Point-to-point reply to reviewer #1’s comments:

Review of Chen et al, I am reviewing this paper as someone with quite a lot of experience of measuring bulk organic nitrogen but with much less expertise in organic matter characterisation. Overall, I think this is a useful paper that demonstrates the potential importance of the organic nitrogen in this region and also provides some useful characterisation of the some of the organic matter in the aerosol. The provision of data on organic carbon and nitrogen together is for me particularly useful. The wide range of data does allow some inter-component relationships to be used to suggest something about organic C and N cycling, although all the correlations may not prove a causal link. The sampling and analysis is state-of-the-art for the compounds analysed and provides a high quality and useful data set. I am happy to see it published but I would suggest a few changes before publication.

Specific comments

Comment: I do wonder if the title is really appropriate given how little of the organic nitrogen is characterised.
Response: One very important purpose of our study is to provide more information on N-containing species in aerosols in forest environments. Although the identified and quantified speciated N-containing organic compounds only contributed a small fraction of the total WSON, which is consistent with other studies, we feel our results add to the current scientific understanding of the issue and emphasizes the need to further characterize aerosol organic N composition in the atmosphere. We think the current title is appropriate considering our aim and purpose.

Comment: Line 69 There is now a global model of atmospheric organic nitrogen cycling that should perhaps be referenced – Kanakidou et al 2012 Global Biogeochemical Cycles doi 10.1029/2011GB004277.
Response: The reference by Kanakidou et al 2012 is now included in the text.

Comment: Line 72 To my mind the work of Altieri cited here and their more recent paper (Altieri et al 2012 ACP 12 355703571) represent the best effort to characterise the atmospheric organic nitrogen and yet neither here or later in the paper is this work discussed. It is relevant because it identifies reduced nitrogen as a dominant component of the atmospheric organic nitrogen, yet the authors here are characterising oxidised nitrogen based organic matter. The rationale for their choice of compounds is not really explained in the section line 112-125 where I might expect it to be.
Response: The reference by Altieri et al 2012 is now included in the Introduction section. The rationale for characterizing oxidised organic nitrogen is based on the possible sources of organic aerosols in a remote forest site. Emissions of the most abundant biogenic precursors, including isoprene, monoterpenes and sesquiterpenes, from the forest are expected to favor the formation of oxidized low volatility compounds to nucleate or condense on to the particle phase. Also, the possibility of wildfires, which are believed to be a significant contributor to atmospheric OM loadings, is considered a potential source to our remote forest site.
**Comment:** Line 140 The site map needs to be in the main text not the supplementary material.

**Response:** The site map is showing the relative location of the sampling site as well as the whole research forest lab to the nearby roads and towns. Although it is providing useful information to understand the sources of the pollutants, we do not think the standalone site map will provide as much important information as other results figures and tables in the main text. We prefer to keep it in the supplemental section.

**Comment:** Line 145-148 Given their importance from the results at this site, the authors might want to comment on ammonia sources.

**Response:** A brief description of local emission sources is provided at Line 141 “Typical rural development is present to the east of the site, consisting of houses and small scale farming for hay and crop production including some scattered cow and horse pastures, which are small local ammonia emission sources.” And also at Line 338 “Nitrogen component contributions to WSTN are presented in Figure 1a, which shows NH$_4^+$ as the most abundant component, contributing 85±11% w/w to total WSTN mass. Typical NH$_4^+$ concentrations at the site were below 1.0 µg/m$^3$ (with an average of 0.32 µg/m$^3$), which is expected for such a remote site with no major local and regional ammonia sources.”

**Comment:** Line 151 – how many samples in total? I guess about 60 but it does help to know when looking at the statistical work.

**Response:** The total number of samples collected is 58. This information is provided on line 156 in the main text.

**Comment:** Line 151-3 Gonzalez-Benitez discussed the issue of semi-volatile organic nitrogen and it may be useful to at least note this, although it is very hard for most of us to sample for this.

**Response:** The following sentence is added to the text regarding difficulty in sampling for semi-volatile organic nitrogen: “Under some conditions, the 24hr integrated filter sampling technique may not fully retain all semi-volatile organic nitrogen compounds (Gonzalez Benitez et al., 2009).”

**Comment:** Line 221 I think “less than” should be “better than” if I understand the point

**Response:** “less than” is changed to “better than”.

**Comment:** Section 2.4 Please explain what the PMF is being used to investigate. The section here is a detailed description of the mathematical manipulations but it does not explain anything about the process to the non specialist.

**Response:** The purpose and basic details of the PMF analysis are stated in the text as “Positive Matrix Factorization (PMF) was used to identify potential sources of compounds measured at Coweeta. Briefly, PMF resolves factor profiles and contributions from a series of PM compositional data with an uncertainty-weighted least-squares fitting approach.”

**Comment:** Line 317-8 How does how ozone consumption lead to a seasonal maximum?
Response: The sentence is revised as “In addition, a spring maximum \([O_3]\) may be due to higher chemical consumption of \(O_3\) by reactive monoterpenes and sesquiterpene emitted in the forest during summer.”

Comment: Line 337-340 For a wider audience I would suggest it is worth noting this \%organic N is consistent with other data from the world beyond the USA.
Response: The following sentence is added “Moreover, the observed WSON contribution to WSTN in particles at Coweetakis consistent with a global estimated range of 10-39\% (Cape et al., 2011).”

Comment: Line 342-344 The claimed seasonal cycle looks very small to me from the graphs.
Response: The differences of OC during spring and summer compared to fall are discernible, but do not reflect a dramatic seasonal cycle..

Comment: Line 349-352. The correlations are presented for each season, and that is OK although with only about 20 samples and so many variables I wonder about the statistical validity of the approach. I would therefore suggest that the equivalent correlation for the whole data set should also be presented. The observation of the correlation of WSON and WSOC is interesting and there is rather limited such data valuable. I also note a much stronger correlation of WSON and NH\(_4^+\) than NO\(_3^-\). This is consistent with other data (see Cape et al 2011 cited) and points along with the Altieri work above, to a key role for reduced nitrogen in WSON formation.
Response: The correlations for the entire dataset are now included in Table 2. We appreciate the comment regarding “a much stronger correlation of WSON and NH\(_4^+\) than NO\(_3^-\)”. The following statement is now included at line 368 “It is also noted that a stronger correlation of WSON with NH\(_4^+\) than with NO\(_3^-\) was observed, which might suggest a key role of reduced nitrogen in WSON formation (Cape et al., 2011; Jickells et al., 2013)”.

Comment: Line 359 “source contributions” of what? presumably WSON and C
Response: Yes. The sentence is revised as “However, the weak WSON-WSOC correlation suggests a variety of source contributions to WSON and WSOC over the different seasons.”

Comment: Line 374-7 We have all had problems such as described here, but is it really useful to include the samples collected when local burning impacted the sampler? This is particularly relevant because throughout much of the paper the authors show they can only characterise a few percent of the WSON. Then suddenly on line 508 they say they can characterize 28\% which would be very impressive but I think this is for these local burning episodes and so by including this high percentage the authors may mislead readers into thinking as a community we are beginning to be able to characterise quite a lot of the WSON. This is also relevant to line 587 and the abstract. As the authors note in line 552 they and the rest of us have yet to be able to characterise very much of this material
Response: Yes, the particular sample characterized as 28\% of WSON was impacted by local biomass burning. We agree that this was a special event and not typical of the other samples. However, we think it is relevant to be included as an example of the impact of local burning (i.e., “fresh” smoke). In order to avoid misleading the readers, we have revised the statement regarding this 28\% characterized WSON: “On average, identified nitro-aromatic and nitrooxy-organosulfate compounds accounted for a small fraction of WSON, ranging from \~\ 1\% in spring
to ~ 4% in fall, though were observed to contribute as much as 28% w/w of WSON in individual samples which were impacted by local biomass burning.”

**Comment:** Line 434-5 Given how small a percentage of WSON appears to be made up of N containing organosulphate compounds, I’m not sure its correct to make the statement “which reflected: : : to WSON” here.

**Response:** The emphasis of this statement is the importance of nitrogen containing organosulfate in summer to WSON relative to the other seasons based on the significant correlations observed. The statement is now revised to “Organosulfates exhibited statistically significant correlations with WSON only in the summer (r=0.64, p<0.01), which reflected the importance of N containing organosulfates or their formation chemistry to WSON during summer compared to the other seasons.”

**Comment:** Line 440 group of ORGANIC compounds Line 447 is 6-9% (which is what I think your report) really “a substantial proportion”? 

**Response:** Composition of atmospheric particulate OM is expected to be complex and could comprise hundreds and thousands of individual compounds. A single class of compounds with a particular functional group which contributes up to ~10% of overall OM loading is substantial considering the complexity and numbers of potential component groups.

**Comment:** Line 446-453 Here and elsewhere I think the authors need to be careful about interpreting correlations as showing causal links.

**Response:** We agree and appreciate the comment.

**Comment:** Line 562-565 I think the authors conclusions are valid for the material they have characterised, but that does not necessarily mean that all of the organic aerosol has been similarly aged.

**Response:** Thanks for the comment. We agree. The biogenic SOA tracers are most likely to reflect aging of the SOA portion of the organic aerosols, which was the intent of our statement in the text: “Warm periods in spring and summer exhibited highest production of terpenoic acids, when SOA correspondingly showed a higher degree of aging.”

**Comment:** Line 581-3 I do not understand what the sentence starting “PMF analysis” means. I am not really sure that figure 5 and 6 add much to manuscript

**Response:** One important piece of information the PMF analysis adds to the study is the contribution of resolved WSON containing OM contributed 20% to WSOC, demonstrating a significant portion of OC is nitrogenated in PM$_{2.5}$ at our study site. While our speciated analysis only identified a small fraction of the nitrogenated OC, there is definitely a need to conduct more in depth research to unveil a complete picture of organic N composition. We feel the results of the PMF analysis shown in Figures 5 and 6 provide useful information to readers.
Point to point reply to reviewer #2’s comments:

This paper presents the analytical results of water-soluble organic nitrogen (WSON) for both bulk and related molecular compounds in PM 2.5 filter samples collected at a remote montane forest site in the U.S. The authors present the season variation of WSON and related organic molecular compounds to characterize aerosol WSON and investigate its possible sources. Combination of bulk WSON and molecular tracer compounds related to WSON and WSOC obtained in the forest environment provides new insights into our understanding on aerosol WSON particularly from terrestrial biogenic sources. While the data presented are valuable, there are some important issues that need to be worked out and clarified before I recommend its publication in ACP.

Specific comments

Comment (1) One of my concern is on the interpretation for the positive correlation between biogenic SOA tracers and ambient temperature (Lines 470-476, 562-565). The authors conclude that such a relationship indicates temperature dependence of “oxidation.” It may be true to some extents, but how about the temperature dependence of VOC emissions? Most of terpenes generally show temperature dependence of emission, which can also explain the correlation shown in this manuscript.

Response: The positive correlation referred to here is not between the abundance of the biogenic SOA tracers with temperature, rather we are using the relative abundance (concentration ratios) with temperature instead. It is stated in the text “To assess the extent of aging, concentration ratios of higher generation oxidation products (C8H12O6, m/z 203 and C8H12O5, m/z 187) to early oxidation fresh SOA products (C8H12O4, m/z 171 and C10H16O6, m/z 231) are calculated.” We do agree that most terpene emissions are temperature dependent, but we think the relative abundance of higher generation products to early oxidation products probably will cancel out such effects.

Comment (2) The authors use the term “aged biogenic SOA” (e.g., Lines. 560-565 and others) in the text. Please add more discussion about specific time scale on this aging (hours, days?). This should be discussed relative to the time scale of transport (e.g., vertical mixing within the forest canopy or between the canopy and the above atmosphere, horizontal transport, etc.).

Response: Under atmospherically relevant conditions, the lifetime of α-pinene SOA was reported as several days (4-7days) as a result of heterogeneous and condensed phase oxidation processes (Epstein et al., 2014). In addition, the precipitation frequency during spring and summer at the Coweeta site was quite high (as in days) and we think the aged biogenic SOA probably had a time scale of aging of days before scavenged by the precipitation. Figure 1C also shows such scavenging effect after precipitation on WSOC (a drop in WSOC right after precipitation occasions). A brief discussion on this topic is now added to the text at Line 495 “Based on typical chemical lifetime of biogenic SOA by OH oxidation and the precipitation frequency at the Coweeta site, biogenic SOA at Coweeta probably had an atmospheric lifetime of several days before depletion by oxidation processes (Epstein et al., 2014) and/or scavenging by precipitation.”

Comment (3) Nitro-aromatics: In section 3.3., the authors conclude that the contribution of nitroaromatics to WSON was generally “small,” whereas they state potential importance
of nitro-aromatics to the atmospheric N deposition budget (L.507-509) in section 3.6. These statements do not seem to be consistent and confusing.

**Response:** L.507-509 “Nitro-aromatics and nitrooxy-organo-sulfates were estimated to account for as much as 28% of WSON, which reflected the abundance and potential importance of these groups of species to the atmospheric N deposition budget.” Here we are referring to the contribution of Nitro-aromatics and nitrooxy-organo-sulfates combined to N deposition budget, not nitro-aromatics alone. The sentence is now revised to “Nitro-aromatics and nitrooxy-organo-sulfates combined were estimated to account for as much as 28% of WSON, which reflected the abundance and potential importance of these groups of species to the atmospheric N deposition budget.”

**Comment** (4) Lines 383-384: If the event cannot be attributed to local burning, then what is the most likely origin (source location)? “Long range transport” is not enough to explain the source of the observed particles in this event.

**Response:** The following analysis and discussion is now included at line 398: Clustering of backward trajectories (120hr duration for individual trajectories; 48 total trajectories covering the two-day event) suggests that northeast Georgia (shown in supplemental information Figure S5) is the most likely origin of the biomass burning event observed on October 24th and 25th.

**Comment** (5) Section 2.3: The authors should describe the measurement uncertainties for each analysis. This is particularly important for the analysis of WSON, whose measurement uncertainty includes propagation of errors of WSTN, NO3-, NH4+, : : :.

**Response:** Yes, the measurement uncertainty of WSON includes propagation of errors of WSTN, NO3-, NH4+ and NO2-. We have included the estimated measurement uncertainties in the text at line 332: “The measurement uncertainty of WSON was estimated to be ~ 30% from error propagation of WSTN (2%), NH4+ (1%), NO3- (1%) and NO2- (1%).”

**Comment** (6) Figure 6: I think that the author should show time series of integrated factor contributions vs. the measured WSOC concentrations to show how well the PMF reproduced the measurements. Then the authors should show fractional contribution of each factor to WSOC in the time series as they discuss it in the text.

**Response:** A linear regression plot for integrated factor contributions with measured WSOC is now included in the supplemental information as Figure S6. Linear regression coefficients are also provided in the figure. In Figure 6, the mean fractional contributions of each factor to WSOC are now included.

**Comment** (7) The authors use the term “N/C ratio” in the manuscript: Lines 42,43, 517, 524, 592, and 593. Should this term be “(WS)ON/OC ratio?” “N/C” includes inorganic N and elemental C.

**Response:** Yes, we are referring to WSON/WSOC ratio. We have revised the term “N/C ratio” throughout the manuscript to “WSON/WSOC ratio”.

**Comment** (8) Lines 522-525: The identified-ON/WSON ratios also show a seasonal difference (Table 4). Can the authors add a few more statement on this difference in terms of unidentified compounds?
Response: The following discussion is included in the text regarding seasonal differences observed for identified-ON/WSON: “Moreover, identified ON/WSON ratio was estimated to be 1.0, 2.0 and 4.4 for spring, summer and fall, respectively. Such differences further suggest much more unidentified WSON compounds exist in spring when organic N was most enriched from biological processes.”

Minor comments
Comment (9) Abstract: The authors should specify that the sampled aerosols are PM2.5.
Response: Yes, PM2.5 is specified now in the abstract on line 24.

Comment (10) L.312: Please define “[O3]” here.
Response: [O3] definition is added as ozone concentration.

Comment (11) L.394: Correct “extreme” to “extremely.”
Response: “extreme” is changed to “extremely”.
Characterization of organic nitrogen in aerosols at a forest site in the southern Appalachian Mountains

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Abstract
This study investigates the composition of organic particulate matter in PM2.5 in a remote montane forest in the southeastern U.S., focusing on the role of organic nitrogen (N) in sulfur-containing secondary organic aerosol (nitrooxy-organosulfates) and aerosols associated with biomass burning (nitro-aromatics). Bulk water soluble organic N (WSON) represented ~14% w/w of water soluble total N (WSTN) in PM2.5, on average, across seasonal measurement campaigns conducted in the spring, summer, and fall of 2015. Largest contributions of WSON to WSTN were observed in spring (~18% w/w) and lowest in the fall (~10% w/w). On average, identified nitro-aromatic and nitrooxy-organosulfate compounds accounted for a small fraction of WSON, ranging from ~1% in spring to ~4% in fall, though were observed to contribute as much as 28% w/w of WSON in individual samples which were impacted by local biomass burning. Highest concentrations of oxidized organic N species occurred during summer (average of 0.65ngN/m³) along with a greater relative abundance of higher generation oxygenated
terpenoic acids, indicating an association with more aged aerosol. Highest concentrations of
nitro-aromatics (eg. nitrocatechol and methyl-nitrocatechol), levoglucosan, and aged SOA tracers
were observed during fall, associated with aged biomass burning plumes. Nighttime nitrate
radical chemistry is the most likely formation pathway for nitrooxy-organosulfates observed at
this low NOx site (generally <1ppb). Isoprene derived organosulfate (MW216, 2-methyltetrol
derived), which is formed from isoprene epoxidiols (IEPOX) under low NOx conditions, was
the most abundant individual organosulfate. Concentration weighted average $WSON/WSOC$
ratios for nitro-aromatics + organosulfates + terpenoic acids were one order of magnitude lower
than the overall aerosol $WSON/WSOC$ ratio, indicating the presence of other uncharacterized
higher N content species. Although nitrooxy-organosulfates and nitro-aromatics contributed a
small fraction of WSON, our results provide new insight into the atmospheric formation
processes and sources of these largely uncharacterized components of atmospheric organic N,
which also helps to advance the atmospheric models to better understand the chemistry and
deposition of reactive N.

1. Introduction

There is extensive evidence showing that boreal and temperate forests are affected by
anthropogenic activities, both industrial and agricultural. Such activity results in unprecedented
quantities of reactive nitrogen (N) being released into the atmosphere, subsequently altering
global nitrogen and carbon (C) biogeochemical cycles (Bragazza et al., 2006; Doney et al., 2007;
Ollinger et al., 2002; Magnani et al., 2007; Neff et al., 2002a,b; Pregitzer et al., 2008). Nitrogen
enters natural ecosystems through atmospheric deposition and biological fixation, and is mainly
lost through leaching and gaseous fluxes back to the atmosphere (Hungate et al., 2003).
Atmospheric deposition of N to terrestrial ecosystems may lead to soil and aquatic acidification,
nutrient imbalance and enrichment, plant damage and microbial community changes as well as
loss of biodiversity (Bobbink et al., 1998; Magnani et al., 2007; Lohse et al, 2008; Simkin et al.,
2016).

In the United States, deposition of atmospheric pollutants including N is monitored by
the National Atmospheric Deposition Program (NADP) and EPA’s Clean Air Status and Trends
Network (CASNET). However, these networks focus only on inorganic N species (eg.
$NH_3/NH_4^+$ and $HNO_3/NO_3^-$). Recent studies shed light on the importance of organic N
deposition, which is not routinely measured in national networks. On a global basis, organic N may contribute ~25 percent of the total N deposition (Gonzalez Benitez et al., 2009; Jickells et al., 2013; Kanakidou et al., 2012; Keene et al., 2002; Neff et al., 2002a; Zhang et al., 2012).

Although ubiquitous, widespread routine monitoring of organic N in the atmosphere is inhibited due to difficulties in sampling (Walker et al, 2012) and inability to fully speciate the wide range of constituents that make up this large pool of atmospheric N (Altieri et al., 2009, 2012; Cape et al., 2011; Neff et al., 2002a; Samy et al., 2013). For these reasons, understanding of the sources, atmospheric chemistry, and deposition of organic nitrogen remains limited.

Atmospheric N from biogenic and anthropogenic emissions sources undergoes complex transformation processes and photochemical reactions. Consequently, apportionment of atmospheric organic N to potential sources is challenging. However, such information is required to advance atmospheric N models applied to better understand the global N cycle. For example, Miyazaki et al. (2014) examined aerosols collected in a deciduous forest and found in the summer that water soluble organic N (WSON) correlated positively to biogenic hydrocarbon oxidation; and during fall WSON in the coarse particle fraction was associated with primary biological emissions (e.g. emitted from soil, vegetation, pollen and bacteria). Such patterns underscore that atmospheric organic N measured in forested landscapes originates from a variety of sources that contribute differently across seasons.

Recent advancements have been made in speciation of organic N in aerosol for some groups of compounds including amines, amino acids and other nitrogenated functional groups such as organonitrates (Day et al., 2010; Place et al., 2017; Samy et al., 2013). Organic N in secondary aerosol and aerosols associated with biomass burning sources are areas of increasing interest, from both atmospheric chemistry and ecosystem exposure perspectives, where more information is needed. Studies of secondary organic aerosols (SOA) have identified a variety of nitrated organosulfate compounds (e.g. nitrooxy-organosulfates) in both chamber and ambient aerosol samples following isoprene and monoterpenes oxidation. These compounds are either produced under high NOx conditions or from nighttime NO3 radical chemistry (Surratt et al., 2006, 2007, 2008, 2010; Darer et al., 2011; Lin et al., 2013a; He et al., 2014; Worton et al., 2013). Potential SOA precursors such as unsaturated green leaf volatiles (GLVs) released by wounded plants (e.g. crop harvesting and insect attacks) may contribute substantially to the budget of biogenic SOA formation especially in remote forests (Gomez-Gonzalez et al., 2008;...
The detection of reaction products such as organosulfates and nitroxy-organosulfates in ambient aerosols provides strong evidence of influence from anthropogenic sources (e.g. SO2 and NOx) interacting with biogenic precursors to form nitrogenated SOA (Chan et al., 2010; Lin et al., 2013a; Meade et al., 2016).

In addition to being present in sulfur-containing SOA, organic nitrogen, specifically nitro-aromatic compounds (e.g. nitrophenols and nitrocatechols), have been characterized as chemical tracers from biomass burning (e.g. wildland and prescribed smoke, bushfires, residential wood burning). This is in addition to levoglucosan, a widely used tracer of biomass burning (Inuma et al., 2010, 2016; Kahnt et al., 2013; Kitanovski et al., 2012; Gaston et al., 2016). These nitrated compounds can form during pyrolysis of plant biopolymers such as cellulose. Furthermore, as combustion byproducts, these compounds are often defined as brown carbon (BrC) and thus potentially light absorbing (Mohr et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2015).

Presumably, nitro-aromatics could constitute a substantial portion of atmospheric organic N in aerosols collected in regions affected by biomass burning.

This study investigates the composition of organic particulate matter in a remote montane forest in the southeastern U.S., focusing on the role of organic N in sulfur-containing SOA and aerosols associated with biomass burning. Measurements target four groups of compounds: 1) nitro-aromatics associated with biomass burning; 2) organosulfates and nitrooxy-organosulfates produced from biogenic SOA precursors (i.e., isoprene, monoterpenes and unsaturated aldehydes) interacting with anthropogenic pollutants; 3) terpenoic acids formed from monoterpene oxidation; and 4) organic molecular markers including methyltetrols, C-5 alkene triols, 2-methylglyceric acid, 3-hydroxyglutaric acid and levoglucosan. Terpenoic acids and organic markers are included to assist in characterizing the extent of biogenic compound oxidation and atmospheric processing (i.e., aerosol aging) as well as contributions from biomass burning sources. Aerosol bulk chemical measurements are conducted to estimate total water soluble organic N and C concentrations. Characterization of seasonal patterns in concentrations of organic N species and assessment of potential sources and formation processes are emphasized.

2. **Experimental methods and materials**

2.1 Sampling site and atmospheric aerosol collection
The study was conducted at the U.S. Forest Service Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory, a 2185-ha experimental forest in southwestern, North Carolina, USA (35°3’ N, 83°25’ W) near the southern end of the Appalachian Mountain chain. The climate is classified as maritime, humid temperate, with mean monthly temperatures ranging from 3.3°C in January to 21.6°C in July (Swift et al., 1988). Elevation ranges from 675 to 1592 m with a corresponding range in annual precipitation of 1800 to 2500 mm (Swank and Crossley, 1988). The vegetation is characterized as mixed coniferous/deciduous including oak, pines, and hardwoods (Bolstad et al, 1998). Atmospheric measurements were conducted in the lowest part of the basin (686 m), collocated with long term measurements of air and precipitation chemistry conducted by CASTNET and NADP networks, respectively.

The sampling site is 5 km west of Otto, NC (population 2500) and Highway 23 (Figure S1, supplemental material). Land to the north, west and south of Coweeta is undeveloped forest. Typical rural development is present to the east of the site, consisting of houses and small scale farming for hay and crop production including some scattered cow and horse pastures, which are small local ammonia (NH₃) emission sources. The nearest metropolitan areas include Atlanta, Georgia (175 km southwest), Chattanooga, Tennessee (175 km west), Knoxville, Tennessee (110 km north/northwest), Asheville, North Carolina (100 km northeast), and Greeneville, South Carolina (100 km southeast). The location of the sampling site within the context of NOx and SO₂ point sources in the eastern U.S. is shown in supplemental material (Figure S2). Only minor point sources are present within ~100 km of the site.

The study period summarized here comprises three seasonal intensives conducted during the spring, summer and fall of 2015. Each campaign was conducted for approximately 3 weeks (21 May to 9 June, 6 August to 25 August, 9 October to 26 October). A high-volume Tisch TE-1000 (Tisch Environmental, Cleves, OH) dual cyclone PM2.5 sampler operated at a flow rate of 230 L/min was set up on the ground to collect 24 hr (started at 7am local time) integrated samples on pre-baked (550°C for 12hrs) quartz fiber (QF) filters (90mm, Pall Corporation, Port Washington, NY). Under some conditions, the 24hr integrated filter sampling technique may not fully retain all semi-volatile organic nitrogen compounds (Gonzalez Benitez et al., 2009). Field blanks were collected the same way except being loaded in the sampler without the pump switched on. A total of 58 ambient samples and 10 field blanks were obtained. Collected filter
samples were transferred back to the laboratory in a cooler and stored in a freezer at -20 °C before chemical analysis.

2.2 Trace gas and meteorological measurements

During the spring 2015 campaign, NOx concentrations were measured on a short tower (7 m above ground) co-located with the CASTNET and high volume PM samplers. NOx concentrations were measured using a commercial NO-NO2-NOx analyzer (model 42S, Thermo Environmental Instruments, Incorporated, Franklin, MA). Briefly, nitric oxide (NO) is measured directly on one channel by chemiluminescence. On a 2nd channel, NO2 is converted to NO by a molybdenum catalyst heated to 325°C, yielding the concentration of NOx (NO + NO2). This approach may overestimate NOx since other oxidized nitrogen gases such as HNO3, PAN and HONO could also be reduced to NO on the heated molybdenum surface (Fehsenfeld et al., 1987; Williams et al.,1998; Zellweger et al., 2000). However, the use of an inlet filter and approximately 12 m of sample line between the atmospheric inlet and converter likely minimized the potential bias from HNO3. For subsequent campaigns, NOx concentrations were estimated from a co-located NOy analyzer. Similar to the NOx instrument, NOy and HNO3 were also measured using a modified model 42S NO-NO2-NOx analyzer. The NOy technique is described in detail by Williams et al. (1998). Briefly, total oxidized reactive nitrogen (NOy) is converted to NO using a molybdenum catalyst heated to 325°C. On a 2nd channel, a metal denuder coated with potassium chloride (KCl) is used to remove HNO3 before passing through a 2nd molybdenum converter heated to 325°C. The difference between the total NOy measurement and the HNO3-scrubbed NOy measurement is interpreted as HNO3. NOx concentrations were estimated from the differences between measured NOy and HNO3, which provided an upper bound estimation as gaseous N containing species were not excluded (eg. PAN and organic nitrates). Hourly ozone concentrations were measured by CASTNET (U.S. EPA, 2017) on a co-located 10m tower. Hourly meteorological data were provided by CASTNET (U.S. EPA, 2017) and Forest Service (Miniat et al 2015; Oishi et al.,2017), including temperature, relative humidity, solar radiation and precipitation.

2.3 Chemical analysis

2.3.1 Elemental and organic carbon analysis
A 1.5 cm² QF punch was analyzed for elemental carbon (EC) and organic carbon (OC) using a thermo-optical transmittance (TOT) method (Sunset Laboratory Inc, Oregon, USA) (Birch and Cary, 1996).

2.3.2 Water soluble species by Ion Chromatography (IC) and Total Organic Carbon/Total Nitrogen (TOC/TN) analyzers

A second QF punch (1.5 cm²) from each sample was extracted with DI water (18.2 MΩ·cm, Milli-Q Reference system, Millipore, Burlington, MA) in an ultrasonic bath for 45 min. The sample extract was filtered through a 0.2µm pore size PTFE membrane syringe filter (Iso-disc, Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, MO) before subsequent analyses.

Water soluble organic carbon (WSOC) and total N (WSTN) concentrations were measured using a chemiluminescence method that included a total organic carbon analyzer (TOC-Vcsh) combined with a total nitrogen module (TNM-1) (Shimadzu Scientific Instruments, Columbia, MD). For WSOC measurements, 25% phosphoric acid was mixed with sample extract (resulting in a 1.5% acid mixture) and sparged for 3 min to remove any existing carbonate/bicarbonate.

Inorganic species (NH₄⁺, NO₃⁻, NO₂⁻ and SO₄²⁻) were analyzed using ion chromatography (IC, Dionex model ICS-2100, Thermo Scientific, Waltham, MA). The IC was equipped with guard (IonPac 2mm AG23) and analytical columns (AS23) for anions. The samples were analyzed using an isocratic eluent mix carbonate/bicarbonate (4.5/0.8mM) at a flow rate of 0.25 mL/min. Cations were analyzed by Dionex IonPac 2mm CG12 guard and CS12 analytical columns; separations were conducted using 20mM methanesulfonic acid (MSA) as eluent at a flow rate of 0.25mL/min. Multi-point (≥5) calibration was conducted using a mixture prepared from individual inorganic standards (Inorganic Ventures, Christiansburg, VA). A mid-level accuracy check standard was prepared from certified standards mix (AccuStandard, New Haven, CT) for quality assurance/quality control purposes.

2.3.3 UV-Vis light absorption analysis

Several studies have shown that methanol can extract aerosol OC at higher efficiencies than water, and that a large fraction of light absorption in the near-UV and visible ranges is ascribed to water insoluble OC (Chen and Bond, 2010; Liu et al., 2013; Cheng et al., 2016). In this study, a QF punch (1.5 cm²) was extracted with 5 mL methanol (HPLC grade, Thermo...
Fisher Scientific Inc.) in a tightly closed amber vial, sonicated for 15 min, and then filtered through a 0.2 μm pore size PTFE filter (Iso-disc, Sigma Aldrich, St. Louis, MO). The light absorption of filtered extracts was measured with a UV-Vis spectrometer over λ = 200-900 nm at 0.2 nm resolution (V660, Jasco Incorporated, Easton MD). The wavelength accuracy is better than ± 0.3 nm; the wavelength repeatability is less than ± 0.05 nm. A reference cuvette containing methanol was used to account for solvent absorption. The UV-Vis absorption of field blank samples was negligible compared to ambient samples, but used for correction nonetheless. For ease of analysis, the absorption at 365 nm referencing to absorption at 700 nm was used as a general measure of the absorption by all aerosol chromophore components (Hecobian et al., 2010).

2.3.4. Analysis of isoprene and monoterpene SOA markers and anhydrosugars by GC-MS

Aliquots of each filter (roughly ¼) were extracted by 10 mL of methanol and methylene chloride mixture (1:1, v/v) ultrasonically twice (15 minutes each). The total extract was filtered and concentrated to a final volume of ~0.5 mL. Next, extracts were transferred to a 2 mL glass vial and concentrated to dryness under a gentle stream of ultrapure N2 and reacted with 50 μL of N, O-bis(trimethylsilyl)trifluoroacetamide (BSTFA) containing 1% trimethylchlorosilane (TMCS) and 10 μL of pyridine for 3 h at 70 °C. After cooling down to room temperature, internal standards (mixture of 17.6 ng μL−1 acenaphthalene-d10 and 18.6 ng μL−1 pyrene-d4 mixed in hexane) and pure hexane were added. The resulting solution was analyzed by an Agilent 6890N gas chromatograph (GC) coupled with an Agilent 5975 mass spectrometer (MS) operated in the electron ionization mode (70 eV). An aliquot of 2 μL of each sample was injected in splitless mode. The GC separation was carried out on a DB-5 ms capillary column (30 m × 0.25 mm × 0.25 μm, Agilent Technologies, Santa Clara, CA). The GC oven temperature was programmed from 50 °C (hold for 2 min) to 120 °C at 30 °C min−1 then ramped at 6 °C min−1 to a final temperature of 300 °C (hold for 10 min). Linear calibration curves were derived from six dilutions of quantification standards. Anhydrosugars (levoglucosan) were quantified using authentic standard; 2-methyltetrols (2-methylthreitol and 2-methylerythritol) and C-5 alkene triols were quantified using meso-erythritol; other SOA tracers (e.g., hydroxyl dicarboxylic acid) were quantified using cis-ketopinic acid (KPA) (refer to supplemental information Table S1). The species not quantified using authentic standards were identified by the comparison of mass
spectra to previously reported data (Claeys, et al., 2004, 2007; Surratt et al., 2006; Kleindienst et al., 2007). Field blanks were collected and no contamination was observed for identified species.

2.3.5. Analysis of organosulfates, terpenoic acids and nitro-aromatics by High Performance Liquid Chromatography- electrospray ionization-Quadrupole time-of-flight-Mass Spectrometer (HPLC-ESI(-)-QTOF-MS)

Approximately 3-5 mL of methanol was used to ultrasonically extract (twice for 15 min) roughly half of each 90mm QF sample. Internal standards (I.S.) were spiked onto each filter sample prior to extraction (refer to Table S2, S3 and S4 for individual compounds and surrogate standards used for each group of compounds). Extracts were filtered into a pear-shaped glass flask (50 mL) and rotary evaporated to ~0.1 mL. The concentrated extracts were then transferred into a 2 mL amber vial that was rinsed with methanol 2-3 times. The final sample extract volume was ~500 µL prior to analysis. All the glassware used during the extraction procedure was pre-baked at 550°C overnight. Extracted samples were stored at or below -20 °C prior to analysis and typically analyzed within 7 d.

An HPLC coupled with a quadrupole time-of-flight mass spectrometer (1200 series LC and QTOF-MS, Model 6520, Agilent Technologies, Palo Alto, CA) was used for target compound identification and quantification. The QTOF-MS instrument was equipped with a multimode ion source operated in electrospray ionization (ESI) negative (-) mode. Optimal conditions were achieved under parameters of 2000 V capillary voltage, 140 V fragmentor voltage, 65 V skimmer voltage, 300 °C gas temperature, 5 L/min drying gas flow rate and 40 psig nebulizer. The ESI-QTOF-MS was operated over the m/z range of 40 to 1000 at a 3 spectra/s acquisition rate. Target compounds separation was achieved by a C18 column (2.1×100 mm, 1.8 µm particle size, Zorbax Eclipse Plus, Agilent Technologies) with an injection volume of 2 µL and flow rate of 0.2 mL/min. The column temperature was kept at 40 °C, and gradient separation was conducted with 0.2% acetic acid (v:v) in water (eluent A) and methanol (eluent B). The eluent B was maintained at 25% for the first 3 min, increased to 100% in 10 min, held at 100% from 10 to 32 min, and then dropped back to 25% from 32 to 37 min, with a 3 min post run time. During each sample run, reference ions were continuously monitored to provide accurate mass corrections (purine and HP-0921 acetate adduct, Agilent G1969-85001).

Typically, the instrument exhibited 2 ppm mass accuracy. Tandem MS was conducted by
targeting ions under collision-induced dissociation (CID) to determine parent ion structures. Agilent software Mass hunter was used for data acquisition (Version B05) and for further data analysis (Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis, Version B07). The mass accuracy for compound identification and quantification was set at ± 10 ppm. Calibration curves were generated from diluted standard compound mixtures. Recoveries of the extraction and quantification were performed by spiking known amounts of standards to blank QF filters. Then the spiked blank filters were extracted and analyzed the same way as ambient collected samples. The average recoveries of standard compounds are listed in supplemental information Table S5 and ranged from 75.2 ± 5.6 to 129.4±4.2%. Isomers were identified for several compounds, no further separation was conducted and combined total concentrations are reported in this study.

2.4 Source apportionment by Positive Matrix Factorization

Positive Matrix Factorization (PMF) was used to identify potential sources of compounds measured at Coweeta. Here we use the PMF2 model (Paatero, 1998a, b) coupled with a bootstrap technique (Hemann et al., 2009), which has been applied in a number of previous studies (Xie et al., 2012, 2013, 2014,). Briefly, PMF resolves factor profiles and contributions from a series of PM compositional data with an uncertainty-weighted least-squares fitting approach; the coupled stationary bootstrap technique generates 1000 replicated data sets from the original data set and each was analyzed with PMF. Normalized factor profiles were compared between the base case solution and bootstrapped solutions, so as to generate a factor matching rate. The determination of the factor number was based on the interpretability of different PMF solutions (3-6 factors) and factor matching rate (>50%). Detailed data selection criteria are presented in supplemental information.

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Meteorology, NOx, and O3

Statistics of atmospheric chemistry and meteorological measurements are summarized by season in Table 1. In general, the sampling site was humid and cool, even in the summer, with an average summer temperature of ~21°C and RH of 82%. During the fall, much lower temperature (~12 °C) and less humid conditions (RH=78%) were observed. NOx concentrations
were generally less than 1 ppb, which is considered typical for such a remote forest site removed
from major emission sources.

\[ \text{[O}_3\text{]} \] (O3 concentration) was generally low (Table 1) with seasonal averages of 15 ppb to
25 ppb. Historical seasonal [O3] over the past 5 years (2011 to 2015) are shown in supplemental
information Figure S3. A spring maximum in [O3] is typically observed at this site, with lower
concentrations during summer. Seasonal clustered back trajectories (Figure S4 in supplemental
information) suggest that during spring the Coweeta sampling site was under the influence from
air masses transported from Atlanta urban areas. In addition, a spring maximum [O3] may be due
to higher chemical consumption of O3 by reactive monoterpenes and sesquiterpenes emitted in
the forest during summer. With observed relatively moderate summer temperatures and
generally low [NOx], the site also experiences frequent cloud cover in summer lowering the
intensity of solar radiation which may suppress ozone production relative to spring conditions.
Additionally, deposition of O3 to the forest would be expected to peak during the summer, when
leaf area is greatest. O3 correlates positively with NOx in summer and fall but not spring,
indicating O3 production might be relatively more VOC-limited in spring than the other seasons
in this region.

3.2 Bulk water soluble organic nitrogen and carbon

Water soluble bulk organic N (WSON) was estimated as the difference between WSTN
and the sum of the inorganic N species (NH4+, NO3- and NO2-). The measurement uncertainty of
WSON was estimated to be $\sim 30\%$ from error propagation of WSTN (2%), NH4+ (1%), NO3- (1%)
and NO2- (1%). Nitrogen component contributions to WSTN are presented in Figure 1a, which
shows NH4+ as the most abundant component, contributing 85±11% w/w to total WSTN mass.
Typical NH4+ concentrations at the site were below 1.0 µg/m³ (with an average of 0.32 µg/m³),
which is expected for such a remote site with no major local or regional NH3 sources. The
oxidized inorganic N components (NO3- and NO2-) accounted for less than 2% w/w of WSTN
measured. Such a small contribution of NO3- to inorganic N (typically <10% of inorganic N
(NO3-+NH4+)) in PM2.5 is consistent with long term CASTNET measurements at Coweeta. The
average contribution of WSON to WSTN over the entire study period was 14±11% w/w. This
fraction reached a maximum of ~18% w/w in the spring (average) and minimum of ~10% in the
fall (average), exhibiting pronounced seasonal variability. Within individual samples (Figure 1b),
values ranged from near zero to 45%. Our study wide average of 14% falls within the range of
measurements at North American forest sites, including Duke Forest, North Carolina (~33%, Lin
et al., 2010) and Rocky Mountain National Park (14-21%) (Benedict et al., 2012). Moreover, the
observed WSON contribution to WSTN in particles at Coweeta is consistent with a global
estimated range of 10-39% (Cape et al., 2011).

WSOC accounted for roughly 62±13% of OC throughout the entire study period with no
significant seasonal variability. A time series of OC and WSOC along with temperature and
precipitation is presented in Figure 1c. On average, OC concentrations increased during warmer
spring and summer seasons and decreased when the temperature decreased in fall.
Concentrations of OC were positively correlated with temperature (r=0.30, p<0.05), presumably
in response to emissions of biogenic precursors and formation of secondary organic aerosols by
photooxidation. Spring and summer were generally moist and warm with frequent precipitation
(relative humidity presented in Table 1). Precipitation events corresponded to decreasing OC and
WSOC concentrations demonstrating the scavenging effect due to wet deposition.

Spearman rank correlation coefficients among measured species and meteorological
variables as well as other gas phase measurements are presented in Table 2 for each season
(p<0.01 for values in bold). As expected, NH$_4^+$ and SO$_4^{2-}$ tracked well over each season (r>0.9,
p<0.01). NH$_4^+$ was mainly associated with SO$_4^{2-}$ given the fact that NO$_3^-$ and NO$_2^-$ were
generally negligible compared to SO$_4^{2-}$. WSOC is often used as an SOA surrogate and accounts
for a significant portion (62% w/w) of OC during all sampling periods. WSOC correlated
strongly with OC over both summer and fall (r>0.95, p<0.01), but less so during spring (r=0.74,
p<0.01). WSOC also positively correlates with WSON over spring and fall (r=0.75, p<0.01) but
less so during summer (r = 0.5, p > 0.01). Note that both [WSOC] and [OC] are highest in the
summer, which likely indicates higher biogenic emissions and SOA formation. However, the
weak WSON-WSOC correlation suggests a variety of source contributions to WSON and WSOC
over the different seasons. [EC] was negligible over the entire study except a modest spike at the
end of October when wood burning was the most likely the source. It is also noted that a stronger
correlation of WSON with NH$_4^+$ than with NO$_3^-$ was observed, which might suggest a key role
of reduced nitrogen in WSON formation (Cape et al., 2011; Jickells et al., 2013). Details of this
event are discussed in the subsequent sections.
3.3 Nitro-aromatics

Concentrations of nitro-aromatics, organosulfate/nitrooxy-organosulfate, and terpenoic acids are summarized in Tables 3, S2, S3 and S4. A time series of compound class totals are presented in Figure 2. Generally negligible concentrations of nitro-aromatics were observed during spring and summer except for occasional spikes. However, higher concentrations of nitro-aromatics were observed in the fall when moderate correlations were observed with levoglucosan (Figure 3, r≥0.5, p<0.01; see table SI 6 for correlation coefficients). A residential wood burning contribution is likely given the lower temperatures observed during this season. Similar positive correlations between nitro-aromatics and wood burning are also reported during the winter season (Gaston et al., 2016; Kahnt et al., 2013; Kitanovski et al., 2012; Iinuma et al., 2010, 2016). Smoke at the sampling site on October 19th and 21st coincided with firewood burning at the main office of the Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory, immediately adjacent to the sampling location. Nitro-aromatics were relatively elevated, but no significant increase in organosulfates or terpenoic acids were found from these fresh smoke events. In contrast, an example of an aged biomass burning signal is illustrated on October 24th and 25th. Pronounced spikes of nitrocatechol(C₆H₄NO₄), methyl-nitrocatechol(C₇H₇NO₄) and levoglucosan were observed (Figure 3), along with elevated concentrations of organosulfates, OC and aged biogenic aerosol tracers (terpenoic acids m/z 203 and 187 shown in Figure 4a, detailed discussion can be found in the subsequent section). However, EC was only slightly higher. This event did not correspond to local burning at Coweeta and was most likely associated with long range transport. Clustering of backward trajectories (120hr duration for individual trajectories; 48 total trajectories covering the two-day event) suggests that northeast Georgia (shown in supplemental information Figure S5) is the most likely origin of the biomass burning event observed on October 24th and 25th.

Nitro-aromatics correlate with EC across the seasons; both are likely emitted from biomass burning (Gaston et al., 2016; Iinuma et al., 2010; Kahnt et al., 2013; Mohr et al., 2013). Interestingly, light absorption at λ= 365nm is highly correlated (r=0.80, p<0.01) with nitro-aromatics in the fall when nitro-aromatic concentrations were elevated. In addition, NOx correlates inversely (r=-0.72, p<0.01) with temperature in the fall. Lower fall temperatures in the region may have resulted in frequent residential wood burning, which emits NOx and light absorbing BrC (eg. nitro-aromatics) (Liu et al., 2015; Mohr et al., 2013). Although nitro-
aromatics account for a minor fraction of OM, they could potentially contribute to 4% of light absorption by BrC (Mohr et al., 2013). Overall, nitro-aromatics displayed relatively weak correlation with WSON (r<0.65) across all seasons; the extremely low concentrations observed suggest a generally small contribution of nitro-aromatics to WSON at the sampling site, hence the lack of strong correlation.

3.4 Organosulfates and nitrooxy-organosulfates
Organosulfate concentrations were highest in summer and lowest in fall (Table 3), contributing 3.9 and 1.0 % w/w of organic matter (OM, estimated by applying an OM/OC factor of 2) mass, respectively, during these seasons. Organosulfate formation is an example of heterogeneous chemistry involving uptake of reactive precursors on acidified sulfate aerosols requiring a mixture of biogenic and anthropogenic emissions. The air masses at Coweeta are mainly from the southwest and westerly directions in spring and summer, but during fall may become more stagnant and slow moving during southwesterly conditions or shift to the northwest (see clustered back trajectories are shown in Figure S4). Because Atlanta, GA is southwest of Coweeta, southwesterly flow during spring and summer may be associated with long range transport of urban pollutants and precursors, including sulfate and sulfuric acid, leading to elevated organosulfate formation compared to fall when the prevailing wind direction changes.

Among all organosulfates identified, the isoprene derived organosulfate (m/z 215, 2-methyltetrol derived), which is formed from isoprene derived epoxydiols (IEPOX) under low NOx conditions, was the most abundant; concentrations reached 167 ng/m³ in summer. Similar high concentrations were also reported in ambient samples collected at other sites in the southeastern U.S. (Lin et al., 2013b; Worton et al., 2013). Of the six nitrooxy-organosulfates identified, isoprene derived m/z 260 was most abundant, approximately 6-fold higher than monoterpene derived m/z 294 nitrooxy-organosulfate.

A subset of possible organosulfates and nitrooxy-organosulfates produced from isoprene and monoterpene oxidation exhibit strong correlations with distinctive SOA tracers (eg. markers 2-methylglyceric acid, C-5 alkene triols and methyltetrols for isoprene oxidation products; tracer 3-Hydroxyglutaric acid for pinene oxidation products) (see table SI 7). Lack of correlation between nitrooxy-organosulfate m/z 294 and 3-hydroxyglutaric acid may indicate a nighttime nitrate radical formation pathway rather than photochemical oxidation. Given that NOx levels at
the rural Coweeta sampling site were typically less than 1 ppb, photo-oxidation pathways involving high [NOx] to form nitrooxy-organosulfates are not likely. Nighttime nitrate radical chemistry is the most likely formation mechanism under such conditions. In contrast to our observations, He et al. (2014) report good correlations ($r>0.5$, $p<0.01$) of m/z 294 with 3-hydroxyglutaric acid and higher daytime m/z 294 concentrations for summer samples collected in Pearl River Delta, China, where a seasonal average NOx level of 30 ppb was observed. The authors suggested that the dominant m/z 294 formation pathway was through daytime photochemistry rather than nighttime NO3 chemistry. The extremely low NOx levels at our study site compared to that measured by He et al. may explain the opposite behavior in terms of m/z 294 formation mechanisms.

Organosulfates exhibited statistically significant correlations with WSON only in the summer ($r=0.64$, $p<0.01$), which reflected the importance of N containing organosulfates or their formation chemistry to WSON during summer compared to the other seasons. During this season, nitrooxy-organosulfates accounted for ~2% of bulk WSON, on average. A strong correlation may therefore not be expected.

3.5 Terpenoic acids

Terpenoic acids, which provide insight into the extent of biogenic compound oxidation and atmospheric processing (i.e., aerosol aging), were the most abundant group of compounds relative to nitro-aromatics and organosulfates. On average, terpenoic acids accounted for 6.5 to 8.7% w/w of OM in PM2.5. The warmer spring and summer periods show higher production of terpenoic acids compared to the cool and drier fall season. Higher emissions of biogenic VOC precursors as well as higher solar radiation intensities during warm seasons, which drive photochemistry, are factors contributing to observed seasonal variability.

The terpenoic acids correlate well with WSOC and OC (Table 2). This is expected as terpenoic acids account for a substantial portion of OM at the site. Individual acids (except compounds C7H10O4 and C9H14O4) exhibit strong correlations with the pinene derived SOA tracer 3-hydroxyglutaric acid ($r>0.75$, $p<0.01$; correlation coefficients shown in the supplemental information Table S8), indicating the presence of α-β-pinene oxidation products. The poor correlations between acids C7H10O4 (m/z 157) and C9H14O4 (m/z 185) suggests the presence of
biogenic VOC precursors other than α-/β-pinene, such as limonene and Δ3-carene (Gomez-Gonzalez et al., 2012).

Recent chamber studies identified several terpenoic acid structures also observed in ambient aerosol samples, including 3-methyl-1,2,3-butanetricarboxylic acid (MBTCA, C₈H₁₂O₆, m/z 203), 2-hydroxyterpenylic acid (C₈H₁₂O₅, m/z 187), terpenylic acid (C₈H₁₂O₄, m/z 171) and diaterpenylic acid acetate (DTAA, C₁₀H₁₆O₆, m/z 231) (Claeys et al., 2009; Kahnt et al., 2014). MBTCA and 2-hydroxyterpenylic acid have been identified as highly oxygenated, higher generation α-pinene SOA markers, and observed in high abundance in ambient aerosols (Gomez-Gonzalez et al., 2012; Kahnt et al., 2014; Muller et al., 2012; Szmigielski et al., 2007). Additionally, terpenylic acid and DTAA are characterized as early photooxidation products from α-pinene ozonolysis. Claeys et al. (2009) proposed further oxidation processes (aging) of terpenylic acid involving OH radical chemistry to form 2-hydroxyterpenylic acid. Figure 4 provides a time series of the terpenoic acids identified in this study. In general, 2-hydroxyterpenylic acid was the most abundant species across the seasons. To assess the extent of aging, concentration ratios of higher generation oxidation products (C₈H₁₂O₆, m/z 203 and C₈H₁₂O₅, m/z 187) to early oxidation fresh SOA products (C₈H₁₂O₄, m/z 171 and C₁₀H₁₆O₆, m/z 231) are calculated. Estimated seasonal averages of these ratios are 3.98, 4.37 and 2.44 for spring, summer and fall, respectively. Thus, during spring and summer, aerosols observed at the site were more aged. Figure 4 shows the correlation of these ratios with temperature (r=0.79, p<0.001) and solar radiation (r=0.23, p<0.1). A clear relationship between temperature and OH radical initiated oxidation (aging) is evident. However, oxidation appears less dependent on solar radiation at our sampling site. Similar higher contribution of these aged biogenic SOA tracers was also reported under warm summer conditions characterized by high temperature and high solar radiation (Claeys et al., 2012; Gomez-Gonzalez et al., 2012; Hamilton et al., 2013; Kahnt et al., 2014). Based on the typical chemical lifetime of biogenic SOA by OH oxidation and the precipitation frequency at Coweeta site, biogenic SOA collected at Coweeta probably had an atmospheric lifetime of several days before depletion by oxidation processes and/or scavenging by precipitation (Epstein et al., 2014).

Terpenoic acids may also provide some insight into the formation mechanisms of organosulfates. While organosulfate concentrations are highest during summer, correlations with SO₄²⁻ are strongest during spring and fall and weakest during summer. Conversely,
organosulfates and terpenoic acids correlate strongly ($r=0.91$, $p<0.01$) during summer.

Terpenoic acids are either first or second generation oxidation products from gas phase monoterpenes; particulate $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$ abundance should not substantially influence the gas-particle partitioning of terpenoic acids. The strong correlation between organosulfates and terpenoic acids in summer suggests organosulfate formation is limited by monoterpane emissions rather than $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$ availability while in the spring and fall (especially fall), organosulfate production may be more limited by $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$. Degree of particle neutralization, calculated as the molar ratio of $\text{NH}_4^+$ to the sum of $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$ and $\text{NO}_3^-$, averaged 0.94, 0.98 and 0.94 for spring, summer and fall, respectively. Neutralization being close to but less than unity implies that aerosols are slightly acidic at the site. Chamber studies have illustrated that acidified $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$ could enhance heterogeneous reactions to form SOA from isoprene and monoterpenes (Iinuma et al., 2009; Surratt et al., 2007, 2010). Similar positive correlations observed at the Coweeta site were also found between isoprene tracers including isoprene derived organosulfates and $\text{SO}_4^{2-}$ by Lin et al. (2013b) at a rural site in the southeastern U.S. However, in contrast to chamber experiments, this study and other ambient field measurements have not provided clear evidence of acidity enhancement of organosulfate formation (He et al., 2014; Lin et al., 2013b; Worton et al., 2011), indicating possible differences in exact mechanisms and processing to form these organosulfates under atmospheric conditions relative to chamber studies. Recent mechanistic modeling simulations by Budisulistiorini et al., (2017) suggest that the role of sulfate on IEPOX-organosulfates formation might be through surface area uptake of IEPOX and rate of particle phase reaction.

Very good correlations between WSON and terpenoic acids were observed during summer and fall ($r\geq0.7$, $p<0.01$). Given the secondary nature of terpenoic acids, this finding may suggest that WSON during these two seasons is associated with more aged air masses and perhaps dominated by secondary organic components rather than primary emitted N containing constituents such as pollens, fungi and bacteria (Elbert et al., 2007; Miyazaki et al., 2014).

3.6 Contribution of identified N containing species to WSTN and WSON Nitro-aromatics and nitrooxy-organosulfates combined were estimated to account for as much as 28% of WSON, which reflected the abundance and potential importance of these groups of species to the atmospheric N deposition budget. Seasonal average ratios of identified WSON to WSTN ranged from 1.0 to 4.4% with the highest recorded for fall (Table 4). Nitrooxy-
organismsulfates dominated over nitro-aromatics as a source of organic nitrogen, contributing >
90% to identified WSON across seasons. However, during episodes of biomass burning, nitro-
aromatics contribute as much as 32% of identified WSON compounds. The ratio of WSON to
WSOC was estimated to be 0.05, 0.04 and 0.02 for spring, summer and fall, which implies
organic N being most enriched during spring, reflecting a spring maximum in seasonal emissions
of organic N from biological sources (e.g. pollens, spores, leave litter decomposition) combined
with smaller contributions from secondary atmospheric processes. The observed WSON/WSOC
ratios in this study were slightly lower than those reported for other forest sites (0.03-0.09) (Lin
et al., 2010; Miyazaki et al., 2014), which are not as remote and pristine as the forest site in this
study. Anthropogenic influences at the study sites described by Lin et al. (2010) and Miyazaki et
al. (2014) such as [SO42−] and [NOx] were ~ 5 times higher than those measured at the Coweeta
site. Concentration weighted average WSON/WSOC ratios for identified compounds (nitro-
aromatics, organosulfates/nitrooxy-organosulfates and terpenoic acids) in this study were
estimated to be 0.003. This value is 10 times less than the overall WSON/WSOC ratio observed
at the site, which indicates existence of other higher N content species in the aerosols. Moreover,
the identified ON/WSON ratio was estimated to be 1.0, 2.0 and 4.4 for spring, summer and fall,
respectively. Such differences further suggest much more unidentified WSON compounds exist
in spring when organic N was most enriched from biological processes.

3.7 PMF analysis

PMF analysis was conducted to identify individual source contributions to total WSOC. Factor profiles and time series of factor contributions are presented in figures 5 and 6. Listed in
order of percent contribution to WSOC, the five factors which were resolved include secondary
sulfate processing (35.3%), isoprene SOA (24.3%), WSON containing OM (20.0%), biomass
burning (15.1%) and monoterpene SOA (5.2%). Overall, these factors could explain 89±2% of
observed WSOC (r=0.88, p<0.0001). The secondary sulfate profile contained a signature of high
SO42−, which was most likely present as fine particulate (NH4)2 SO4 and NH4HSO4. Secondary
sulfate was the most important factor during spring, though was a significant contributor in
summer and fall as well. Isoprene SOA, which was identified based on isoprene derived
organosulfates and isoprene SOA markers, was the most important factor during summer. The
biomass burning factor, which exhibited a high portion of nitro-aromatic and levoglucosan
markers, dominated in the fall. This pattern agreed well with observed patterns of nitro-aromatic compounds. Monoterpene SOA, which was resolved based on the composition of monoterpene derived organosulfates, was overall a minor contributor with the exception of a few samples during the fall intensive.

WSON containing OM contributed 20% to WSOC, overall, demonstrating a significant association between organic N and C in PM$_{2.5}$ at our study site. The WSON containing OM source profile exhibited weak correlation with most measured species with the exception of modest correlations with terpenoic acids. WSON containing OM contributed more to WSOC in late spring and early summer, which was consistent with observed higher production of nitrooxy-organosulfates during these sampling periods as well as terpenoic acids. The relationship with terpenoic acids may reflect an association of WSON with more aged air masses. Because nitroaromatics and nitrooxy-organosulfates contribute only a small portion of WSON, on average, the 20% contribution of WSON containing OM to WSOC primarily reflects the contribution of organic N present in bulk WSON but unspeciated in this work.

4. Conclusions
Ambient PM$_{2.5}$ collected at a temperate mountainous forest site were investigated on a bulk chemical and a molecular level during spring, summer, and fall of 2015. Analyses focused on speciation of nitro-aromatics associated with biomass burning, organosulfates produced from biogenic SOA precursors, and terpenoic acids formed from monoterpene oxidation. Among these three groups, terpenoic acids were estimated to be most abundant, contributing up to a seasonal average of 8.7% of OM in PM$_{2.5}$ during spring. Warm periods in spring and summer exhibited highest production of terpenoic acids, when SOA correspondingly showed a higher degree of aging. Relative abundance of aged biogenic SOA tracers (MBTCA and 2-hydroxyterpenylic acid), which reflect the degree of organic aerosol aging, showed a strong correlation with temperature. Such a relationship might indicate temperature dependence of OH radical initiated oxidation steps or aging in the formation of higher generation oxidation products.

Organosulfates showed a peak in summer and lowest concentrations during fall, contributing averages of 3.9 and 1.0 % of OM mass, respectively, during these seasons. Isoprene derived organosulfate (m/z 215, 2-methyltetrol derived), formed from isoprene derived epoxydiols (IEPOX) under low NOx conditions, was the most abundant identified organosulfate
(up to 167 ng/m$^3$ in summer). This observation is consistent with observations of low NOx levels (< 1 ppb on average) at our study site. Nighttime nitrate radical chemistry is most likely the dominant formation mechanism for nitrooxy-organosulfates measured at this remote site with background level NOx.

Nitro-aromatics were most abundant at our study site during the fall (up to 0.01% of OM mass). Moderate correlations were observed between nitro-aromatics and the biomass burning marker levoglucosan, indicating a common origin. Nitro-aromatics also correlated well with EC across seasons. Highest concentrations of nitro-aromatics, specifically nitrocatechol and methyl-nitrocatechol, were associated with aged biomass burning plumes as indicated by correspondingly high concentrations of terpenoic acids.

Bulk measurements determined that WSOC accounted for 62±13% of OC throughout the entire study period without significant seasonal variability. PMF analysis indicated that a significant portion of this organic carbon was associated with a resolved factor of WSON containing OM. As a component of total nitrogen in PM$_{2.5}$, largest contributions of WSON to WSTN were observed in spring (~18% w/w) and lowest in the fall (~10% w/w). On average, identified nitro-aromatic and nitrooxy-organosulfate compounds accounted for a small fraction of WSON, ranging from ~1% in spring to ~4% in fall, though were observed to contribute as much as 28% w/w of WSON in individual samples which were impacted by local biomass burning. Of the organic N compounds speciated in this study, nitrooxy-organosulfates dominated over nitro-aromatics as a source of organic nitrogen, contributing > 90% to WSON across seasons. As a component of WSON, nitro-aromatics were most important during episodes of biomass burning, when their contribution to identified and total WSON was as much as 32% and 3%, respectively. Concentration weighted average WSON/WSOC ratios for compounds identified in this study were estimated to be 0.003. This number is an order of magnitude lower than the overall WSON/WSOC ratio observed, indicating a predominance of other uncharacterized N species. Other N containing substituents of WSON could include amino acids, amines, urea and N-heterocyclic compounds as well as substances of biological origin such as spores, pollens and bacteria (Cape et al., 2011; Neff et al., 2002a). Ratios of WSON to WSOC indicate organic C being most enriched by organic N during spring, perhaps reflecting a spring maximum in seasonal emissions of organic N from biological sources combined with smaller contributions from secondary atmospheric processes (e.g., nitrooxy-organosulfates).
Although nitro-aromatics and nitrooxy-organosulfates contribute a relatively small fraction of organic N in PM$_{2.5}$ at our study site, our observations shed light on this complex but largely unknown portion of the atmospheric N budget. Our results provide further understanding of the patterns and composition of SOA in a remote mountain environment previously uncharacterized. Similar to our results, other studies generally find that individual groups of organic N compounds (e.g., amines, amino acids, urea) cannot explain the majority of bulk WSON, (Cape et al., 2011; Day et al., 2010; Place et al., 2017; Samy et al., 2013), which globally accounts for ~25% of total N in rainfall (Cape et al., 2011; Jickells et al., 2013). As methodological advances allow for greater speciation of this large pool of atmospheric N, future work should emphasize analysis of both primary and secondary forms of organic N in individual samples, in addition to bulk analyses, so that a more complete picture of organic N composition may be developed for specific atmospheric chemical and meteorological conditions. Additionally, as progress is made in better characterizing the composition and sources of atmospheric organic N, the ecological and atmospheric science communities must work together to develop a better understanding of the role of atmospheric organic N in ecosystem N cycling.

Supplemental Information available

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge Pamela Barfield, Ryan Daly, Aleksandra Djurkovic, David Kirchgessner, John Offenberg, Bakul Patel and Bill Preston for laboratory and field support. We also would like to thank Joshua G. Hemann and Michael P. Hannigan for the PMF source codes and Christopher Oishi, Patsy Clinton and Chuck Marshall for assistance with meteorological data sets. We would like to thank the U.S. Forest Service, Southern Research Station for the opportunity to conduct this study at the Coweeta Hydrologic Laboratory and for the contribution of meteorological data used in our analysis. We also thank internal EPA reviewers Chris Geron and Havala Pye for their comments and suggestions. The views expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views or policies of the U.S. EPA. Mention of trade names does not constitute endorsement or recommendation of a commercial product by U.S. EPA.
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Figure 1. a) Individual concentrations of nitrogen components to WSTN (NH$_4^+$, NO$_3^-$, NO$_2^-$ and WSON); b) Percent contribution of WSON to WSTN; c) Time series of OC, WSOC, temperature and precipitation. Start and end dates of each intensive sampling periods are shown.
Figure 2. Time series of summed compound group concentrations of nitro-aromatics, organosulfates and terpenoic acids.
Figure 3. Time series of individual nitro-aromatics compounds as well as levoglucosan.
Figure 4. a) Time series of these four identified terpenoic acids (3-methyl-1,2,3-butanoic acid (MBTCA, C₆H₁₂O₆, m/z 203), 2-hydroxyterpenyl acid (C₆H₁₂O₅, m/z 187), terpenyl acid (C₆H₁₂O₄, m/z 171) and Diaterpenyl acid acetate (DTAA, C₁₀H₁₆O₆, m/z 231)); b) correlation of concentration ratios of higher generation oxidation products (C₆H₁₂O₆, m/z 203 and C₆H₁₂O₅, m/z 187) to early oxidation fresh SOA products (C₆H₁₂O₄, m/z 171 and C₁₀H₁₆O₆, m/z 231) with temperature and solar radiation; c) with solar radiation.
Figure 5. Normalized factor profiles (error bar represents one standard deviation).
Figure 6. Time series of factor contributions to WSOC (mean factor contribution shown in brackets).
Table 1. Summary of particulate and gaseous species measured at Coweeta sampling site in 2015.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>(µg/m³)</th>
<th>Spring mean</th>
<th>Spring median</th>
<th>Spring min</th>
<th>Spring max</th>
<th>Summer mean</th>
<th>Summer median</th>
<th>Summer min</th>
<th>Summer max</th>
<th>Fall mean</th>
<th>Fall median</th>
<th>Fall min</th>
<th>Fall max</th>
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<td>3.80</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>6.32</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>7.49</td>
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<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.08</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.07</td>
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<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>0.78</td>
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<td>3.25</td>
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<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.11</td>
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<td>ND</td>
<td>0.11</td>
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<td>0.09</td>
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<td>ND</td>
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<td>15.8</td>
<td>9.0</td>
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<td>296</td>
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<td>201</td>
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<td>323</td>
<td>151</td>
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Table 2. Spearman rank correlation coefficients among measured species and meteorological variables by season. Nitro-aromatics (Nitro), Organosulfates (OS), and terpenoic acids (Tacids) represent group summed concentrations.

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<th>NO$_3^-$</th>
<th>NH$_4^+$</th>
<th>SO$_4^{2-}$</th>
<th>WSON</th>
<th>Abs$_{365}$</th>
<th>Nitro</th>
<th>OS</th>
<th>Tacids</th>
<th>O$_3$</th>
<th>NOx</th>
<th>Temp</th>
<th>RH</th>
<th>radiation</th>
<th>Precip</th>
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<td>0.177</td>
<td>0.690</td>
<td>0.705</td>
<td>0.129</td>
<td>0.875</td>
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<td>0.645</td>
<td>0.579</td>
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<td>0.773</td>
<td>0.541</td>
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<td>Tacids$^3$</td>
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$^1$Nitro-aromatics; $^2$organosulfates; $^3$terpenoic acids; values in bold indicate p<0.01
Table 2. Continued.

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<th>SO\textsubscript{2}^-</th>
<th>WSON</th>
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<th>Tacids</th>
<th>O\textsubscript{3}</th>
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1 including nitrooxy-organo-sulfates; 2 Fraction of each group of identified compounds (combined total) to organic matter.
Table 4. Ratios of identified nitrogen containing compounds (nitro-aromatics and nitrooxy-organosulfates) to WSON.

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