

WHITE OAK CREEK MITIGATION SITE

2006 Annual Monitoring Report (Year 5)

Johnson County

EEP Project No. 417

Design Firm: Rummel, Klepper & Kahl, LLP

NCDOT Format

Prepared for:



NCDENR/ ECOSYSTEM ENHANCEMENT CENTER

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WHITE OAK CREEK MITIGATION SITE

2006 Annual Monitoring Report (Year 5)

SUMMARY

The White Oak Creek Mitigation Site (Site) was constructed for “up-front” wetland restoration by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to be used for compensatory mitigation requirements involving roadway impact to wetlands in the Neuse River Basin. Through an agreement with the Ecosystem Enhancement Program (EEP) to the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), EEP has accepted the transfer of all off-site mitigation projects. Therefore, EEP will be responsible for fulfilling the remaining requirements and future remediation for the Site. The NCDOT monitoring report format has been retained for clarity and continuity.

The following report summarizes the monitoring activities that have occurred in the past year at the Site. Site construction was begun in February 2002 and completed in March 2002. The Site was planted in late March 2002. In December 2002, the Site was replanted; therefore vegetation monitoring was restarted beginning in March 2003. The 2006 monitoring report represents the fourth year of vegetation monitoring and the fifth year of hydrological monitoring. The Site must demonstrate both hydrologic and vegetation success for a minimum of five years or until the Site is deemed successful.

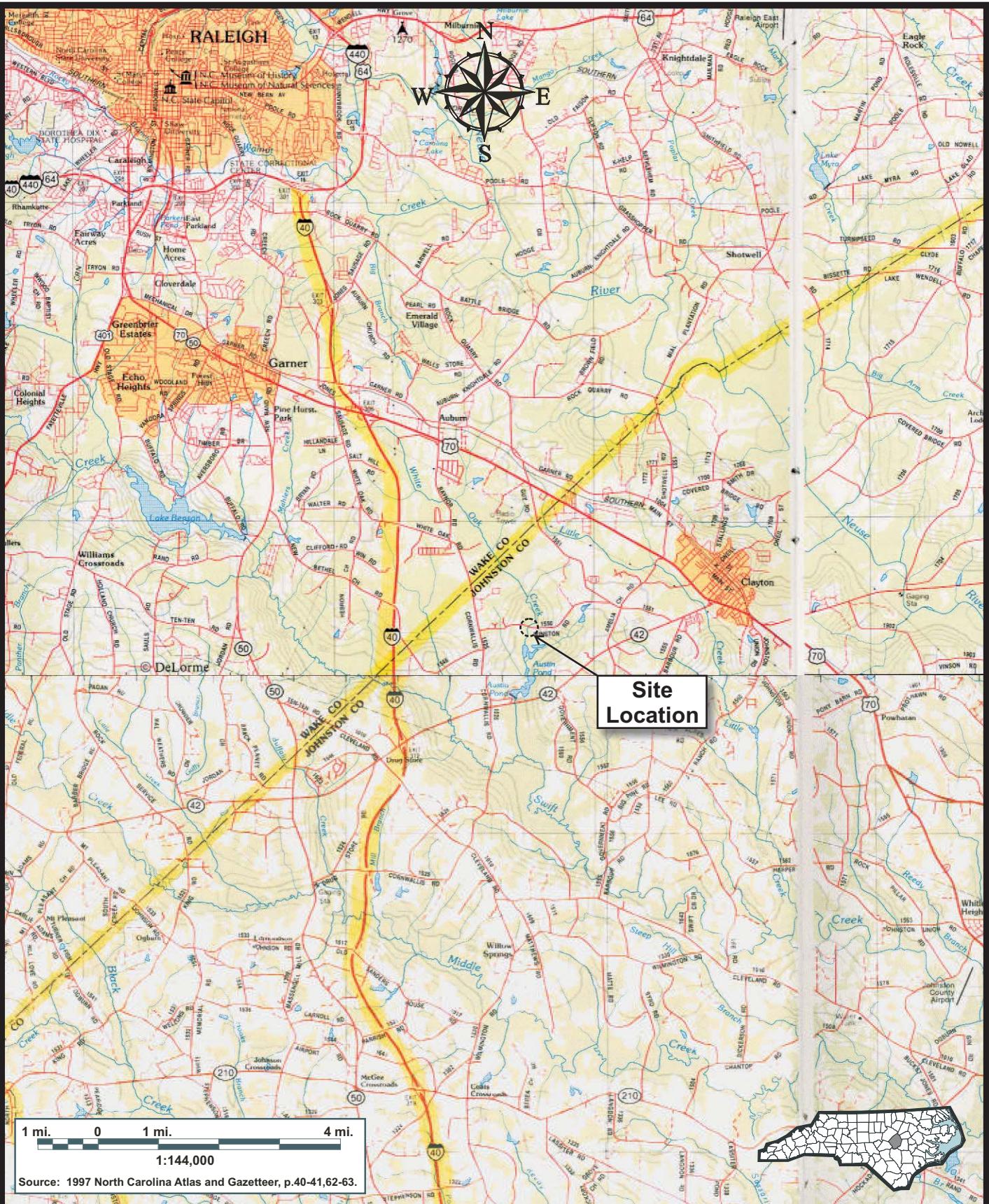
The 2006 year represents the fifth year of hydrologic monitoring of the Site. Overall, 23 of the 36 monitoring gauges met the success criteria (groundwater within 12 inches of the surface for at least 12.5 percent of the growing season). Nine monitoring gauges indicated groundwater within 12 inches of the surface for 5 to 12.5 percent of the growing season. The remaining four monitoring gauges indicated groundwater within 12 inches of the surface for 1 to 5 percent of the growing season.

The 2006 vegetation monitoring results revealed an average density of 305 trees per acre of planted species. This average is above the minimum success criteria of 290 trees per acre after the fourth growing season. Overall, 49 percent of the stems planted in the eight plots have survived.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Site is located adjacent to the west bank of White Oak Creek, immediately south of Winston Road (SR 1550) and north of Austin Pond, approximately 2.5 miles west of Clayton (Figure 1). White Oak Creek flows south for approximately 2 miles to the confluence with Swift Creek. The Site is located in hydrologic unit 03020201110040 (USGS). The Site is bordered on the north and west by residential development. The Site’s eastern boundary is White Oak Creek, which is buffered by mature swamp and bottomland hardwood forest communities.



Raleigh, North Carolina

SITE LOCATION

White Oak Creek Mitigation Site

Johnston County, North Carolina
EEP Project # 417

Dwn. by:	MAF
Ckd by:	JWG
Date:	DEC 2006
Project:	06-282.01

FIGURE

1

The Site comprises approximately 50.7 acres of previously open pasture land that was used for grazing horses. The Site was restored to promote natural plant communities and provide water quality benefits to the area. Construction at the Site was begun in January 2002 and completed in March 2002. Planting of the Site was completed in March 2002. Poor vegetation establishment required a second planting in December of 2002. Monitoring of the Site was restarted in 2003.

1.2 PURPOSE

In order to demonstrate successful wetland mitigation, hydrological and vegetative monitoring must be conducted for a minimum of five consecutive years. Success criteria are based on federal guidelines for wetland mitigation. These guidelines stipulate criteria for both hydrological conditions and vegetation survival. The following report details the results of hydrological and vegetative monitoring at the Site during the 2006 growing season.

Included in this report are analyses of both hydrologic and vegetative monitoring results, as well as local climate conditions throughout the growing season, and site photographs.

1.3 PROJECT HISTORY

January-March 2002	Site Construction
March 2002	Site Planted
August 2002	Vegetation Monitoring (1 year)
March-November 2002	Hydrologic Monitoring (1 year)
December 2002	Site Replanted
June 2003	Vegetation Monitoring (Restart 1 year)
March-November 2003	Hydrologic Monitoring (2 year)
June 2004	Vegetation Monitoring (2 year)
March-November 2004	Hydrologic Monitoring (3 year)
October 2005	Vegetation Monitoring (3 year)
March-November 2005	Hydrologic Monitoring (4 year)
October 2006	Vegetation Monitoring (4 year)
March-November 2006	Hydrologic Monitoring (5 year)

2.0 HYDROLOGY

2.1 SUCCESS CRITERIA

In accordance with federal guidelines for wetland mitigation, the success criteria for hydrology state that the restoration areas must be inundated or saturated (within 12 inches of the surface) by surface water or groundwater for at least 12.5 percent of the growing season (consecutive days) during a normal precipitation year. Areas that have between 5 and 12.5 percent of the growing season may be considered hydric under certain conditions. Areas inundated for less than 5 percent of the growing season are always classified as non-wetlands.

The growing season in Johnson County begins March 21 and ends November 4. These dates correspond to a 50 percent probability that temperatures will not drop to 28 degrees Fahrenheit or lower after March 21 and before November 4 (Natural Resources Conservation Service, Soil Survey of Johnston County). The growing season is 228 days.

2.2 HYDROLOGIC DESCRIPTION

In March 2002, 38 Remote Data Systems (RDS) continuous logging groundwater gauges were installed. Thirty-six of these gauges were installed within the Site and two were installed as reference gauges on an adjacent property. The on-site gauge locations are shown on Figure 2, Appendix A). The monitoring gauges record daily readings of depth to groundwater. This year's data represents the fifth growing season that the gauges have been monitored. The reference gauges are non-functioning and are not currently being monitored. The Site was designed to receive hydrologic inputs from rainfall, groundwater, and surface water from overbanking events.

2.3 RESULTS OF HYDROLOGIC MONITORING

2.3.1 Site Data

The maximum number of consecutive days that groundwater was within 12 inches of the surface was calculated for each monitoring gauge and converted into a percentage of the 228-day growing season (March 21-November 4). The results are presented in Table 1.

Appendix B contains the hydrographs for each monitoring gauge for the current monitoring year. The corresponding rain data collected from the on-site rain gauge is also provided on each hydrograph.

Figure 2 provides a graphical representation of the hydrologic results. Gauges highlighted in green indicate wetland hydrology for more than 12.5 percent of the growing season. Gauges highlighted in yellow are those that had wetland hydrology between 5 and 12.5 percent of the growing season. Gauges highlighted in red are those that had wetland hydrology less than 5 percent of the growing season.

Table 1. White Oak Hydrologic Monitoring Results

Monitoring Gauge*	<5%	5-12.5%	>12.5%	Actual %	Success Date
GW-1	✓			4	
GW-2		✓		9	
GW-3			✓	94	April 3 – November 4
GW-4			✓	100	March 21 – November 4
GW-5			✓	94	April 3 – November 4
GW-6		✓		11	
GW-7	✓			3	
GW-8			✓	15	April 23 – May 28
GW-9			✓	60	March 21 – August 8
GW-10		✓		9	
GW-11			✓	62	March 21 – August 11
GW-12		✓		6	
GW-13			✓	31	March 21 – May 31
GW-14		✓		10	
GW-15	✓			1	
GW-16			✓	100	March 21 – November 4
GW-17			✓	62	March 21 – August 10
GW-18			✓	33	March 21 – June 6
GW-19		✓		8	
GW-20			✓	13	March 21 – April 20
GW-21			✓	13	March 21 – April 19

GW-22		✓		10	
GW-23		✓		11	
GW-24			✓	30	March 21 – May 28
GW-25			✓	35	March 21 – June 8
GW-26			✓	19	March 21 – May 4
GW-27			✓	50	March 21 – July 14
GW-28			✓	33	March 21 – June 6
GW-29			✓	14	March 21 – April 21
GW-30	✓			1	
GW-31			✓	100	March 21 – November 4
GW-32			✓	100	March 21 – November 4
GW-33		✓		9	
GW-34			✓	52	March 21 – July 16
GW-35			✓	50	March 21 – July 12
GW-36			✓	62	March 21 – August 19

*Monitoring gauges 1, 7, 8, 10, 13, 20, 23, 26, and 28 were reinstalled with a new bentonite seal prior to the 2006 growing season.

2.3.2 Climatic Data

Figure 3 (Appendix A) provides an evaluation of the local climate in comparison with historical data in order to determine whether 2006 was a year with “average” rainfall. The bars are the monthly rainfall totals for the 2006 hydrologic year collected from the on-site rain gauge. Also represented on the figure are the 30th and 70th percentiles of monthly precipitation for the Clayton weather station. The historical data and monthly data were collected by the Southeast Regional Climate Data.

Months with below average rainfall include: January, February, March, July, August, and September. The months of April and October experienced average rainfall. May and June

received above average rainfall. A normal yearly rainfall in the area is approximately 45.7 inches.

2.4 CONCLUSION

The current year represents the fifth year of hydrologic monitoring. In general, water levels showed a typical pattern of flooding during the spring, followed by a late summer and fall draw down period, punctuated by peaks associated with precipitation events. The 2006 year represents the fifth year of hydrologic monitoring of the Site. Overall, 23 of the 36 monitoring gauges met the success criteria (groundwater within 12 inches of the surface for at least 12.5 percent of the growing season). Nine monitoring gauges indicated groundwater within 12 inches of the surface for 5 to 12.5 percent of the growing season. The remaining four monitoring gauges indicated groundwater within 12 inches of the surface for 1 to 5 percent of the growing season. Gauges 1 and 10 indicated saturation for a much shorter period compared to the 2005 growing season. Gauges 1 and 10 are two of the gauges that were reinstalled prior to the 2006 growing season due to deteriorated bentonite seals. During the 2006 growing season the new bentonite seals stopped surface water from entering the gauge. The monitoring results for 2006 for gauges 1 and 10 are a more accurate indicator of the hydrologic conditions in the areas adjacent to the gauges compared to the 2005 monitoring results.

3.0 VEGETATION

3.1 SUCCESS CRITERIA

The success criteria state that at least 320 stems per acre must survive after the completion of the third growing season. The required survival criterion will decrease by 10 percent per year after the third year of vegetation monitoring (i.e., for an expected 290 stems per acre for year 4 and 260 stems per acre for year 5. Photograph locations are shown in Figure 4 (Appendix A). Site photographs are provided in Appendix C.

3.2 DESCRIPTION OF SPECIES

The following tree species were planted in the Wetland Areas:

Zone 1: Wetland Restoration Area (10.03 Acres)

Quercus lyrata, Overcup Oak
Quercus michauxii, Swamp Chestnut Oak
Quercus phellos, Willow Oak
Quercus nigra, Water Oak
Nyssa sylvatica var. *biflora*, Swamp Blackgum
Fraxinus pennsylvanica, Green Ash
Cornus amomum, Silky Dogwood
Sambucus canadensis, Elderberry
Cephalanthus occidentalis, Buttonbush

Zone 2: Wetland Enhancement Area (1.58 Acres)

Quercus lyrata, Overcup Oak
Quercus michauxii, Swamp Chestnut Oak
Quercus phellos, Willow Oak
Quercus nigra, Water Oak
Nyssa sylvatica var. *biflora*, Swamp Blackgum
Fraxinus pennsylvanica, Green Ash
Cornus amomum, Silky Dogwood
Sambucus canadensis, Elderberry
Cephalanthus occidentalis, Buttonbush

Zone 3: Wetland Creation Area (6.59 Acres)

Quercus lyrata, Overcup Oak
Quercus michauxii, Swamp Chestnut Oak
Quercus phellos, Willow Oak
Quercus nigra, Water Oak
Nyssa sylvatica var. *biflora*, Swamp Blackgum
Fraxinus pennsylvanica, Green Ash

3.3 RESULTS OF VEGETATION MONITORING

RESULTS OF VEGETATION MONITORING

The following table lists the densities of planted tree species recorded in each established 0.06-acre (50-foot by 50-foot) plot. (Figure 4, Appendix A).

TABLE 2: Vegetation Monitoring Statistics

Plot Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total
Buttonbush <i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i>		2	2					3	7
Elderberry <i>Sambucus canadensis</i>			3	3			3	1	10
Green Ash <i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>	2	10	3	4	6	6	3	4	38
Overcup Oak <i>Quercus lyrata</i>	1	3	1	1		2	1	6	15
Silky Dogwood <i>Cornus amomum</i>	5	11	8	10	4		4	2	44
Swamp Blackgum <i>Nyssa sylvatica</i> var. <i>biflora</i>	5					1			6
Swamp Chestnut Oak <i>Quercus michauxii</i>	2	1		2	1		4	1	11
Water Oak <i>Quercus nigra</i>	1						2		3
Willow Oak <i>Quercus phellos</i>	3	1					1	1	6
Total (2006, Year 4)	19	28	17	20	11	9	18	18	140
Total (2005, Year 3)	21	22	18	15	12	10	21	17	115
Total (2003, Year 1)	30	28	40	17	31	21	39	22	198
Total (2002, at Planting)	40	38	45	24	37	31	40	32	247
Density (Trees/Acre)	331	488	296	348	192	157	314	314	
Average Density (Trees/Acre)									305

Stem counts were made of additional, volunteer woody species within the study plots. These are listed in Table 3.

TABLE 3: Volunteer Woody Stem Counts in the Study Plots.

Plot Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	TOTAL
Black Willow <i>Salix nigra</i>	1	2	8		1	20		1	33
Bradford Pear <i>Pyrus calleryana</i>				1	1				2
Groundsel Bush <i>Baccharis halimifolia</i>	14		2		1	1	1	4	23
Loblolly Pine <i>Pinus taeda</i>	26	3	4		6	1	52	7	99
Persimmon <i>Diospyros virginiana</i>				10					10
Red Maple <i>Acer rubrum</i>		45	20	3	2	42		38	150
Sweetgum <i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	3	5	10	2			1	3	24
Tulip Poplar <i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>		2		1					3
Wax Myrtle <i>Morella cerifera</i>	1	5	5					2	13
American Elm <i>Ulmus americana</i>		1						1	2
Winged Elm <i>Ulmus alata</i>				2					2
TOTAL	45	63	49	19	11	64	54	56	361
Density (Trees/Acre)	784	1098	854	331	192	1115	941	976	Average Density (Trees/Acre) 786

An inventory of herbaceous species on the site was also taken. Dominant herbaceous species over the site as a whole include: blackberry (*Rubus argutus*), climbing hempweed (*Mikania scandens*), common cattail (*Typha latifolia*), dog fennel (*Eupatorium capillifolium*), false nettle (*Boehmeria cylindrica*), goldenrod (*Solidago* sp.), jewelweed (*Impatiens capensis*), meadow beauty (*Rhexia mariana*), seedbox (*Ludwigia alternifolia*), soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), tearthumb (*Polygonum sagittatum*), woolgrass (*Scirpus cyperinus*), Virginia buttonweed (*Diodia virginiana*), Virginia creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*), boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*), monkey-flower (*Mimulus ringens*), beggar ticks (*Bidens frondosa*), broomsedge (*Andropogon virginicus*), fescue (*Festuca* sp.), greenbrier (*Smilax rotundifolia*), ragweed (*Ambrosia artemisiifolia*), ragwort (*Senecio* sp.), sericea lespedeza (*Lespedeza cuneata*), and trumpet creeper (*Campsis radicans*).

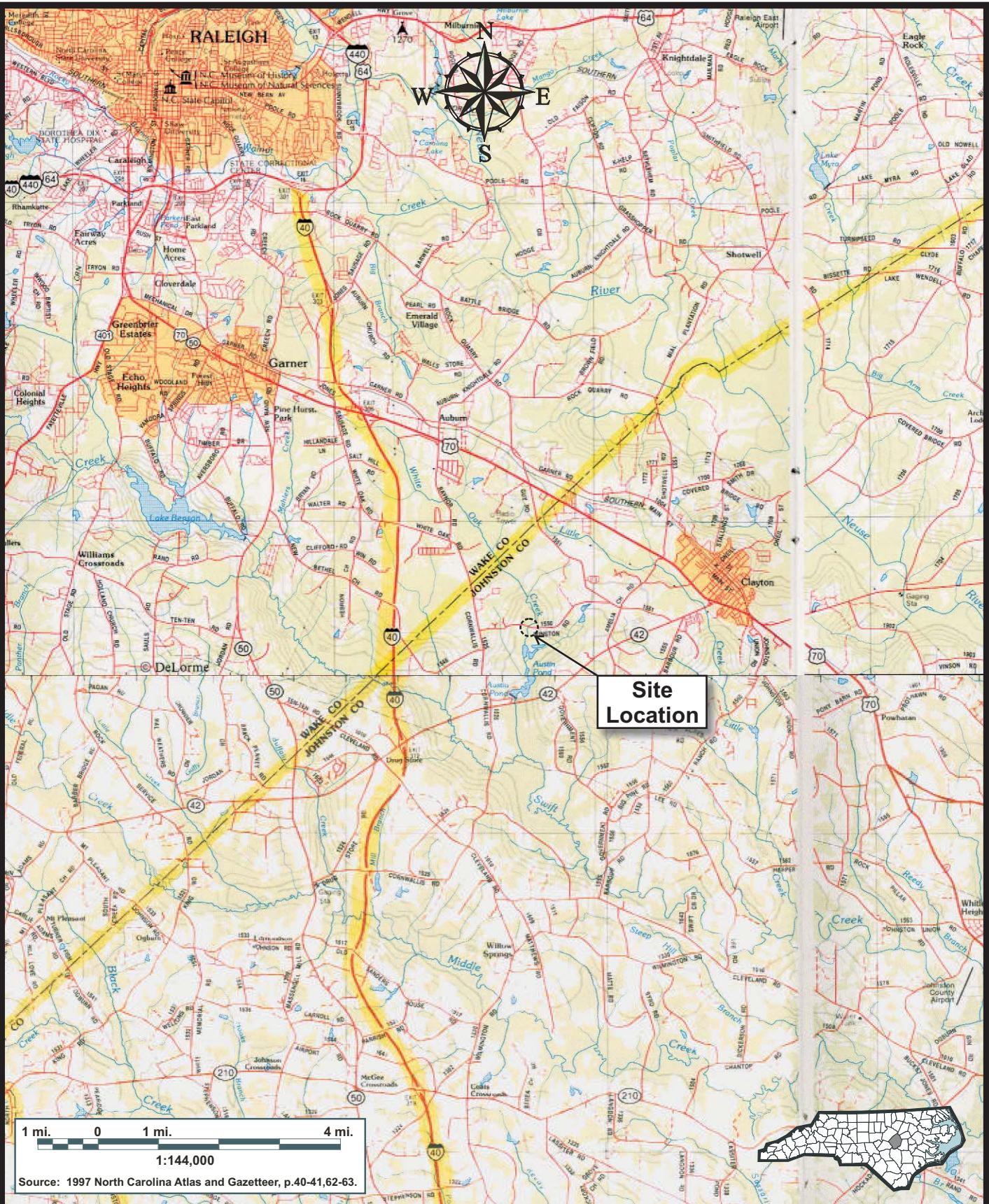
3.4 CONCLUSION

Of the 50.7 acres on this site, approximately 18.2 acres involved tree planting. Supplemental tree planting was completed in December 2002. An upland buffer area that consisted of 12.04 acres was also planted. Eight vegetation monitoring plots, 50 by 50 feet (0.06 acre) in size, were established throughout the planting areas. The 2006 vegetation monitoring results revealed an average density of 305 trees per acre of planted species. This average is above the minimum success criteria of 290 trees per acre after the fourth growing season. Overall, 49 percent of the stems planted in the eight plots survive.

Nuisance trees such as red maple and loblolly pine occur in significant amounts in some areas of the Site, as seen in Plots 1, 3, and 7. The increase in stem counts of these species over 2005, for example in Plot 1, is likely due to site characteristics and proximity to seed sources. These occurrences do not appear to have a direct effect on the survivability of planted species on the plots. However, several areas on the site are nearly devoid of vegetation with Plots 5 and 6 below minimum planted tree density.

APPENDIX A

FIGURES



Raleigh, North Carolina

SITE LOCATION

White Oak Creek Mitigation Site

Johnston County, North Carolina
EEP Project # 417

Dwn. by:	MAF
Ckd by:	JWG
Date:	DEC 2006
Project:	06-282.01

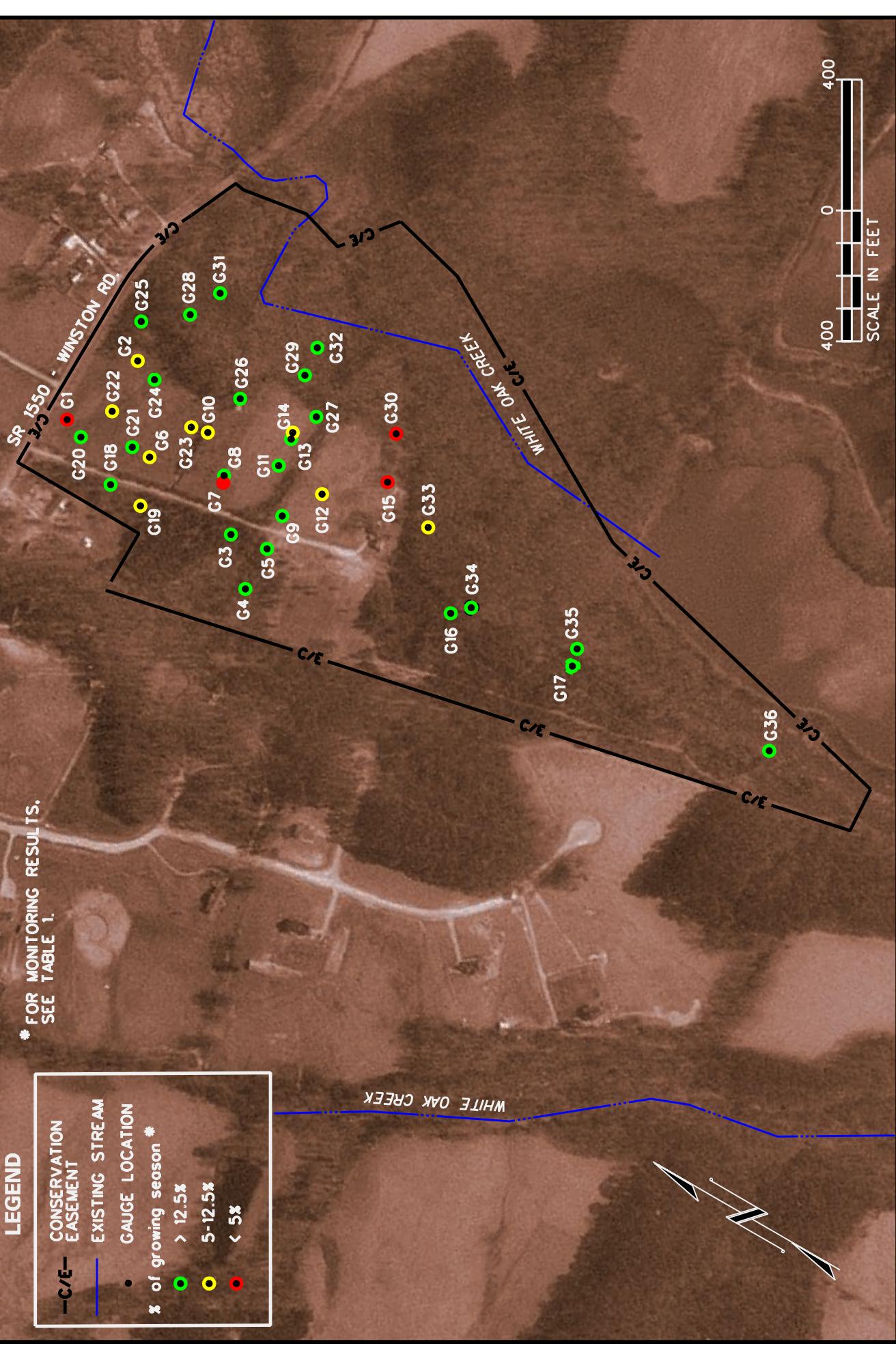
FIGURE

1

LEGEND

* FOR MONITORING RESULTS,
SEE TABLE 1.

CONSERVATION EASEMENT	EXISTING STREAM
-C/E-	
• GAUGE LOCATION	
* of growing season *	
● > 12.5x	
○ 5-12.5x	
○ < 5x	



MONITORING GAUGE LOCATIONS AND RESULTS

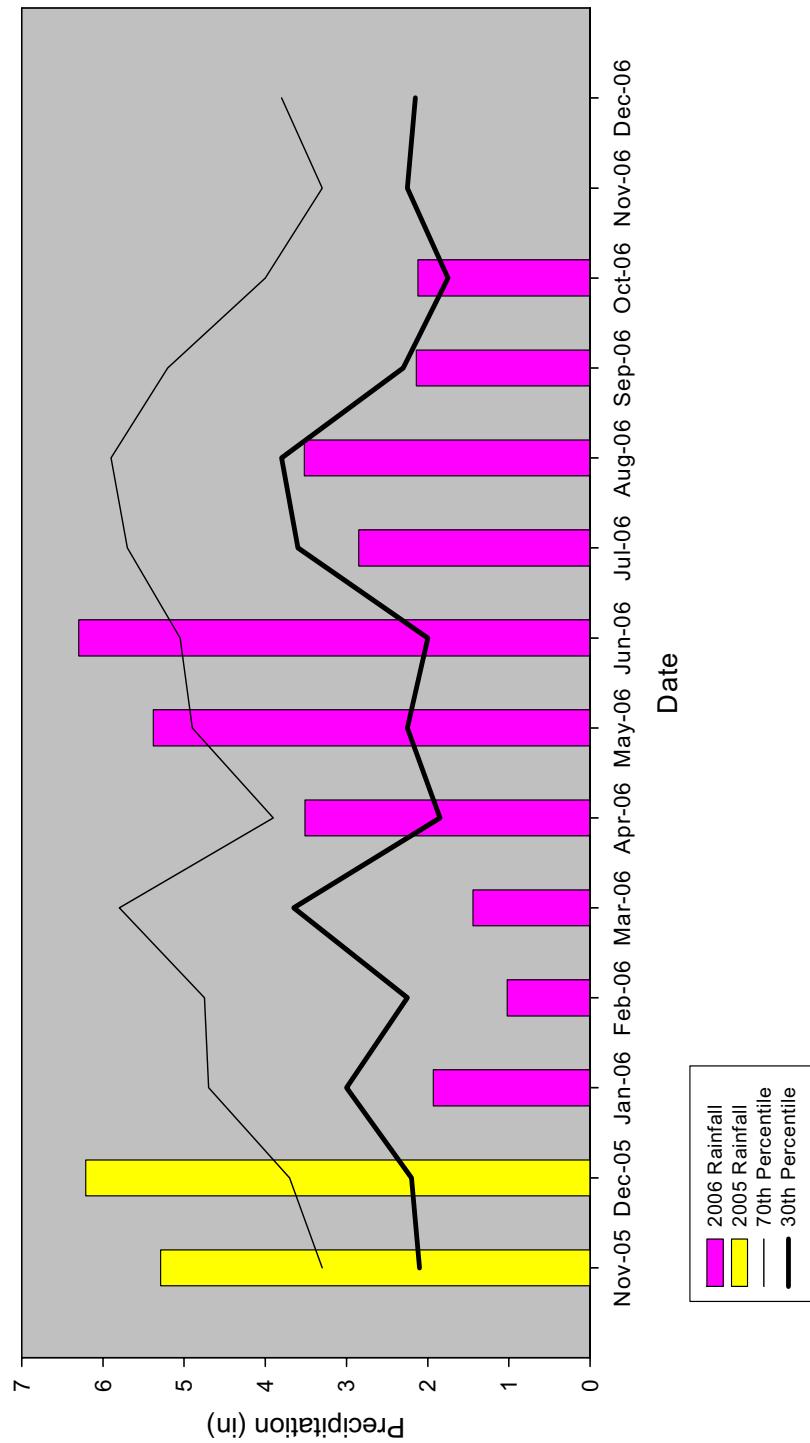
White Oak Creek Mitigation Site

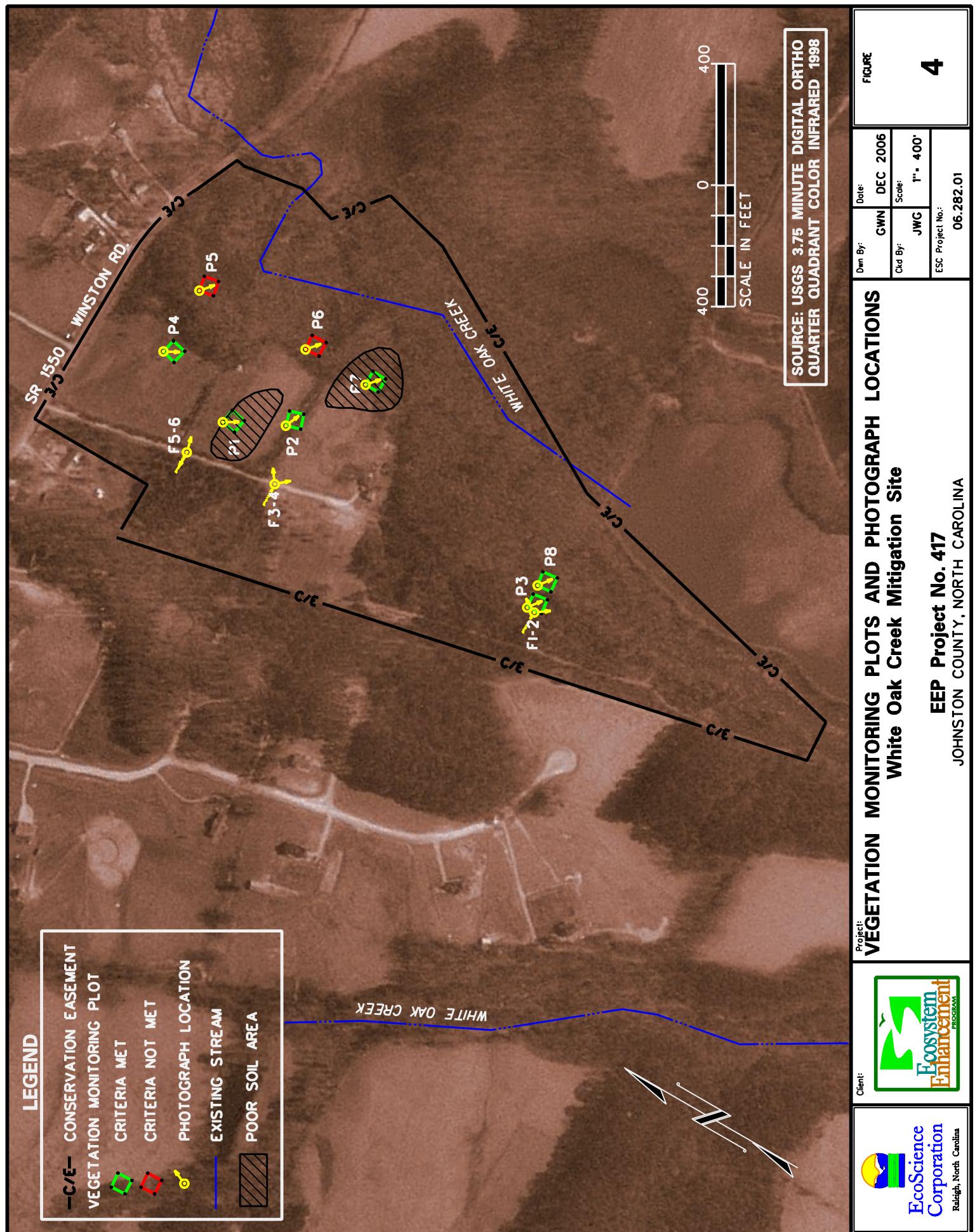
JOHNSTON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA

FIGURE		
Date: DEC 2006	Drawn By: GWN	Scale: 1" = 400'
Scale: JWG	Checked By:	Project No.: 06-282.01
ESC Project No.: 06-282.01		

2

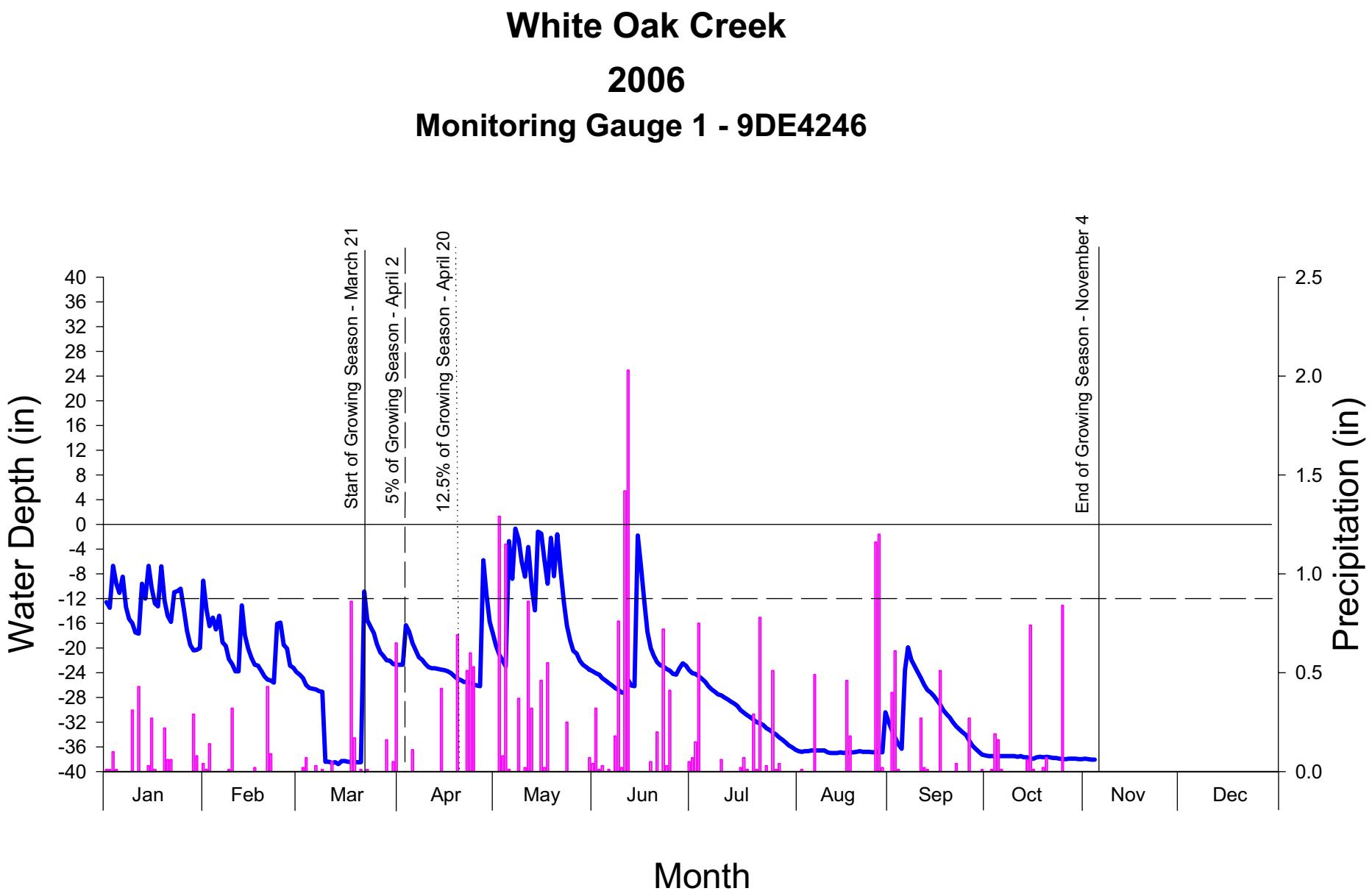
**Fig 3. White Oak Creek 30-70 Percentile Graph 2006
Clayton, NC**

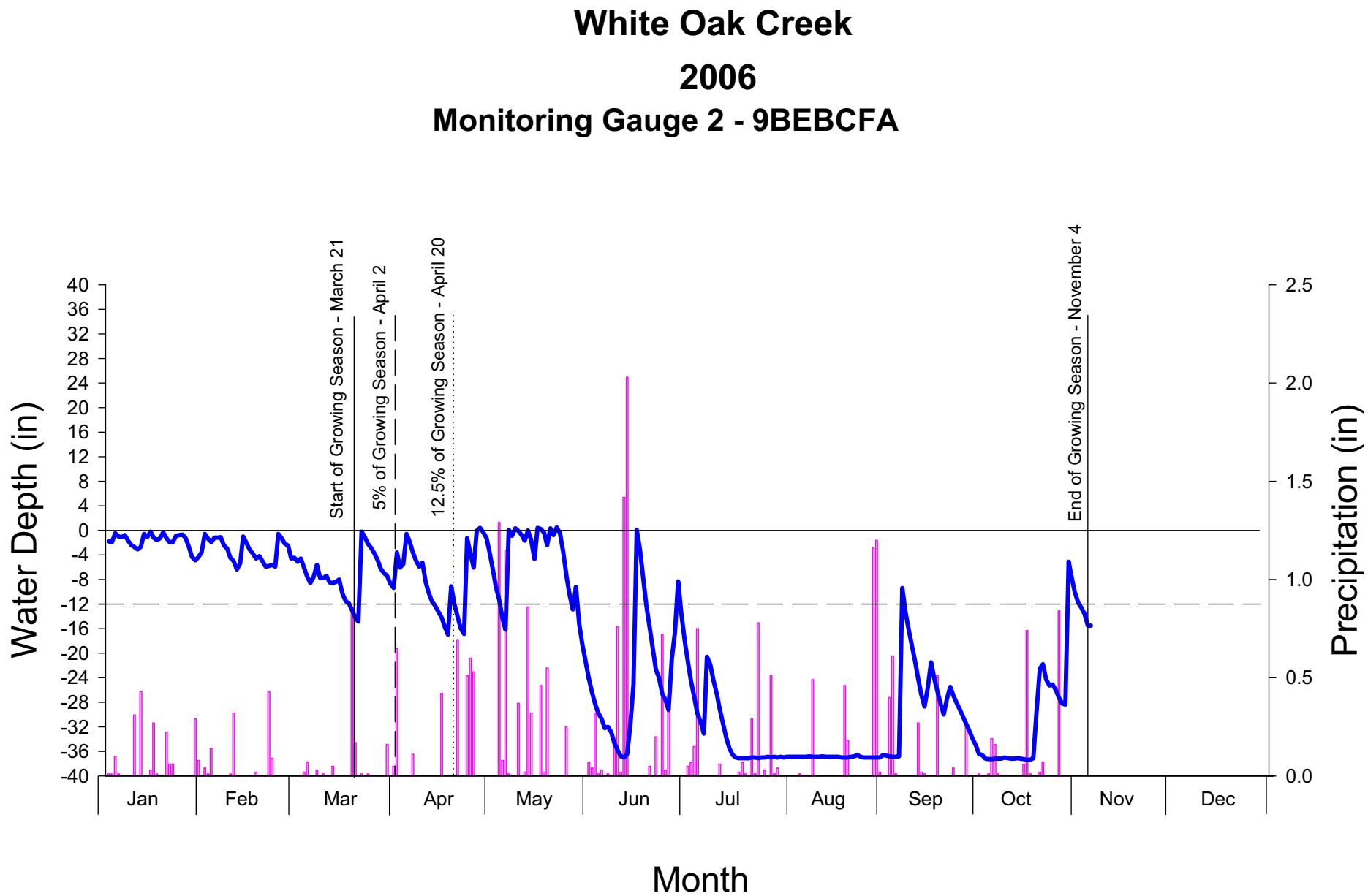


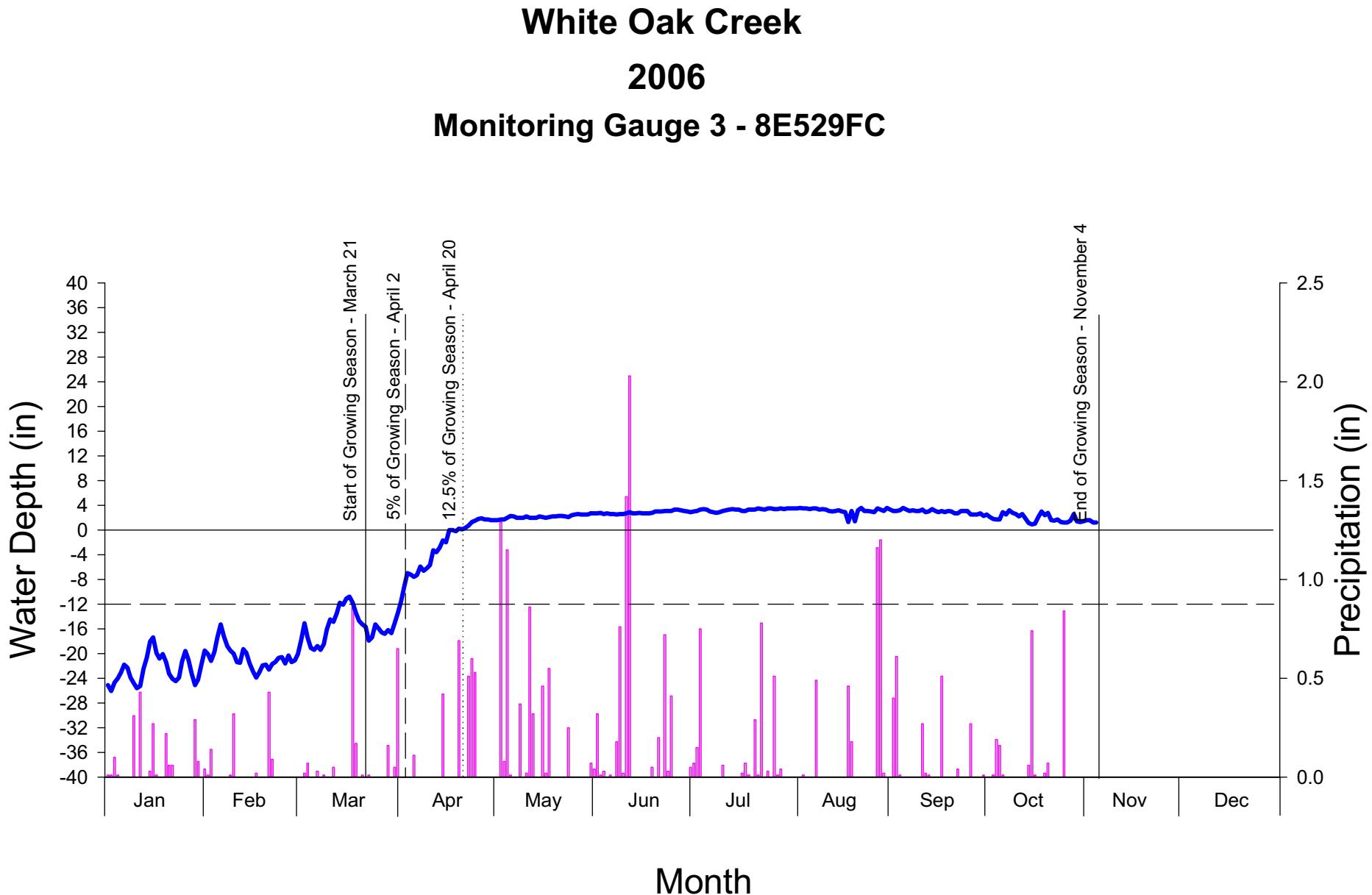


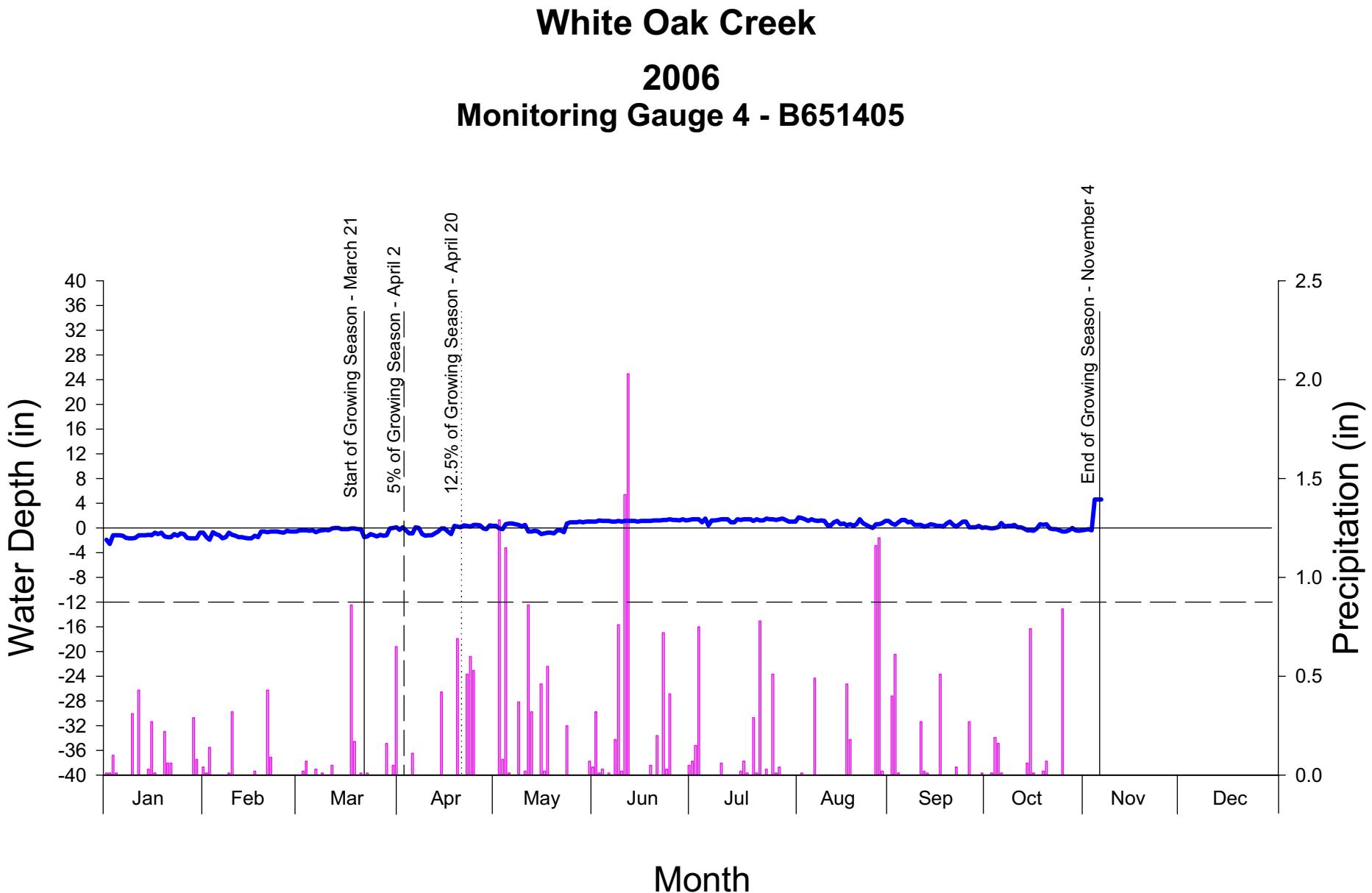
APPENDIX B

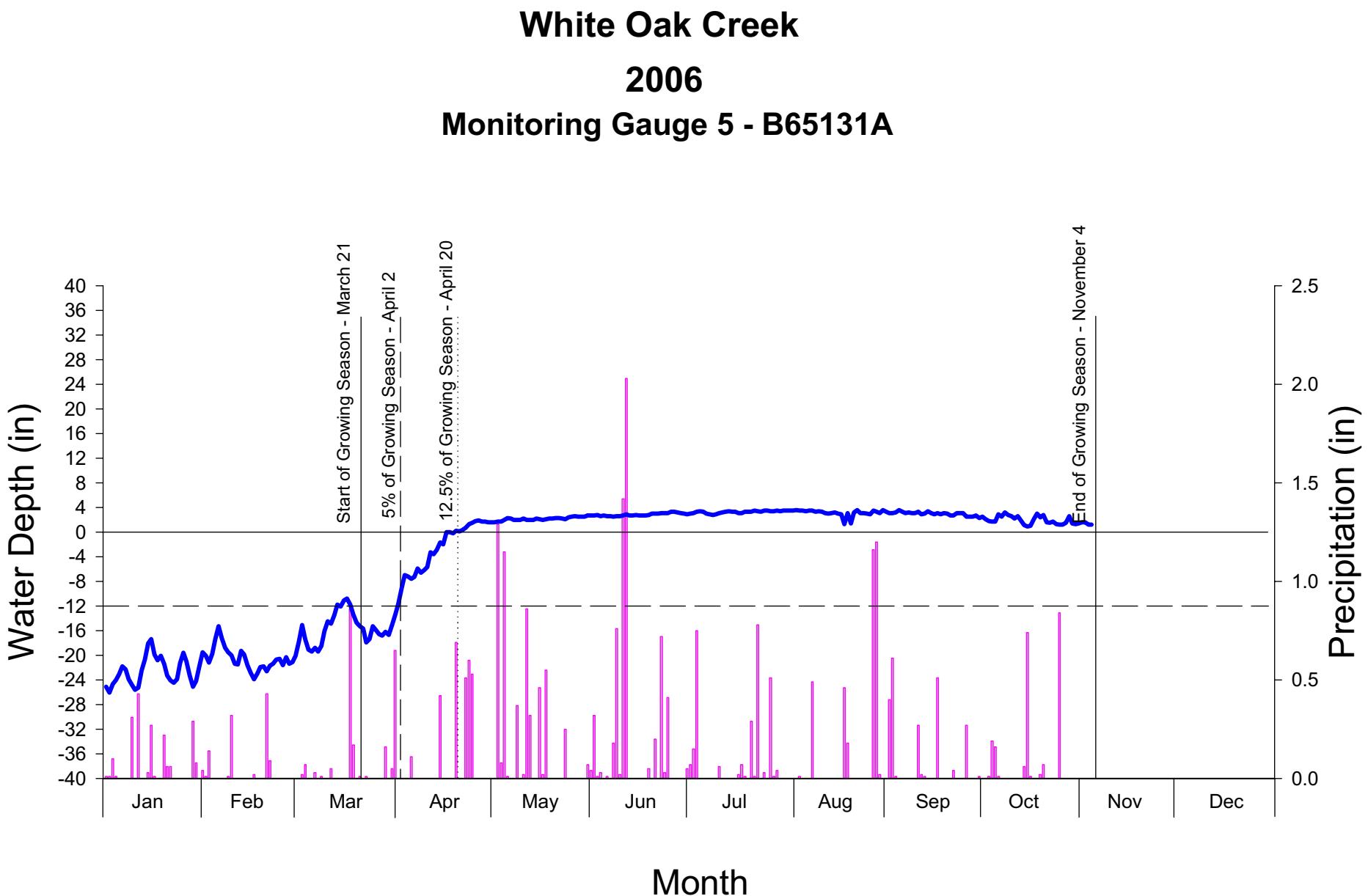
GROUNDWATER GAUGE HYDROGRAPHS

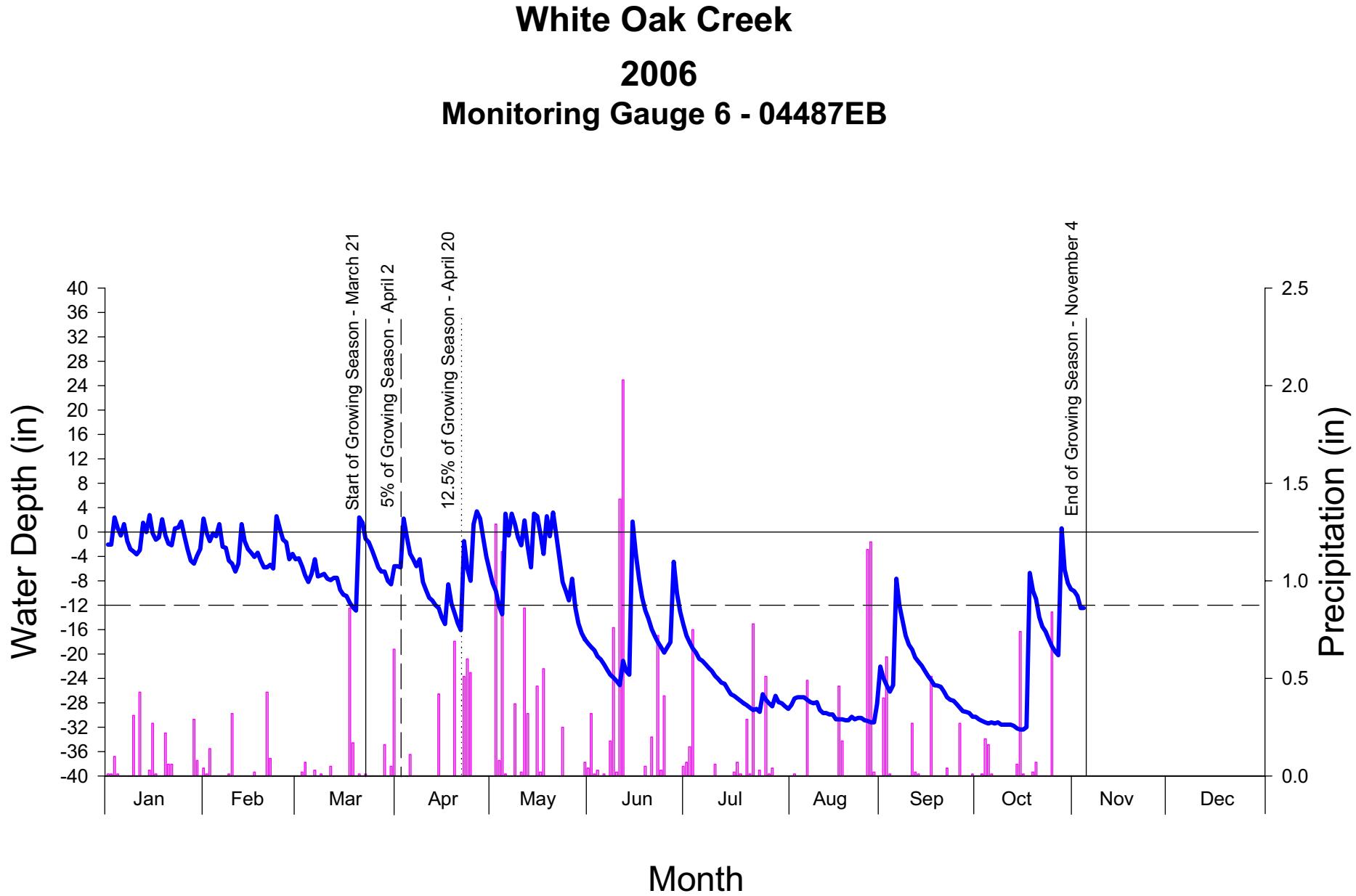


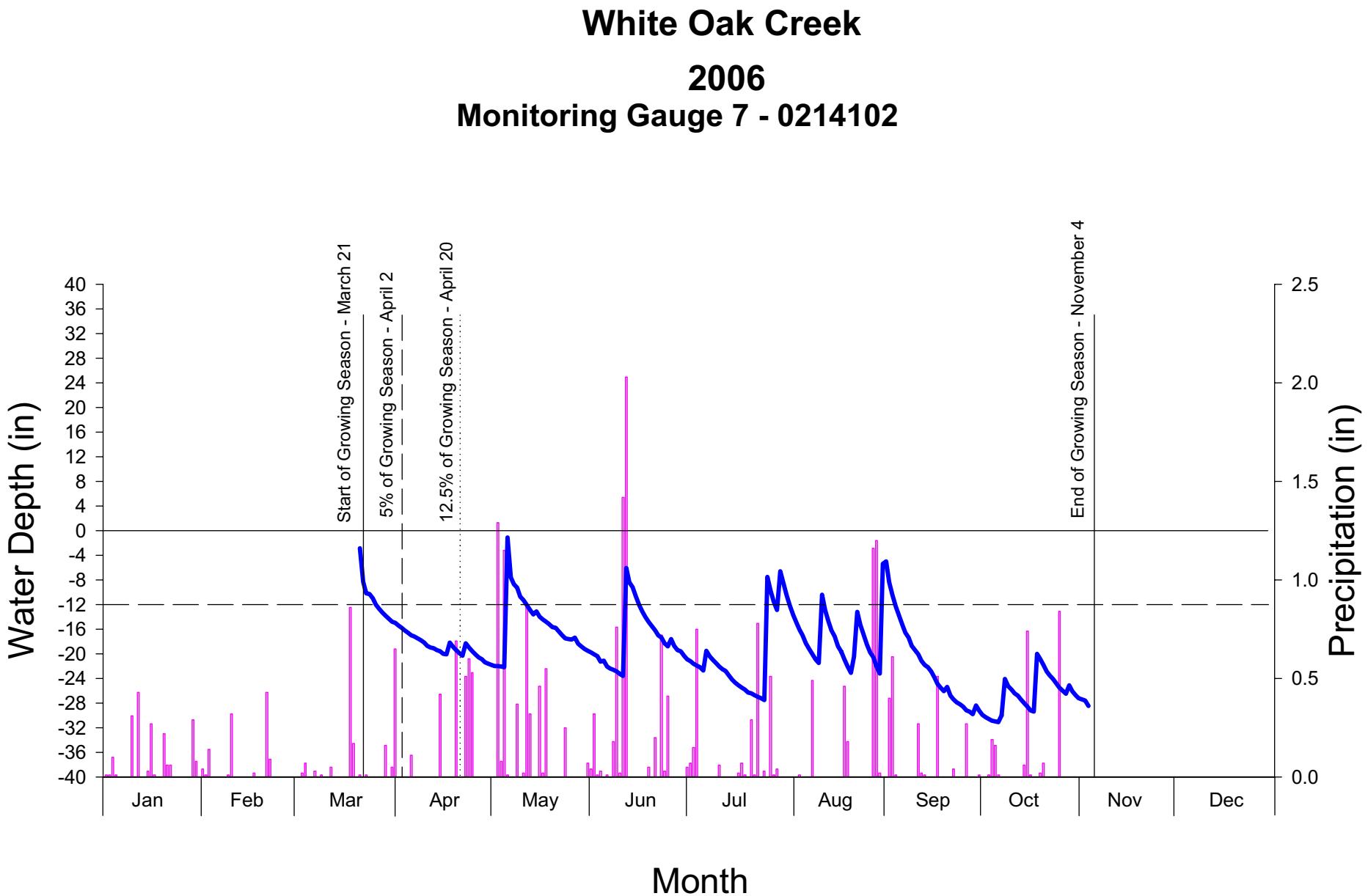


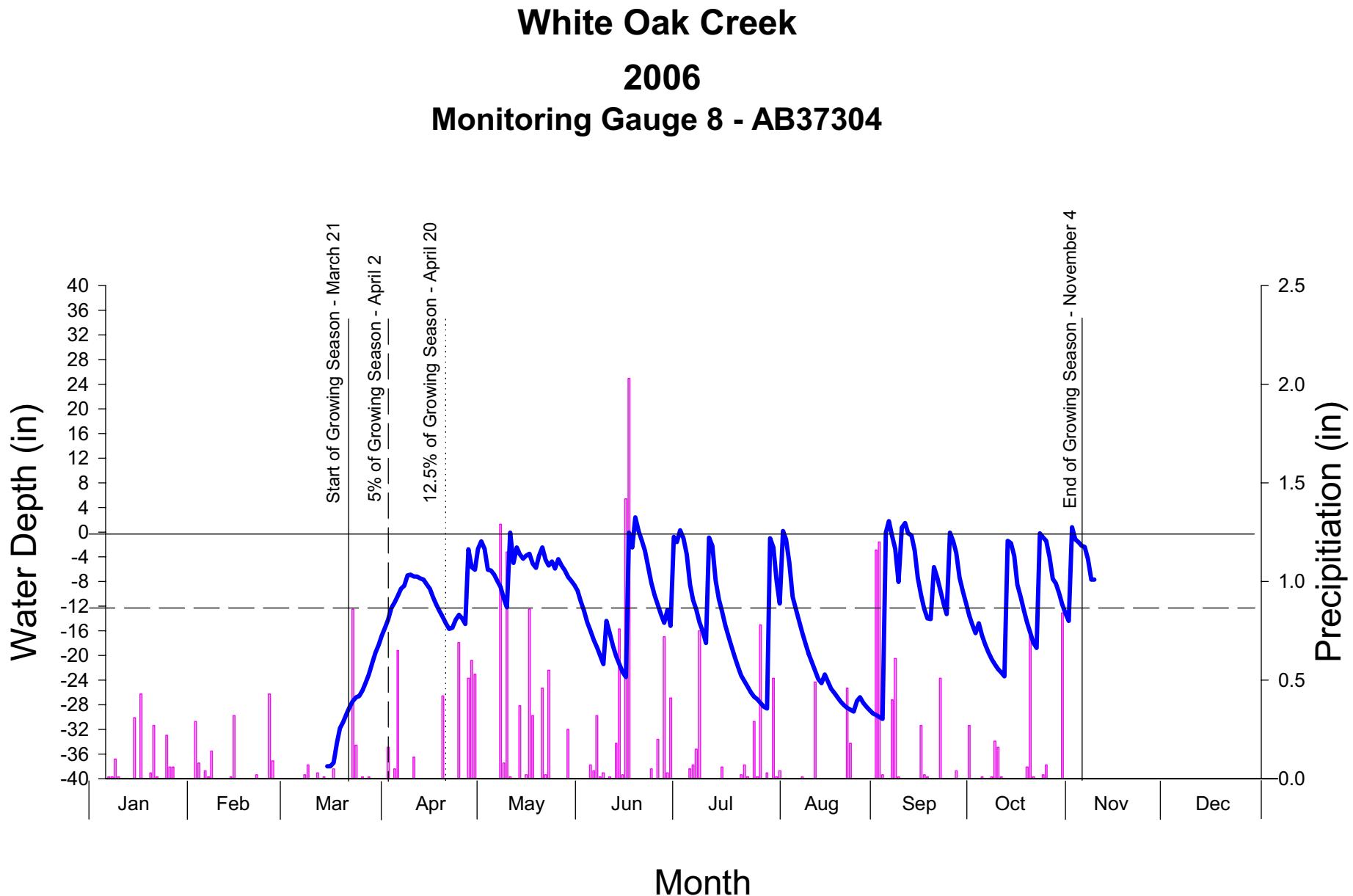


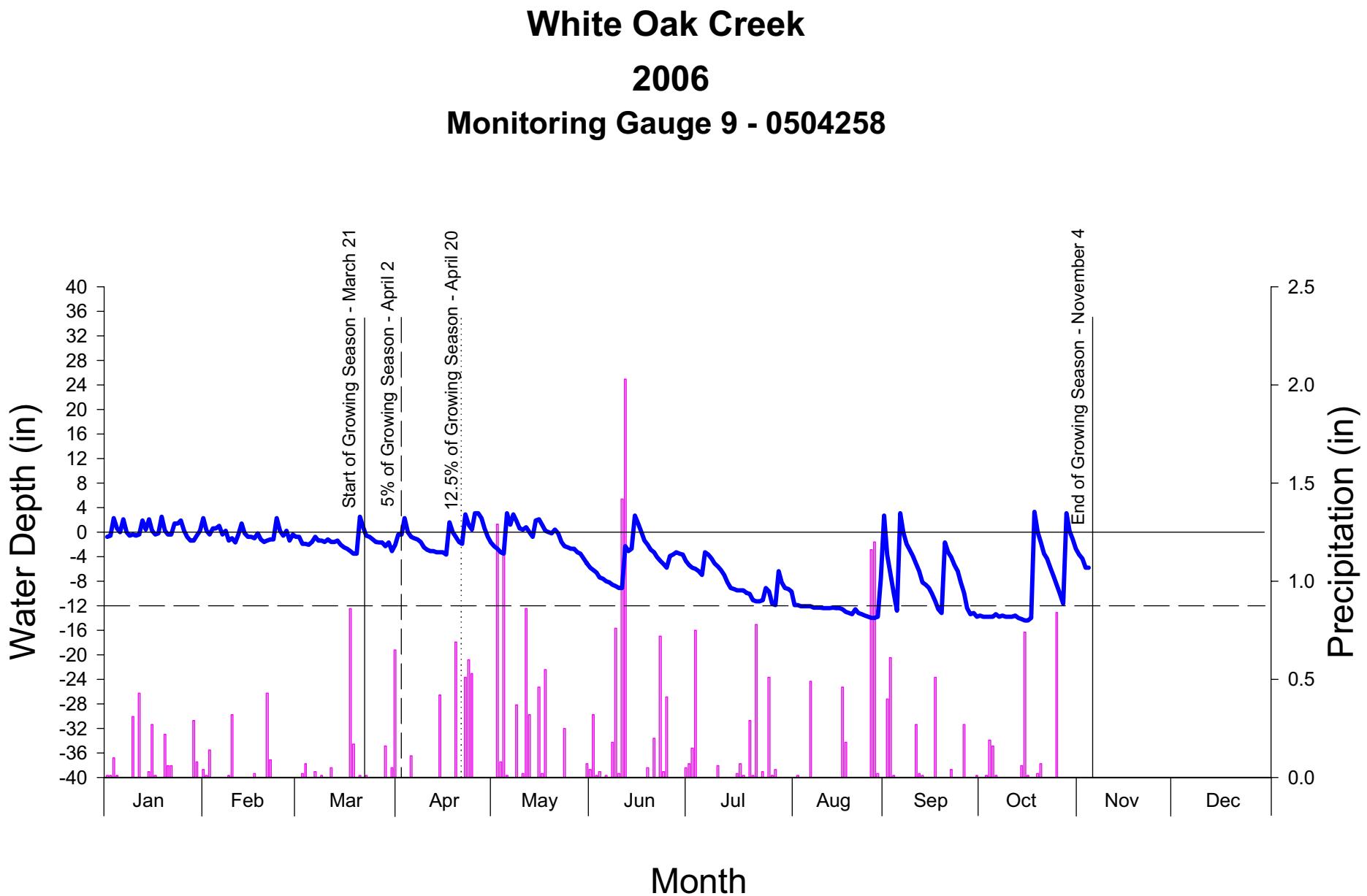


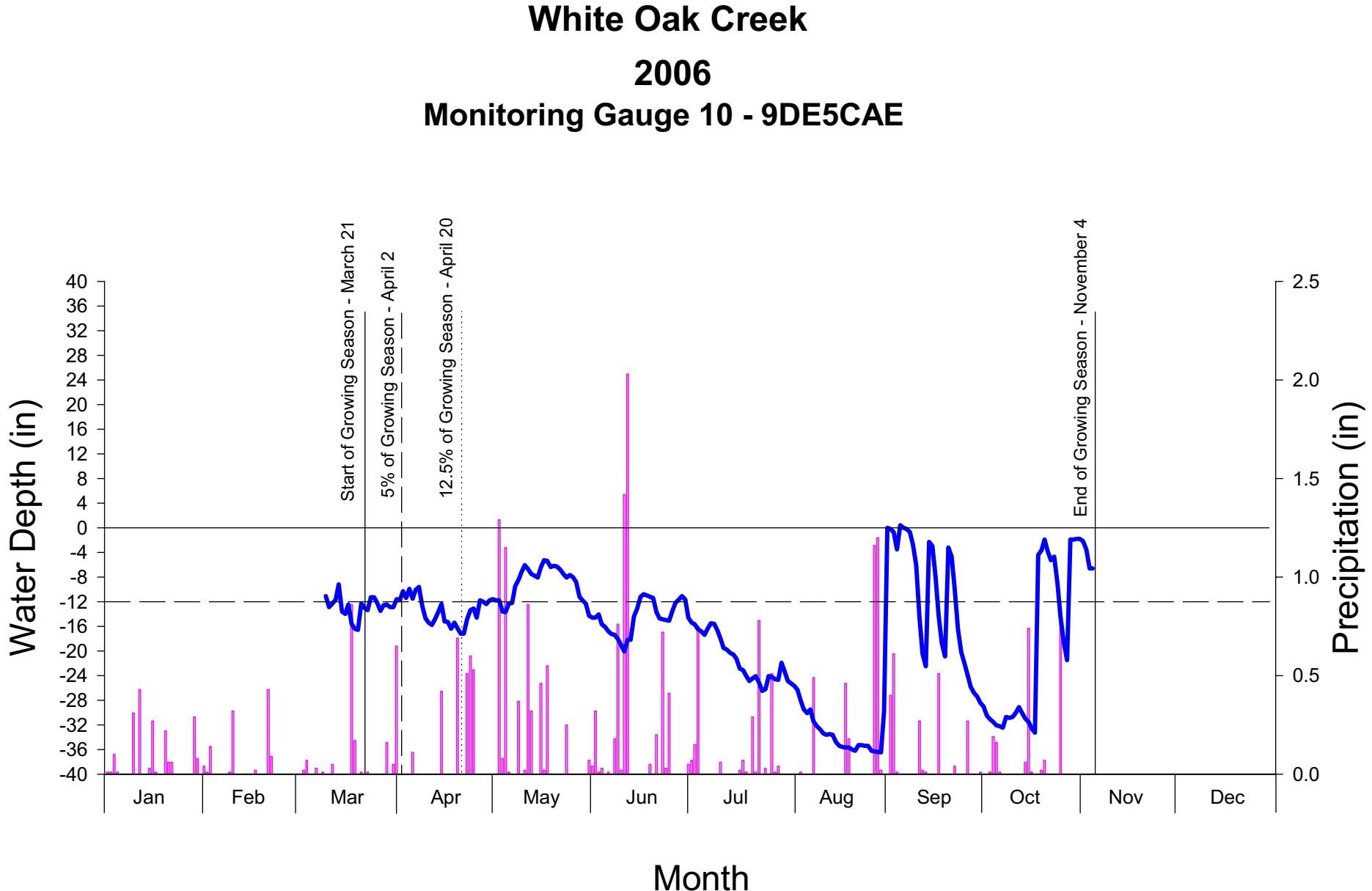


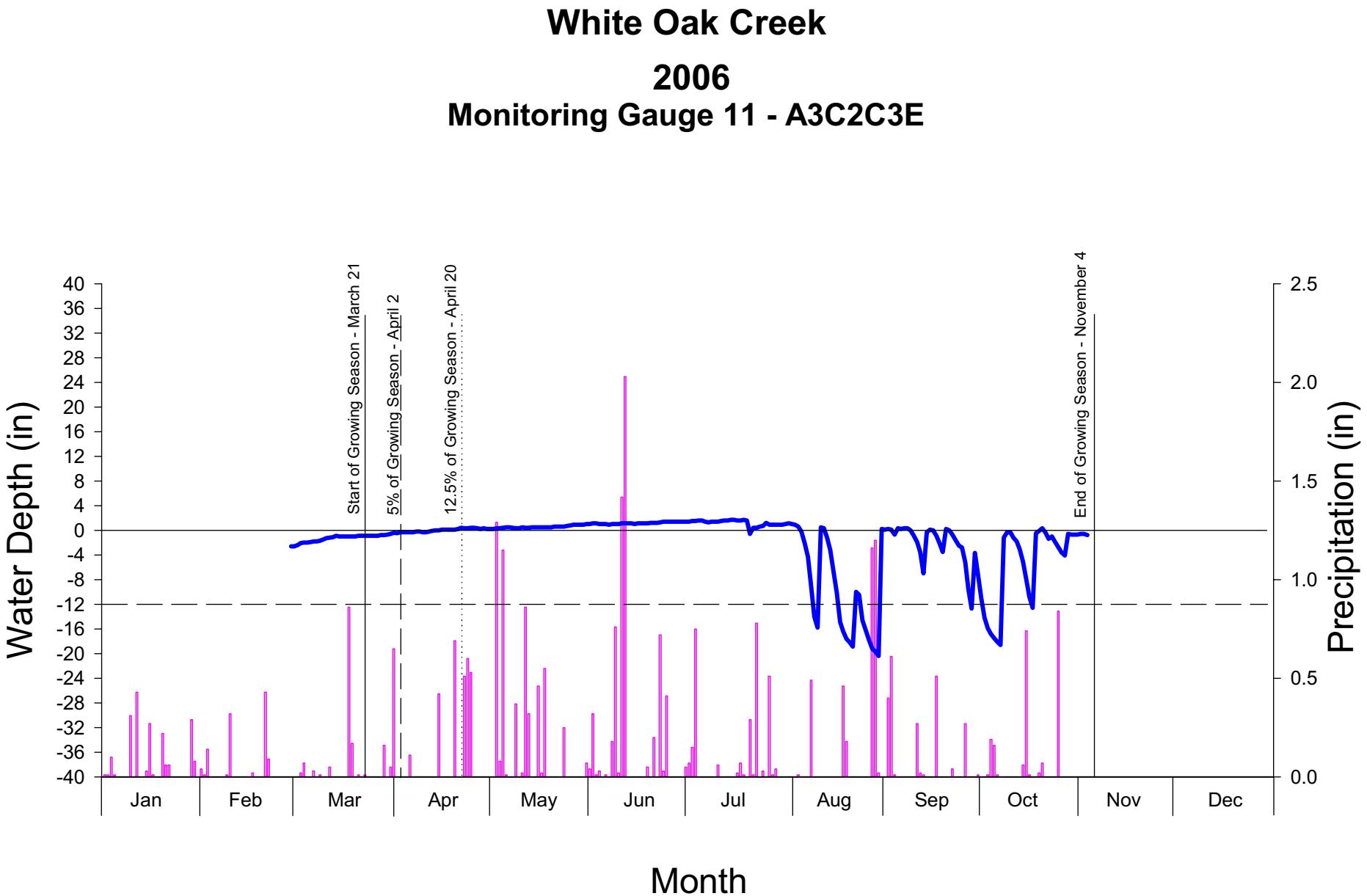


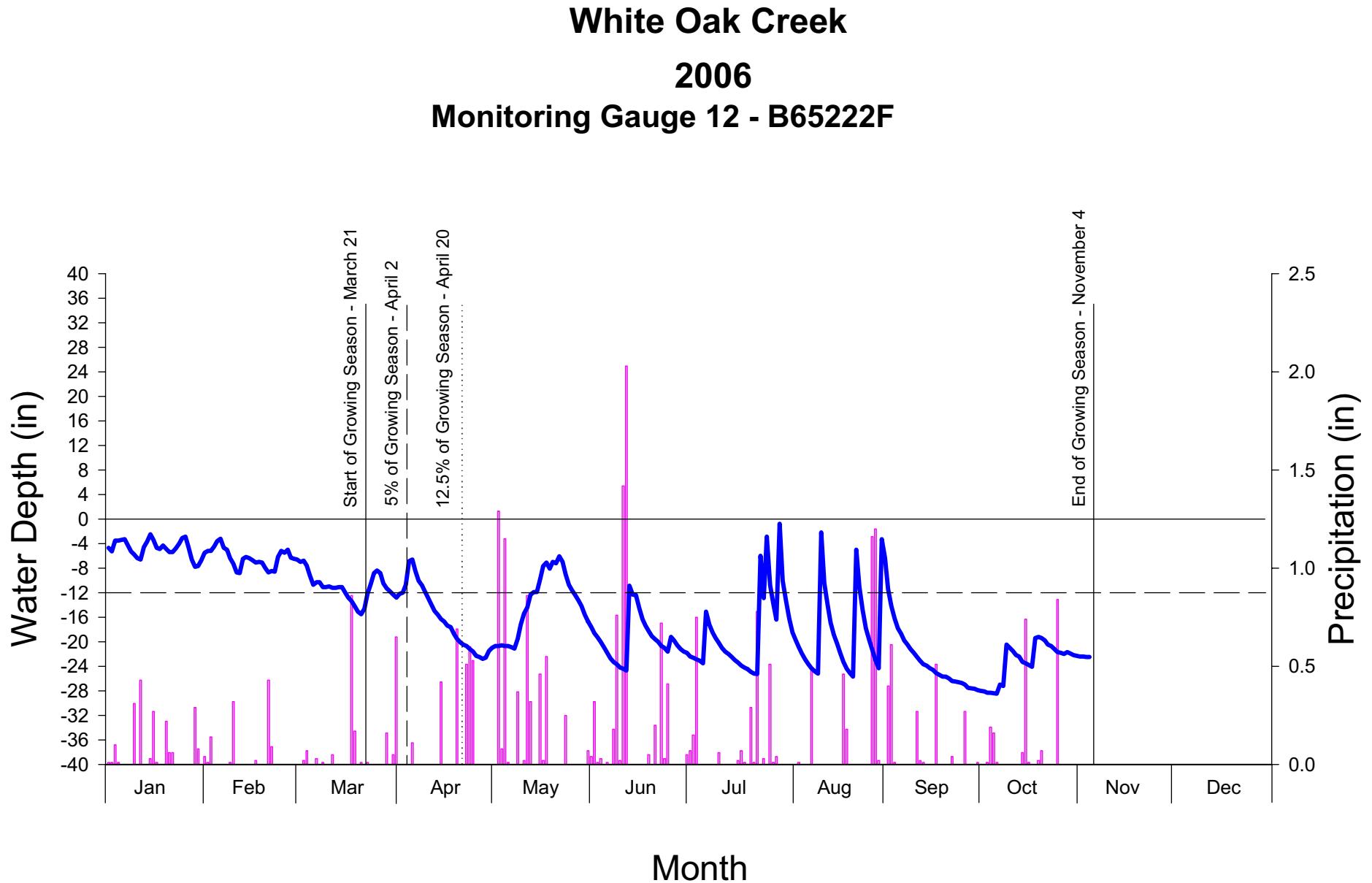


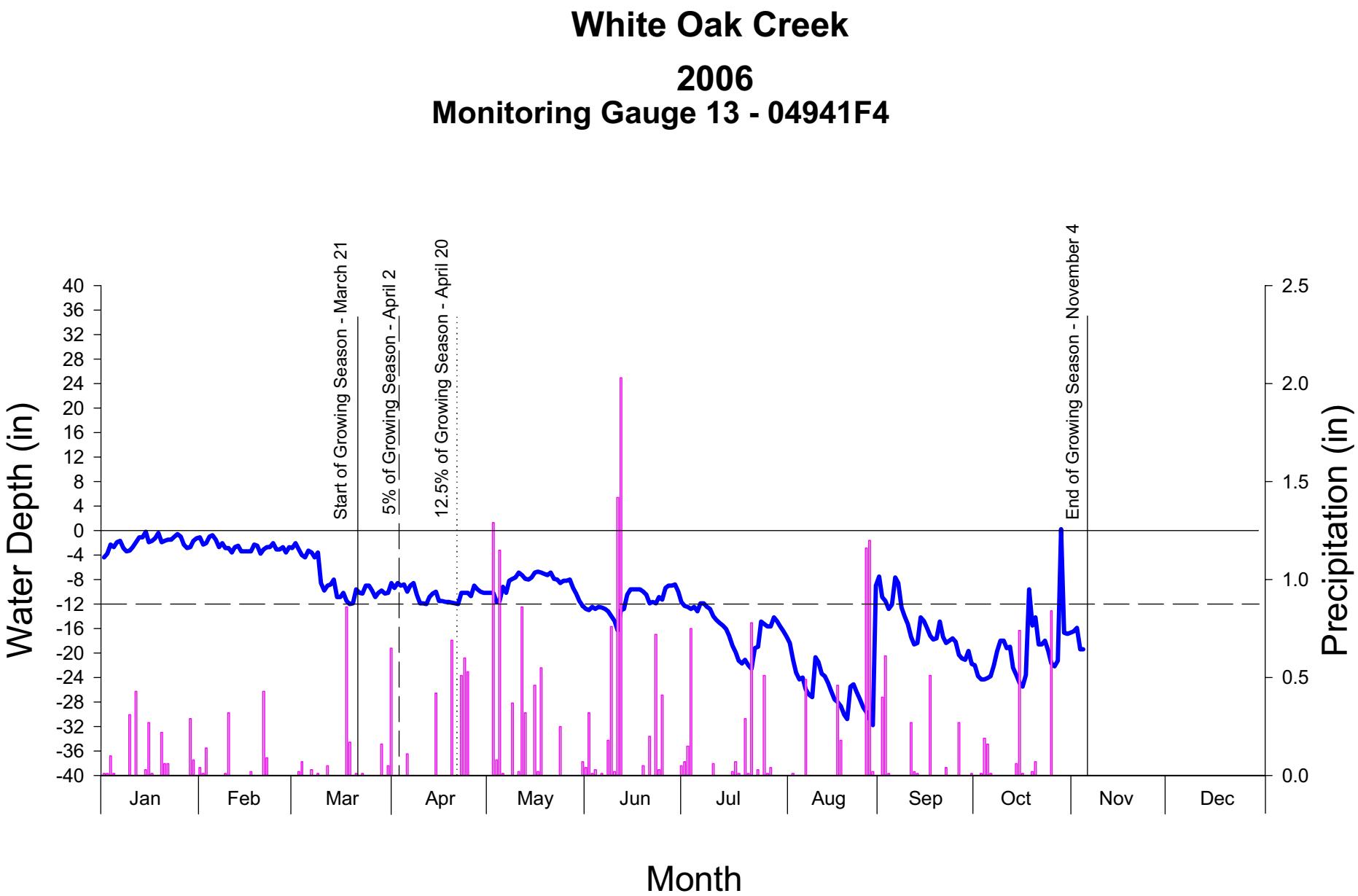


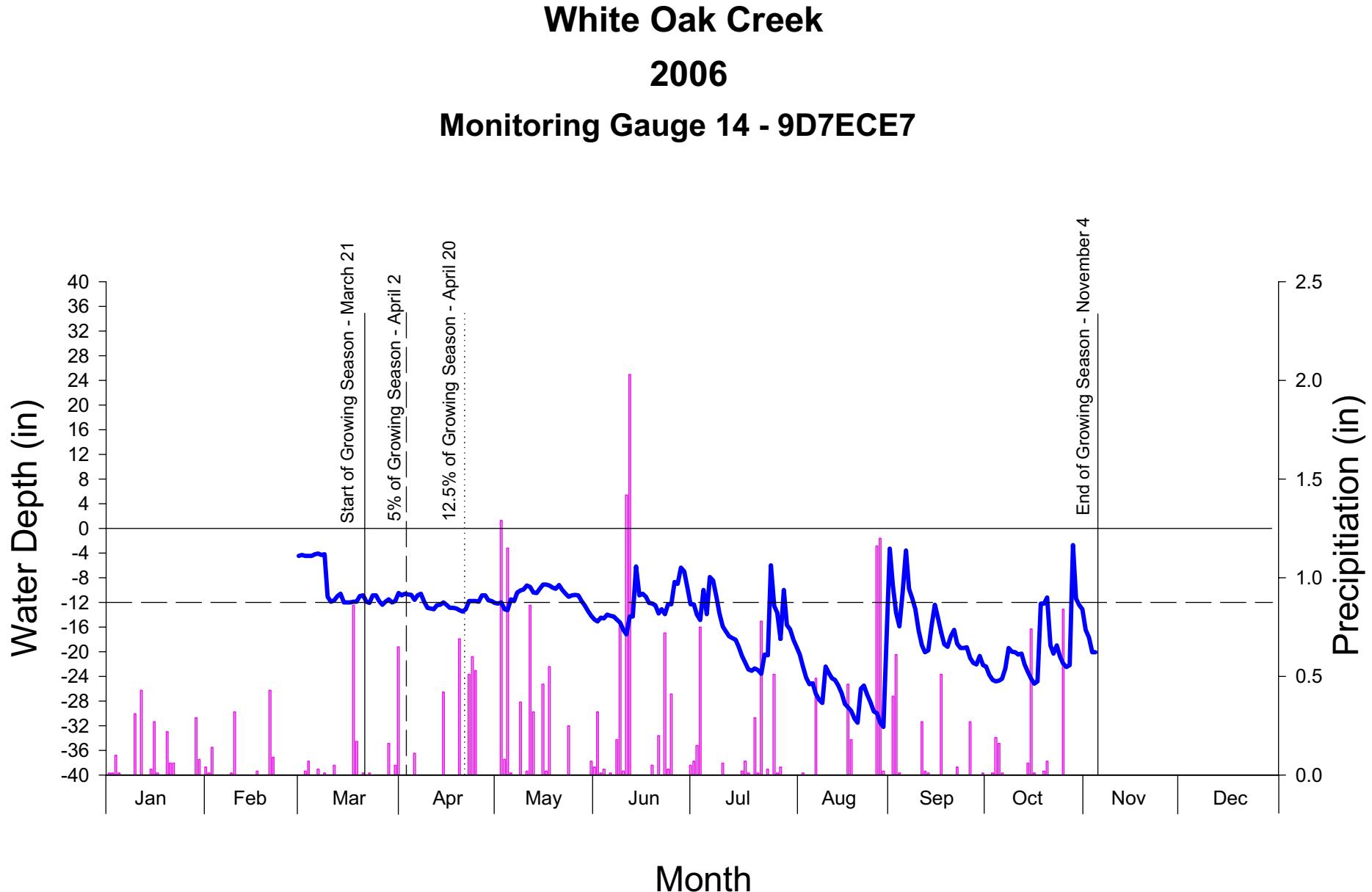


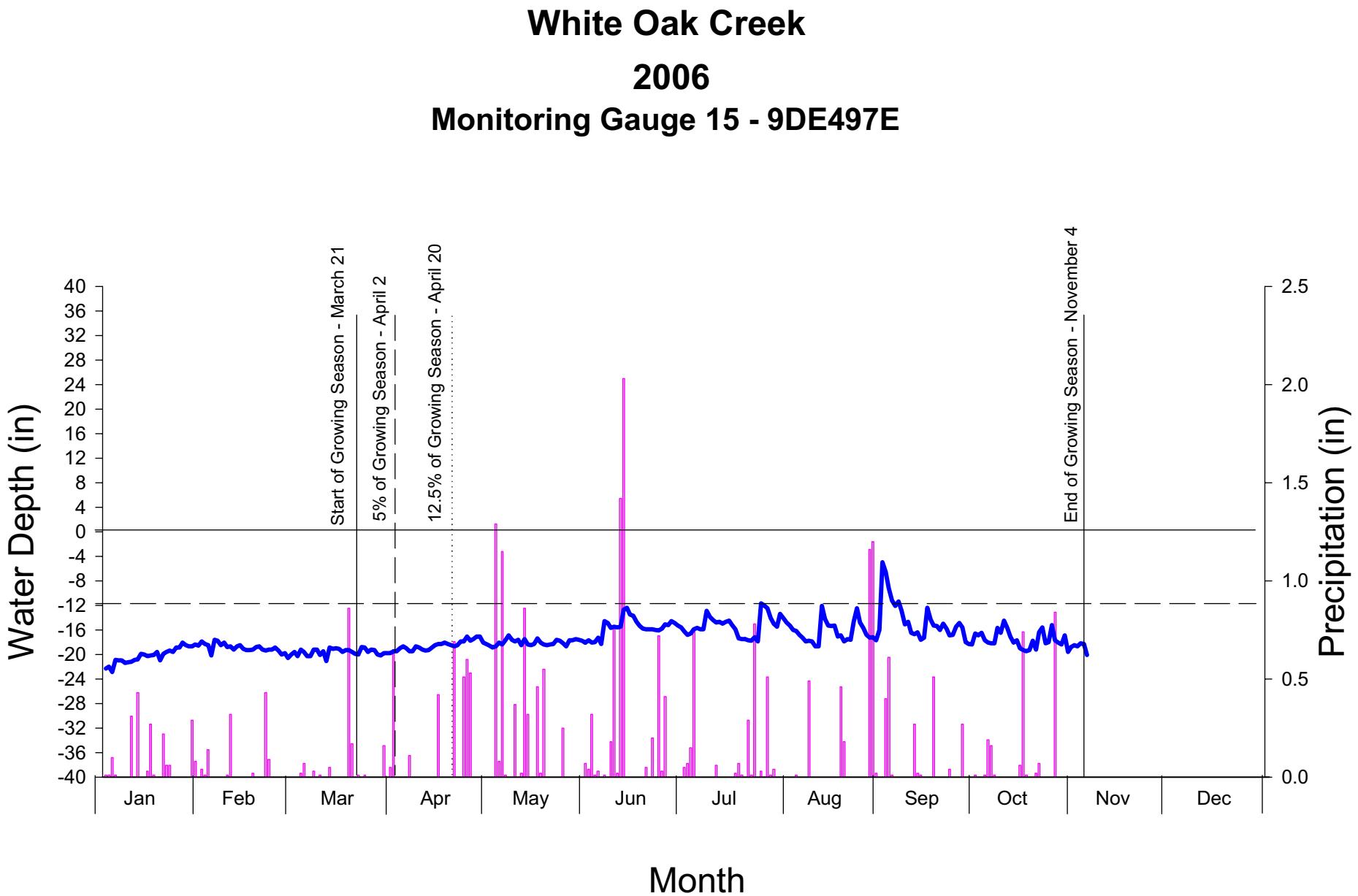


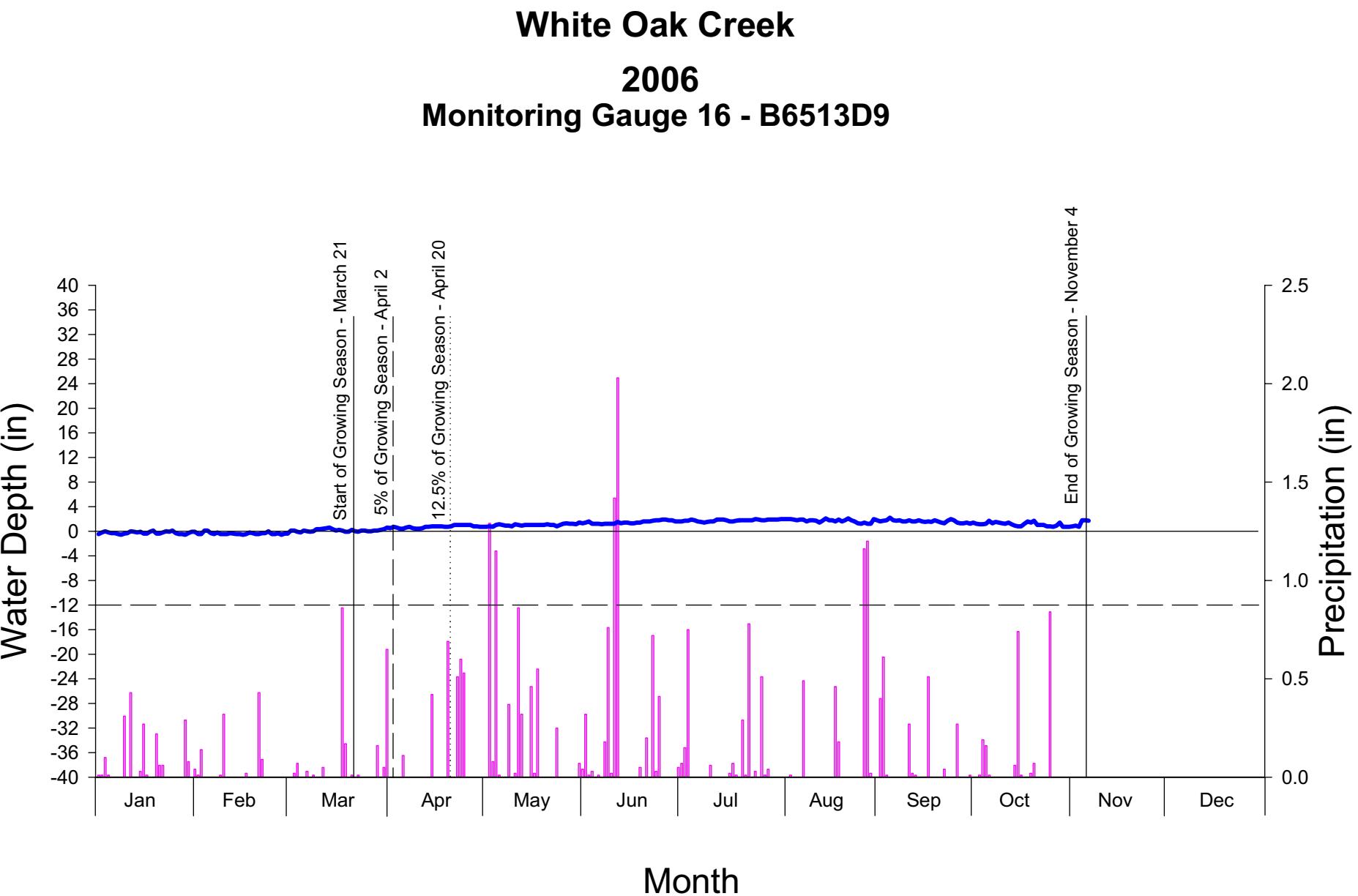


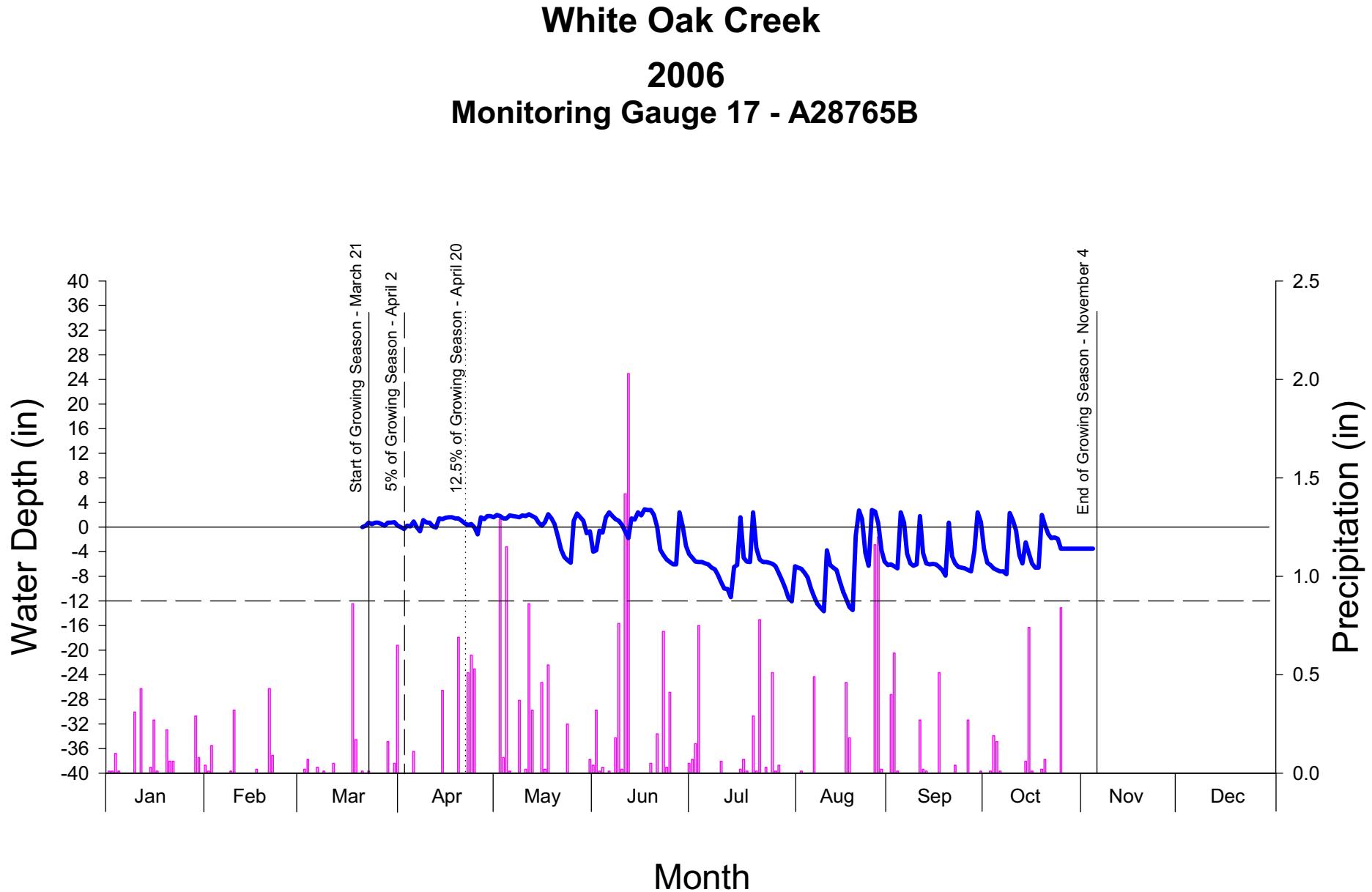


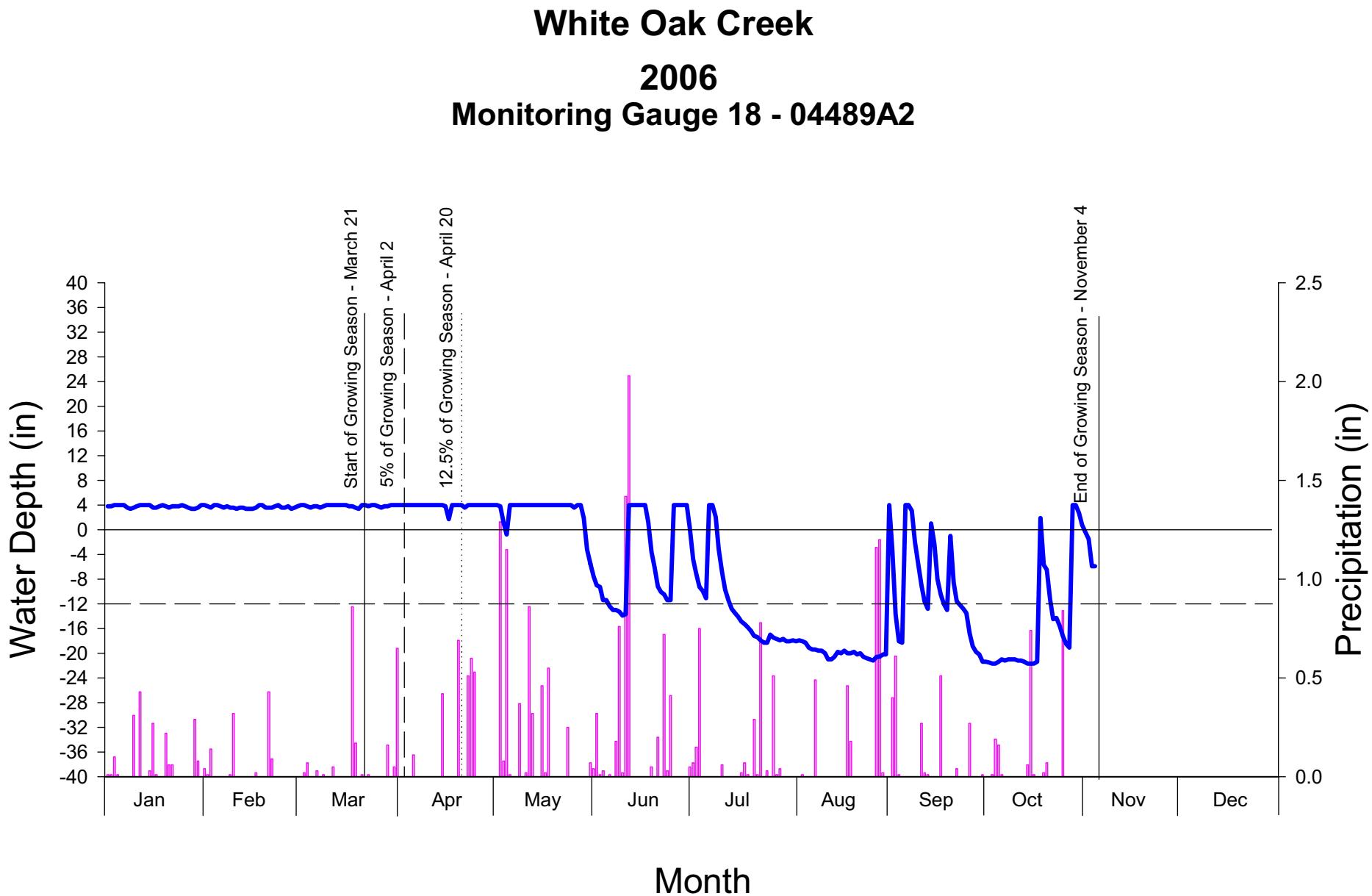


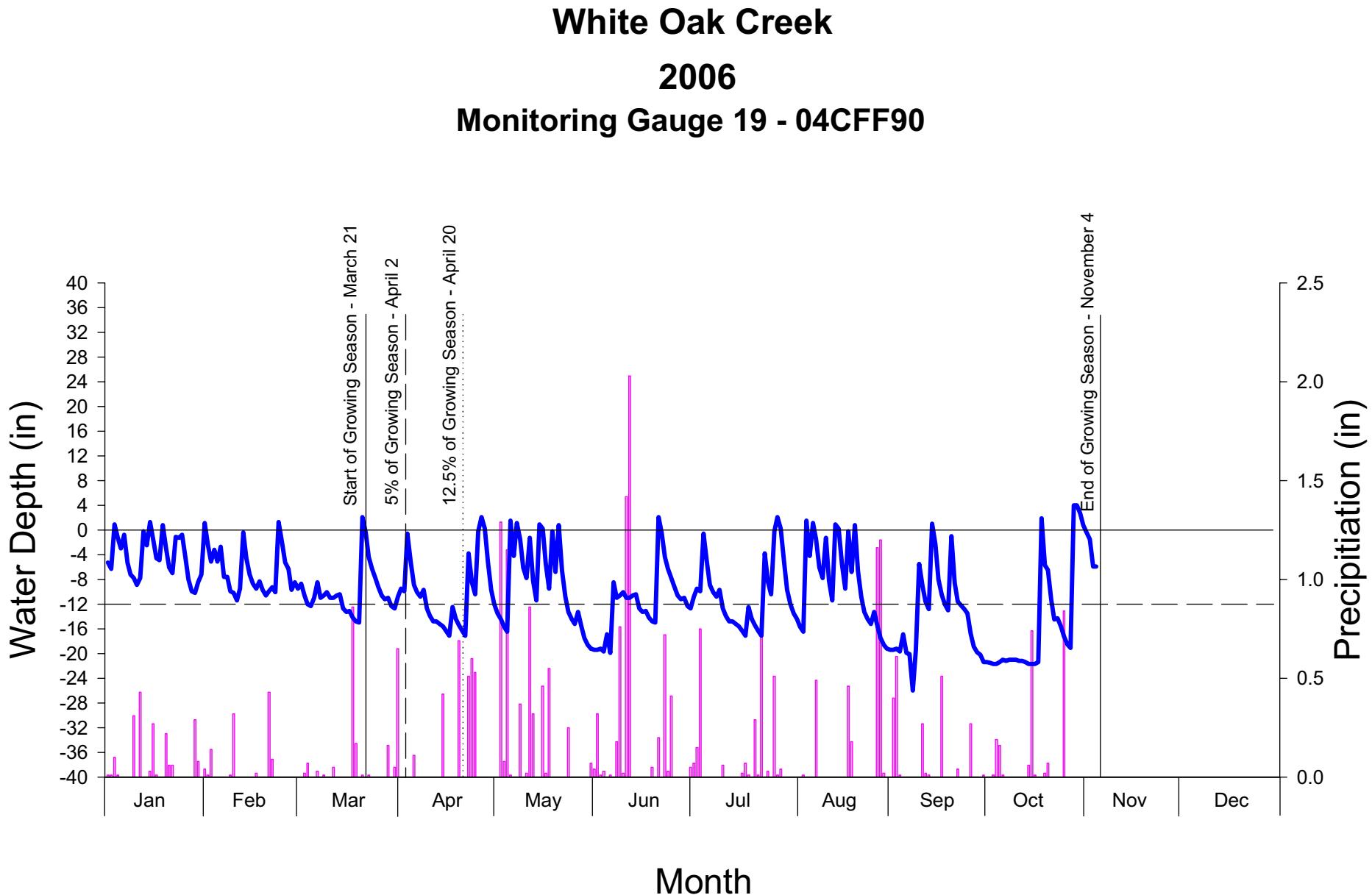


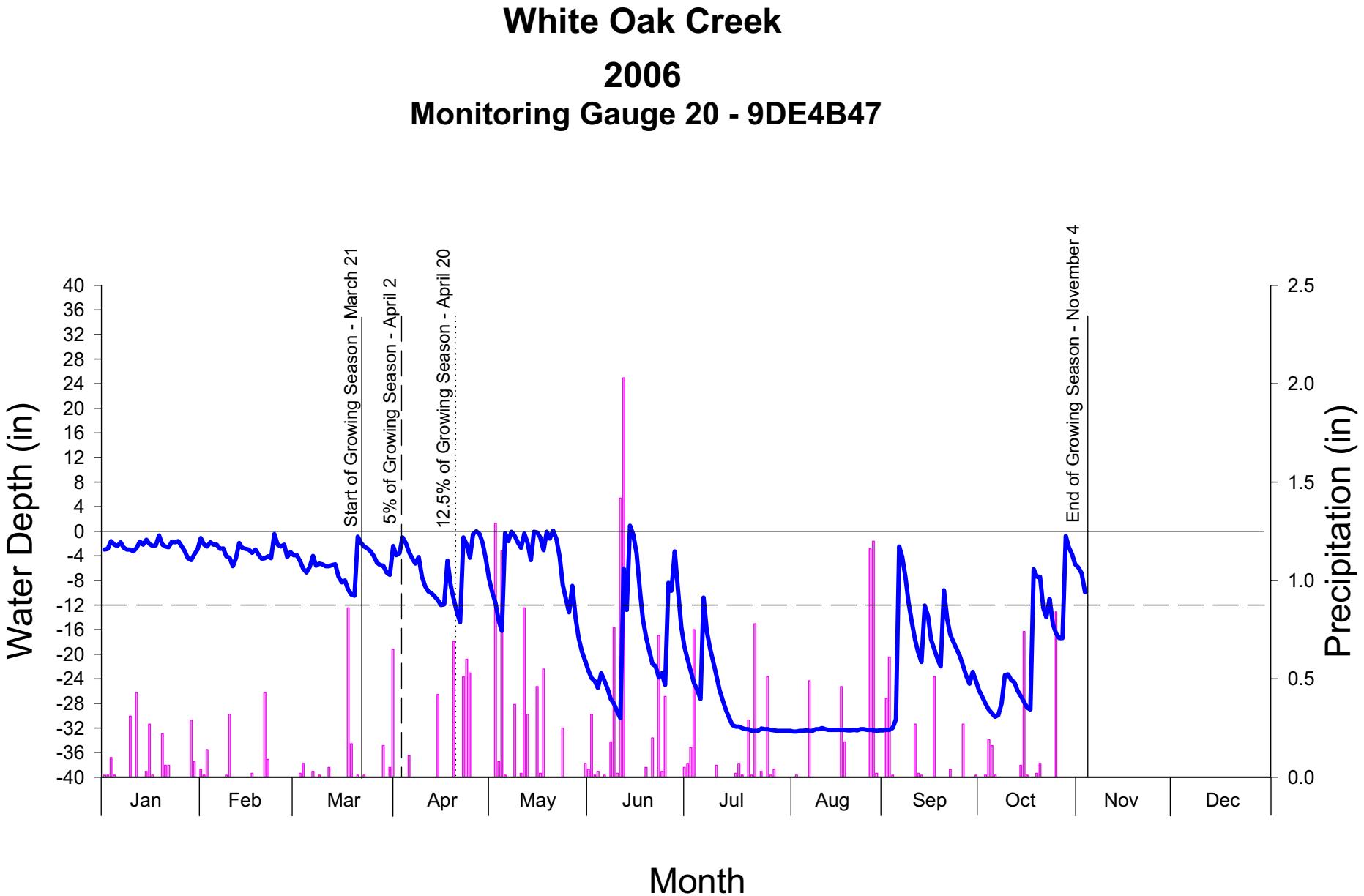


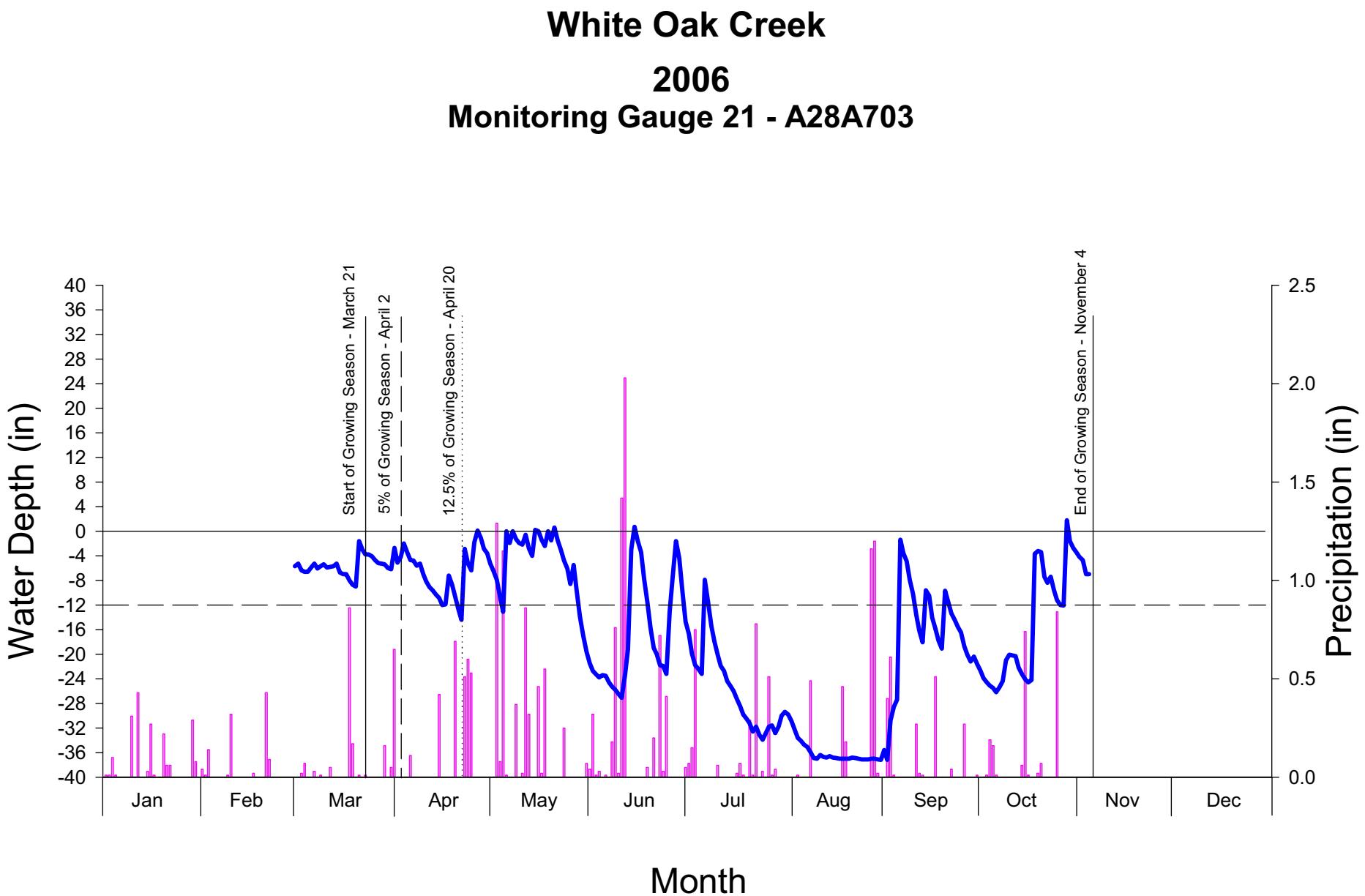








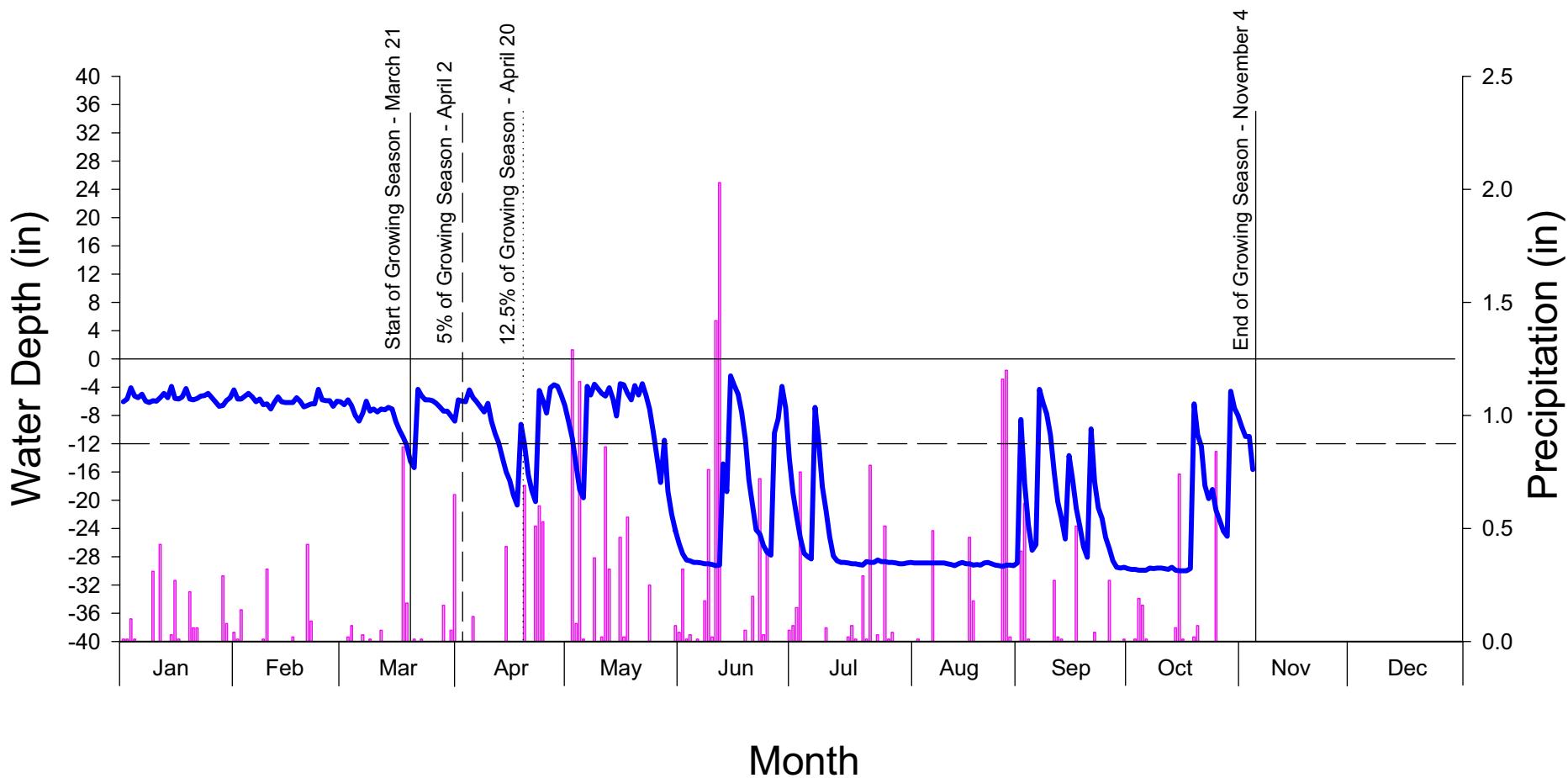


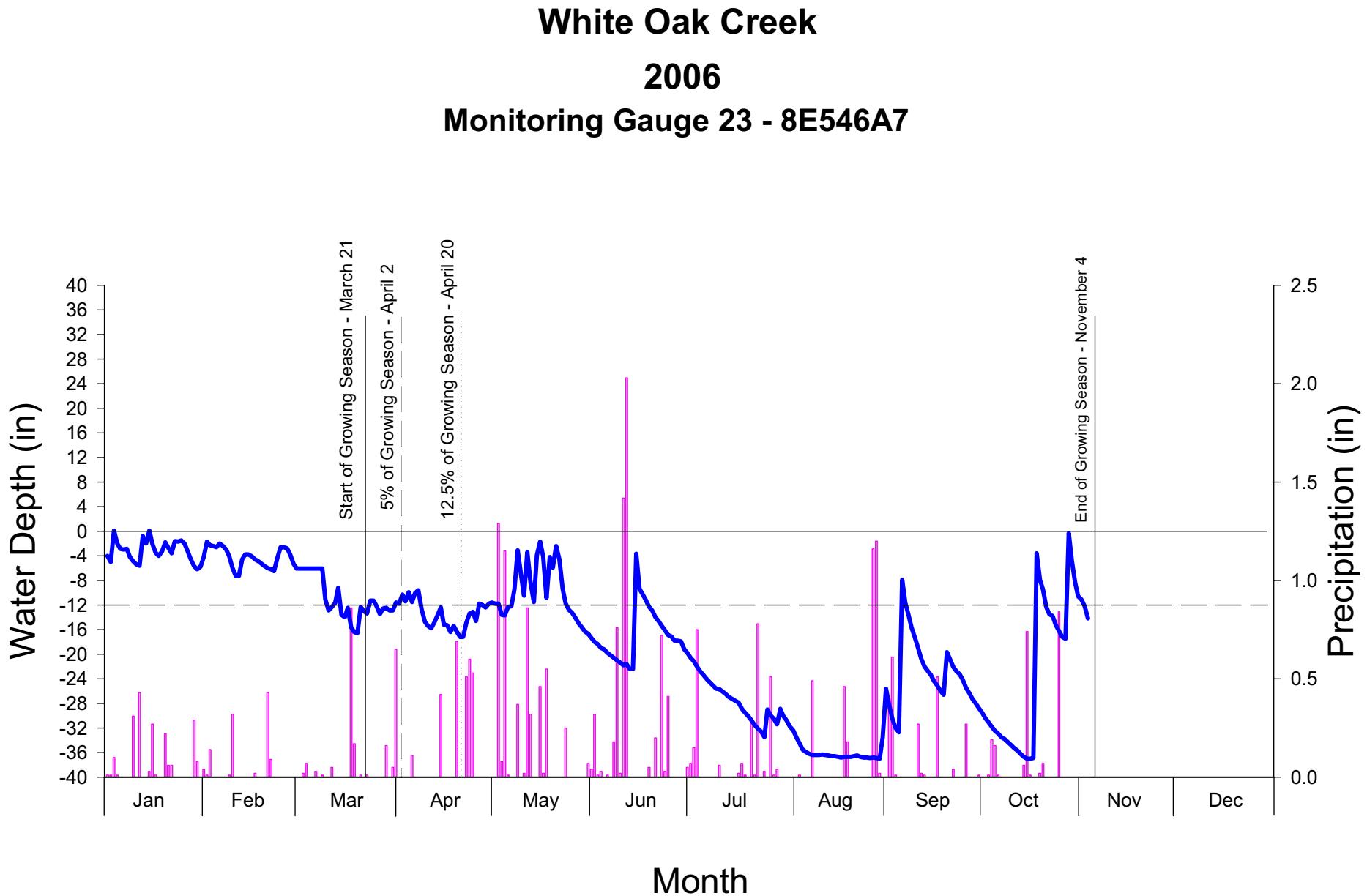


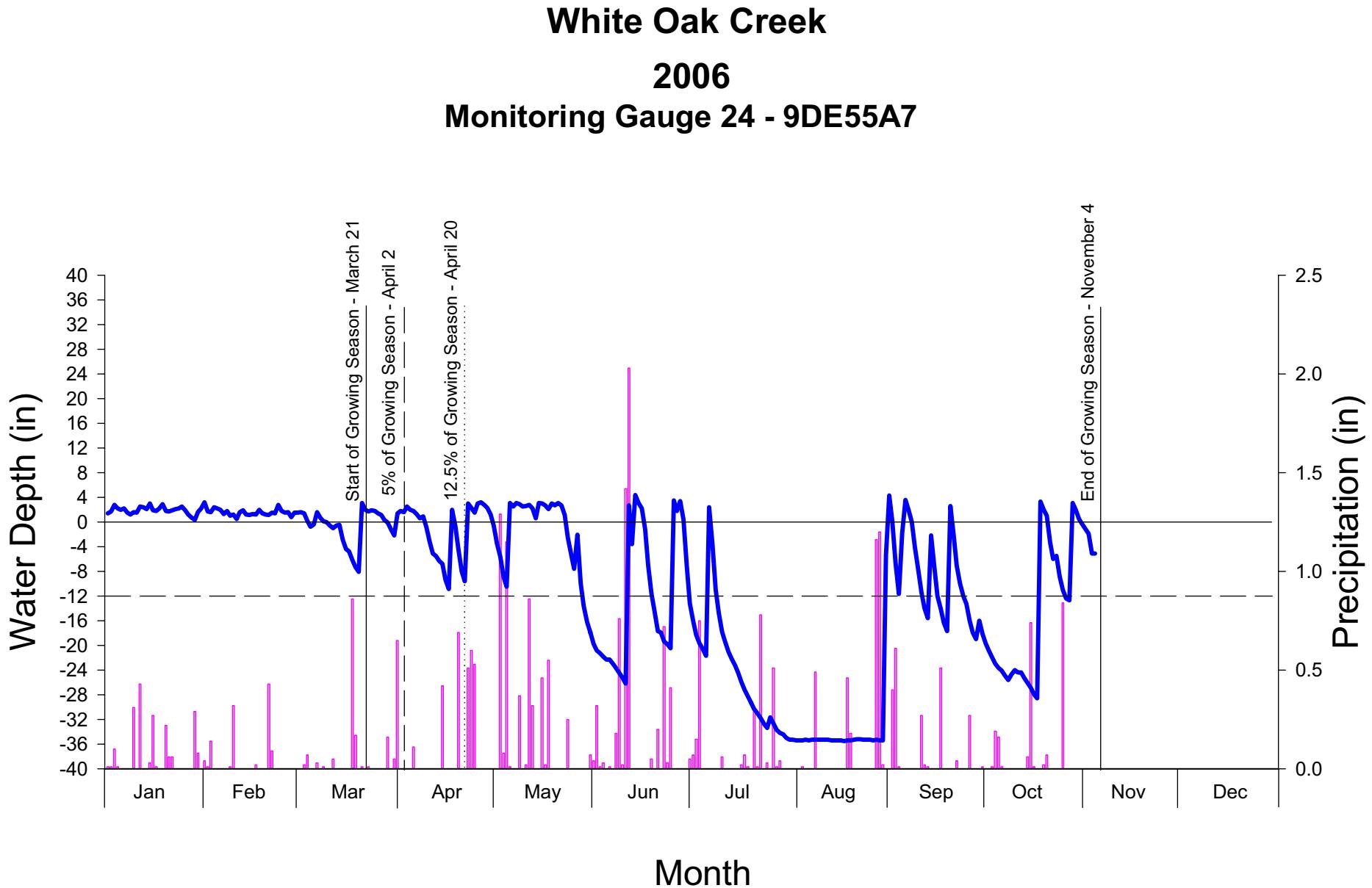
White Oak Creek

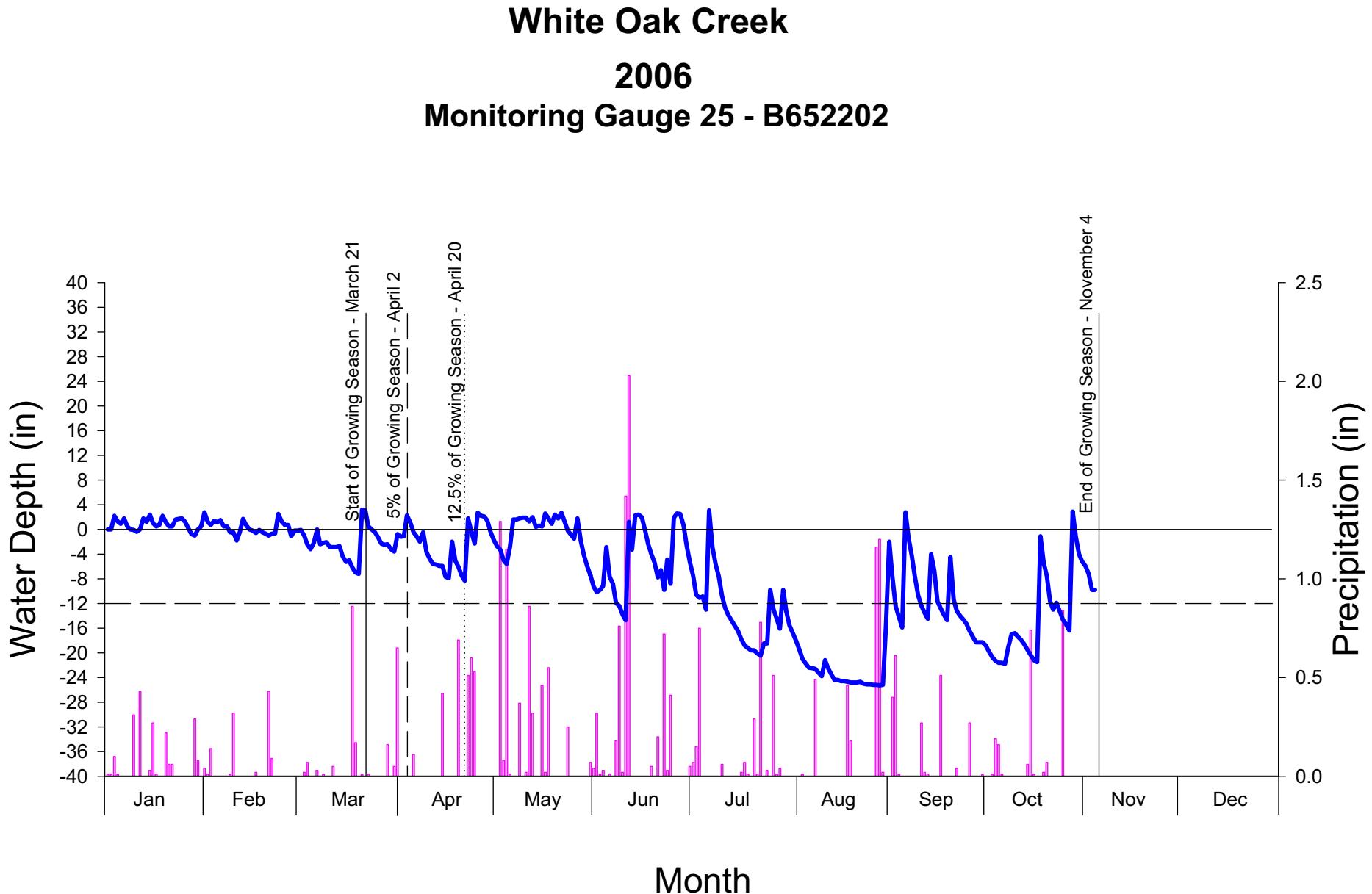
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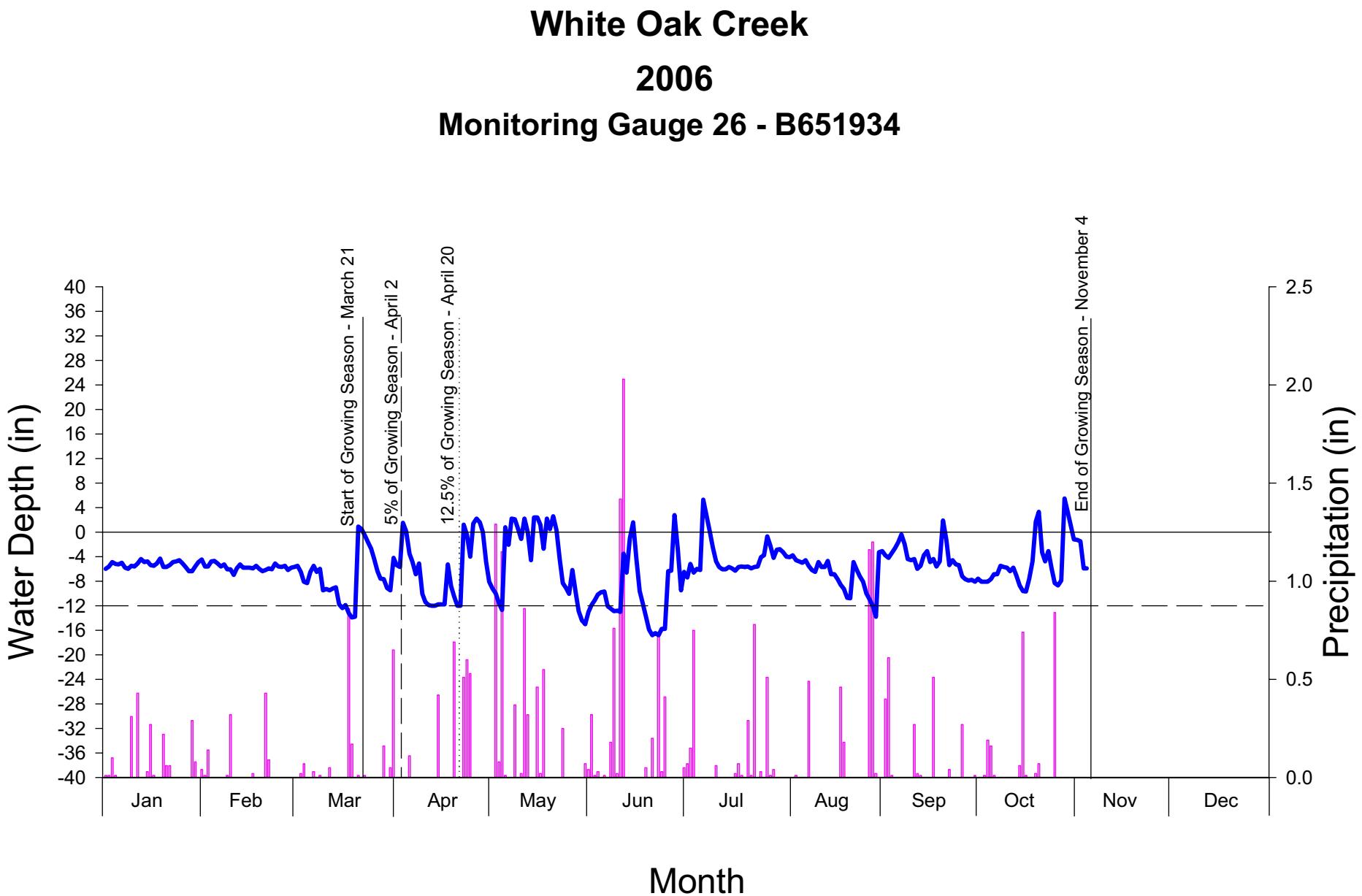
Monitoring Gauge 22 - 9DE4889

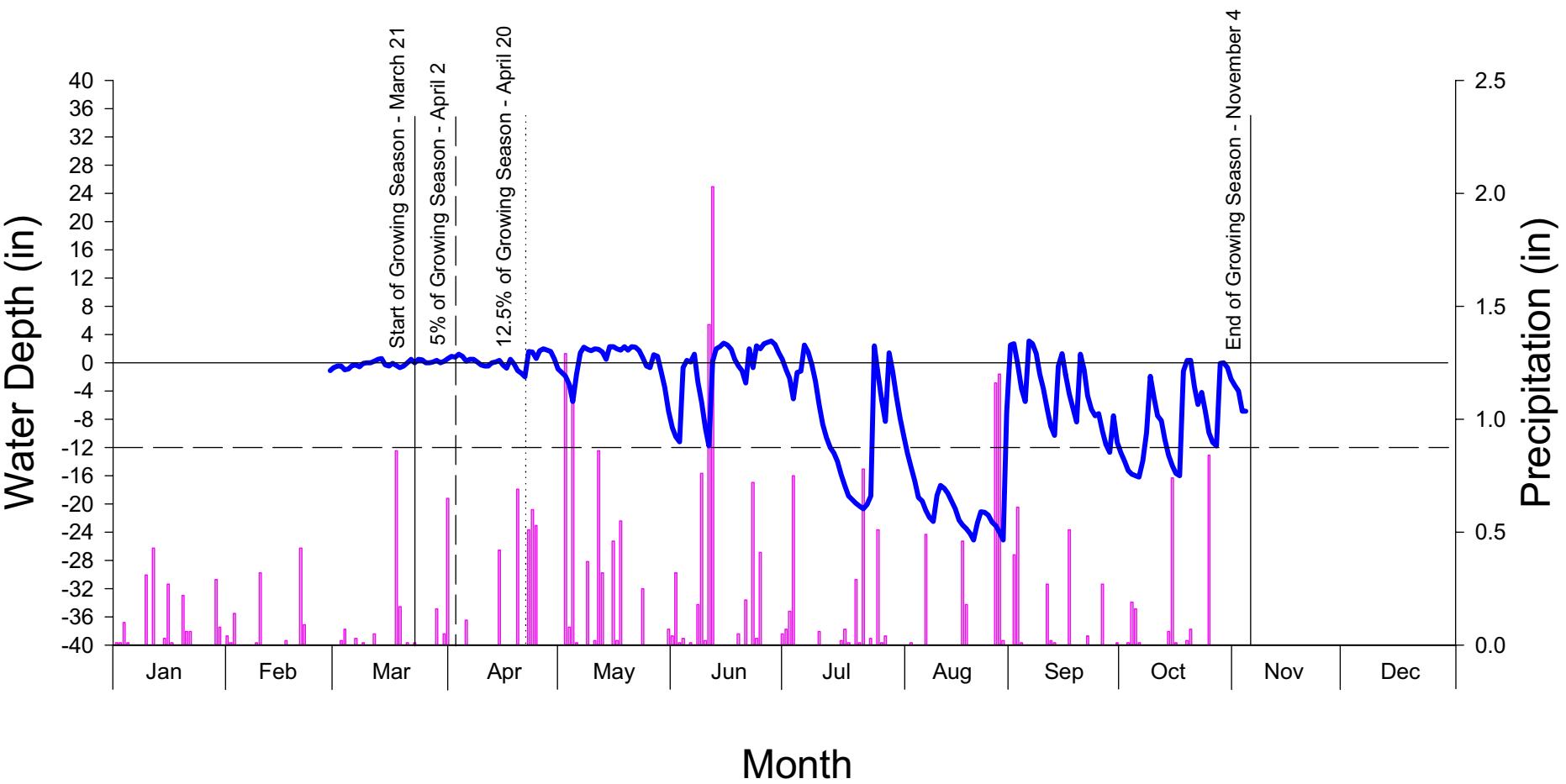


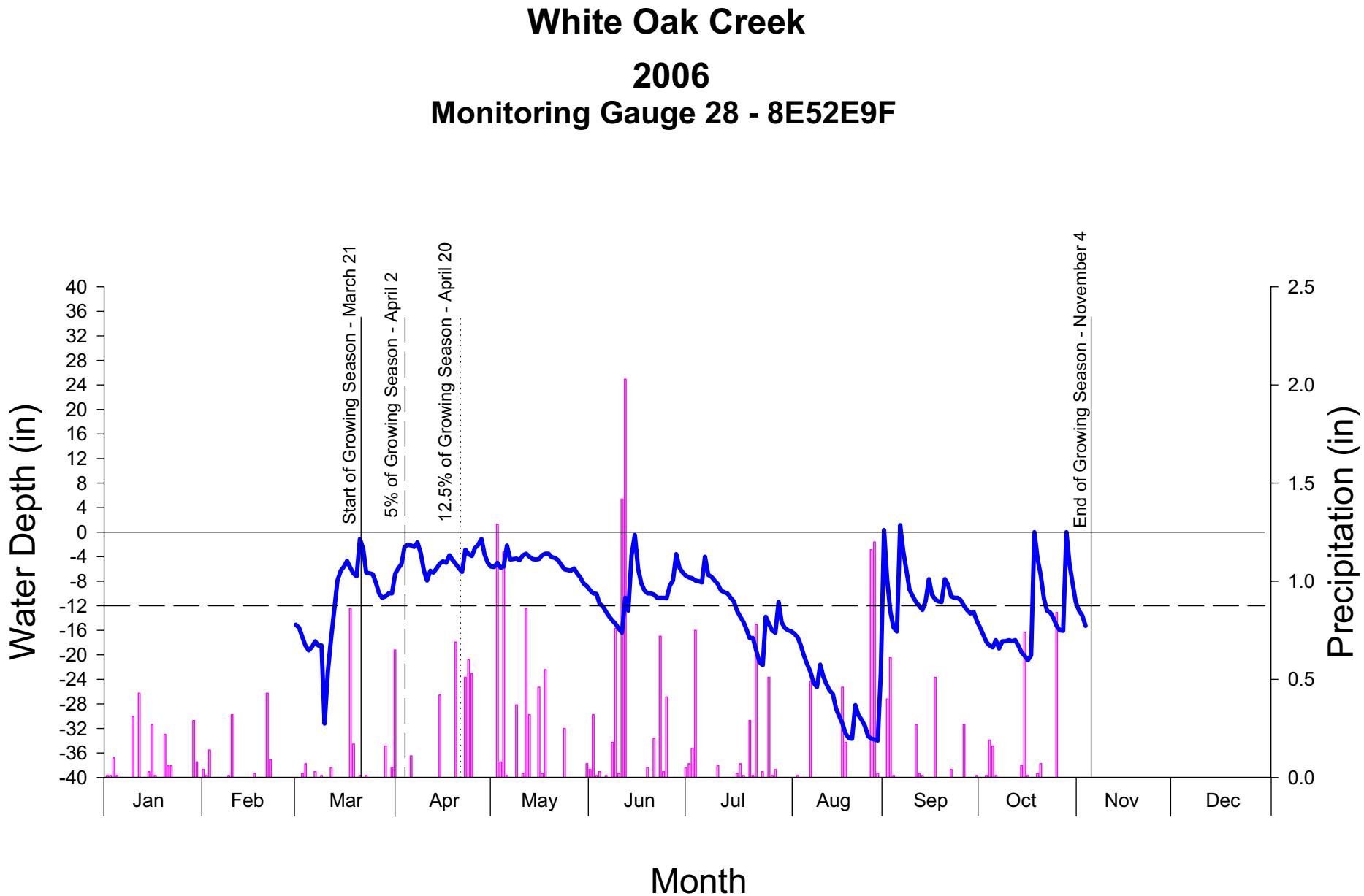


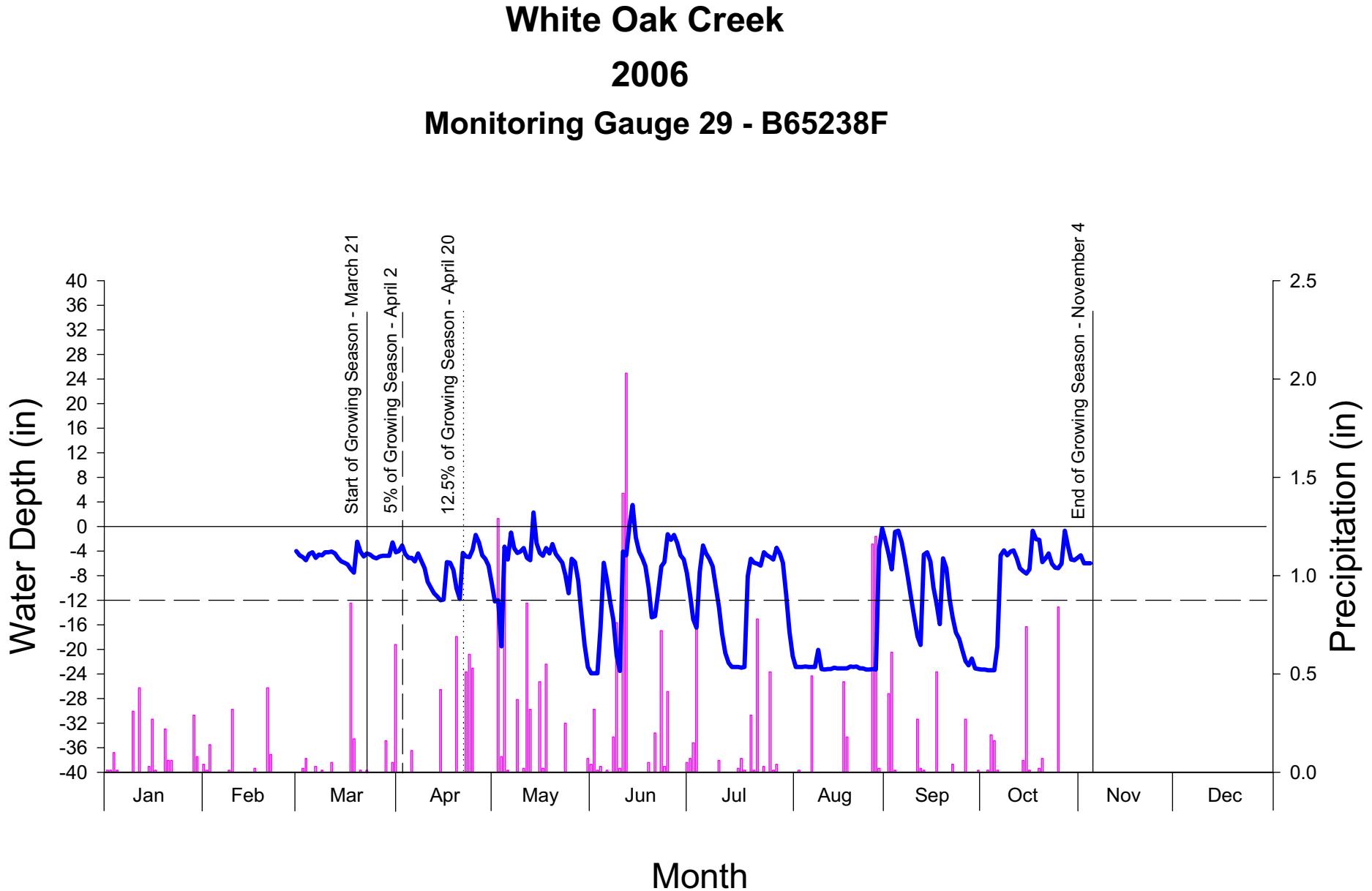


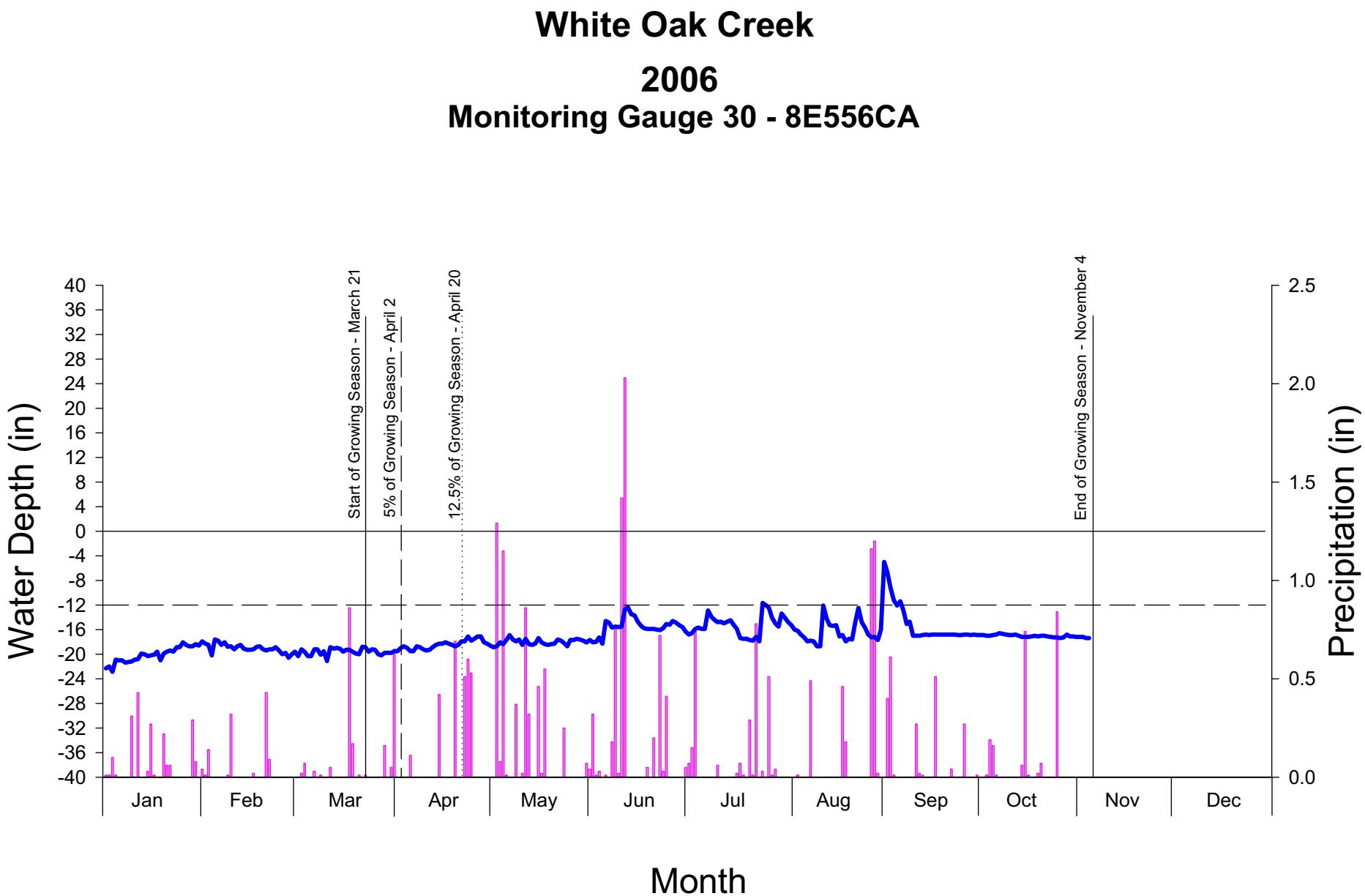


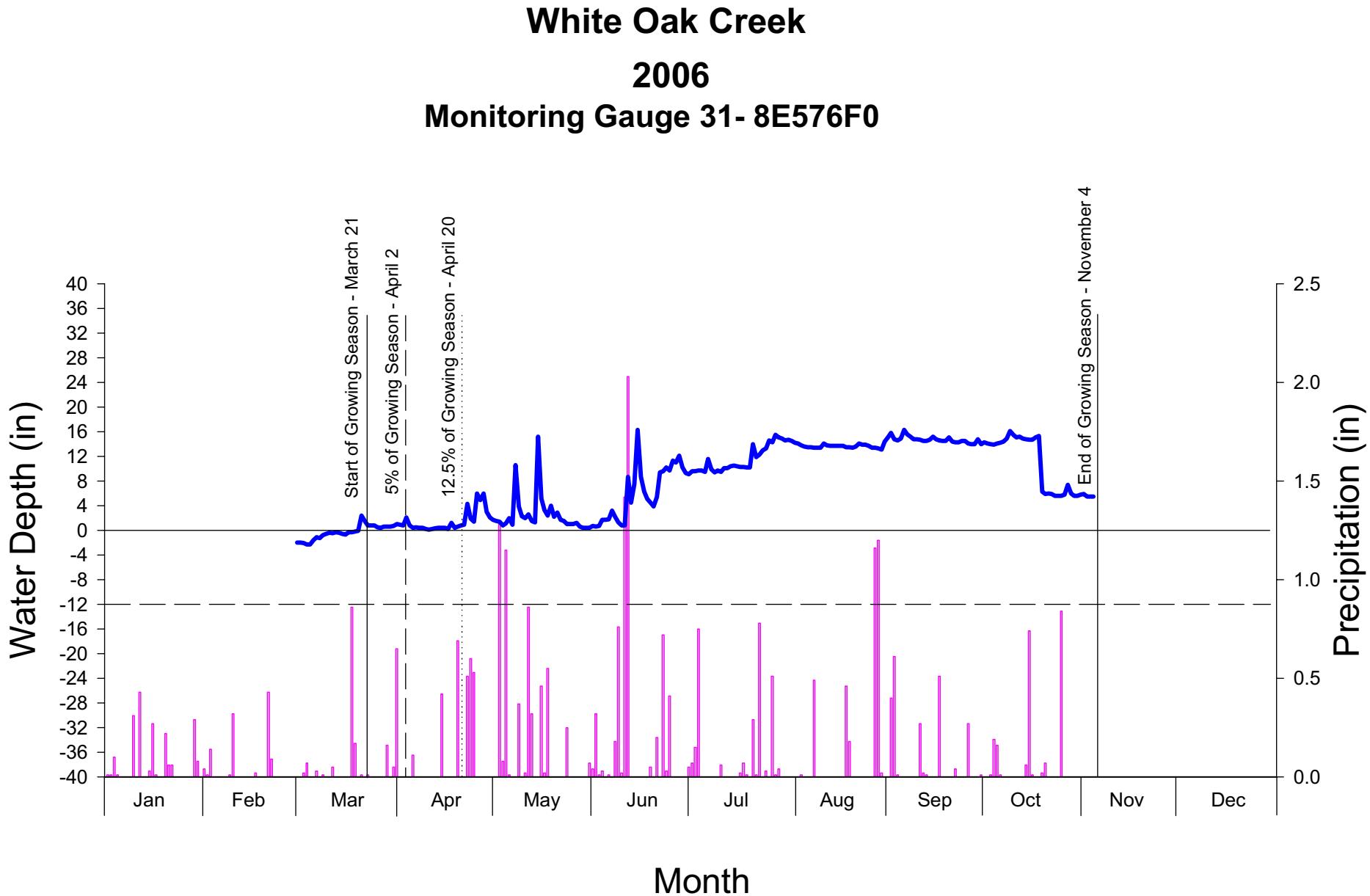


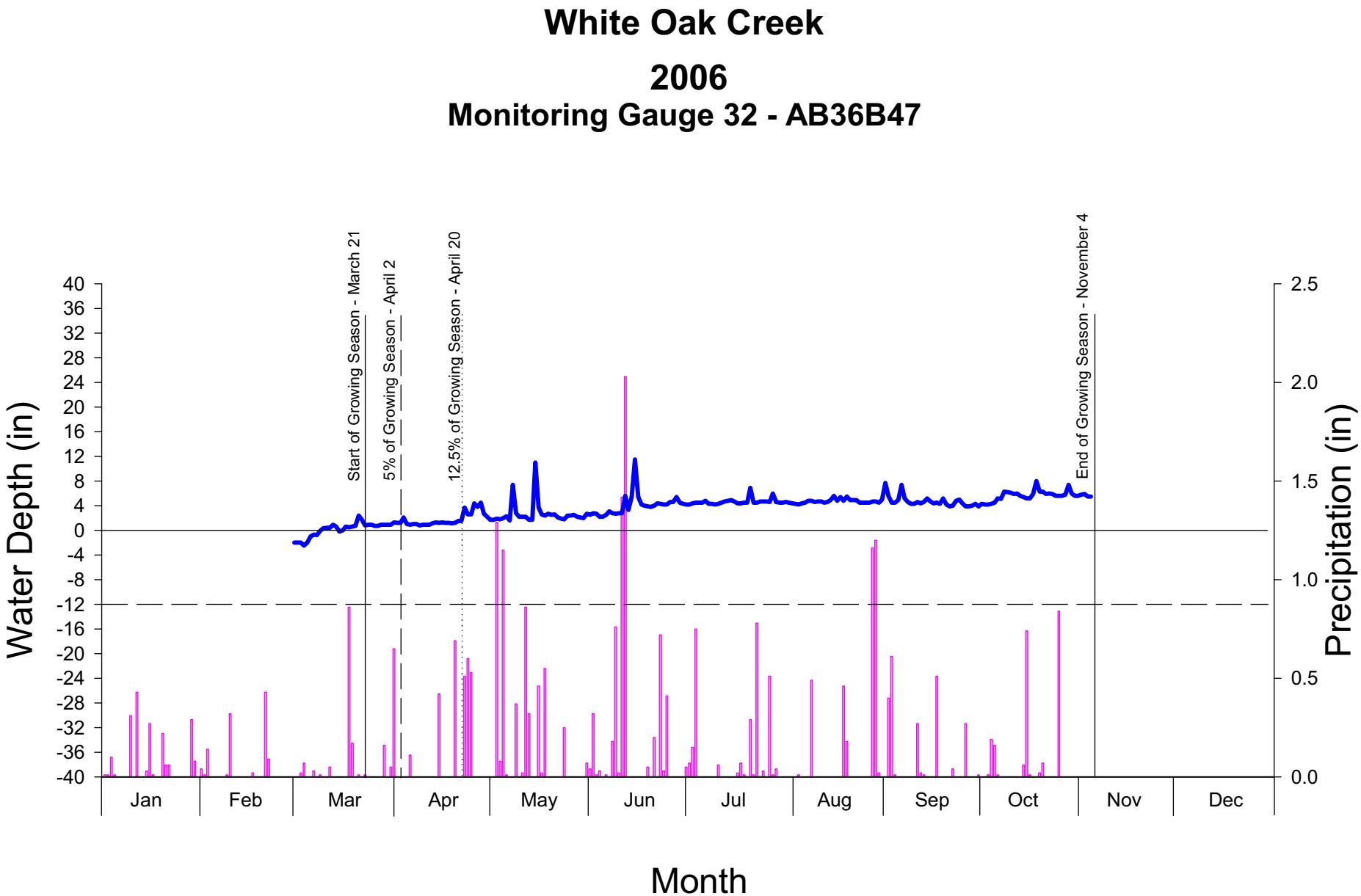


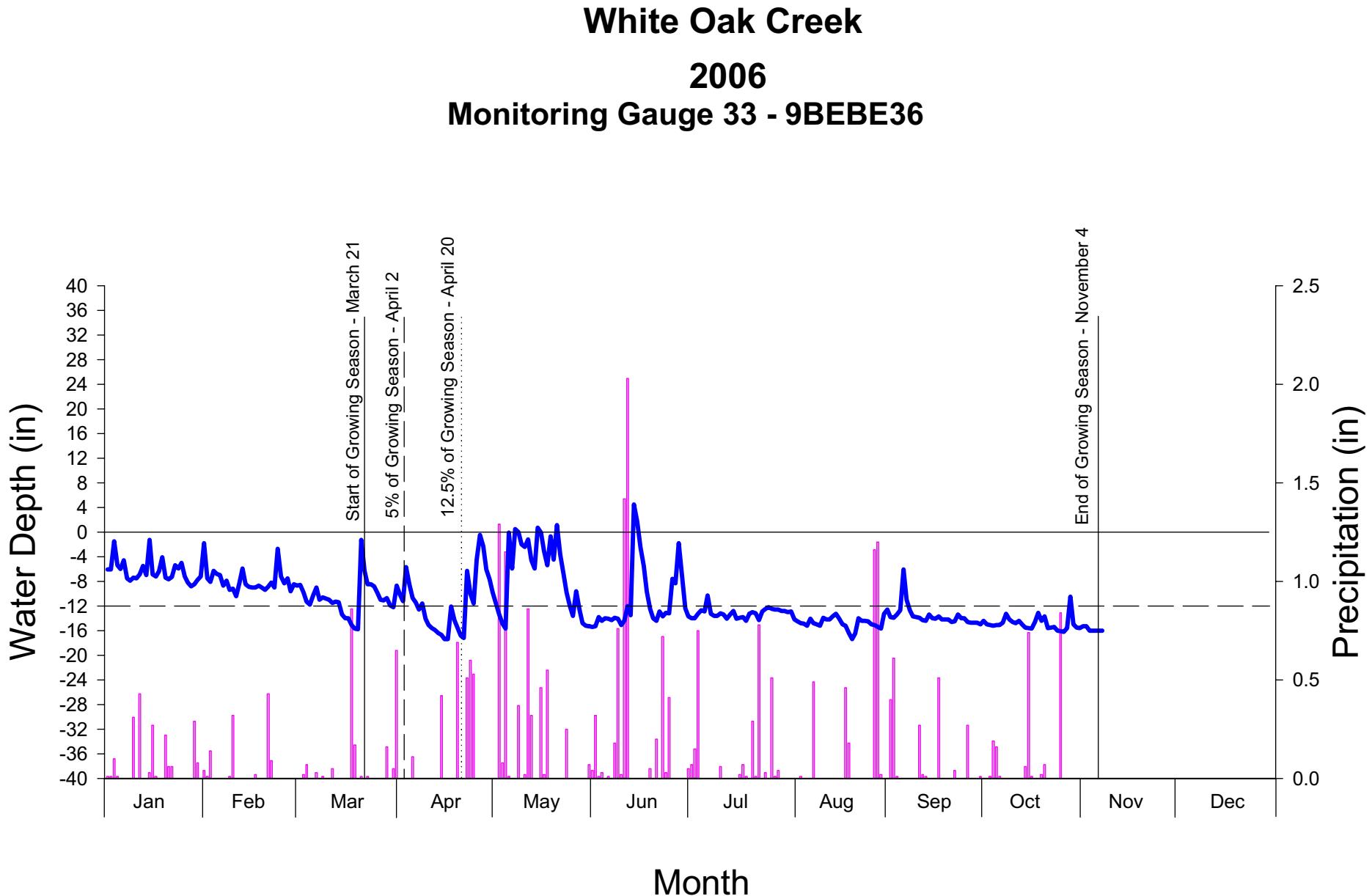


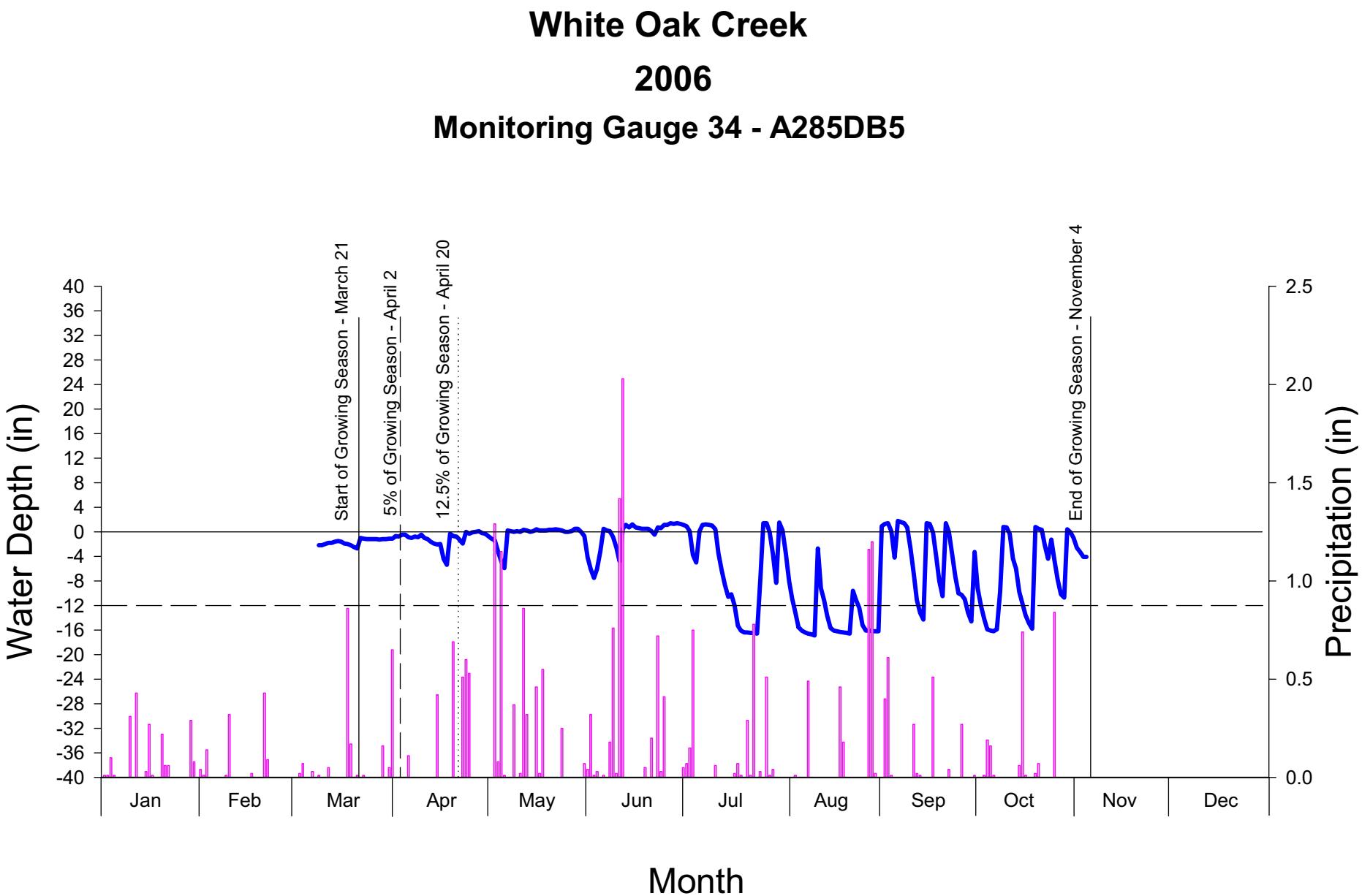


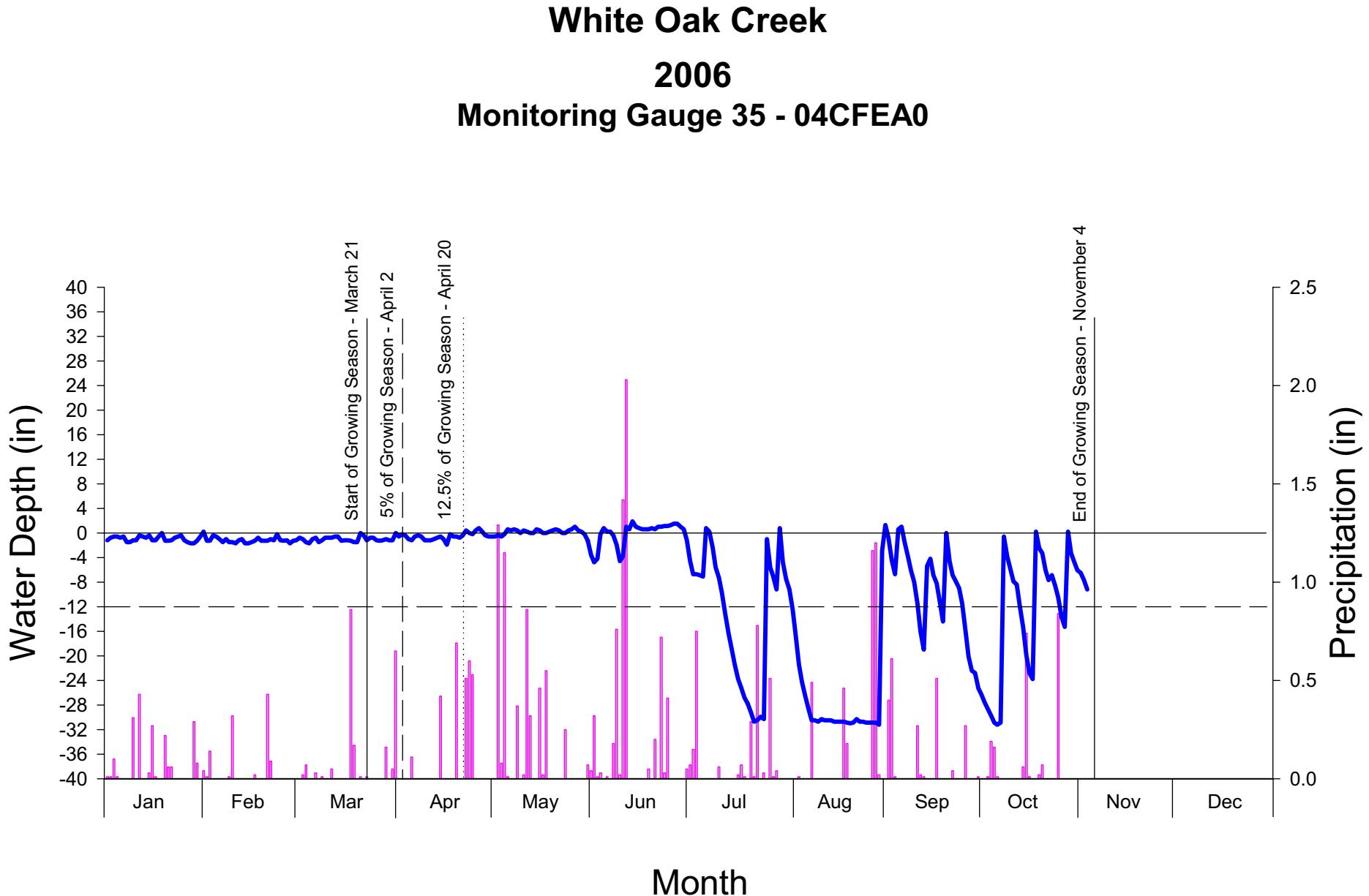


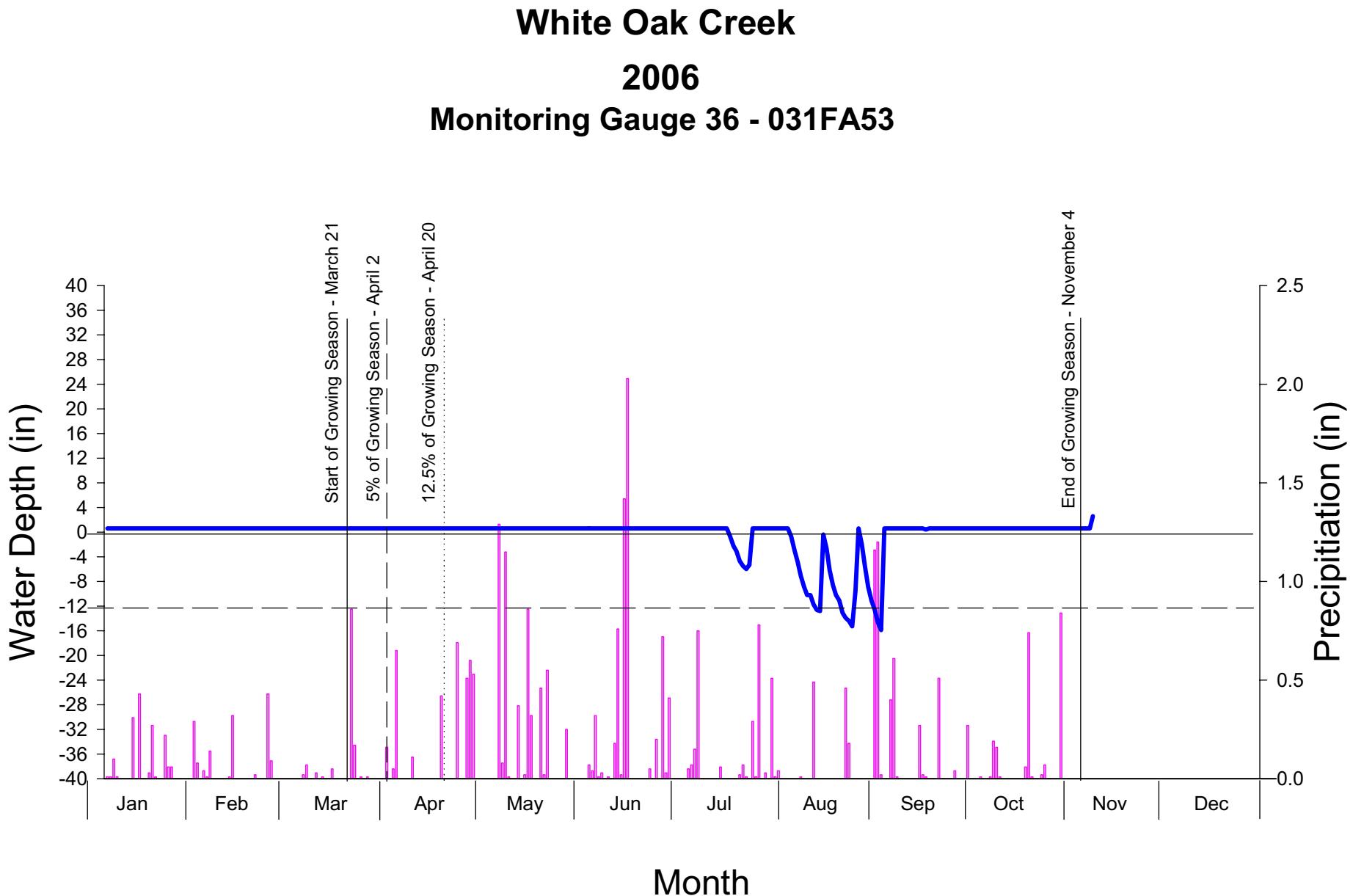












APPENDIX C

SITE PHOTOS

**White Oak Creek
Fixed Photo Stations
August 16, 2006 – Year 4 of 5**



Photo Plot 1



Photo Plot 2



Photo Plot 3



Photo Plot 4



Photo Plot 5



Photo Plot 6

**White Oak Creek
Vegetation Plot Photos
August 16, 2006 – Year 4 of 5**



Vegetation Plot 1 looking southeast



Vegetation Plot 2 looking southeast



Vegetation Plot 3 looking south



Vegetation Plot 4 looking southeast



Vegetation Plot 5 looking southeast



Vegetation Plot 6 looking southeast



Vegetation Plot 7 looking south



Vegetation Plot 8 looking south

APPENDIX D

RESTORATION AREA

Client:	Project:	RESTORATION PLAN		APPENDIX	
		White Oak Creek Mitigation Site			
		EEP Project No. 417 JOHNSTON COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA			

Drawn By:	GWN	Date:	DEC 2006
Ckd By:	JWG	Scale:	1" = 400'
ESC Project No.:		06.282.01	

D

