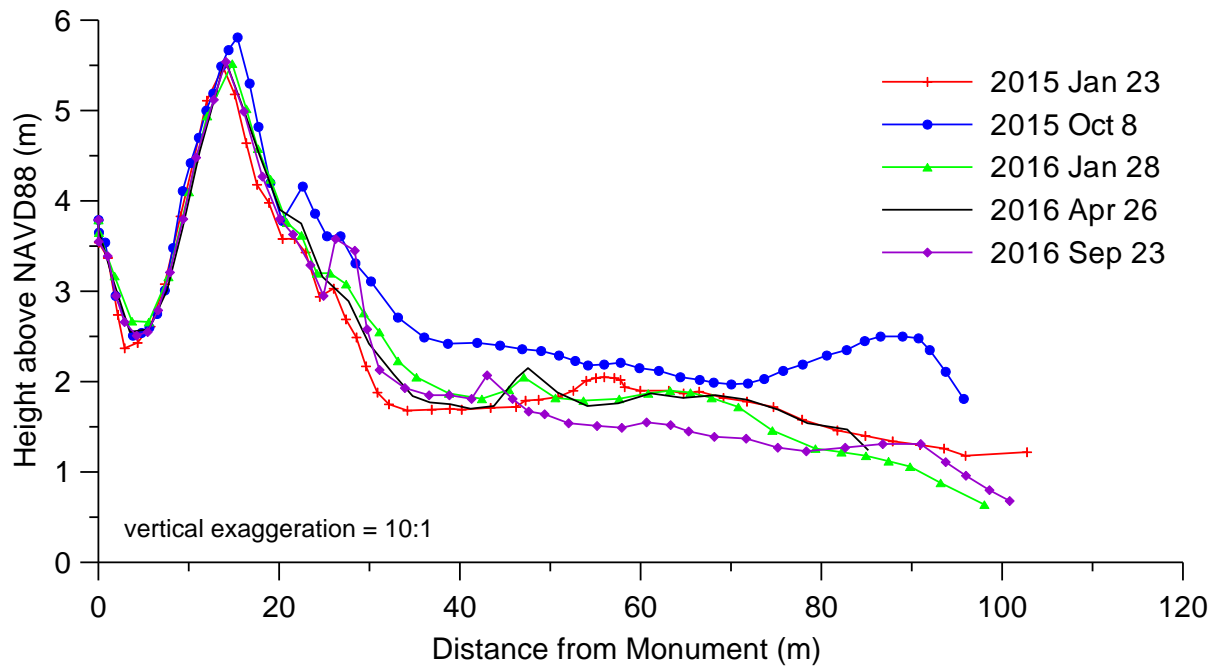
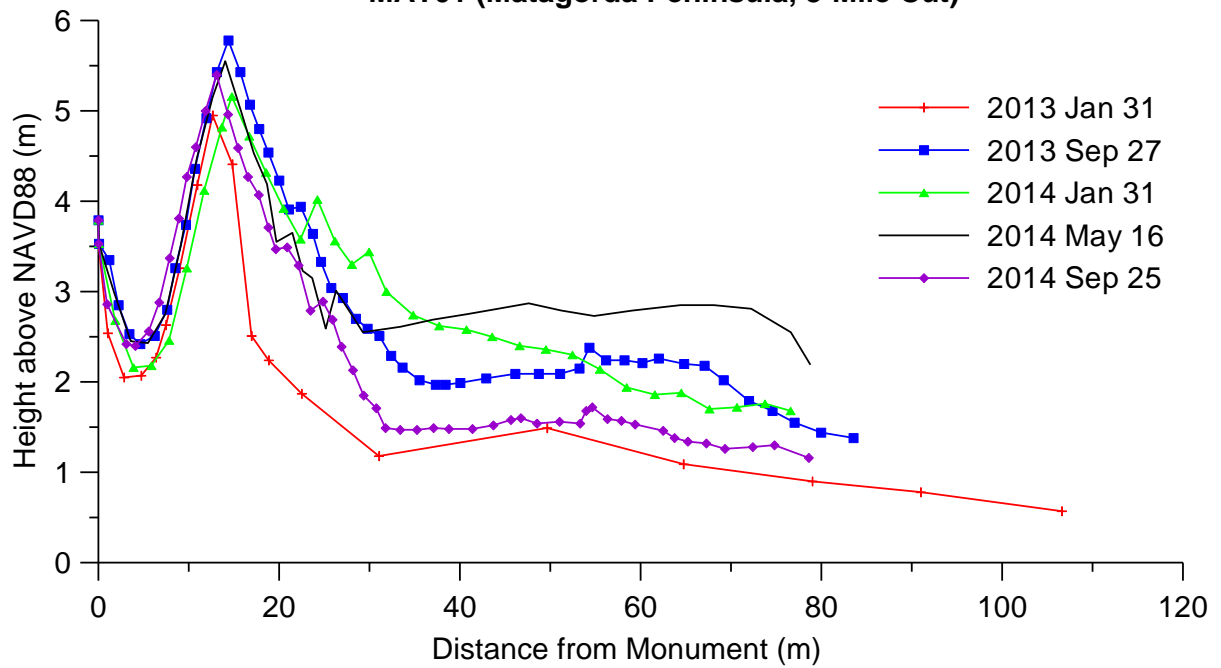
MAT01 **MAT01 (Matagorda Peninsula, 3-Mile Cut)**



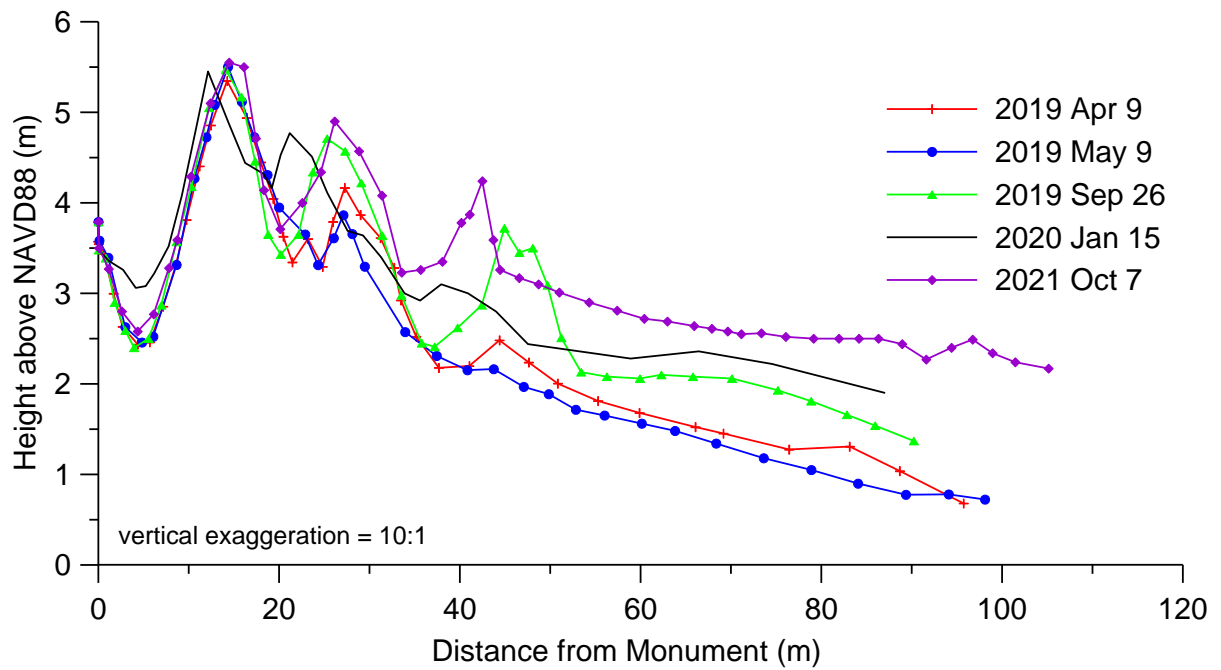
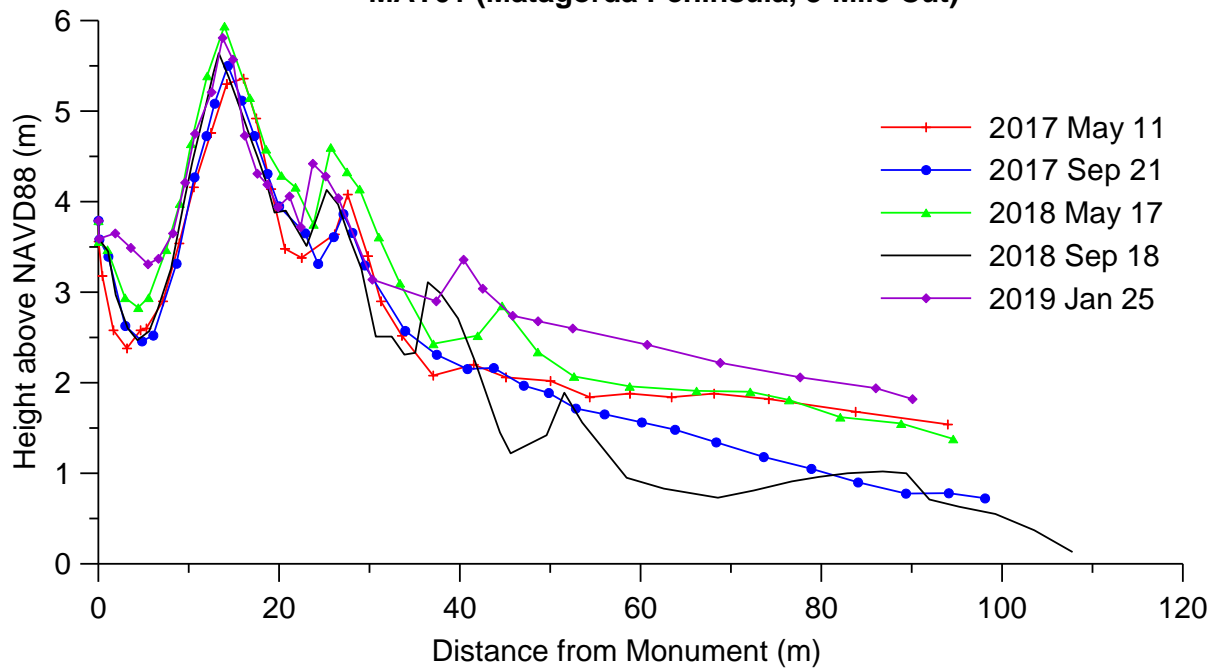
MAT01 (Matagorda Peninsula, 3-Mile Cut)

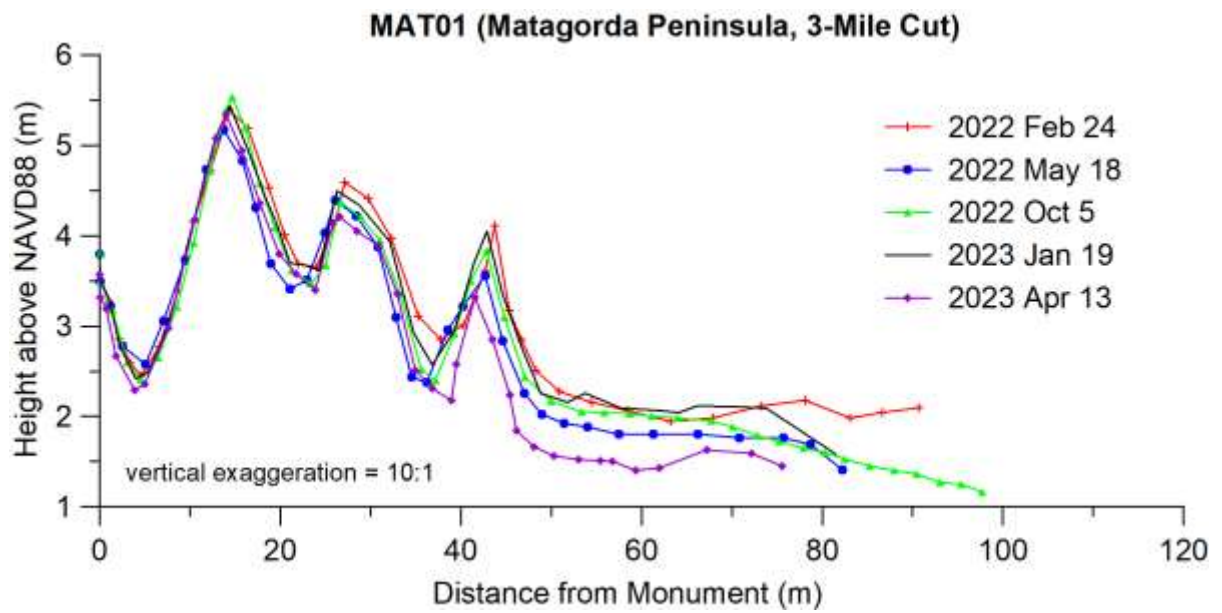


MAT01 (Matagorda Peninsula, 3-Mile Cut)

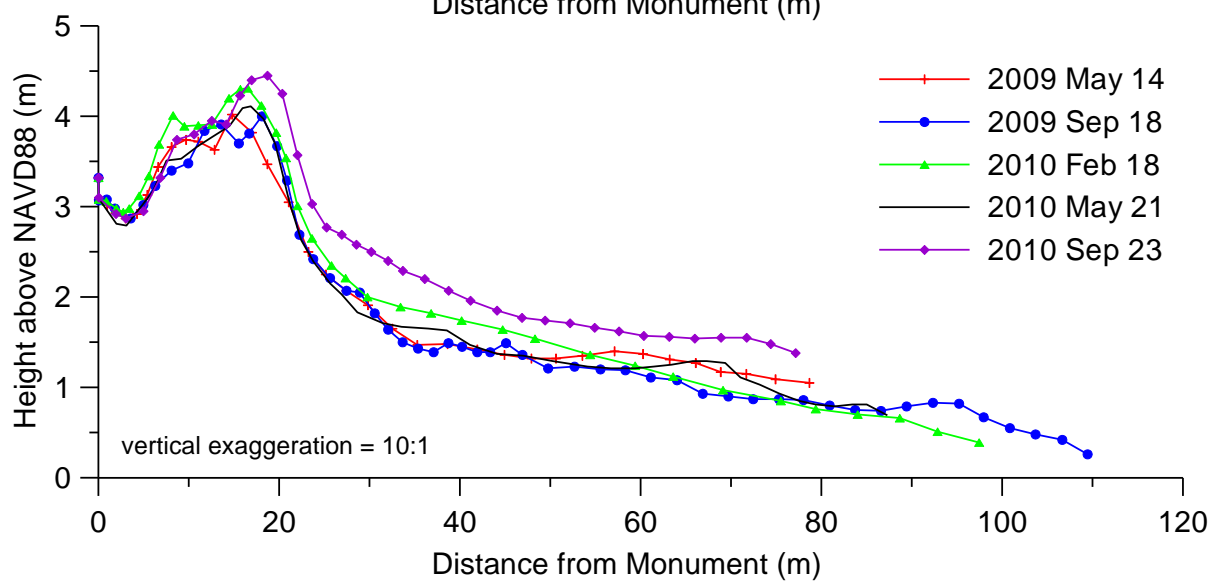
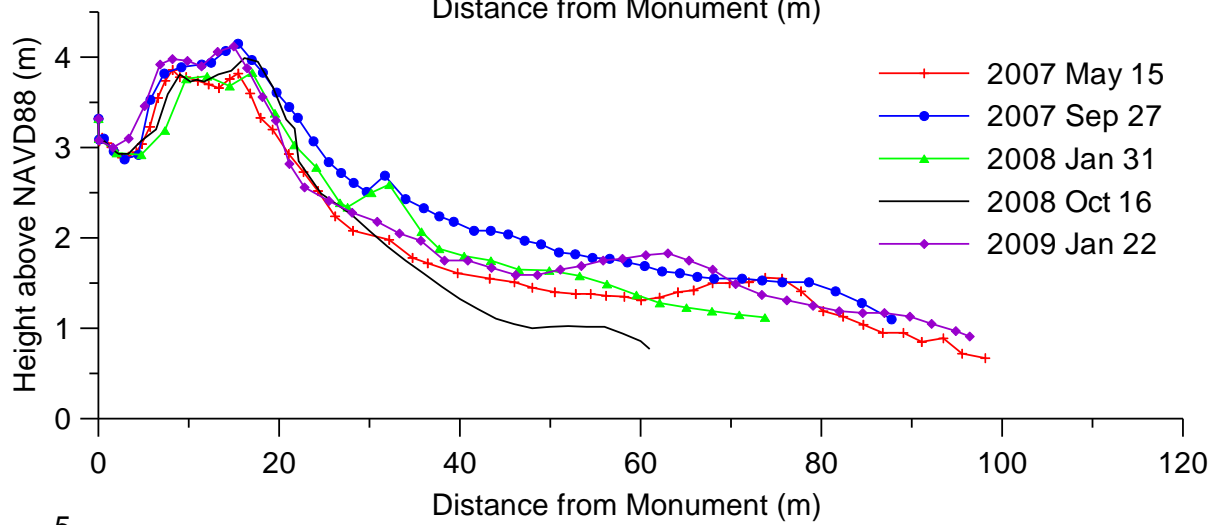
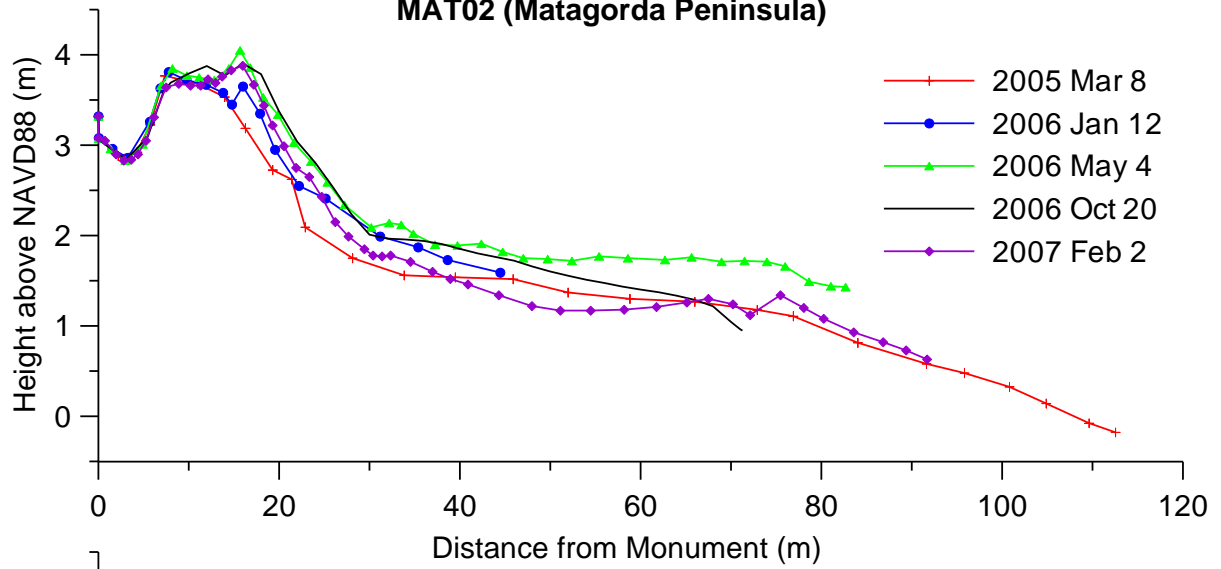


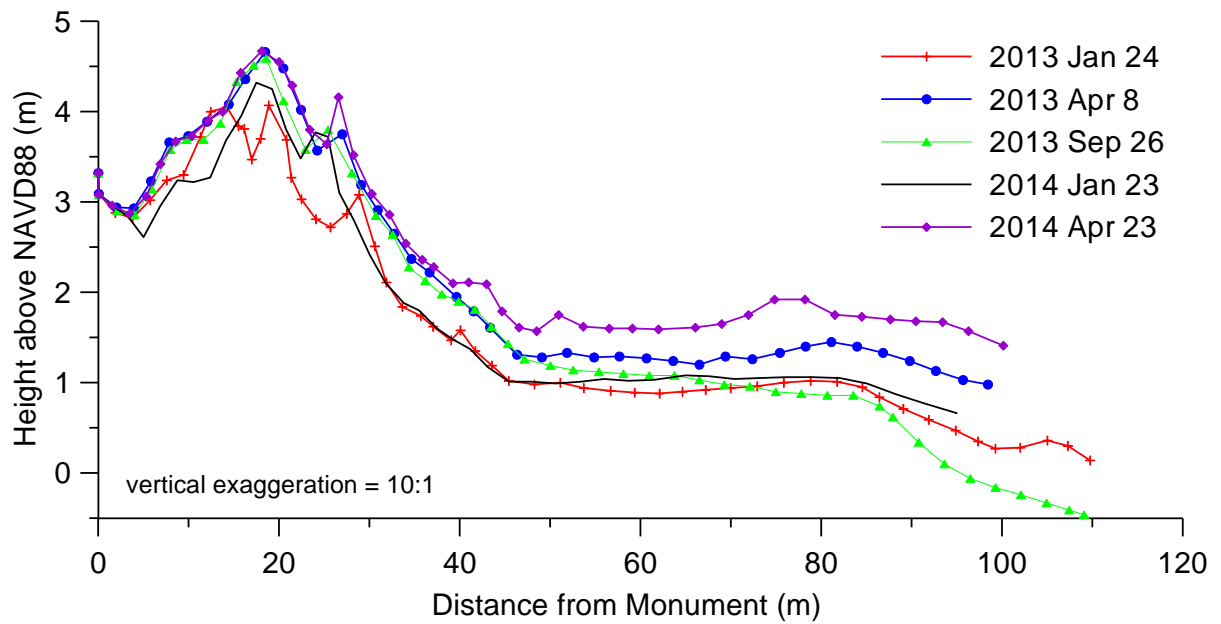
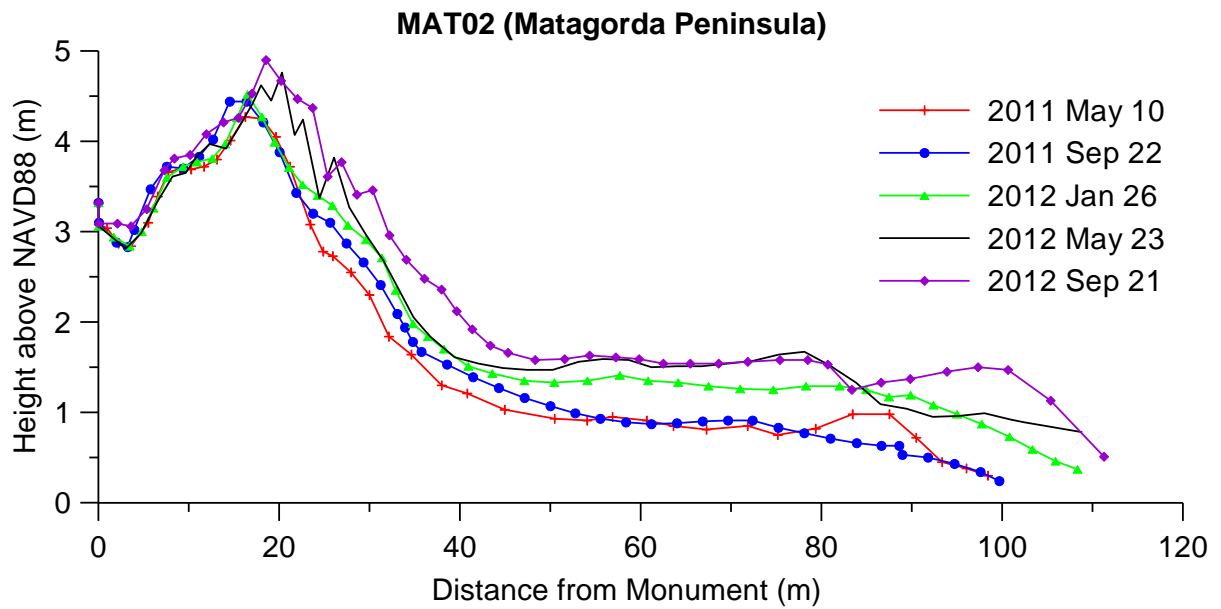
MAT01 (Matagorda Peninsula, 3-Mile Cut)

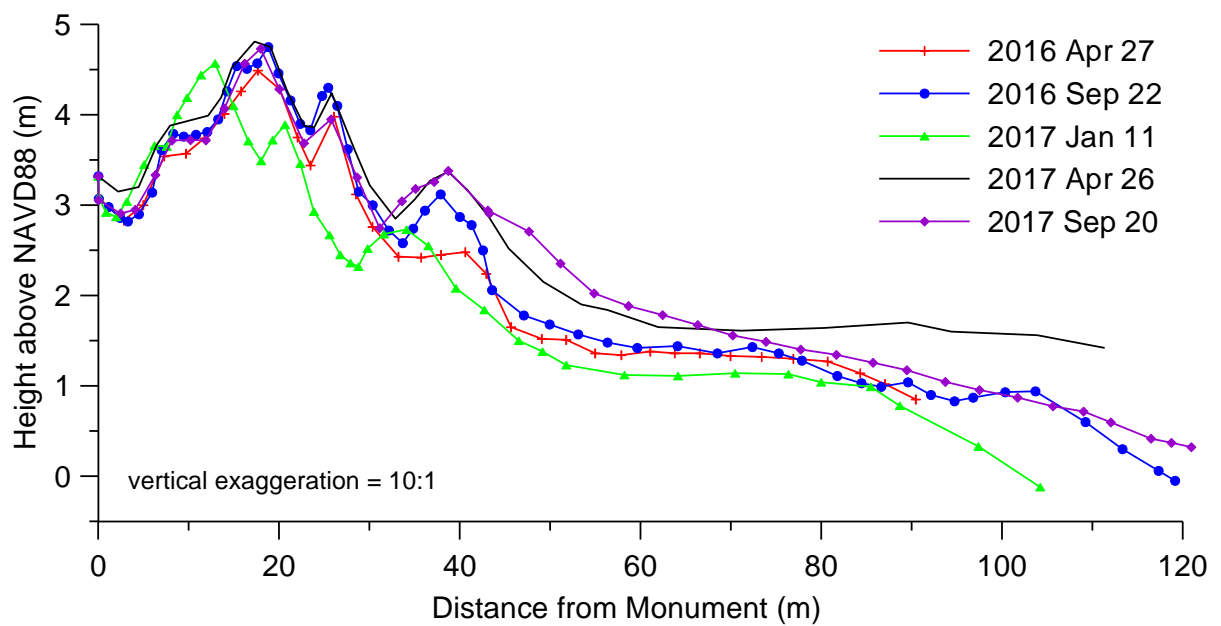
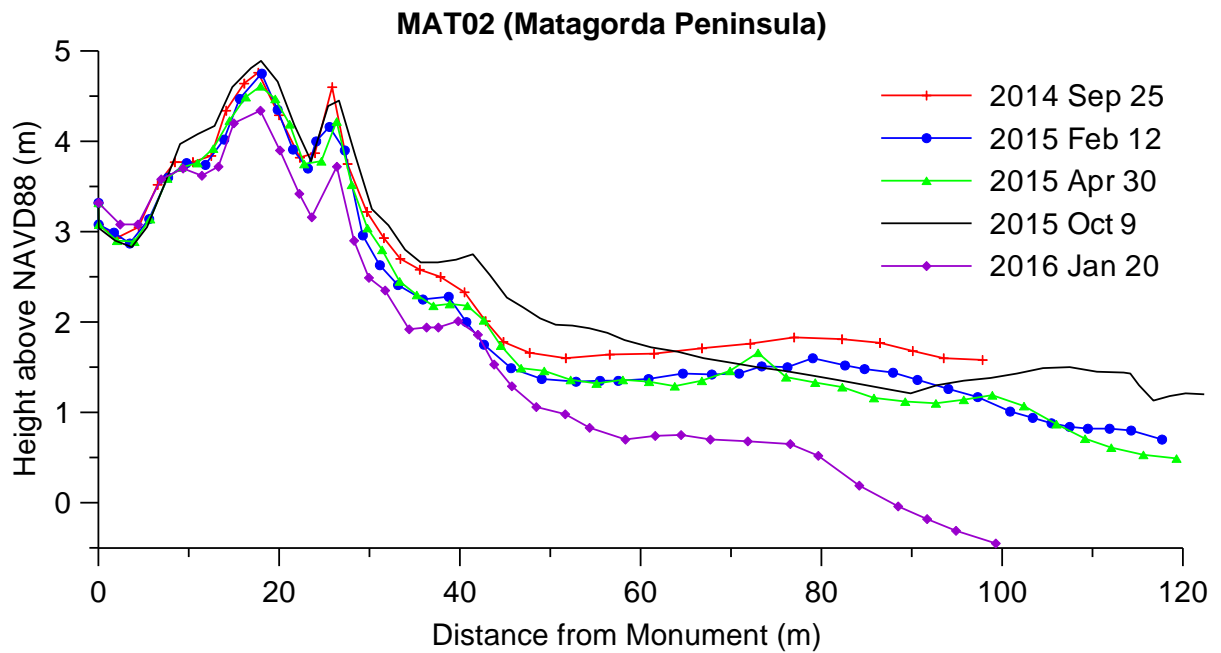


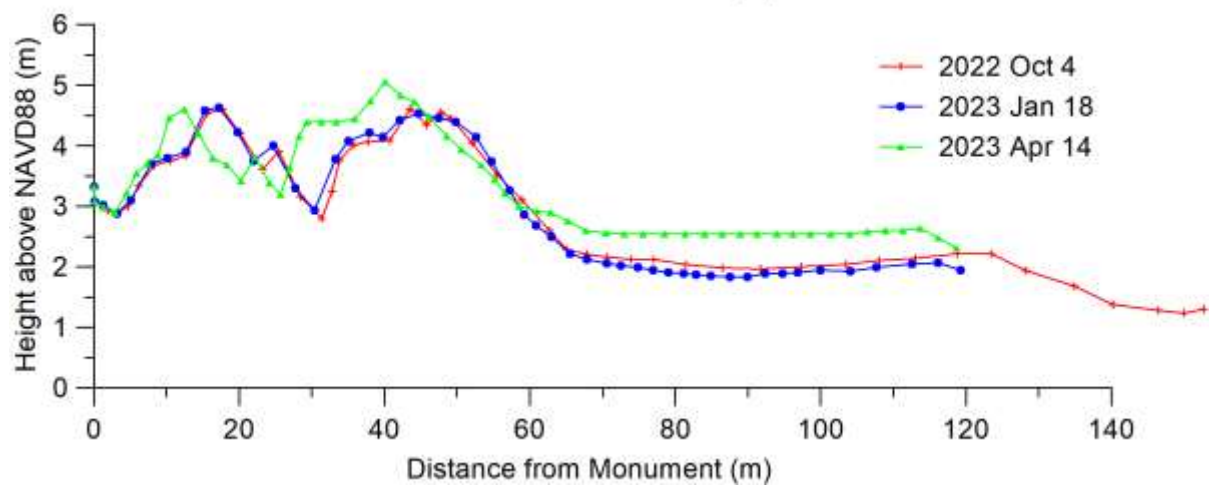
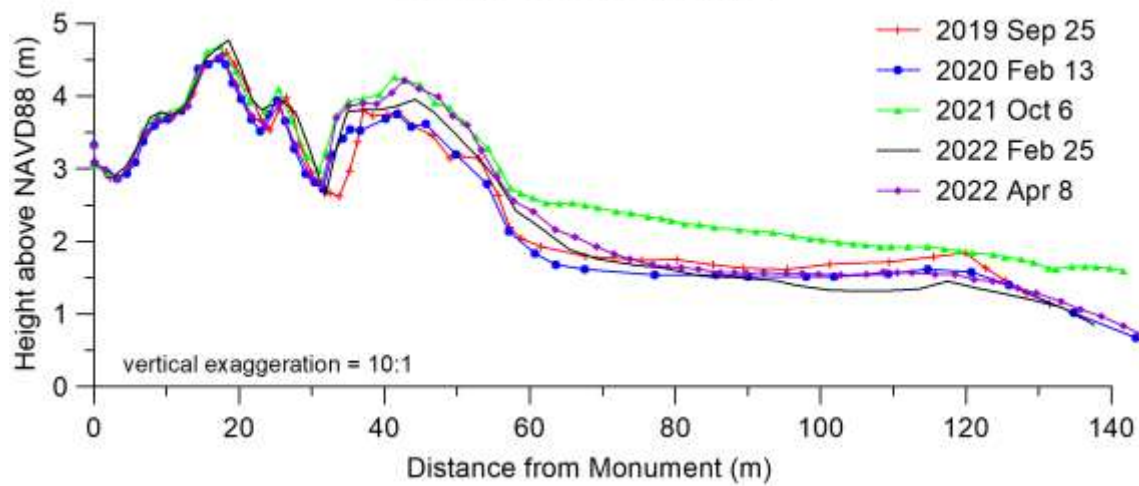
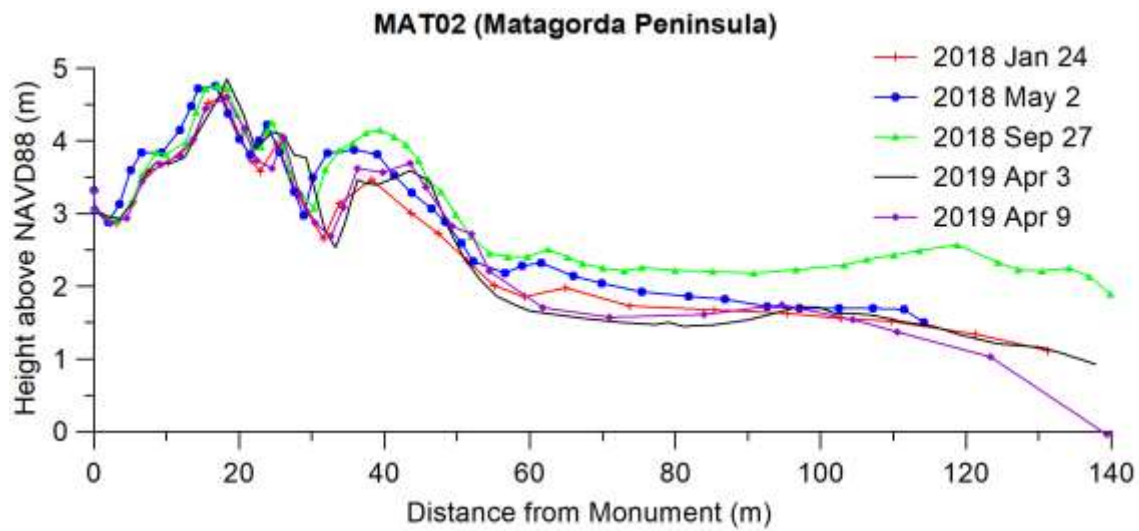


MAT02 **MAT02 (Matagorda Peninsula)**

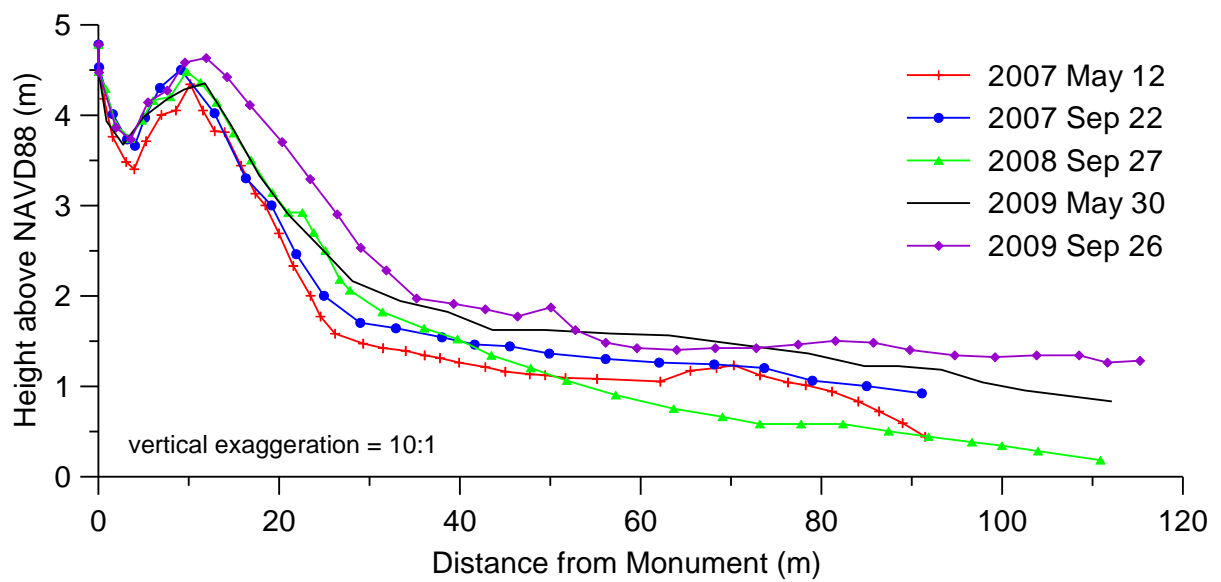
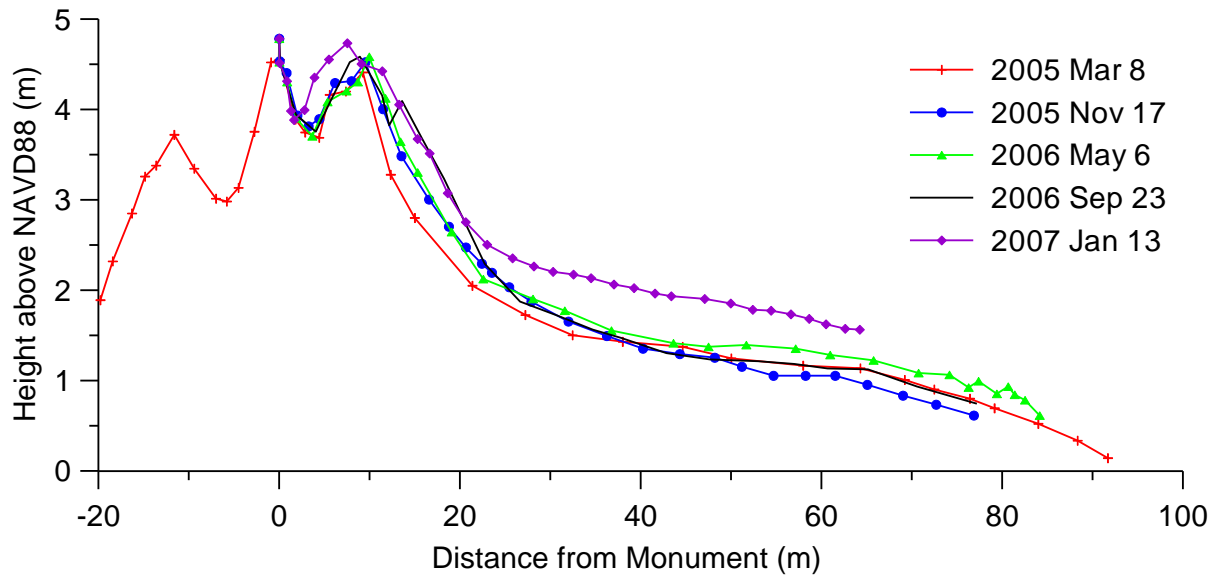




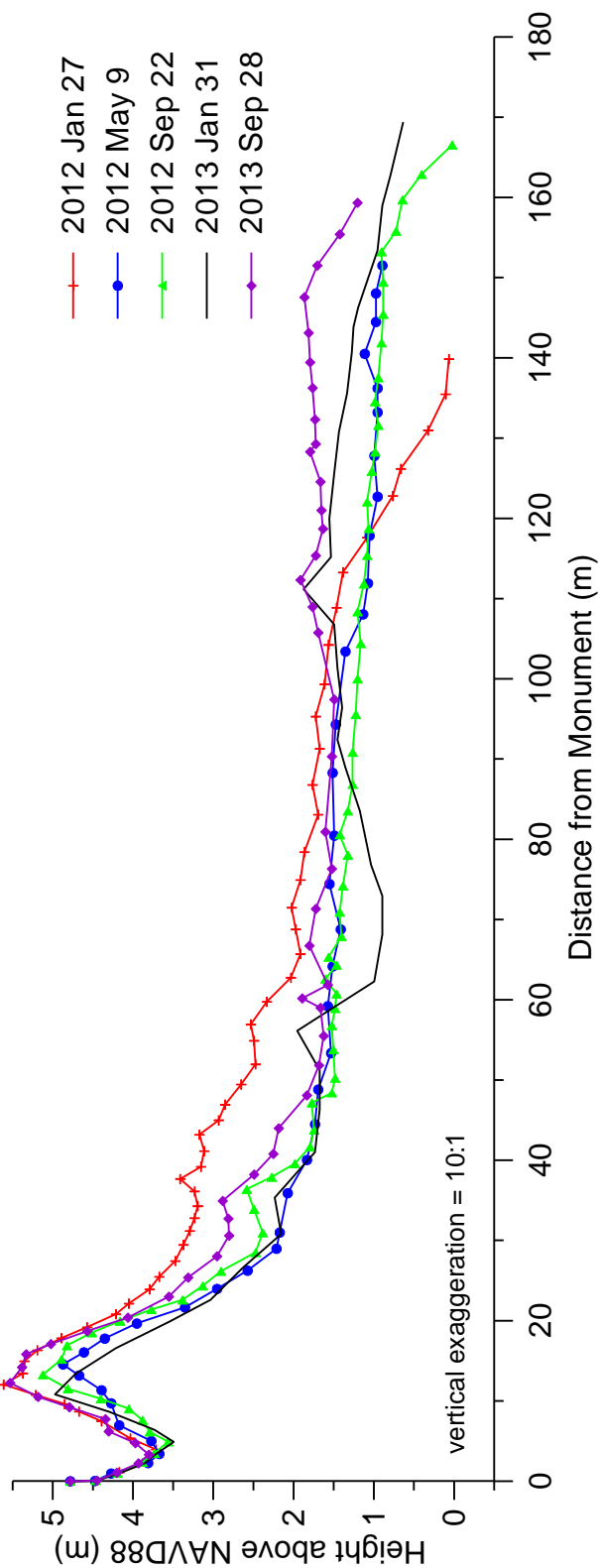
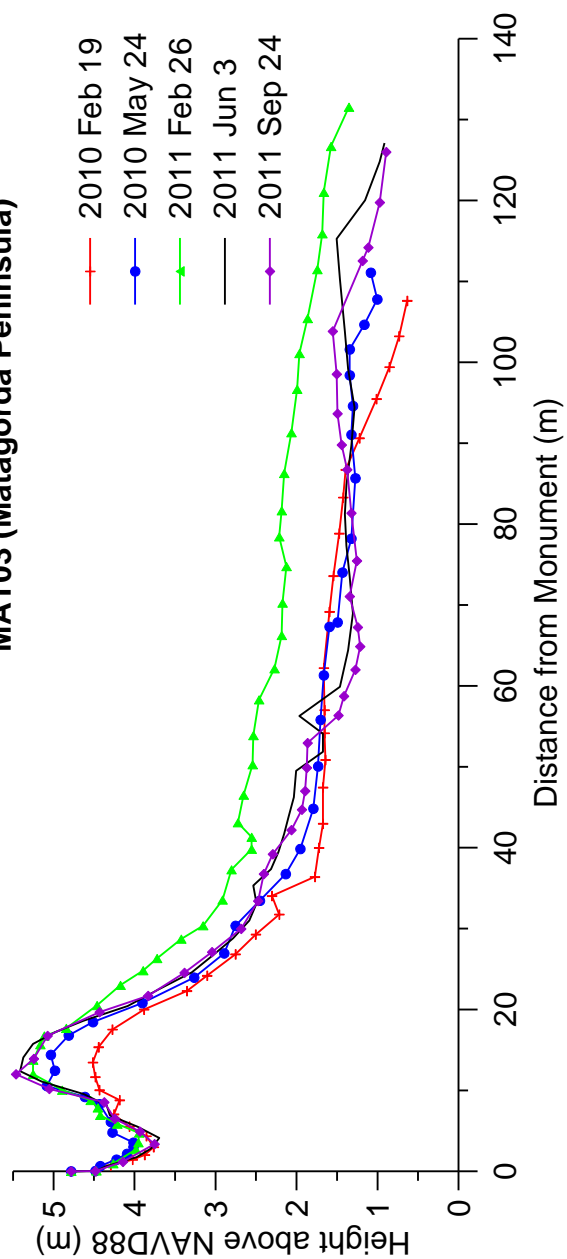




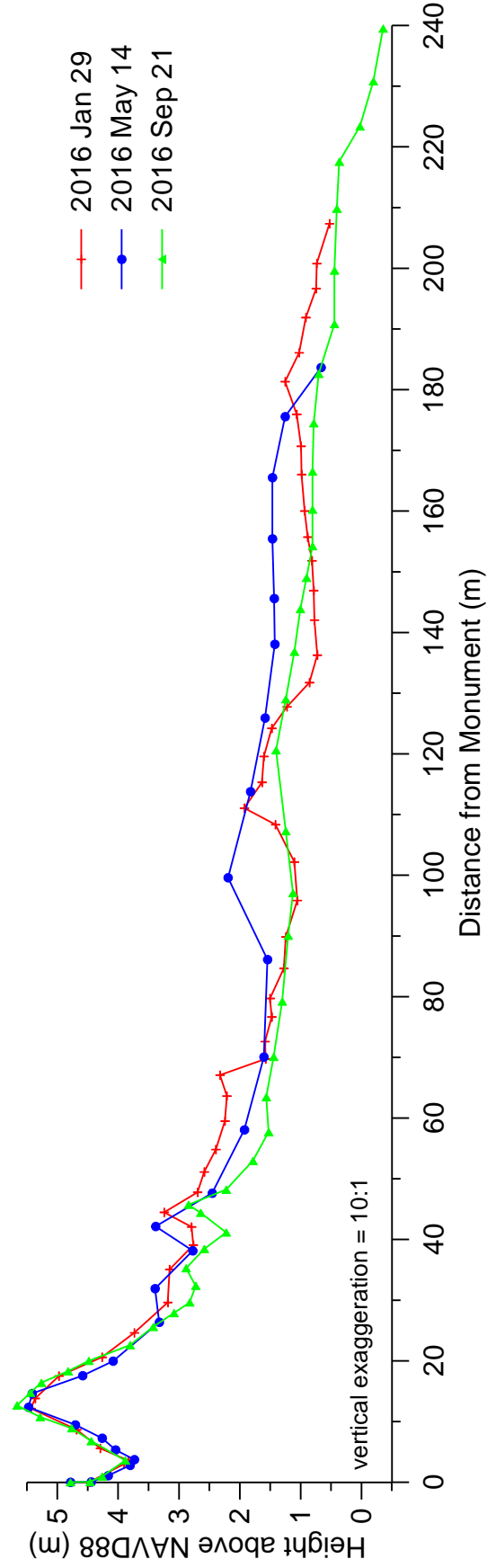
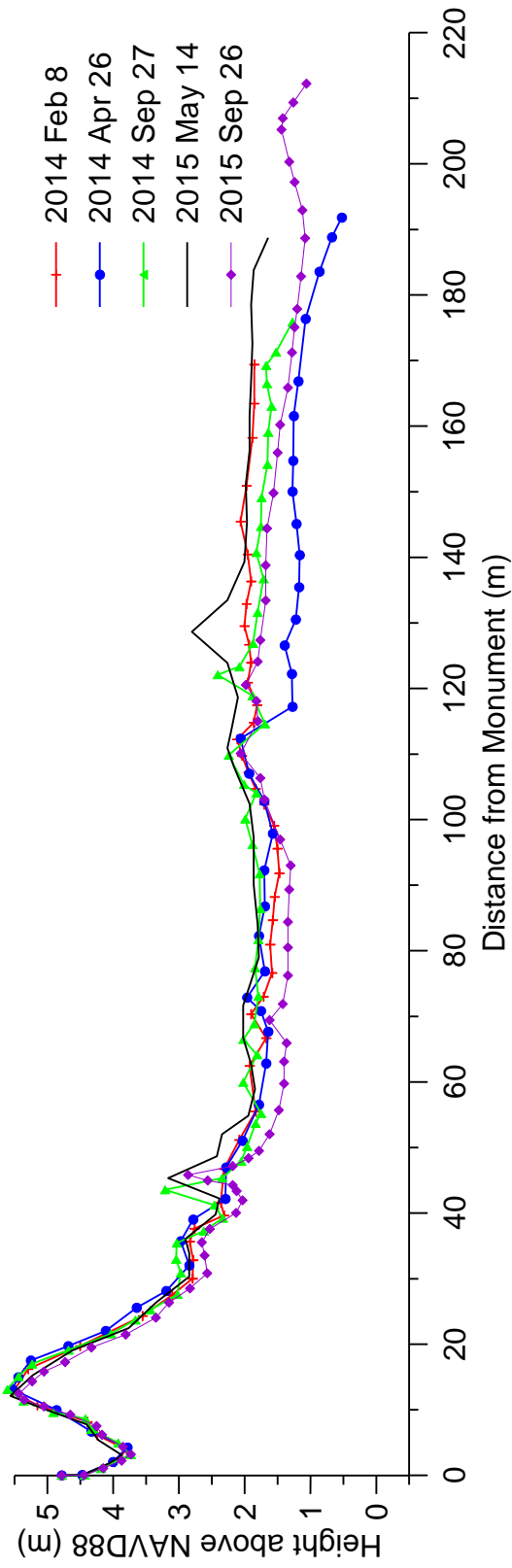
MAT03 **MAT03 (Matagorda Peninsula)**

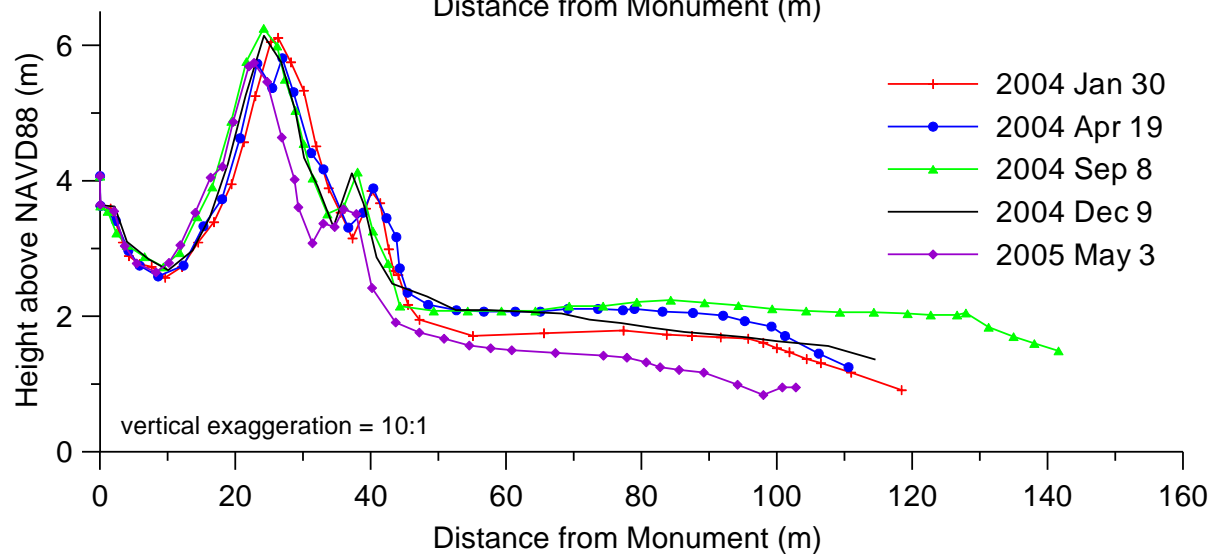
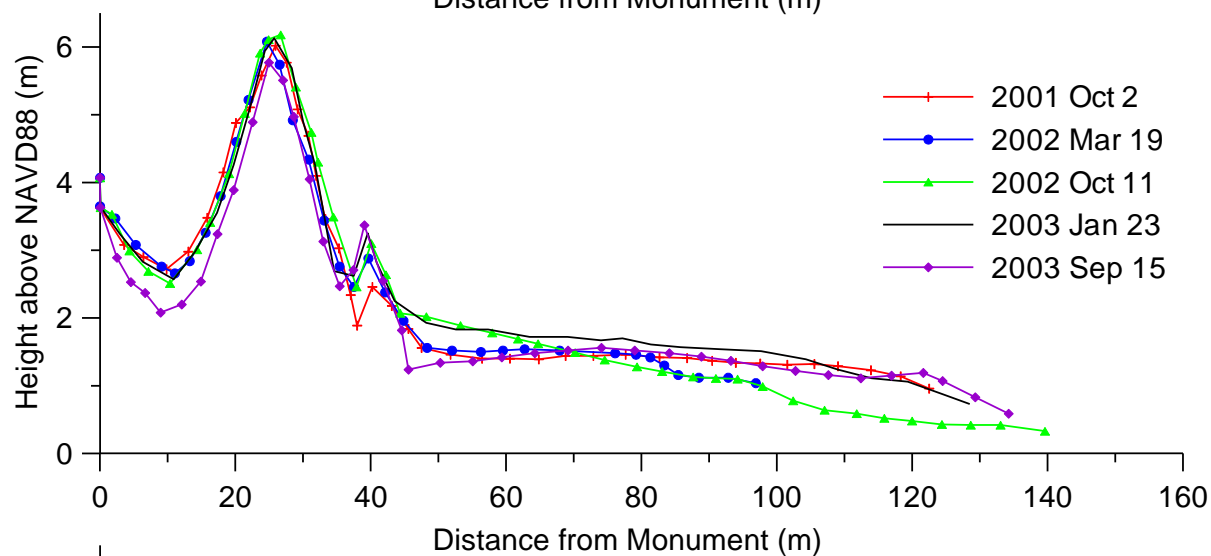
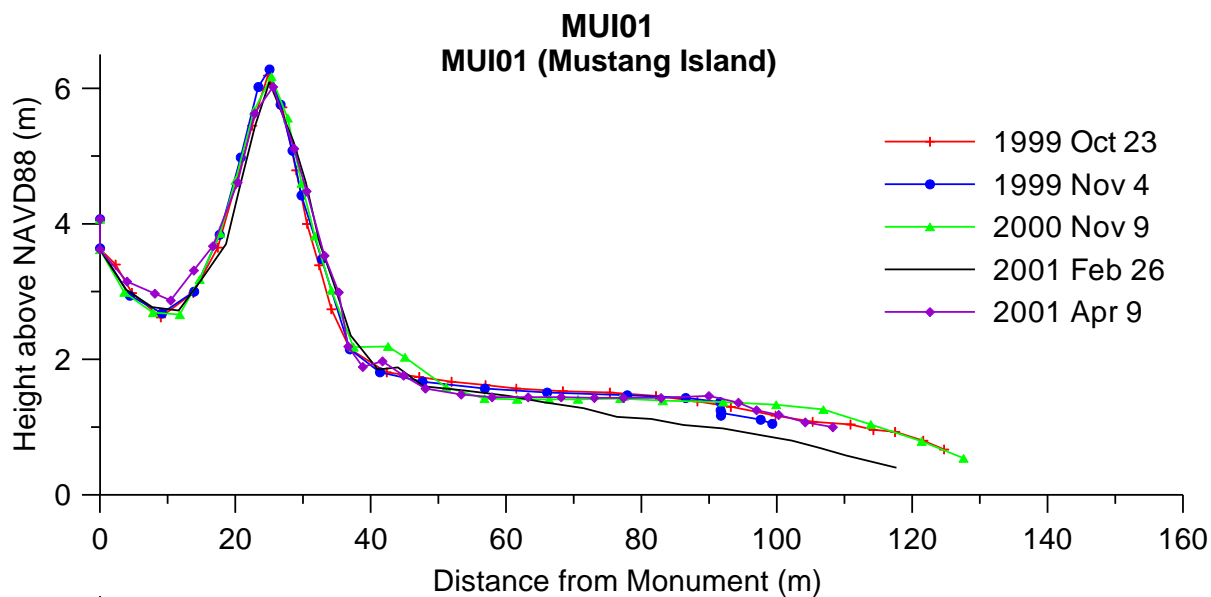


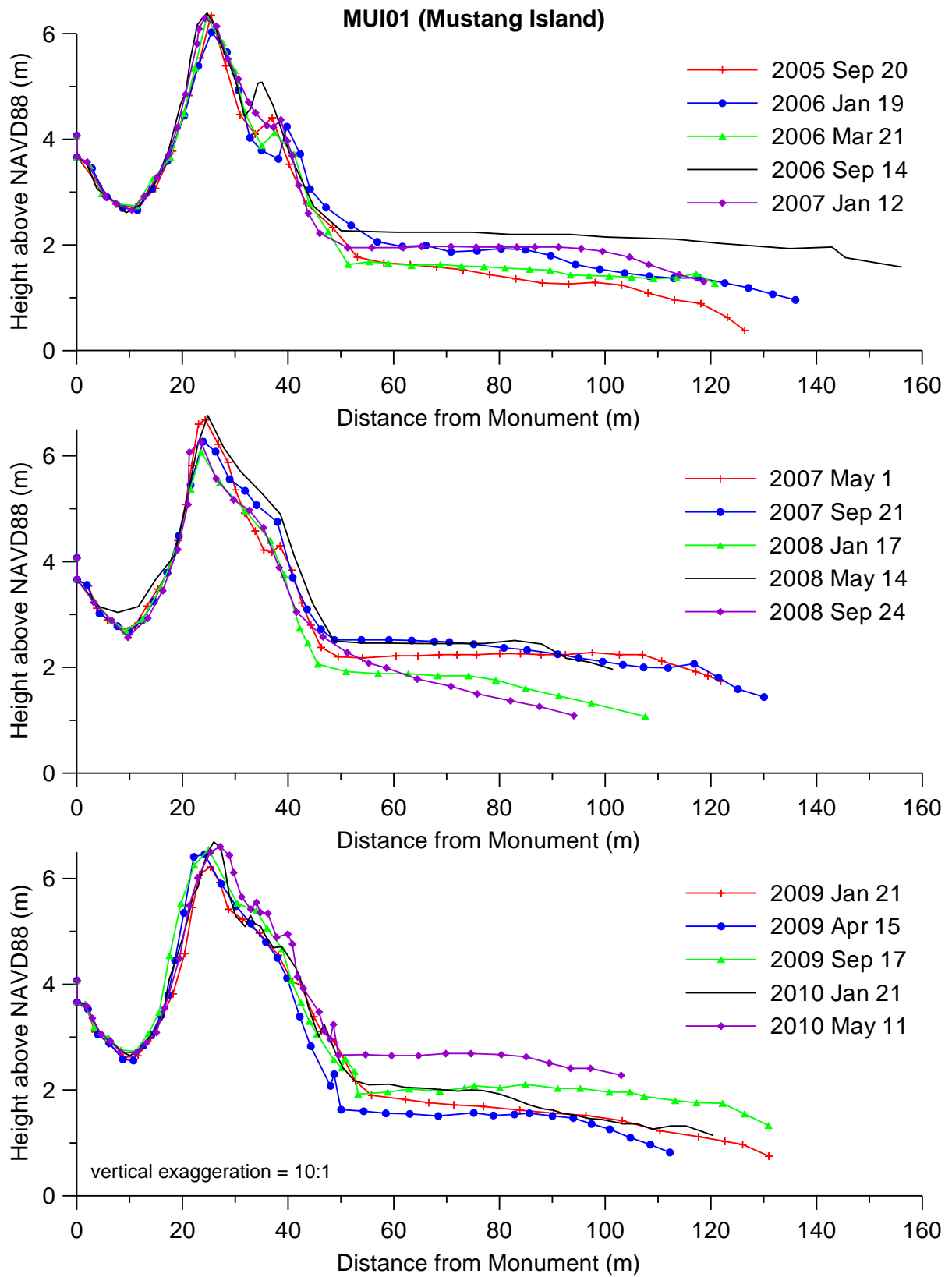
MAT03 (Matagorda Peninsula)

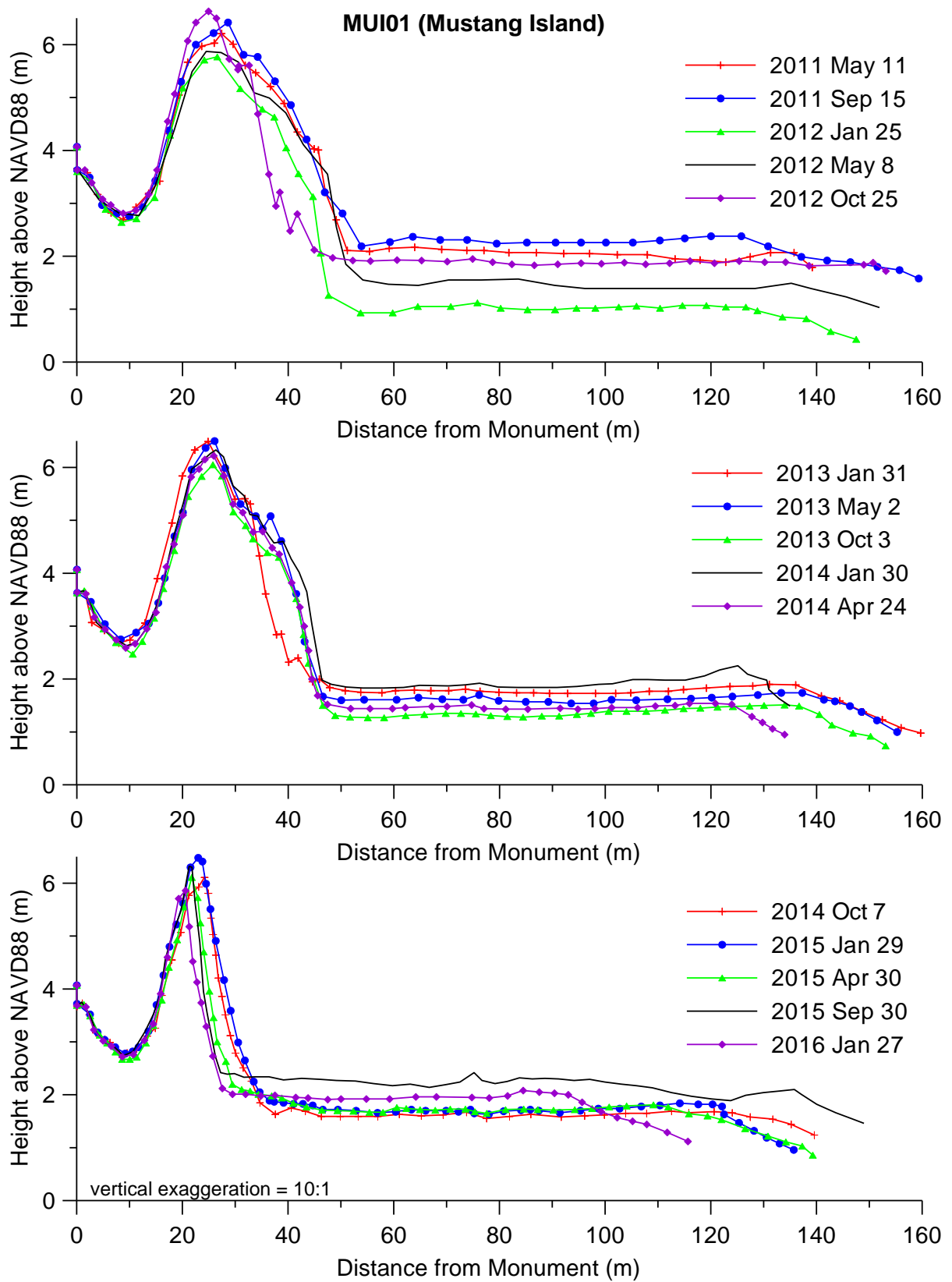


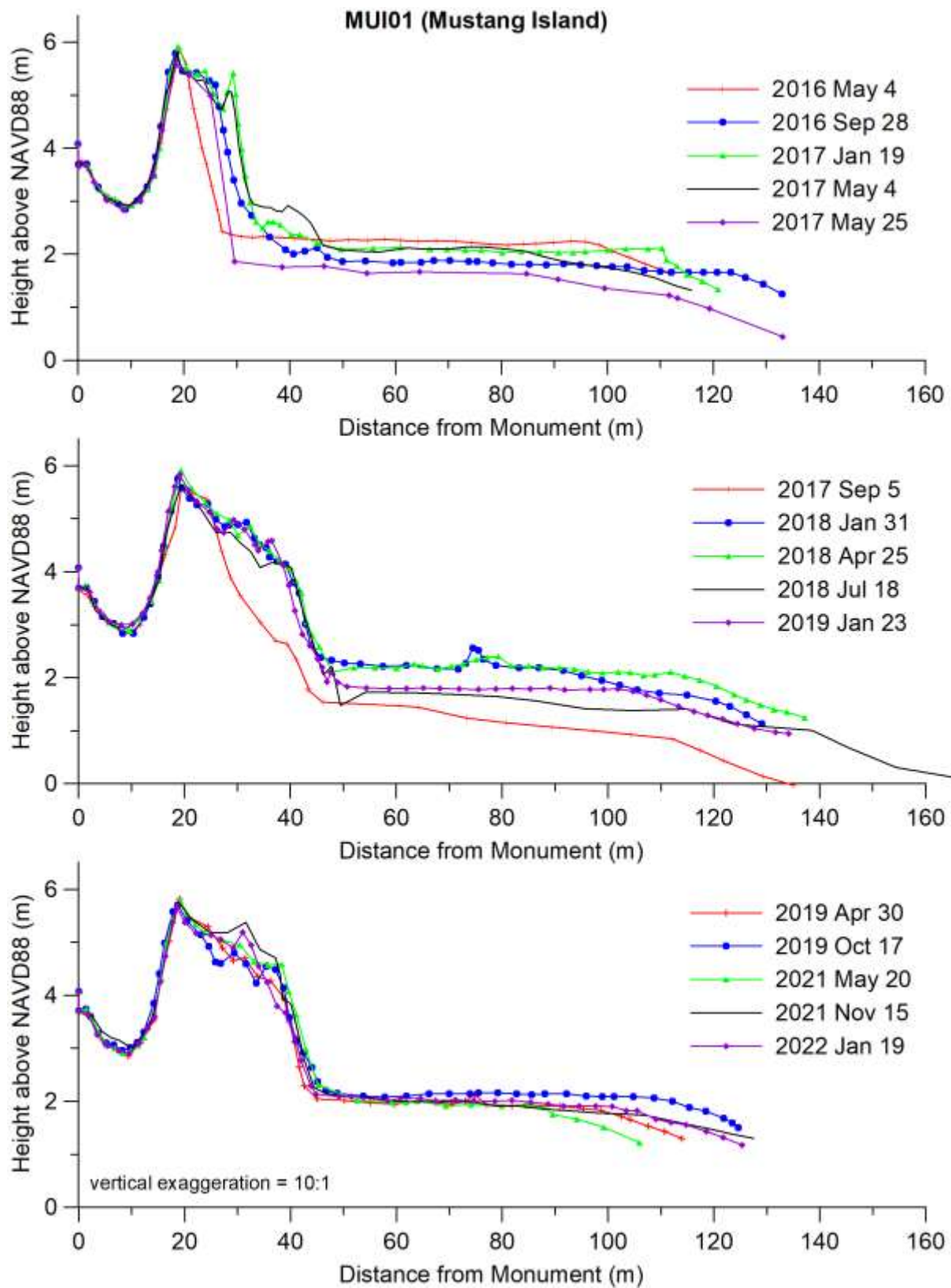
MAT03 (Matagorda Peninsula)

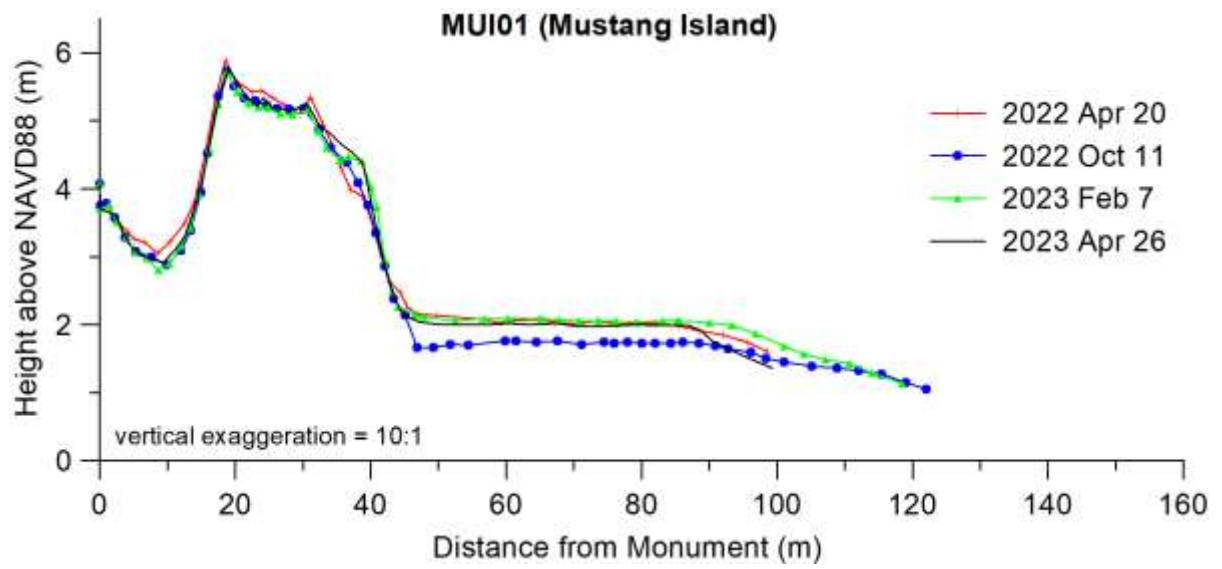




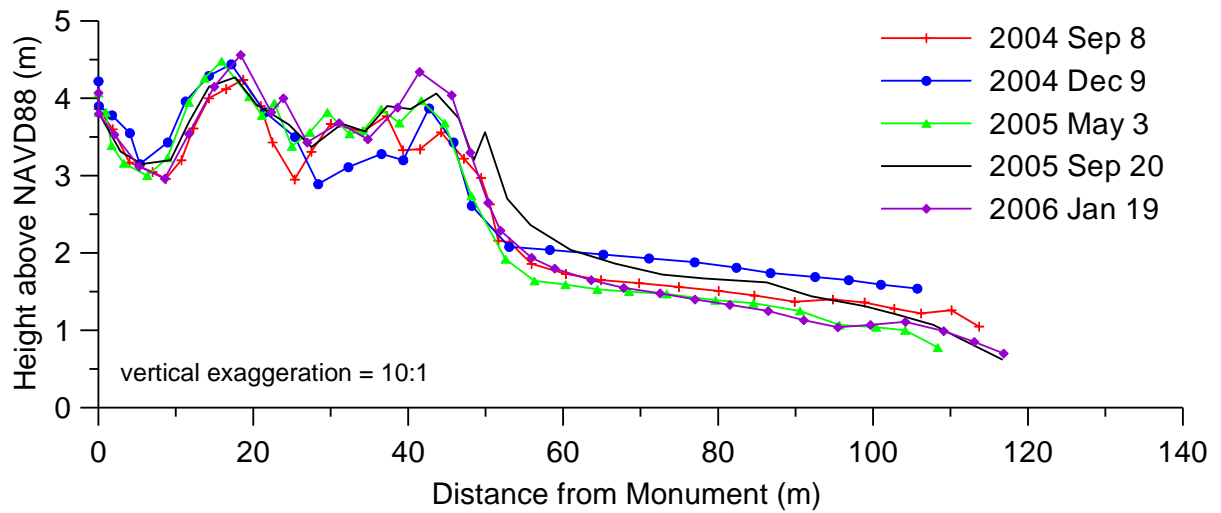
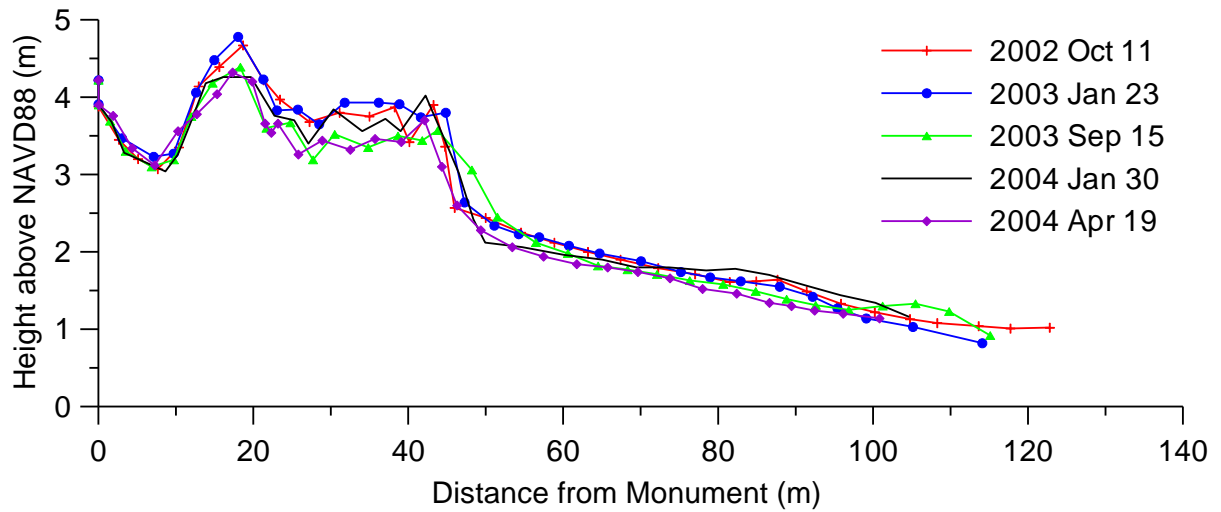
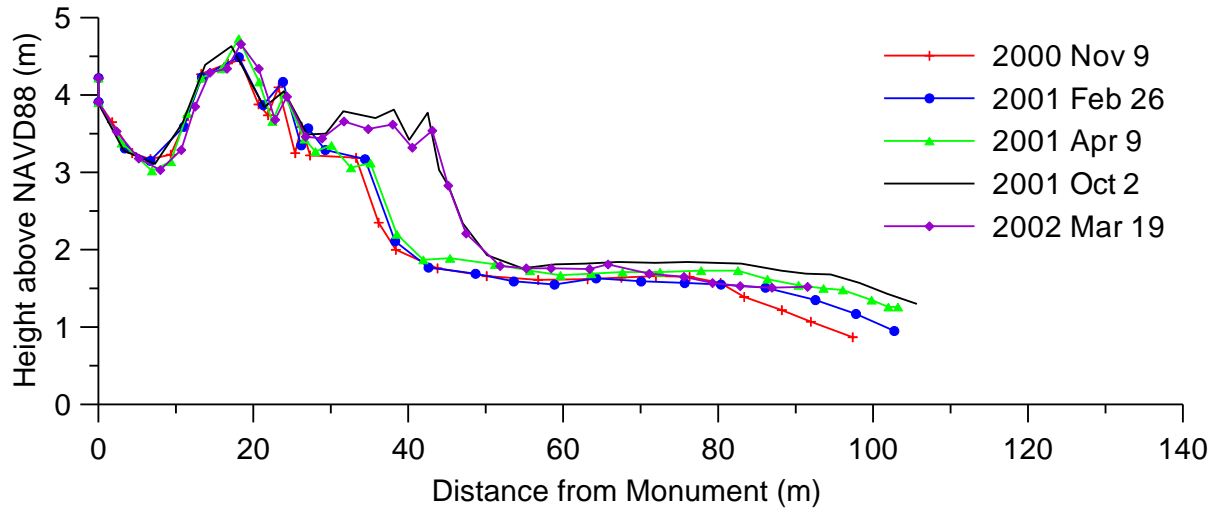


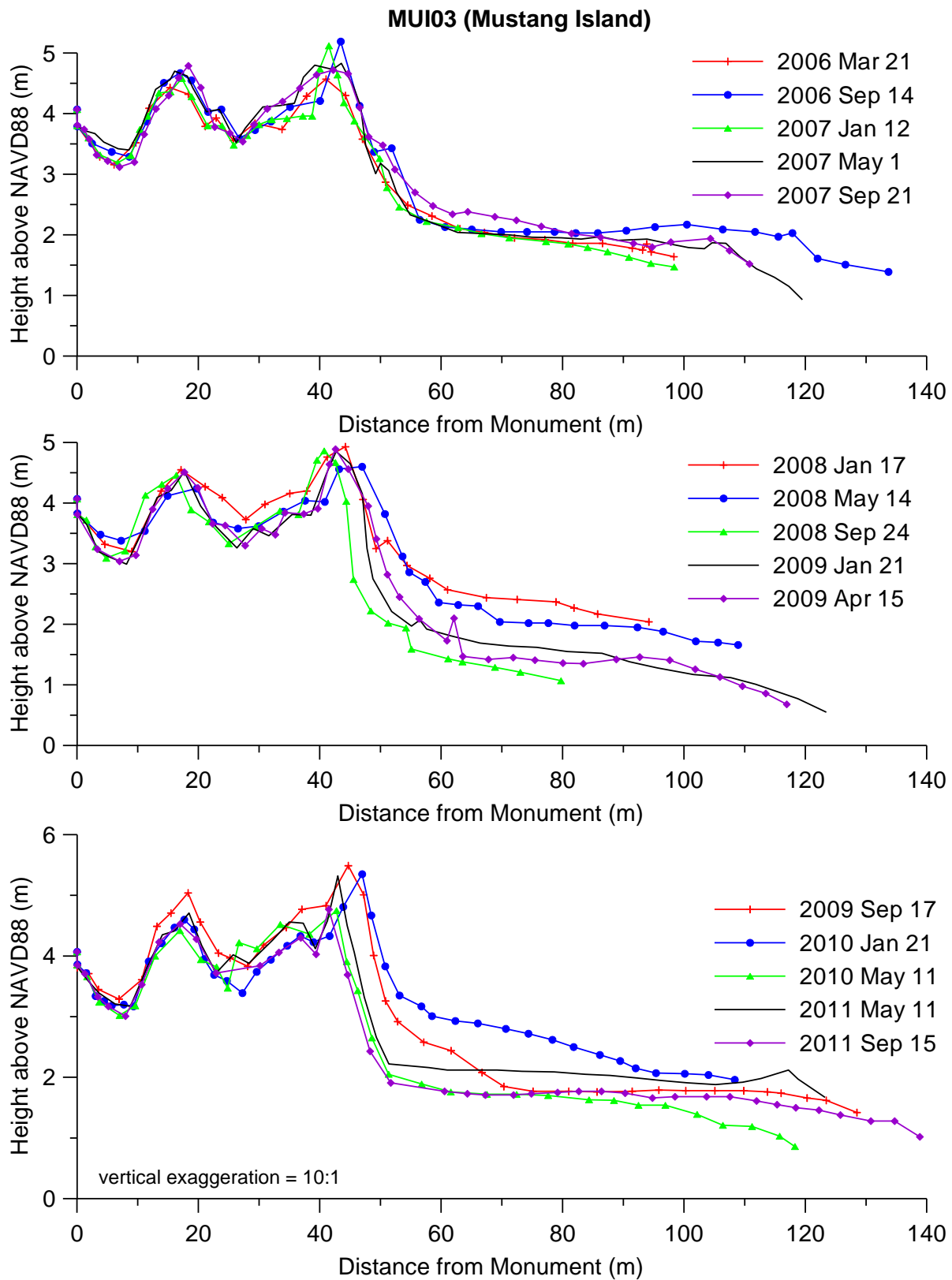


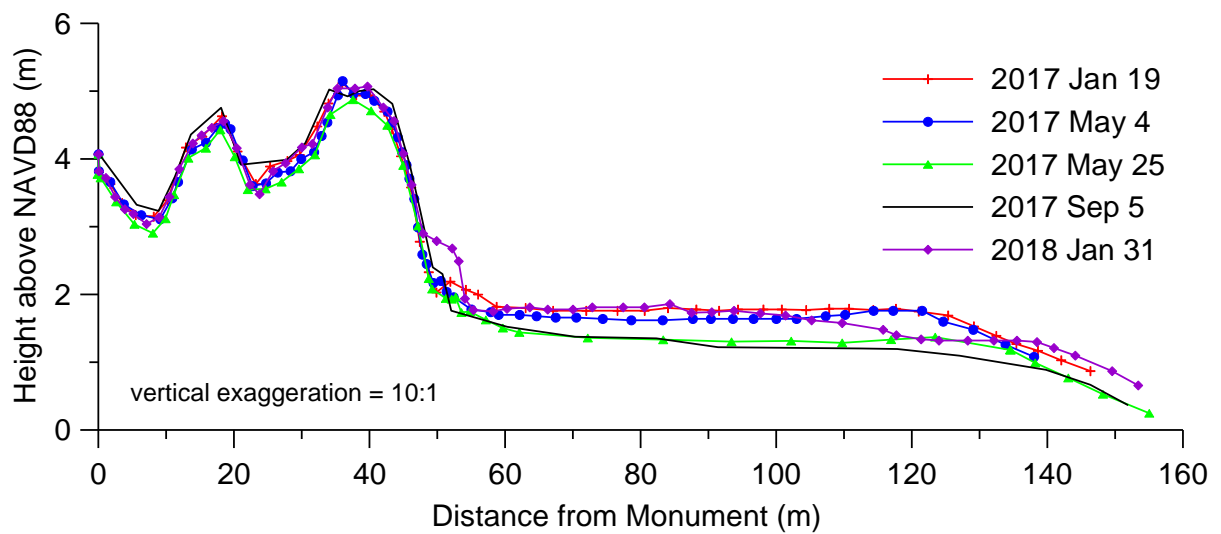
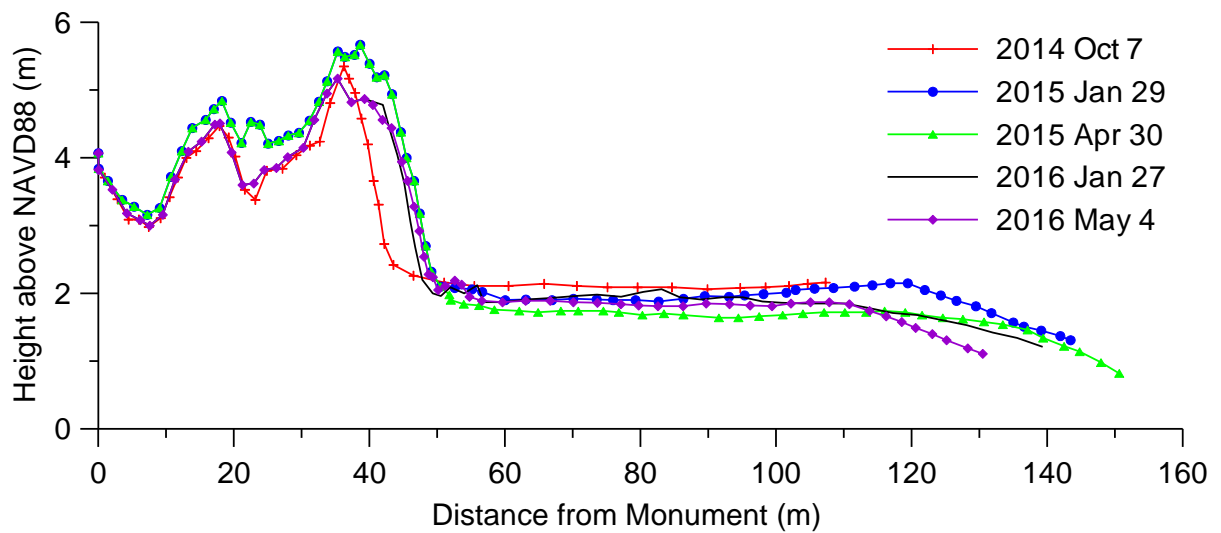
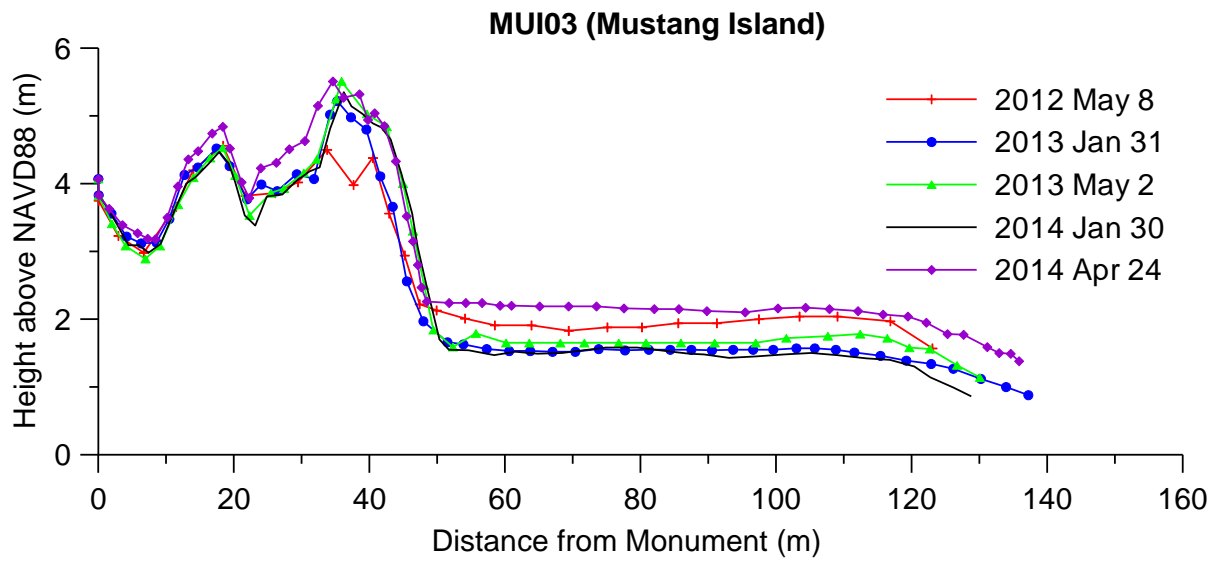




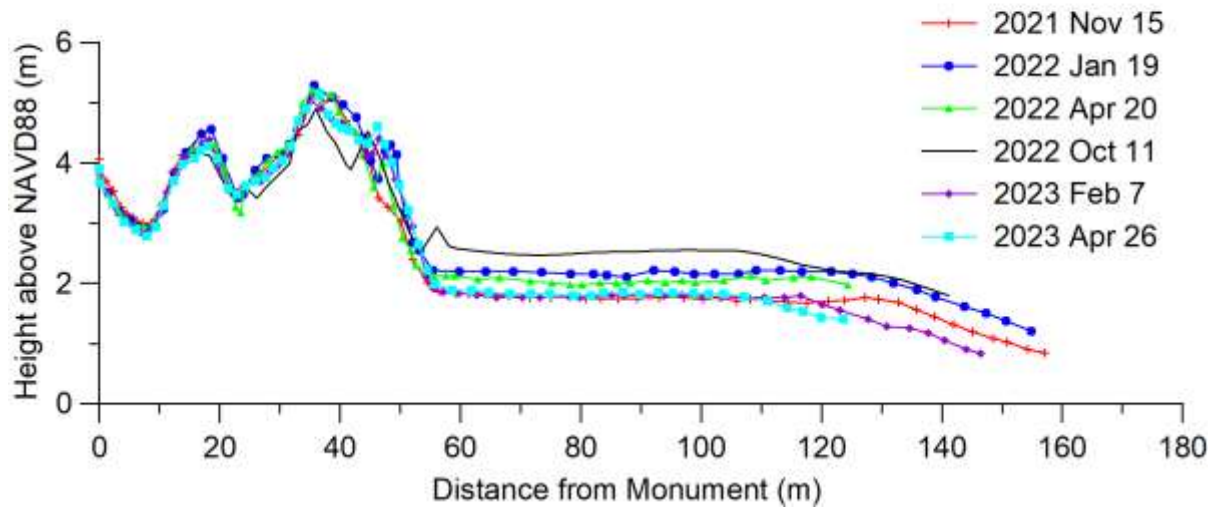
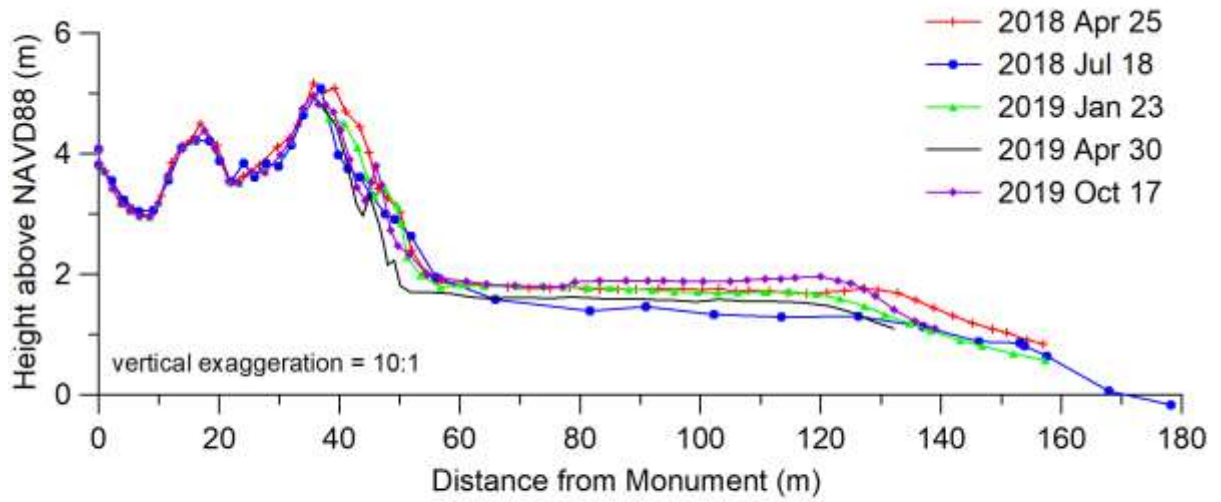
MUI03 **MUI03 (Mustang Island)**



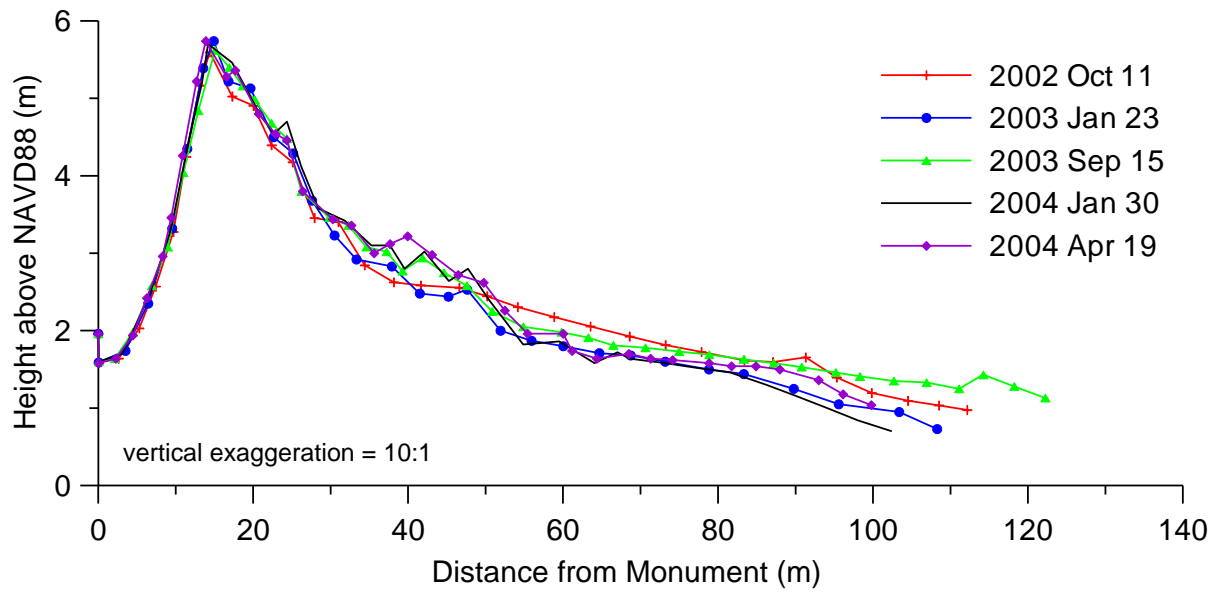
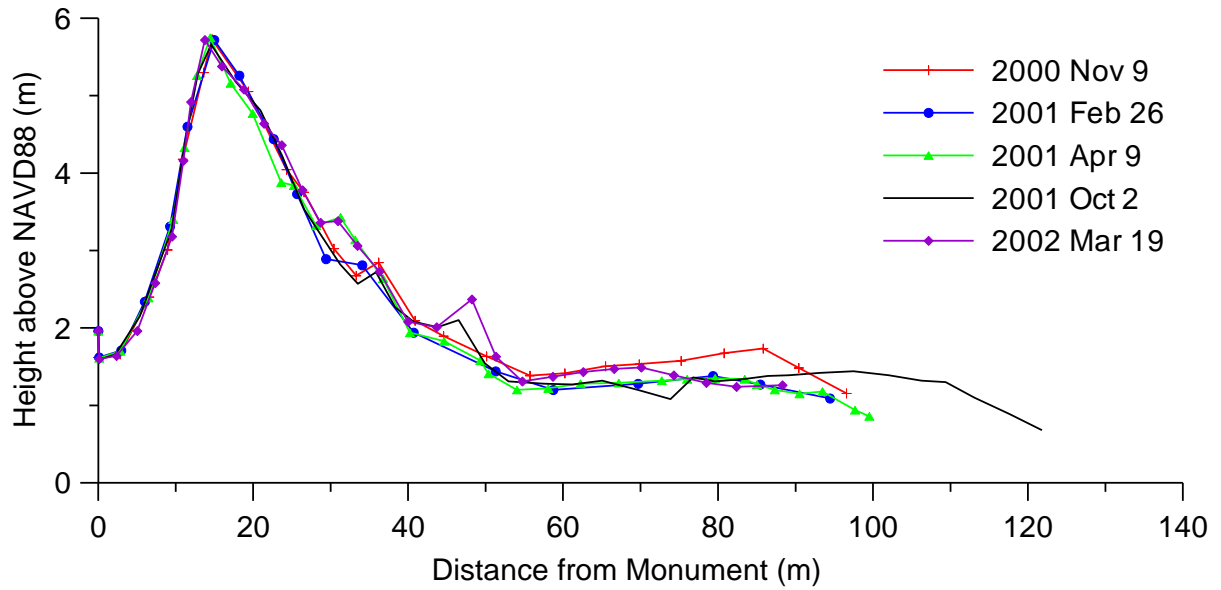




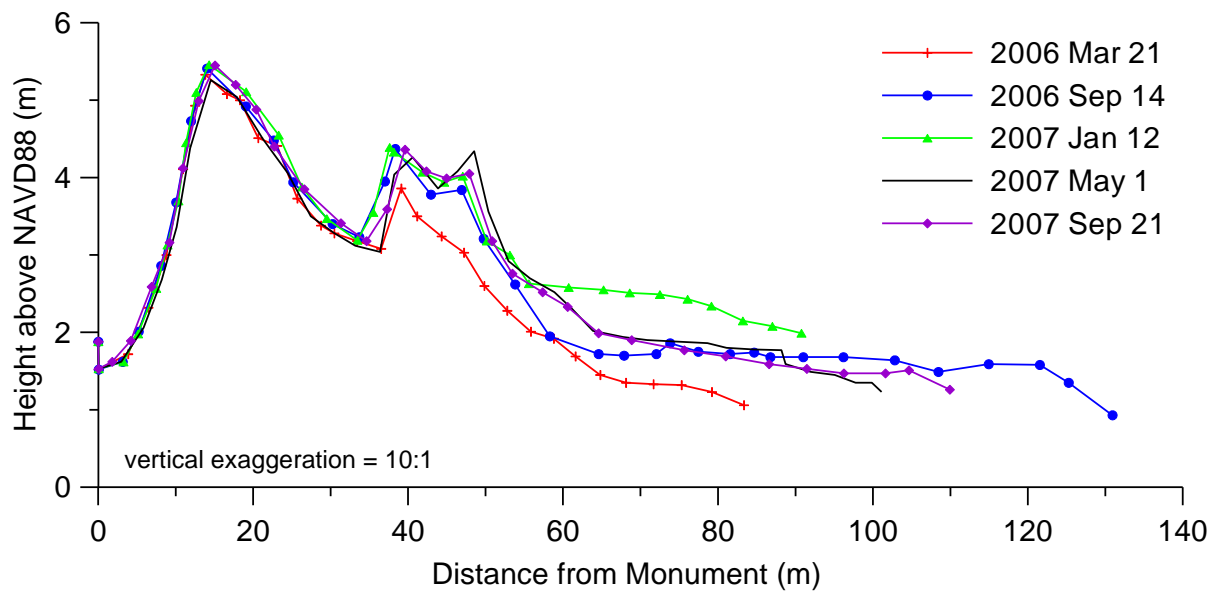
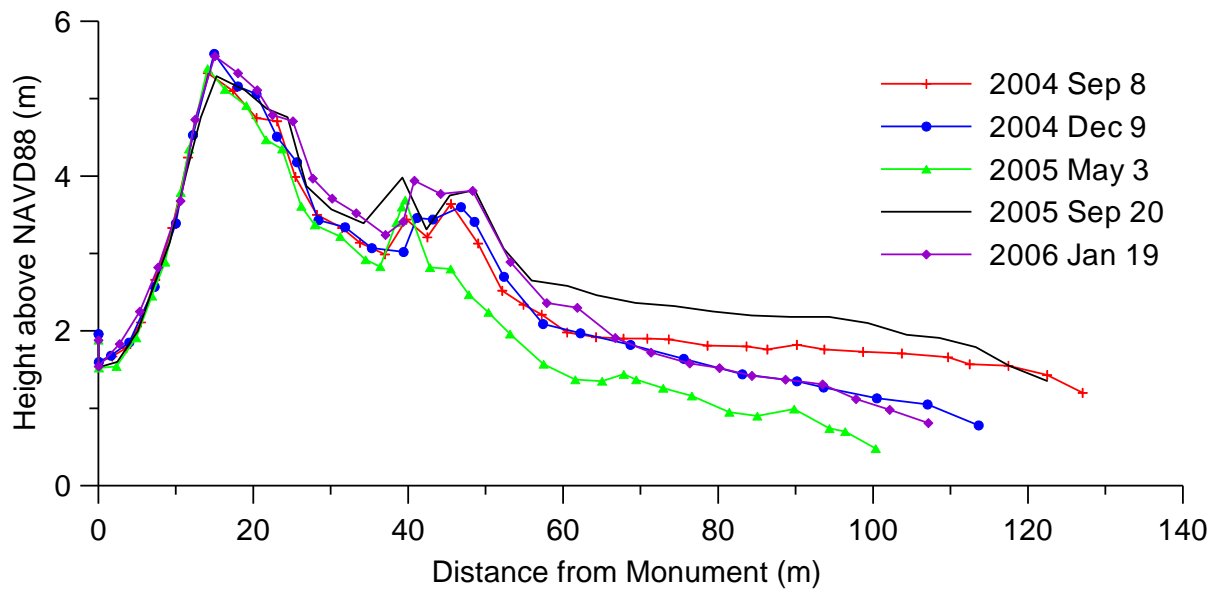
MUI03 (Mustang Island)



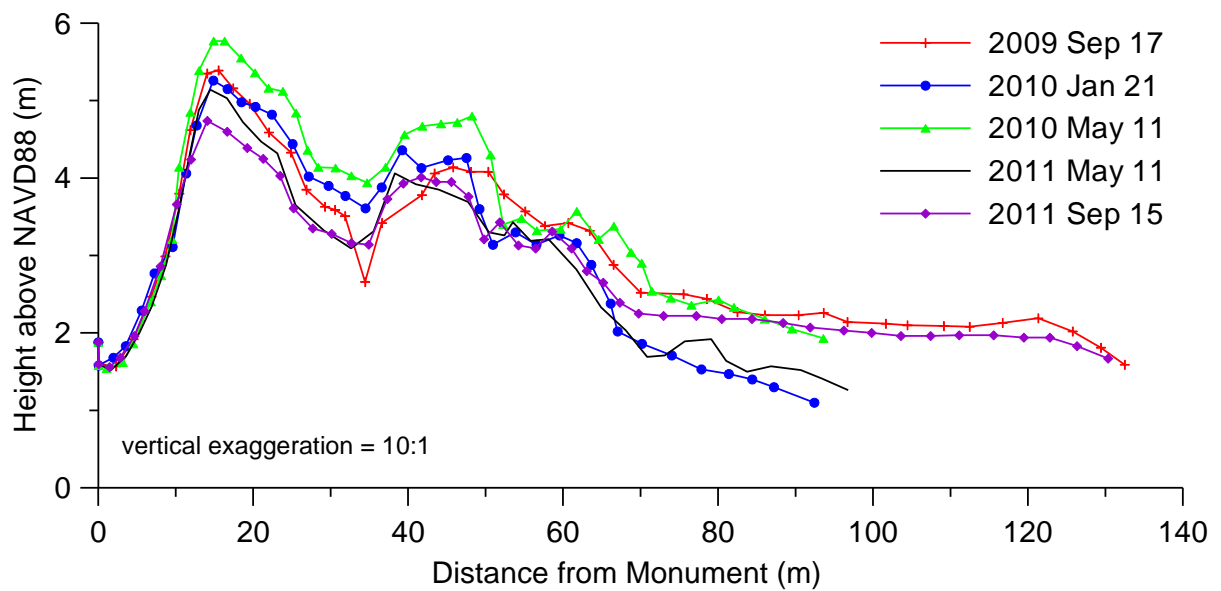
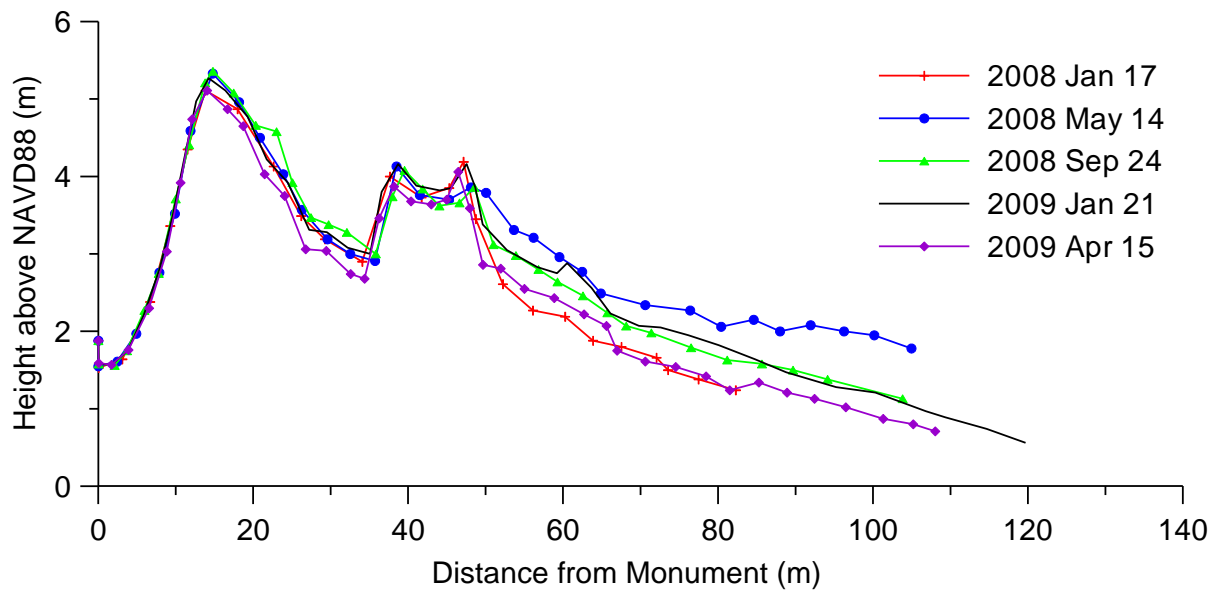
MUI02 **MUI02 (Mustang Island State Park)**



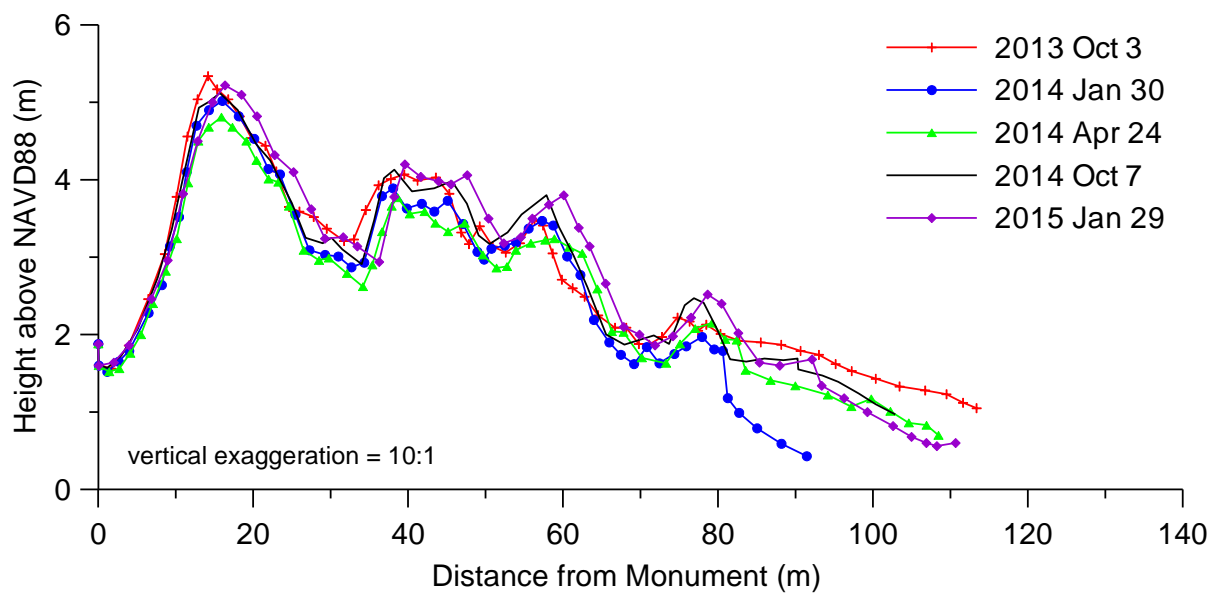
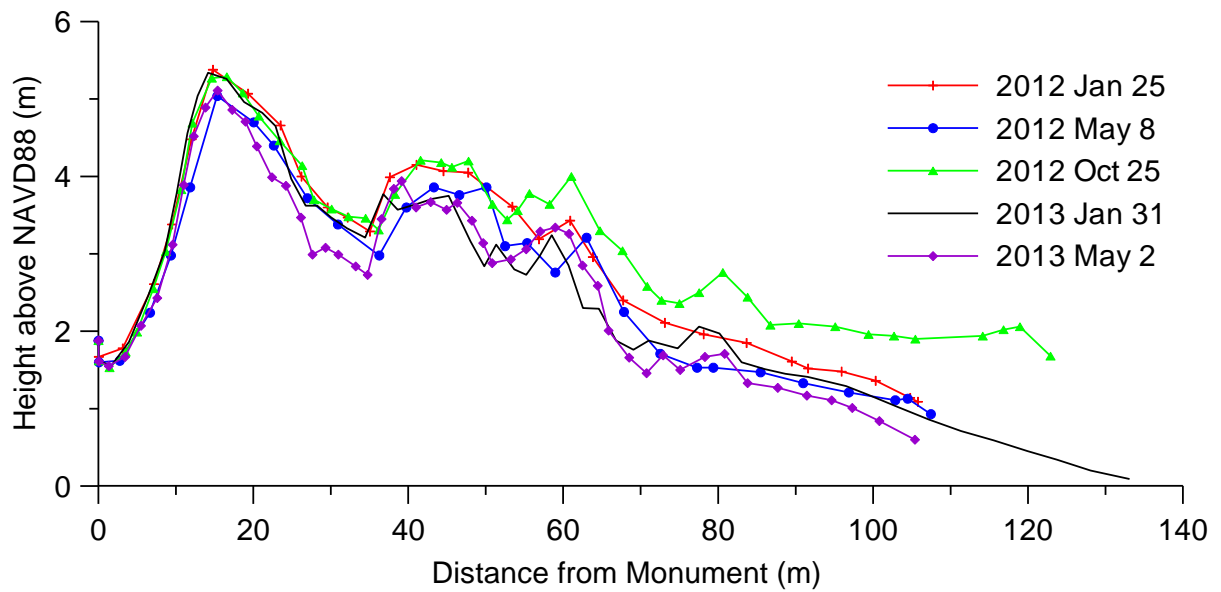
MUI02 (Mustang Island State Park)



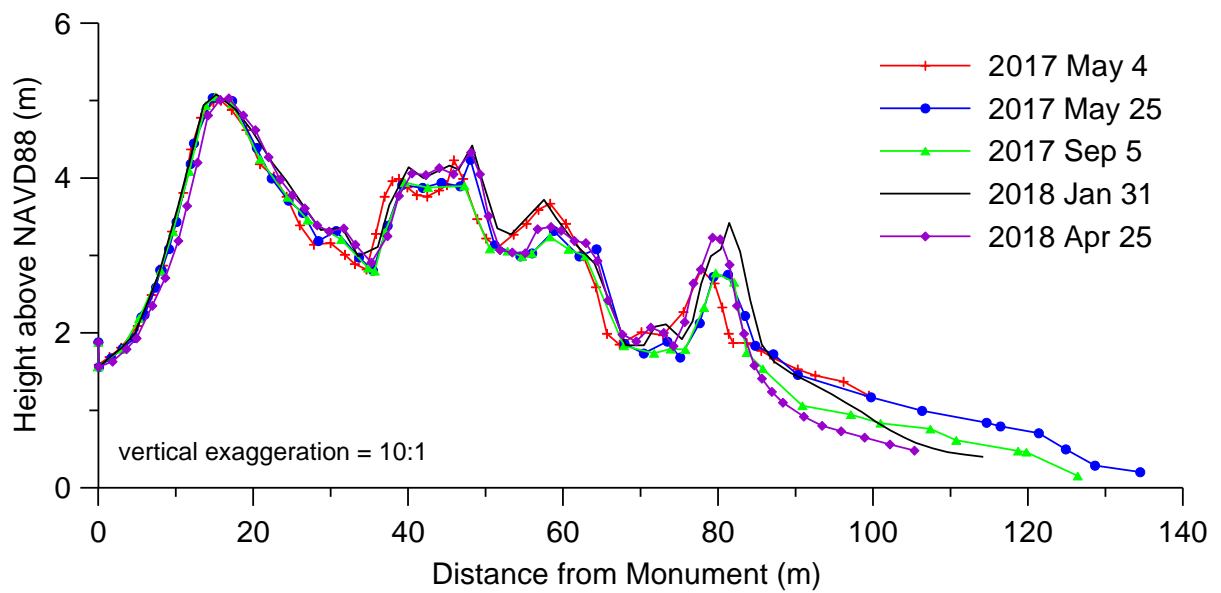
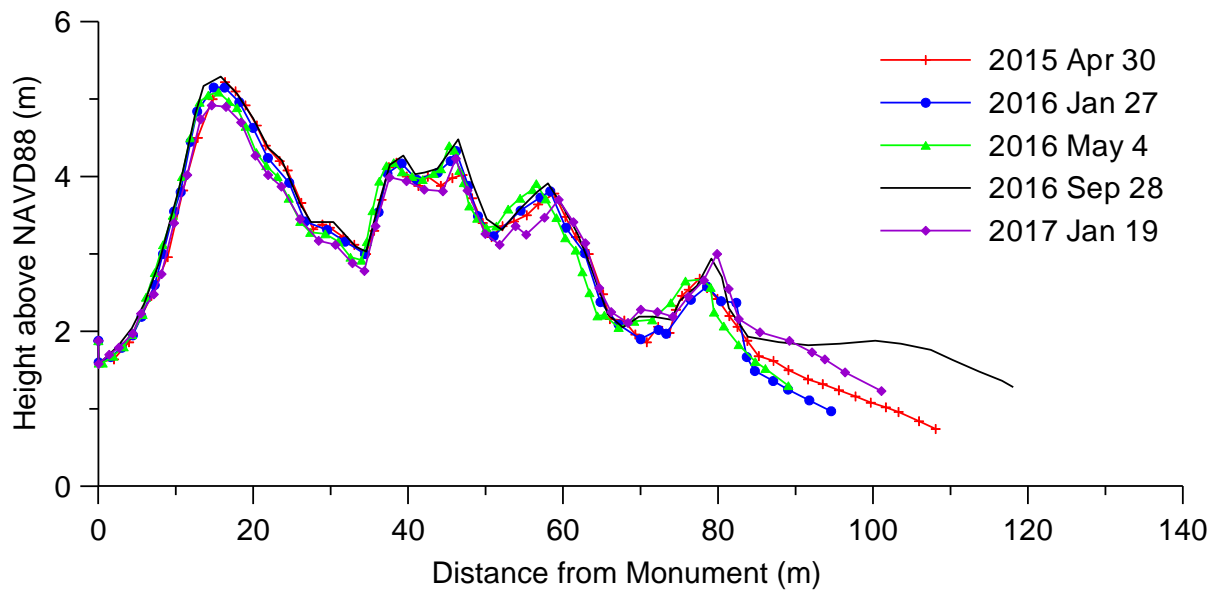
MUI02 (Mustang Island State Park)



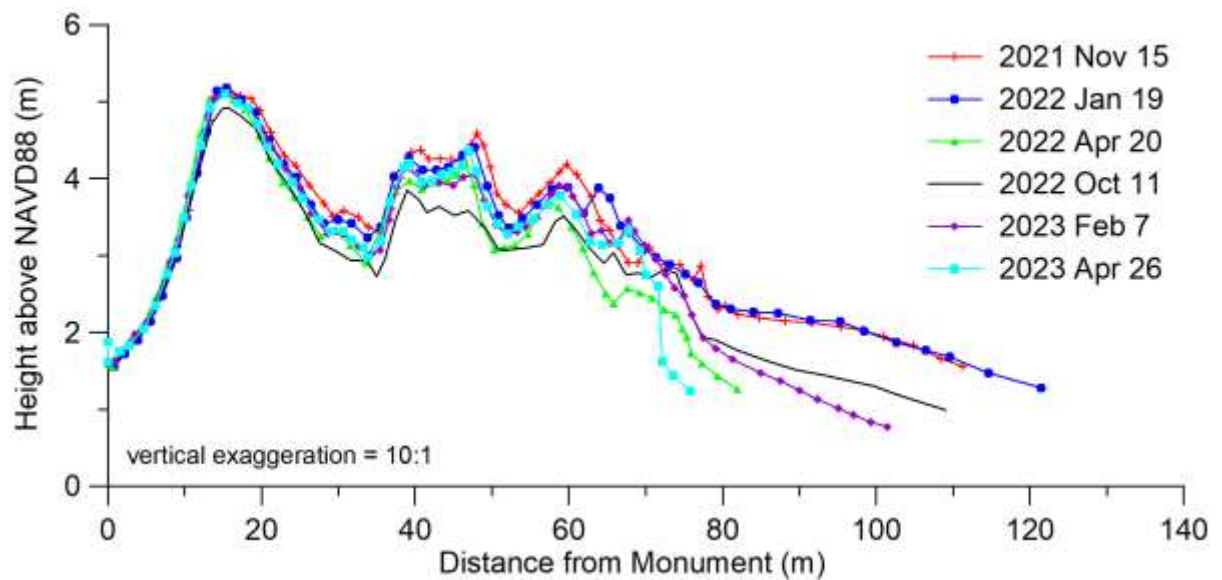
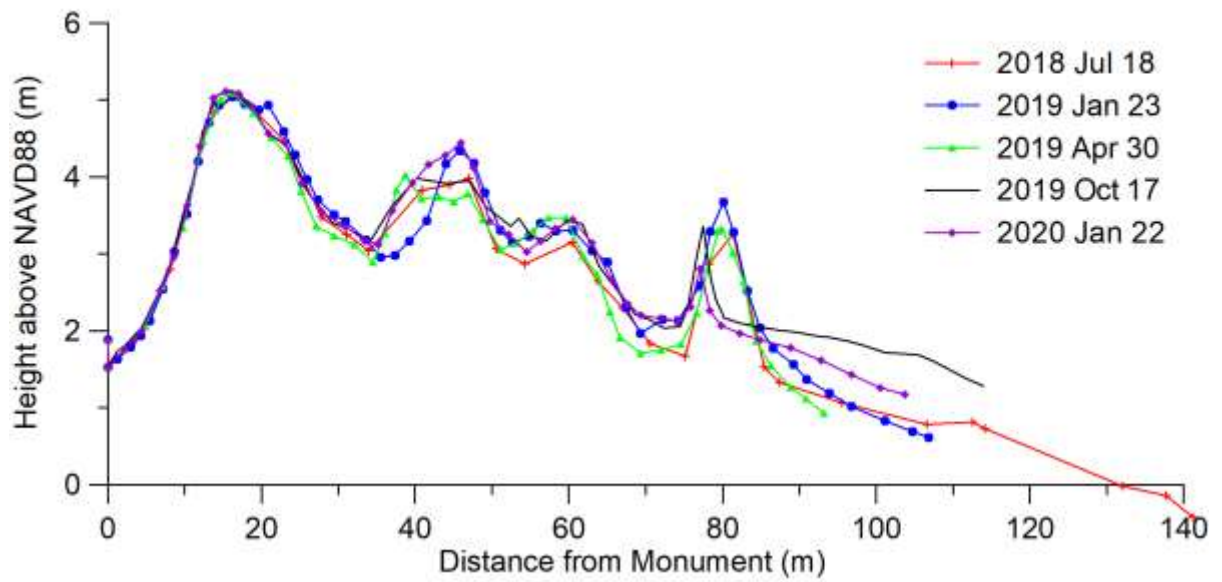
MUI02 (Mustang Island State Park)



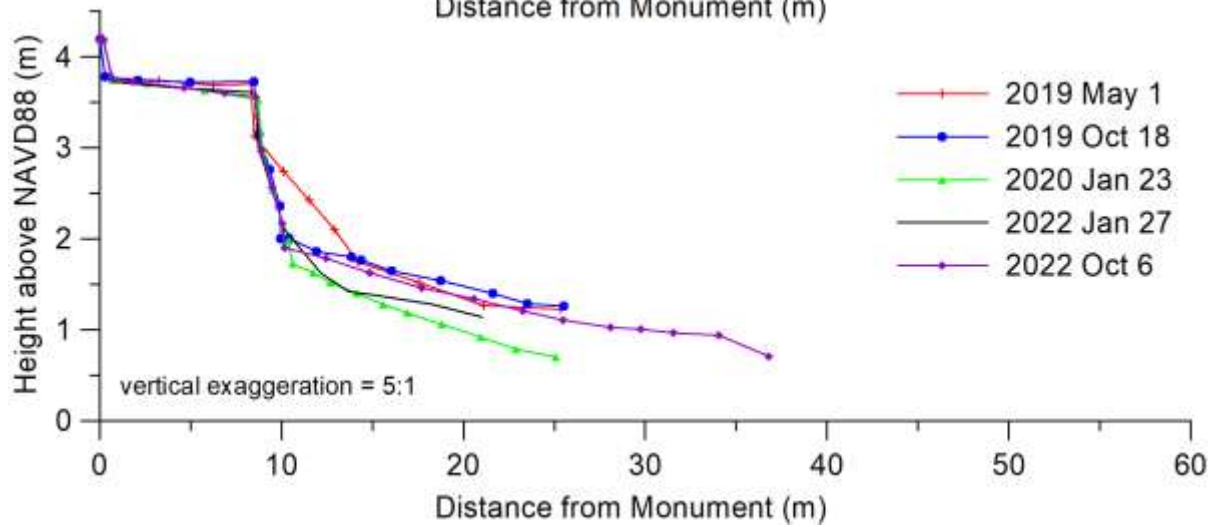
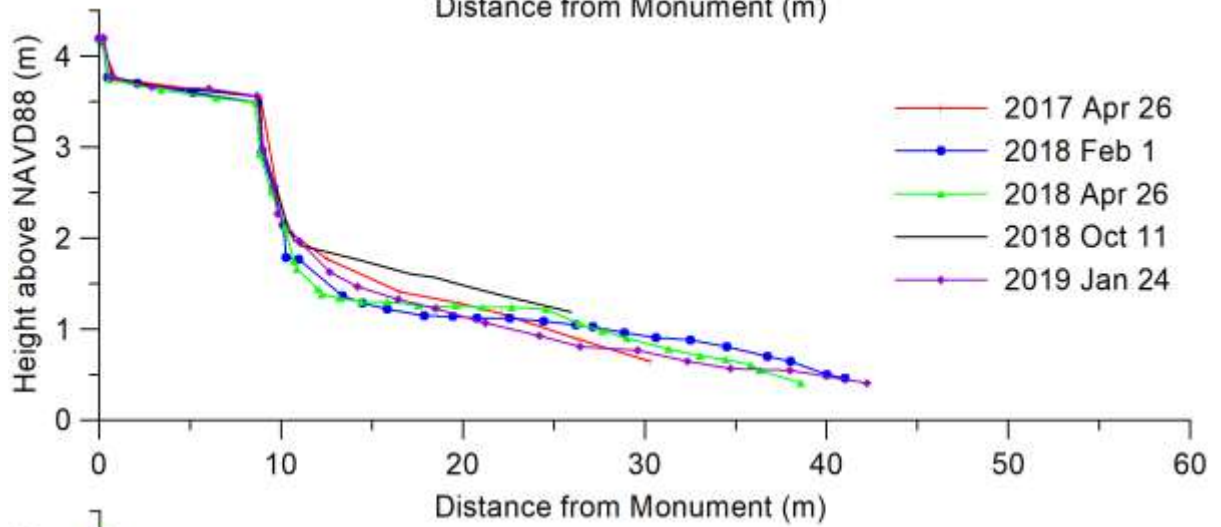
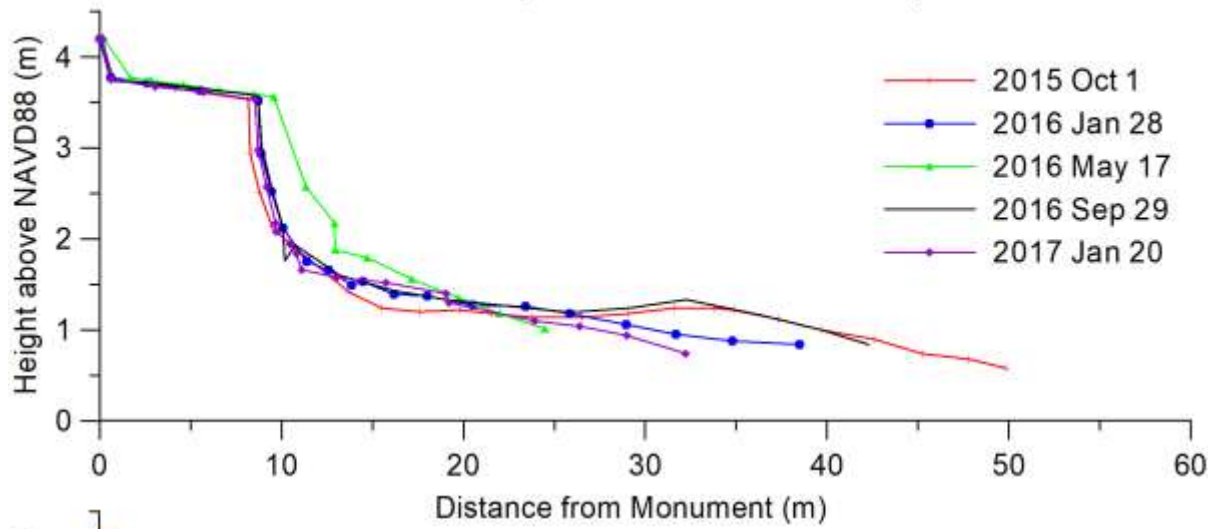
MUI02 (Mustang Island State Park)



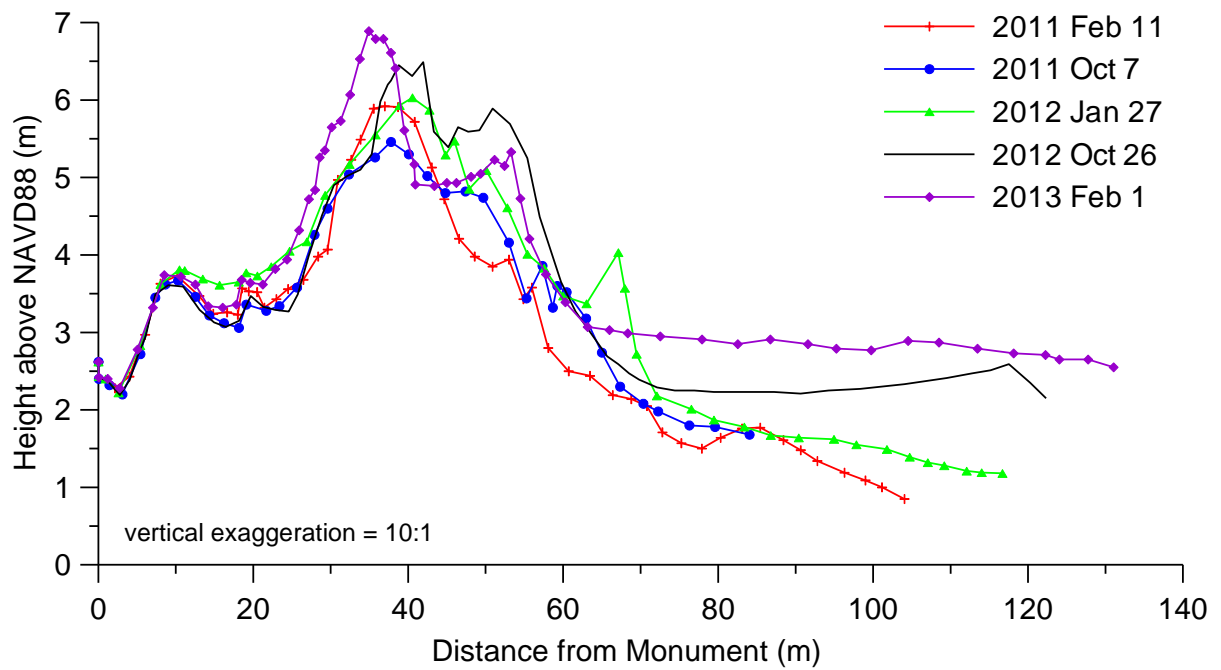
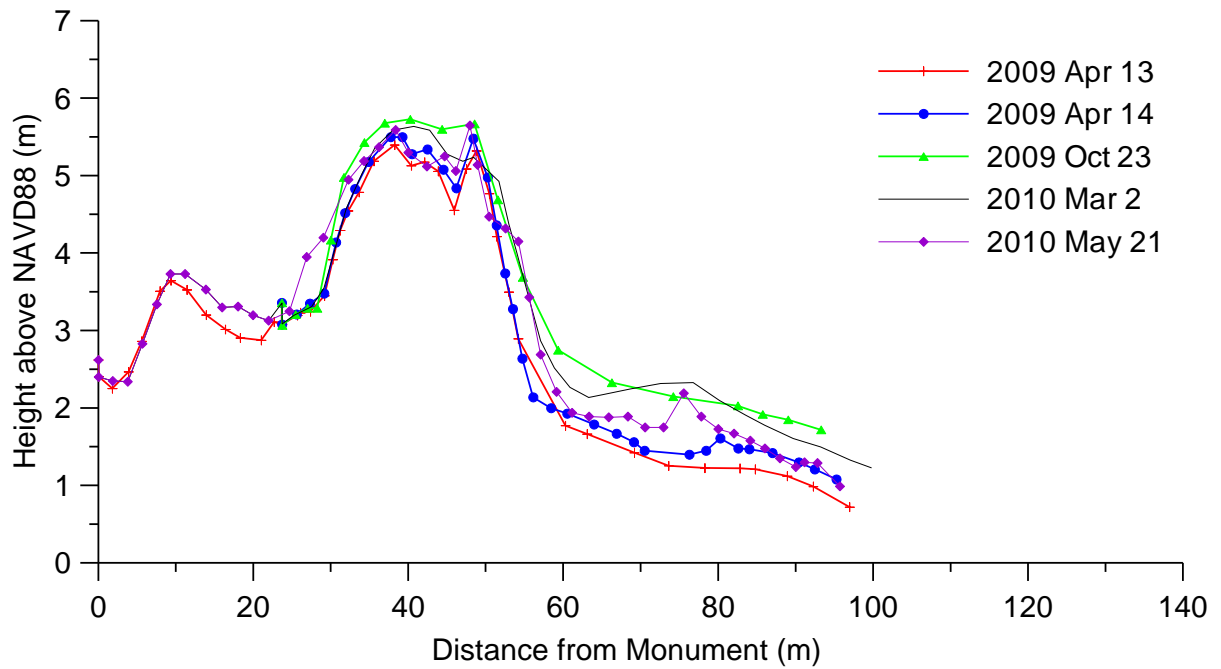
MUI02 (Mustang Island State Park)



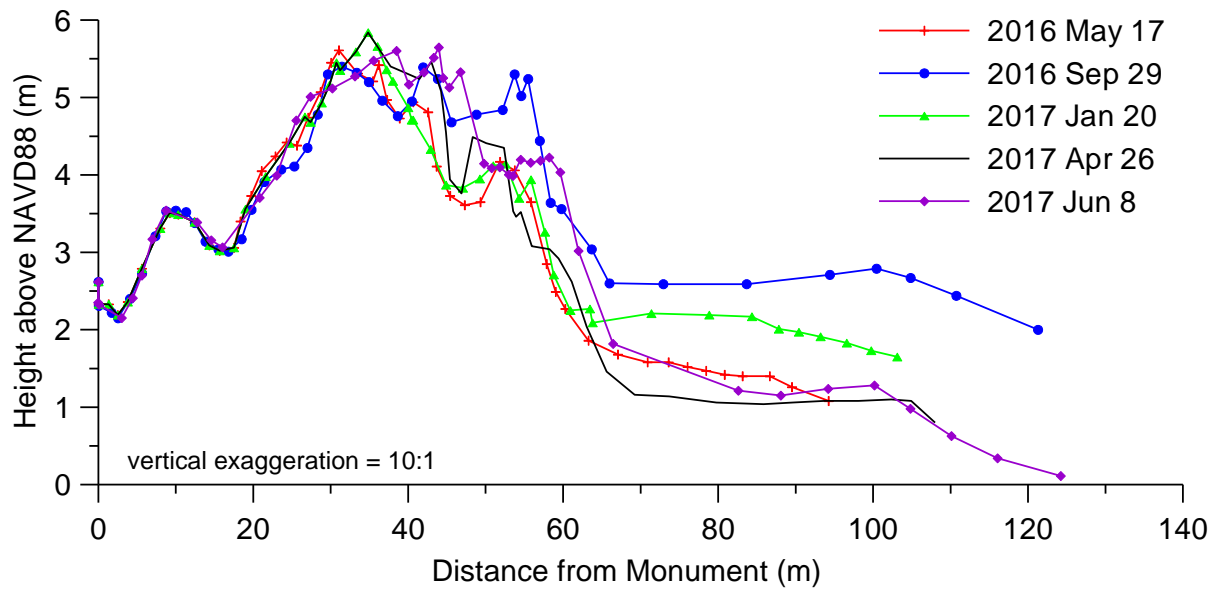
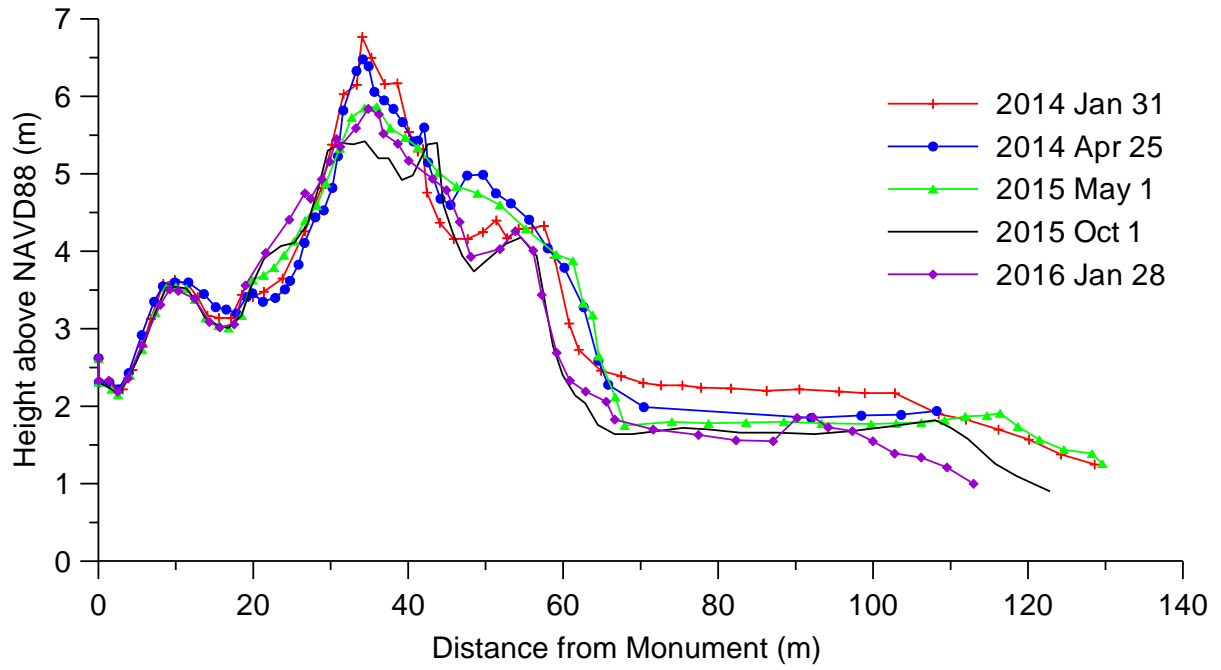
NPC06 **NPC06 (North Padre Island Seawall)**



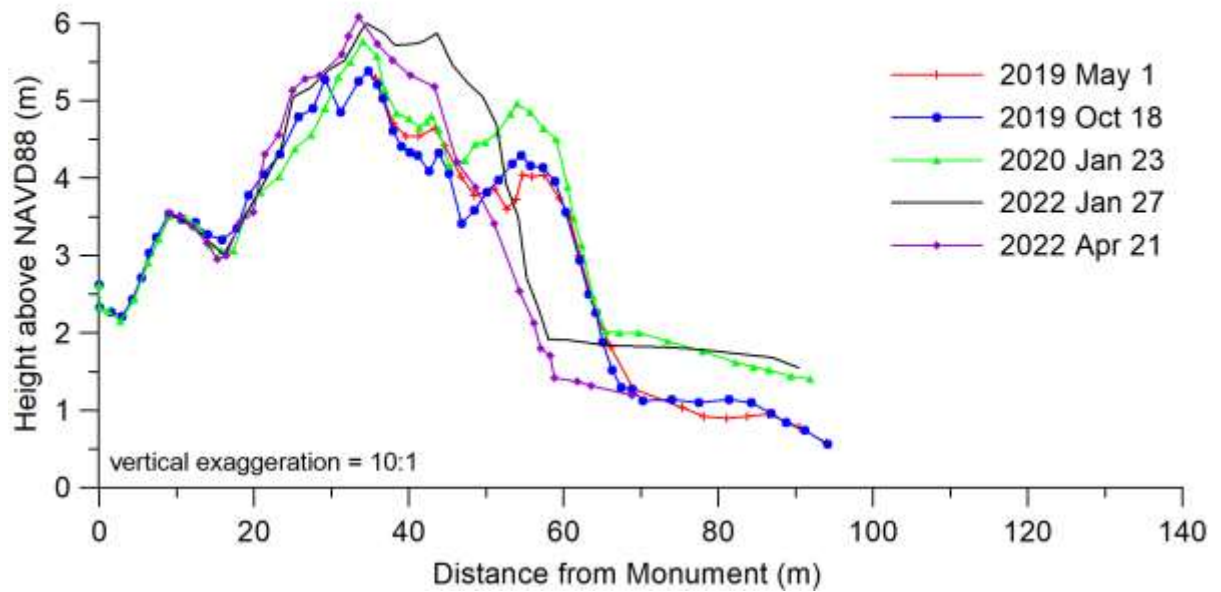
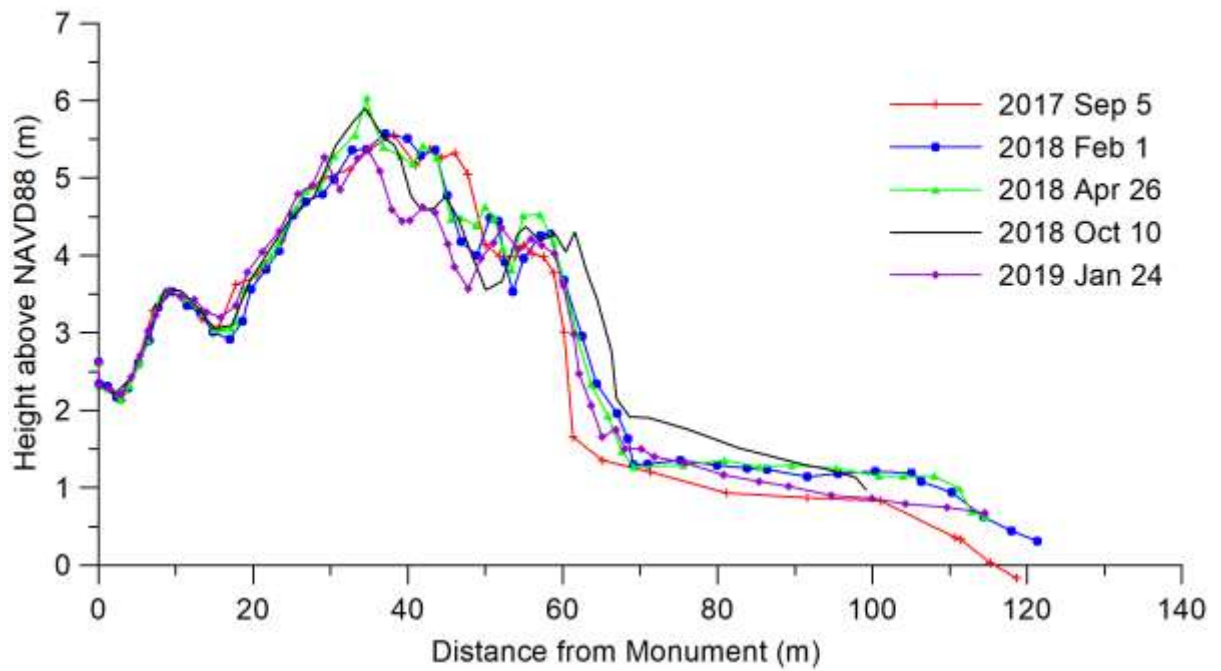
NPI08 **NPI08 (North Padre Island)**



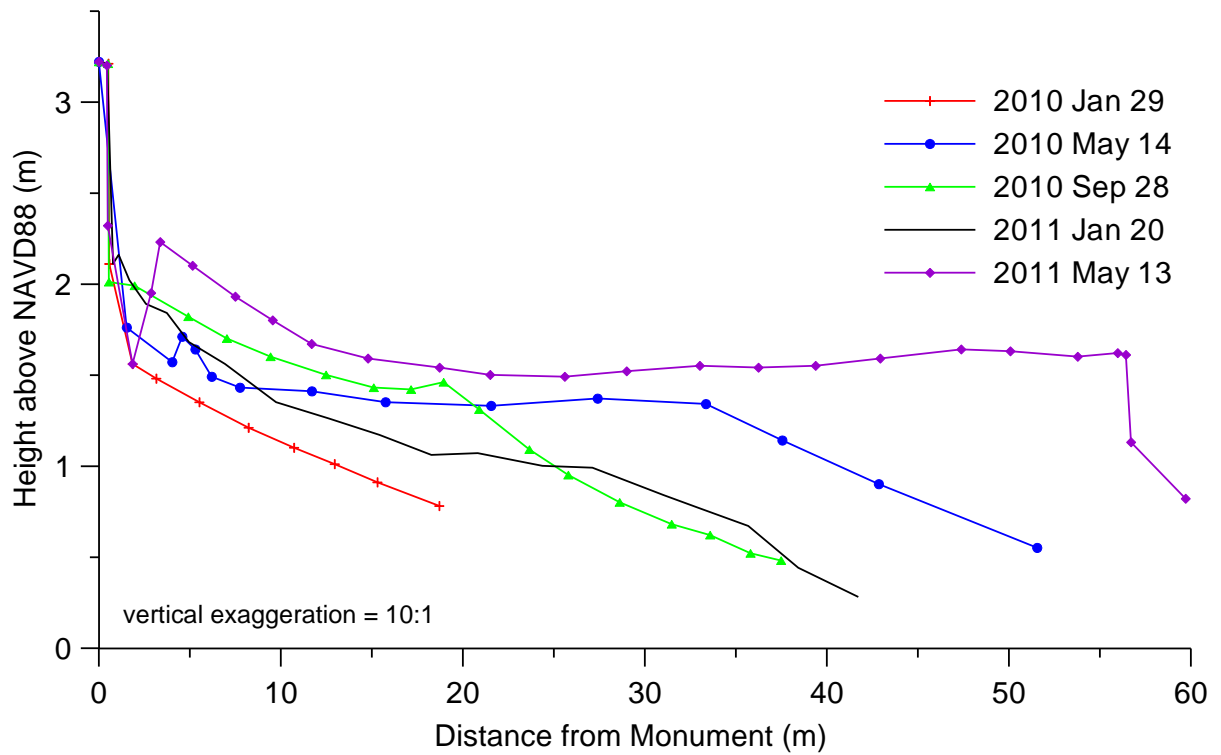
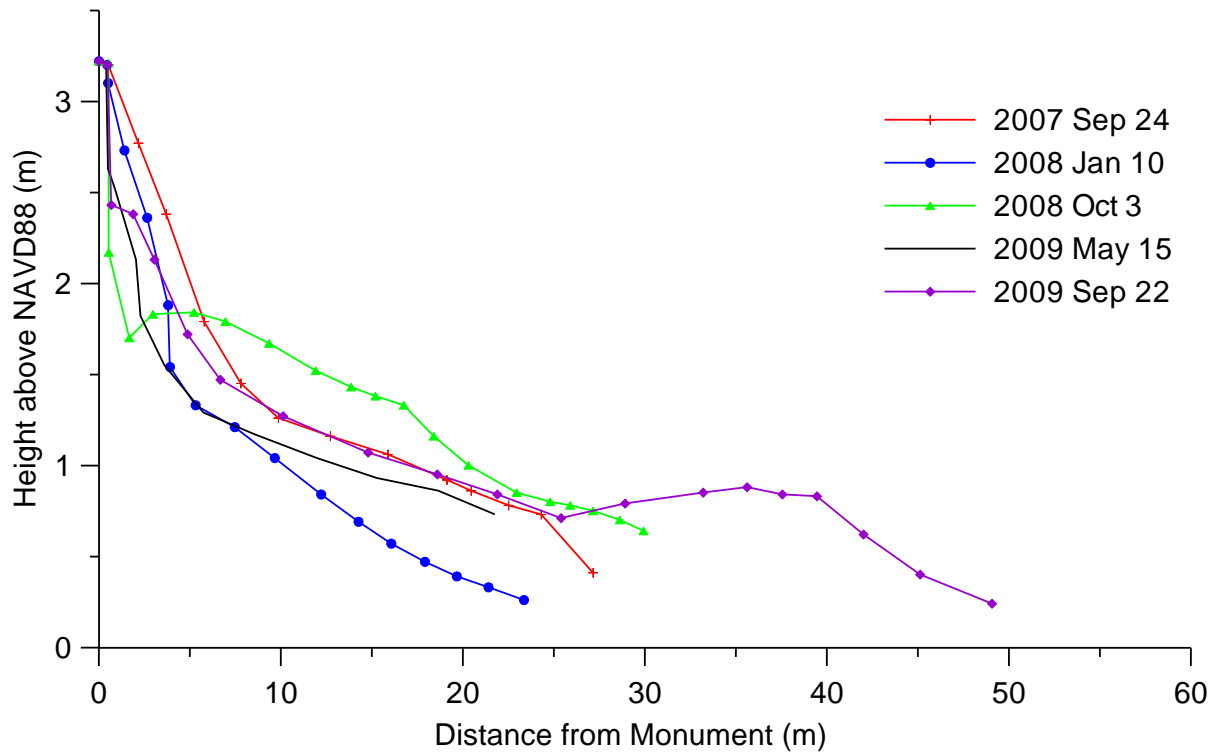
NPI08 (North Padre Island)



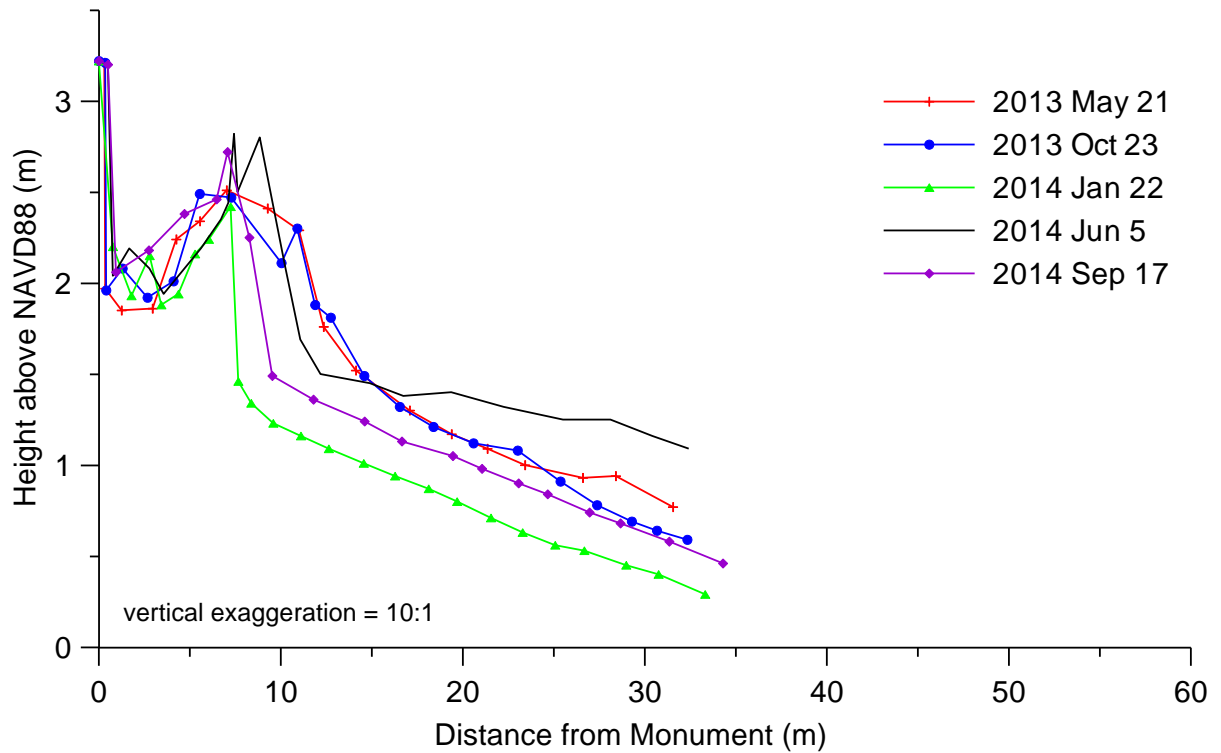
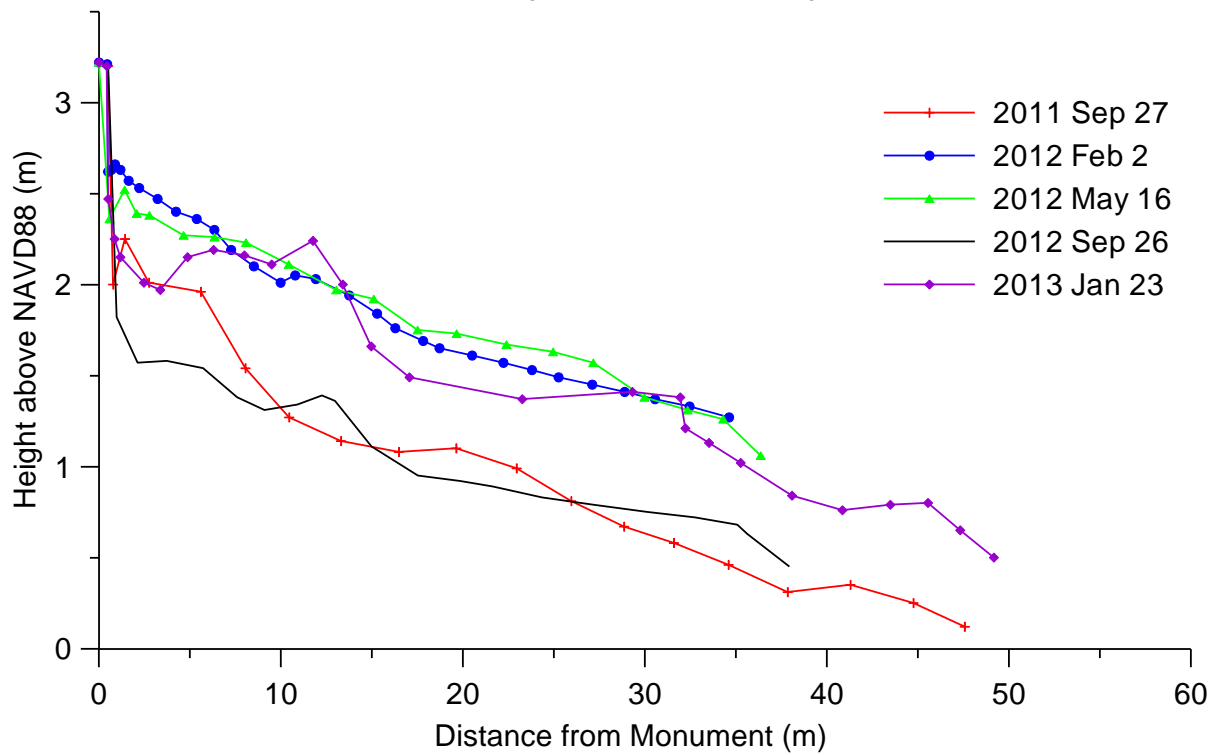
NPI08 (North Padre Island)



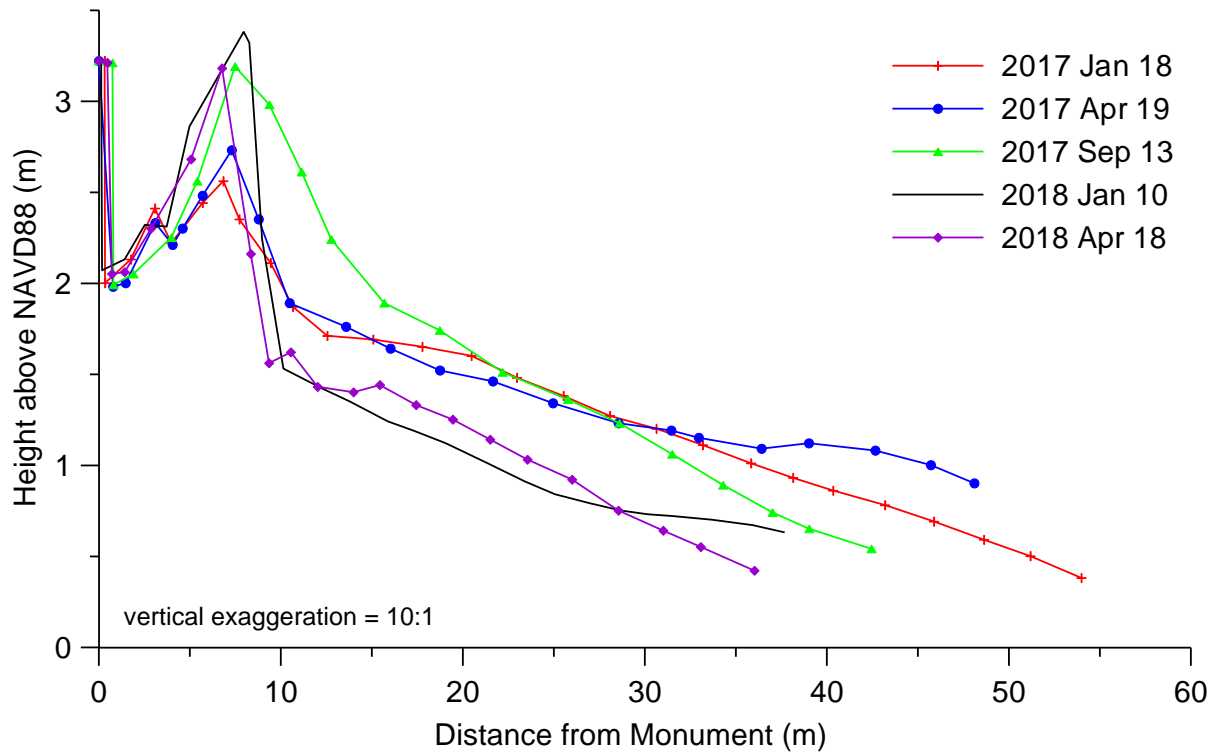
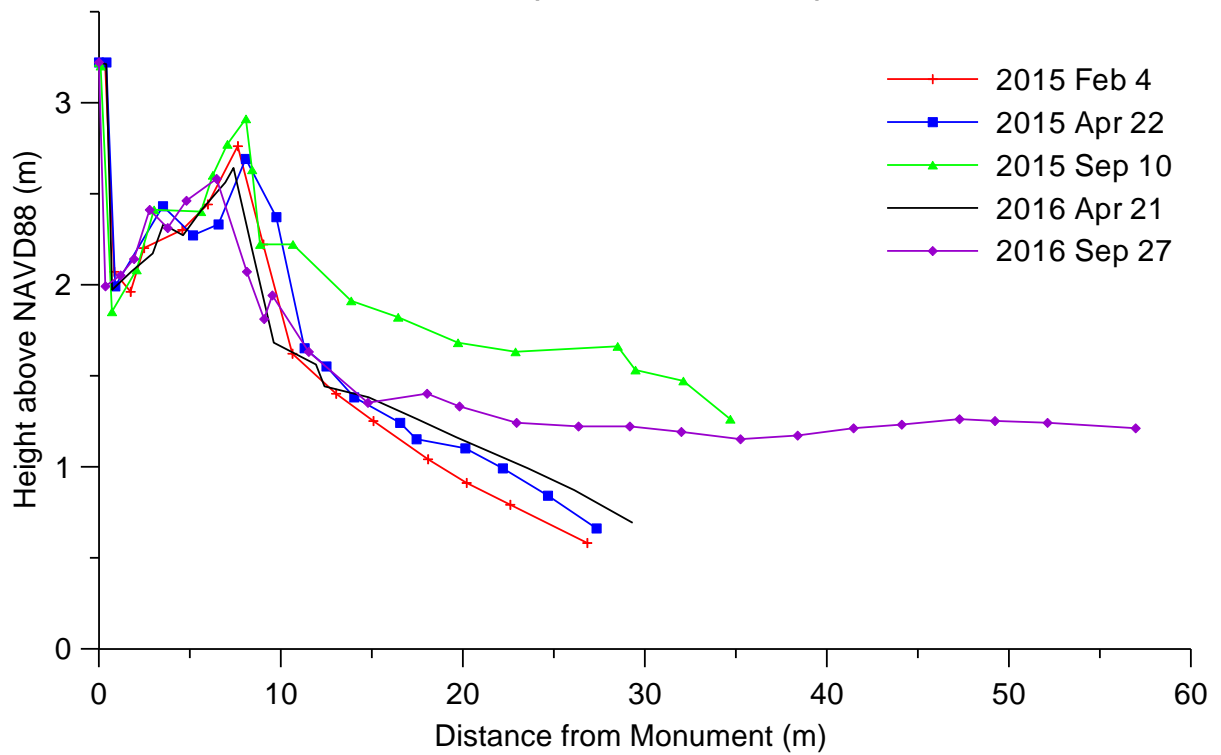
SPI08 **SPI08 (South Padre Island)**

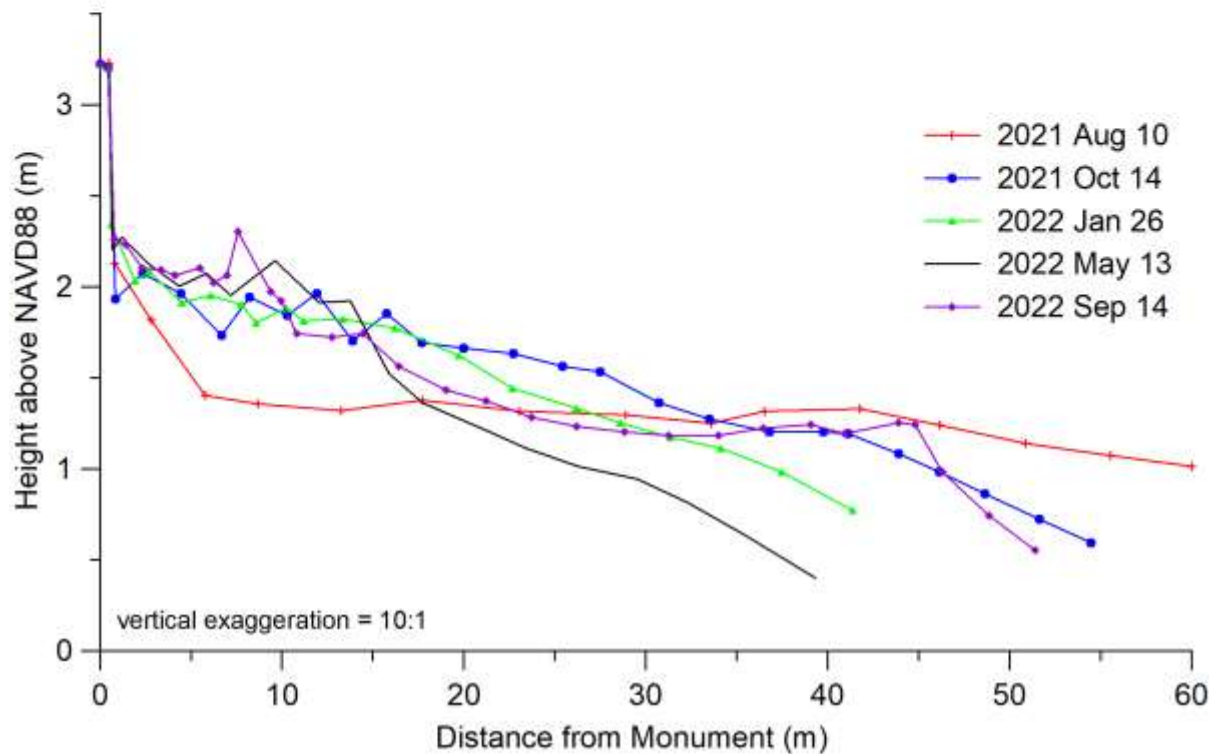
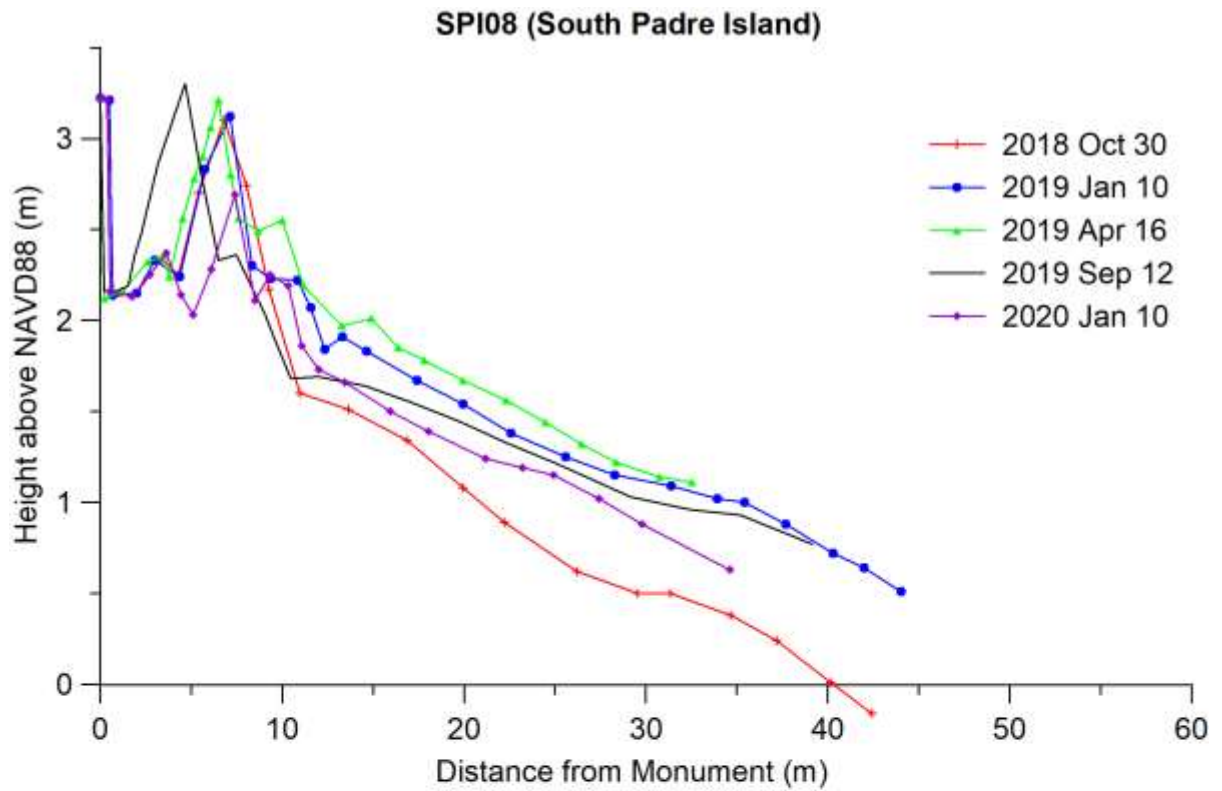


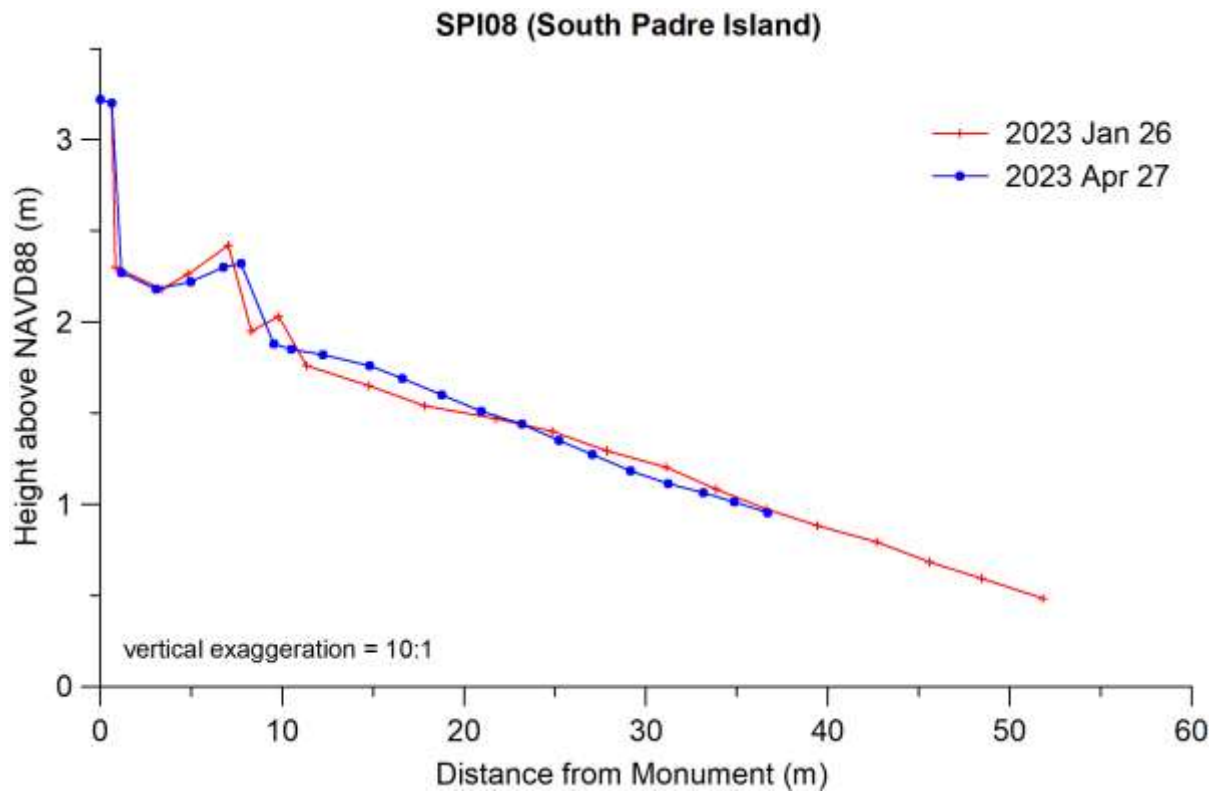
SPI08 (South Padre Island)



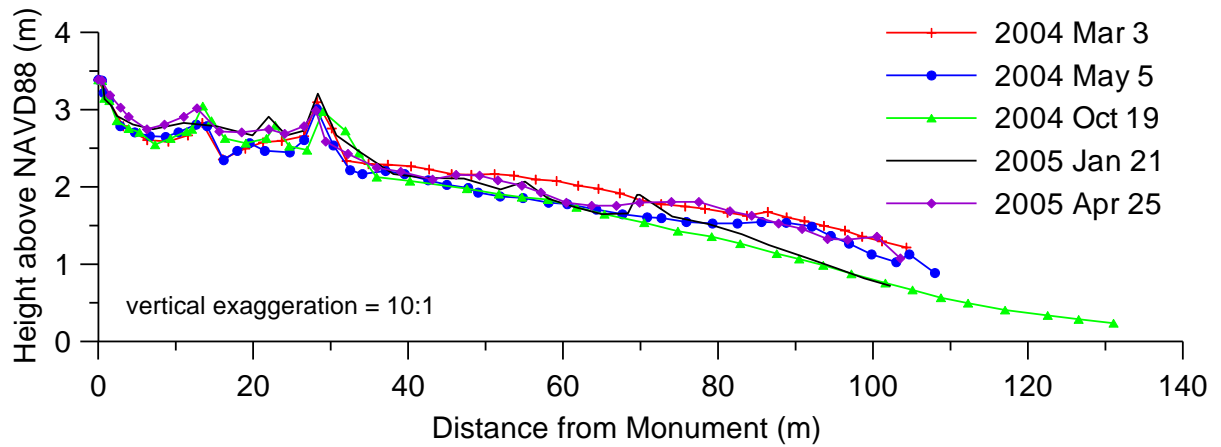
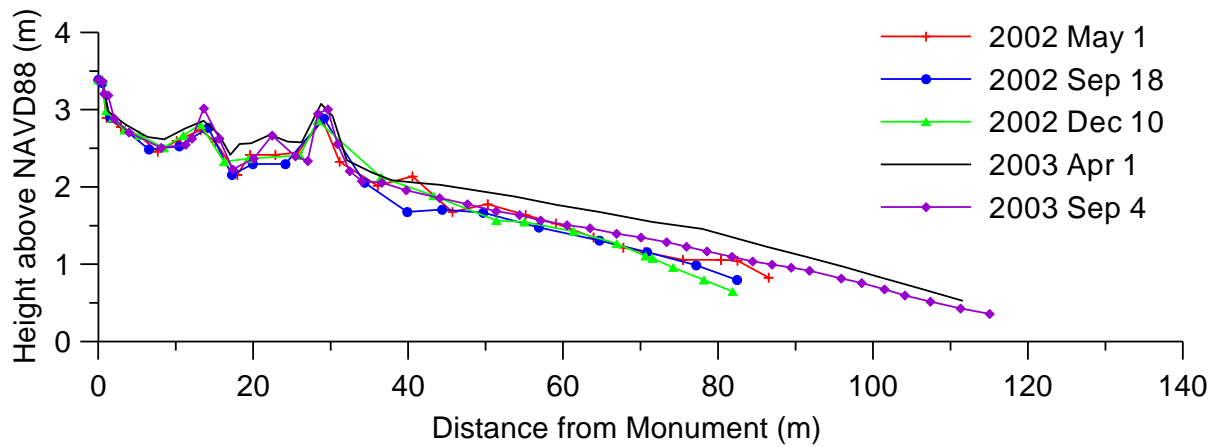
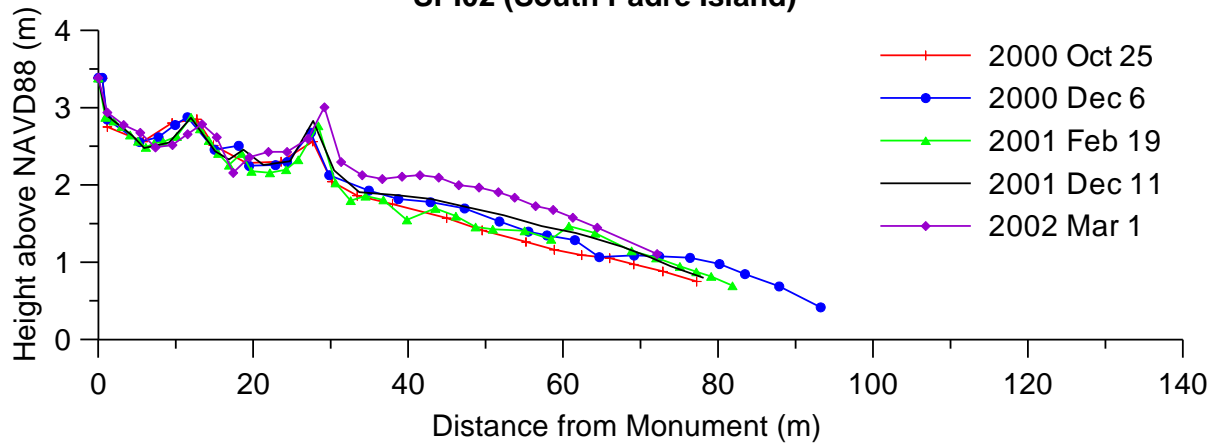
SPI08 (South Padre Island)

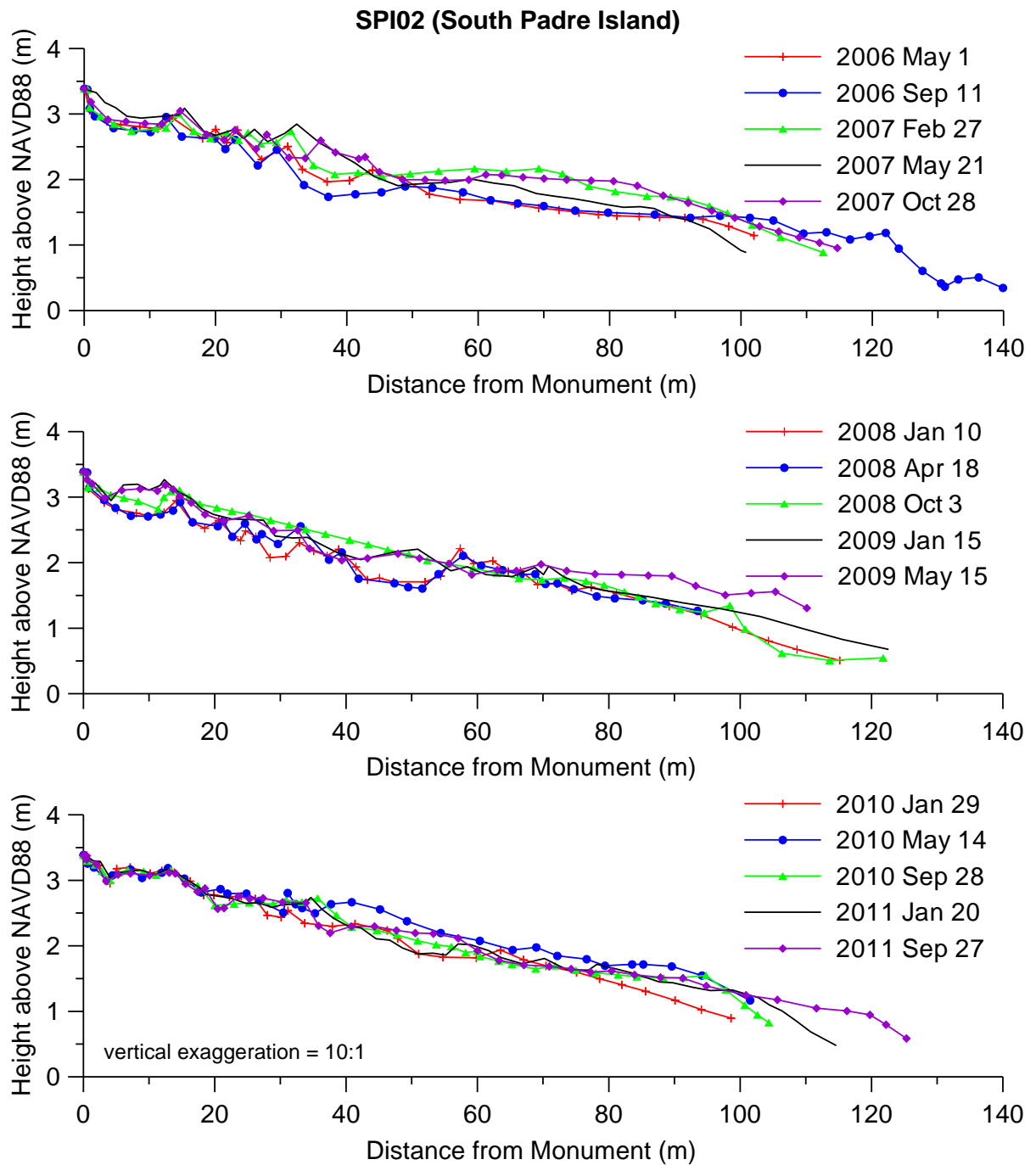


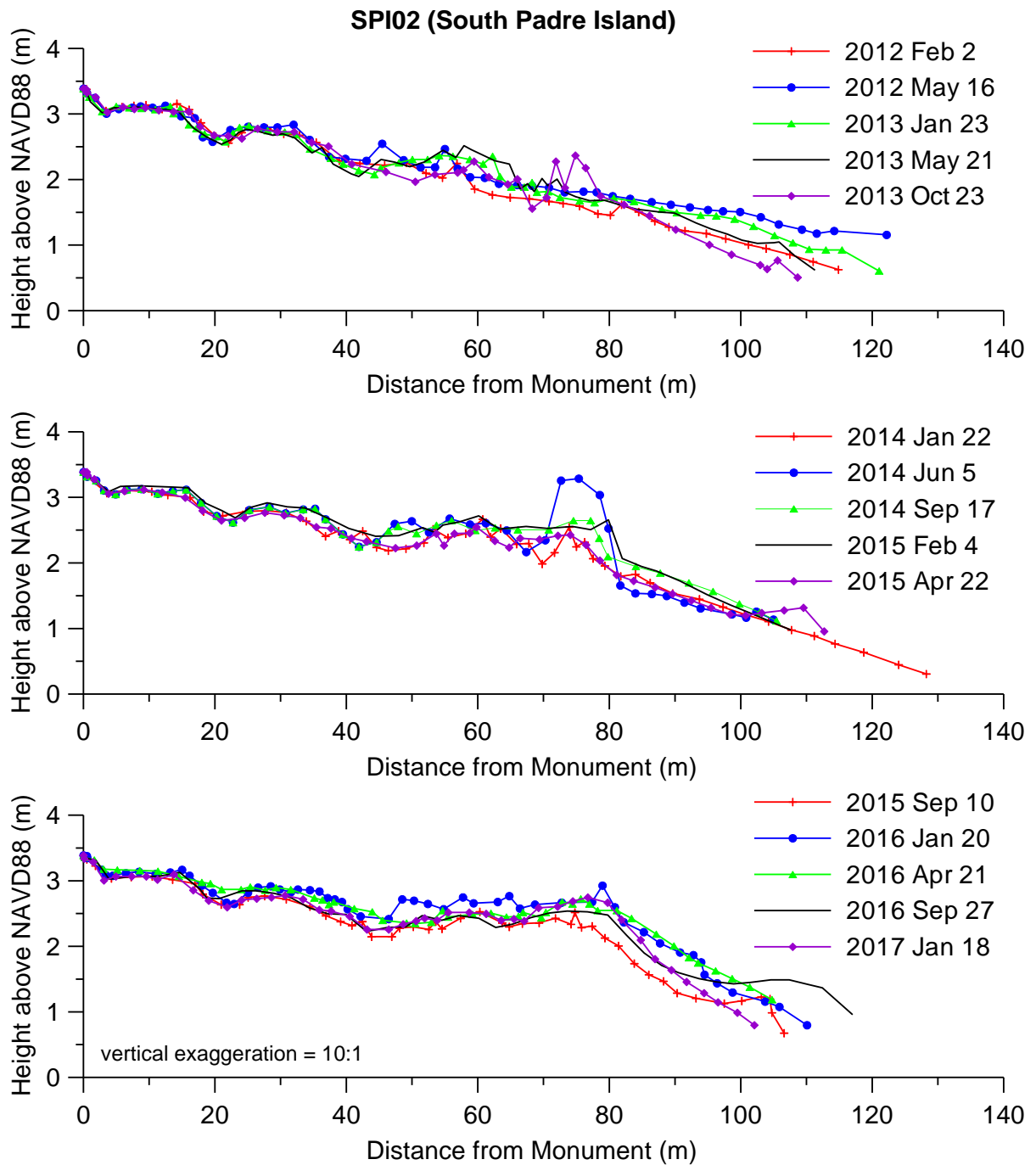


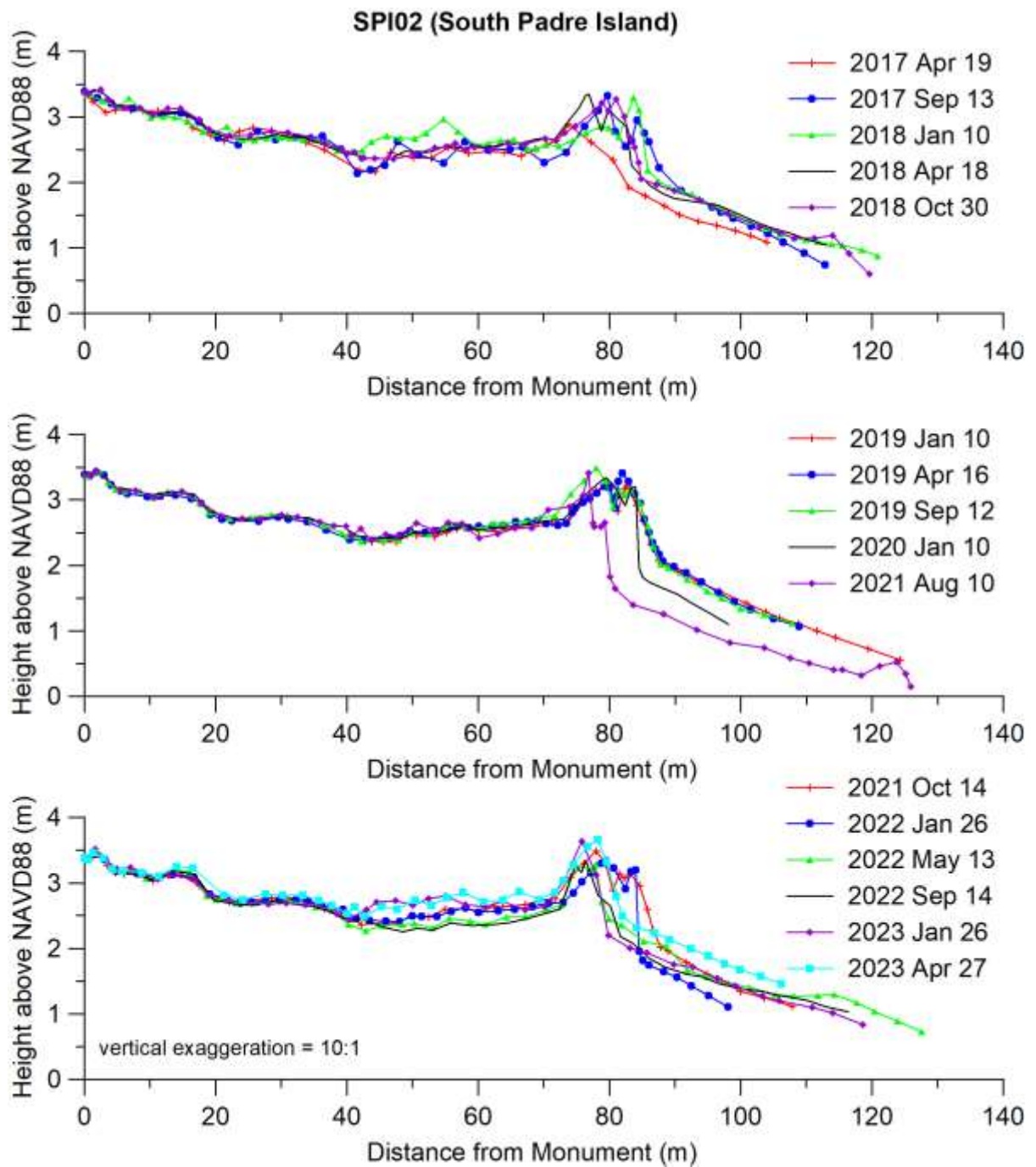


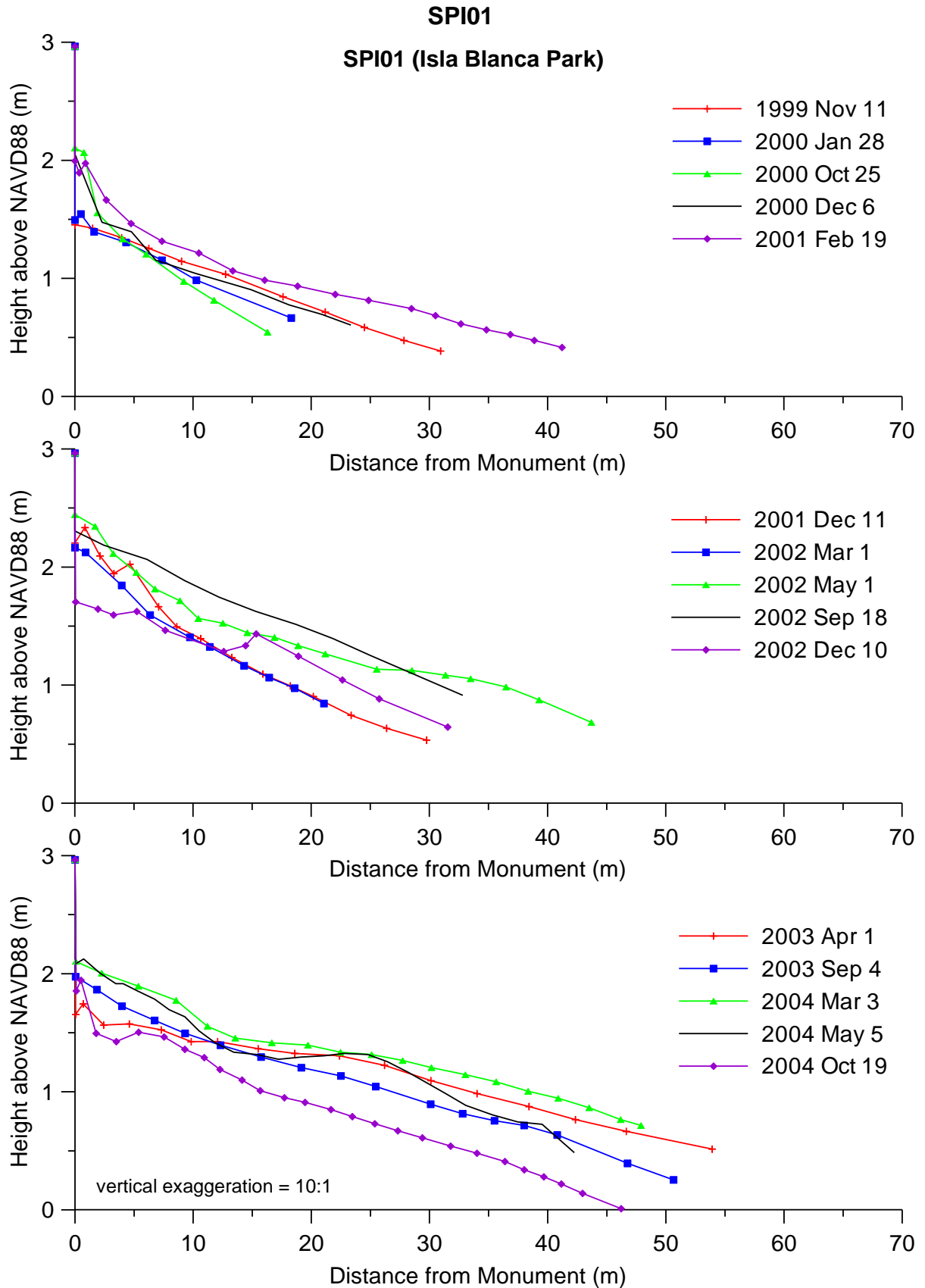
SPI02 **SPI02 (South Padre Island)**

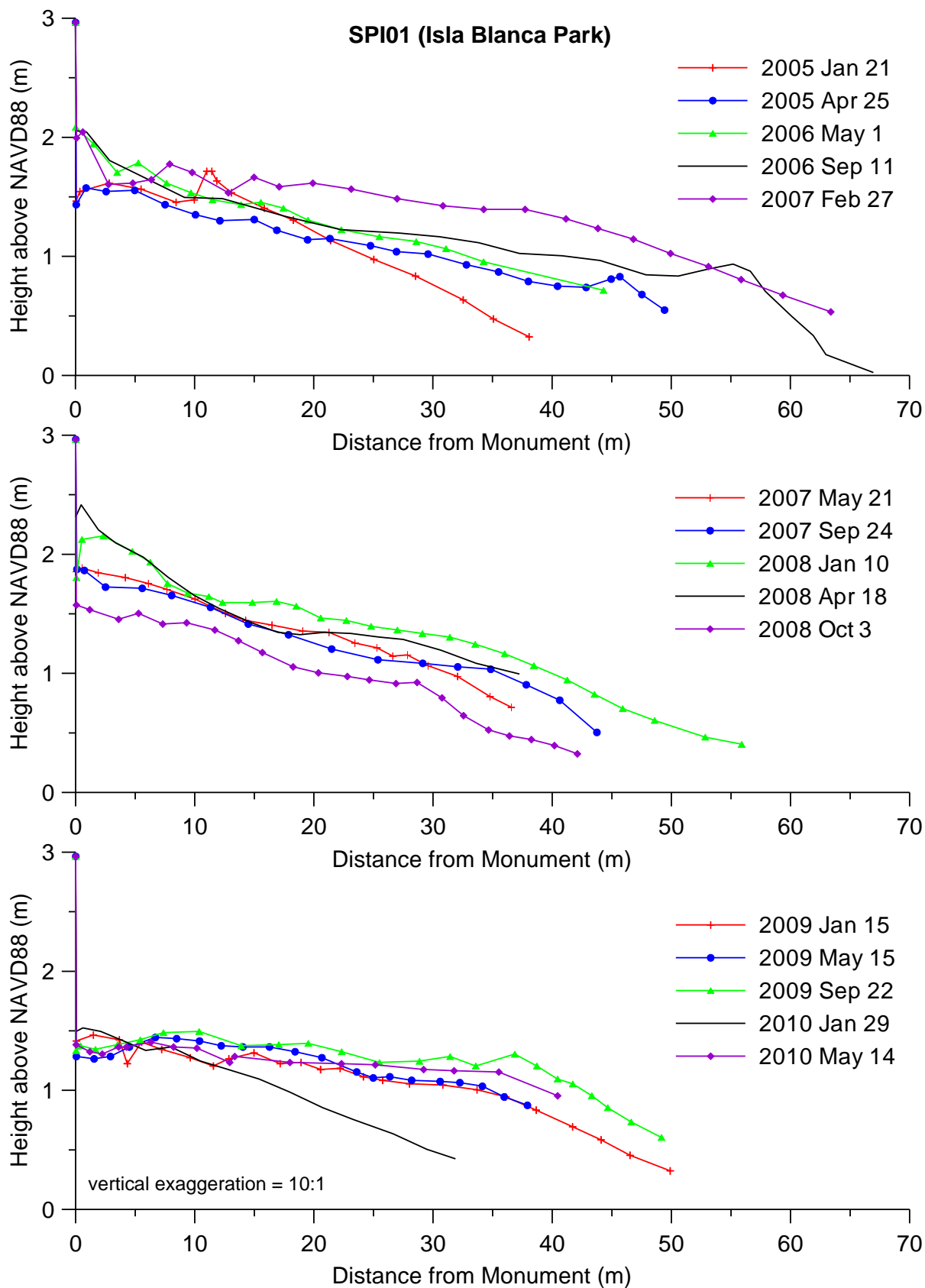


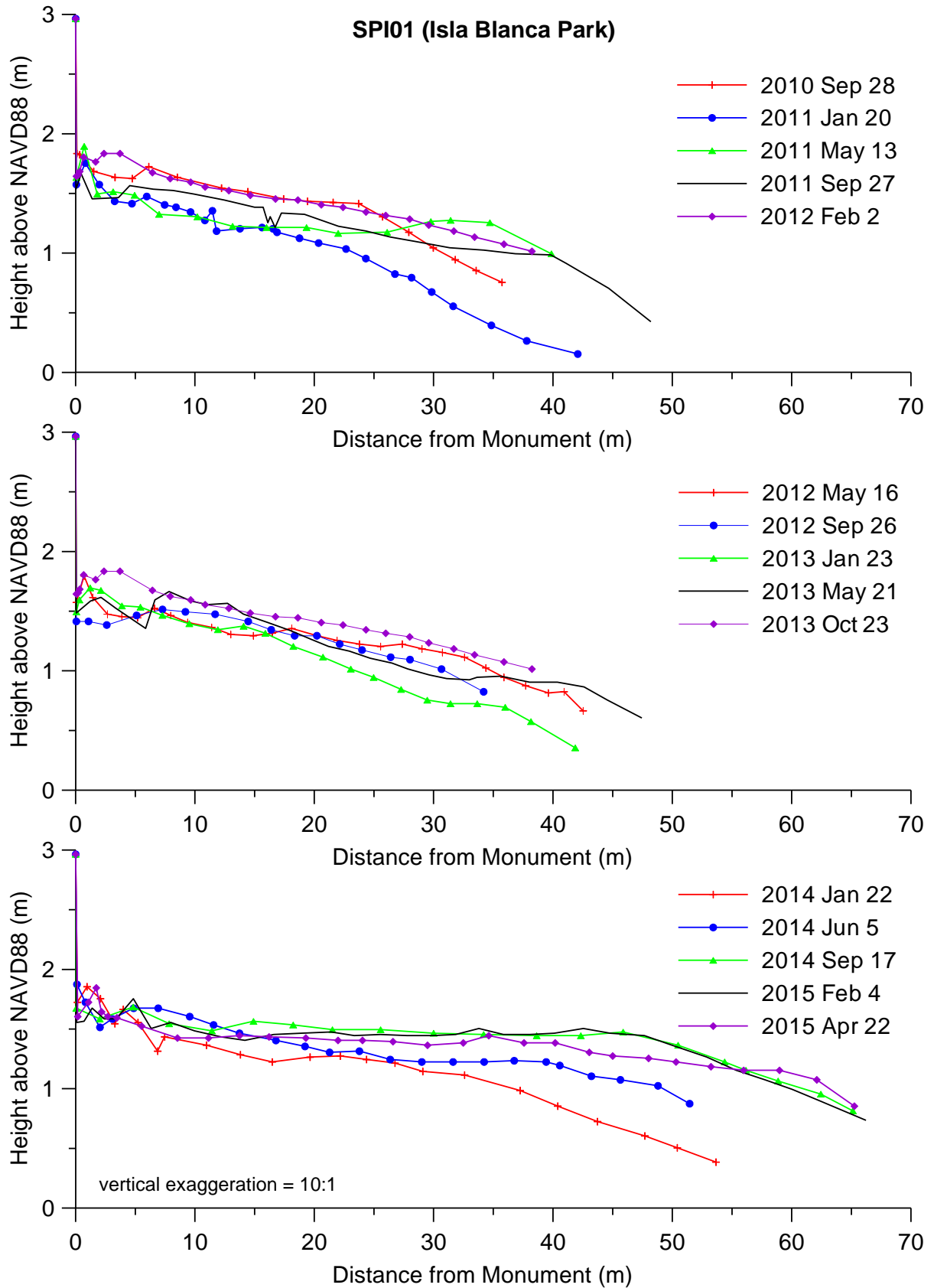


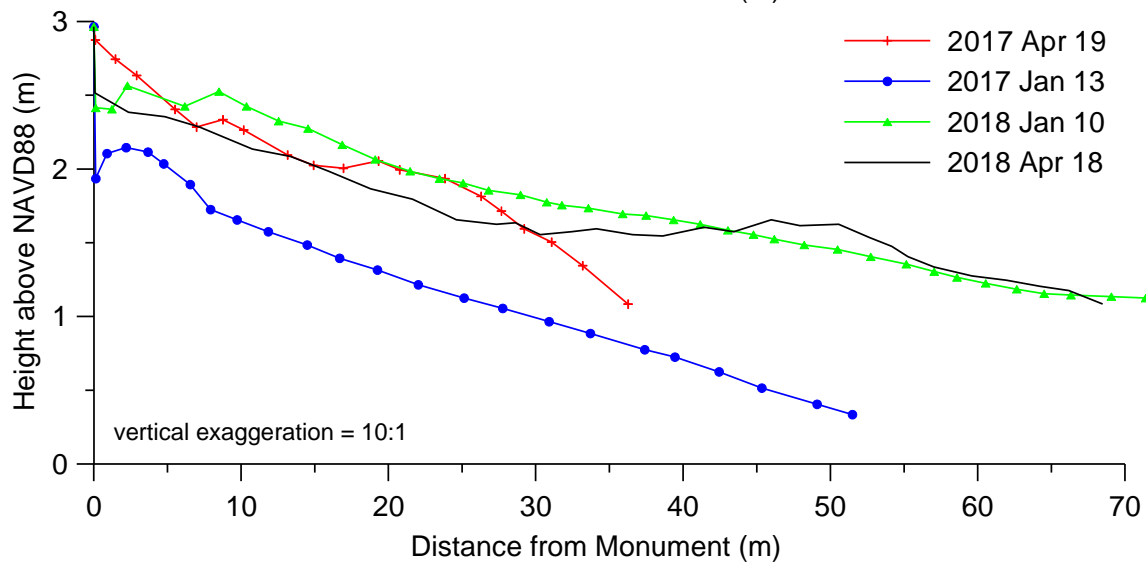
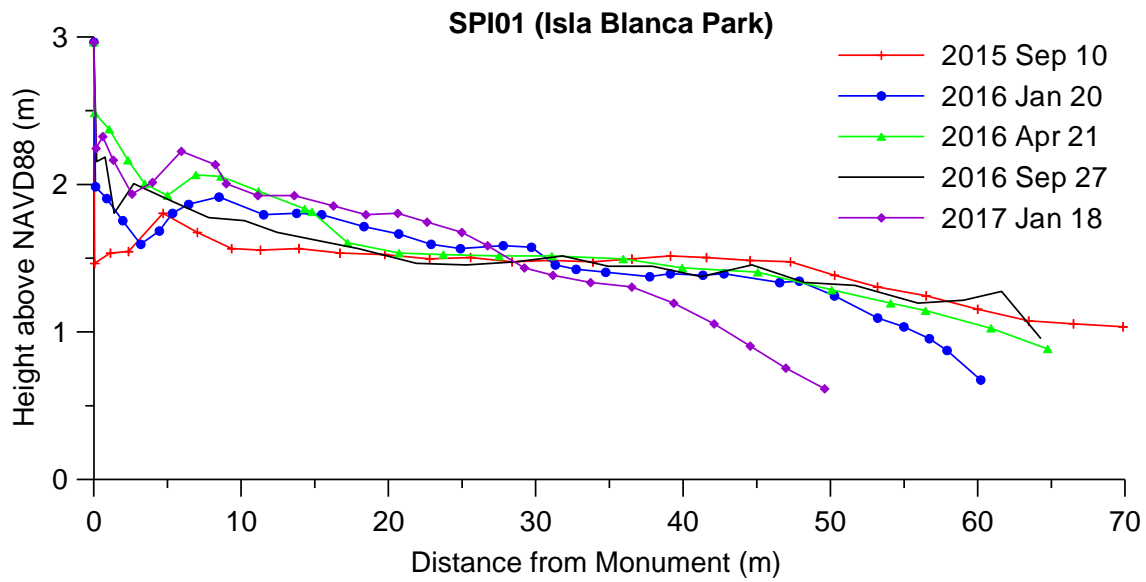




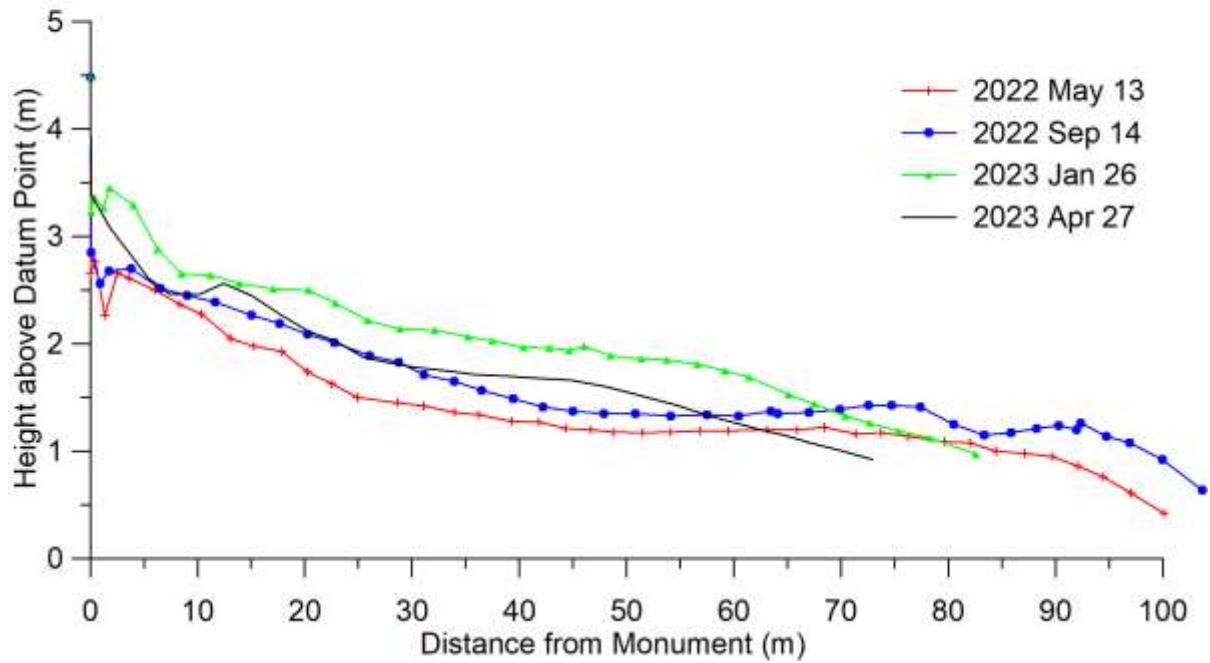
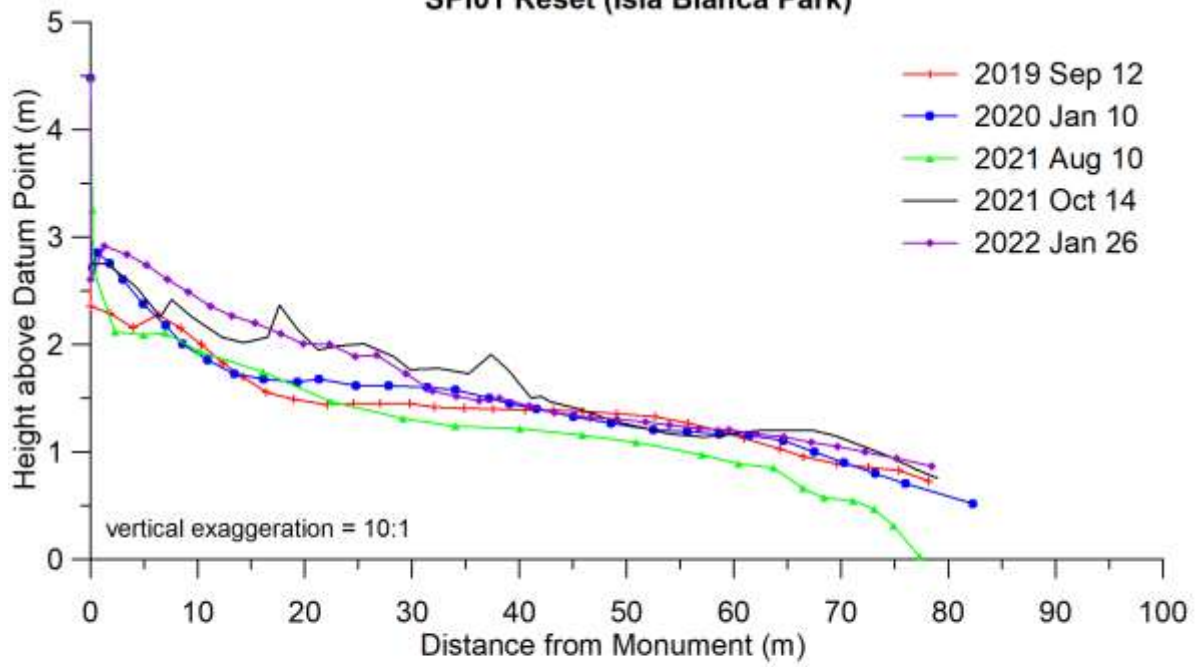








SPI01R **SPI01 Reset (Isla Blanca Park)**



APPENDIX D: MAPS OF GPS SHORELINE AND VEGETATION LINE POSITIONS

