

# Real Time Water Quality Deployment Report

Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive

NF02ZM0178

2023-09-07 to 2023-10-27



Government of Newfoundland & Labrador  
Department of Environment & Climate Change  
Water Resources Management Division

# Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive



The Water Resources Management Division (WRMD), in partnership with Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC), maintains a real-time water quality and water quantity monitoring station at Leary's Brook, adjacent to Prince Phillip Drive. This was WRMD's first real time water quality station, established in 2001. The real-time station allows for assessment and management of the water body. The purpose of this real-time station is to monitor, process, and publish hydrometric (water quantity) and real-time water quality data at the station.

The headwaters for Learys Brook are Hummocky Marsh and Yellow Marsh. Waters from these two marshes converge near the Avalon Mall and the river is then culverted underneath the mall parking lot. Oxen Pond which is located in Pippy Park also drains into the brook before it is culverted. The brook flows northeast from the mall parking lot through a developed section of St. John's and drains into Long Pond.

Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive  
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0 0.75 1.5 3  
Kilometers

# Quality Assurance and Quality Control



As part of the Quality Assurance and Quality Control protocol (QA/QC), an assessment of the reliability of data recorded by an instrument is made at the beginning and end of the deployment period. The procedure is based on the approach used by the United States Geological Survey. With the exception of water quantity data (stage), all data used in the preparation of the graphs and subsequent discussion adhere to this stringent QA/QC protocol. Corrected data can be obtained upon request.

Parameter	Excellent	Good	Fair	Marginal	Poor
Dissolved oxygen	$\leq \pm 0.3$ mg/L	$\leq \pm 0.31 - 0.5$ mg/L	$\leq \pm 0.51 - 0.8$ mg/L	$\leq \pm 0.81 - 1$ mg/L	$> \pm 1$ mg/L
pH	$\leq \pm 0.2$ units	$\leq \pm 0.21 - 0.5$ units	$\leq \pm 0.51 - 0.8$ units	$\leq \pm 0.81 - 1$ units	$> \pm 1$ units
Specific conductance	$\leq \pm 3$ $\mu$ S/cm or $\leq \pm 3\%$ , whichever is greater	$\leq \pm 3.1 - 10$ $\mu$ S/cm or $\leq \pm 3.1 - 10\%$ , whichever is greater	$\leq \pm 10 - 15$ $\mu$ S/cm or $\leq \pm 10.1 - 15\%$ , whichever is greater	$\leq \pm 15.1 - 20$ $\mu$ S/cm or $\leq \pm 15.1 - 20\%$ , whichever is greater	$> \pm 20$ $\mu$ S/cm or $> \pm 20\%$ , whichever is greater
Turbidity	$\leq \pm 2$ turbidity units or $\leq \pm 5\%$ , whichever is greater	$\leq \pm 2.1 - 5$ turbidity units or $\leq \pm 5.1 - 10\%$ , whichever is greater	$\leq \pm 5.1 - 8$ turbidity units or $\leq \pm 10.1 - 15\%$ , whichever is greater	$\leq \pm 8.1 - 10$ turbidity units or $\leq \pm 15.1 - 20\%$ , whichever is greater	$> \pm 10$ turbidity units or $> \pm 20\%$ , whichever is greater
Water temperature	$\leq \pm 0.2^\circ$ C	$\leq \pm 0.21 - 0.5^\circ$ C	$\leq \pm 0.51 - 0.8^\circ$ C	$\leq \pm 0.81 - 1^\circ$ C	$> \pm 1^\circ$ C

At deployment and removal, a QA/QC Sonde is temporarily deployed adjacent to the Field Sonde. Values for temperature, pH, conductivity, dissolved oxygen and turbidity are compared between the two instruments. Based on the degree of difference between parameters recorded by the Field Sonde and QA/QC Sonde at deployment and at removal, a qualitative statement is made on the data quality.

There are a few circumstances which may cause QA/QC rankings below excellent, including the placement of the QA/QC sonde in relation to the field sonde, the amount of time each sonde was given to stabilize before readings were recorded, and deteriorating performance of one of the sensors.

The temperature sensor on any sonde is the most important. All other parameters can be divided into subgroups of: temperature dependent, temperature compensated, and temperature independent. Due to the temperature sensor's location on the sonde, the entire sonde must be at a constant temperature before the temperature sensor will stabilize. The values may take some time to climb to the appropriate reading; if a reading is taken too soon it may not accurately portray the water body.

Due to the volume and frequency of streamflow and stage data, the data is provisional, and has not undergone quality control checks. The data may be subject to significant change.

## QAQC Rankings

Parameter	Deployment Ranks	Removal Ranks	Grab Sample Ranks
Dissolved Oxygen (mg/l)	Excellent	Excellent	
pH	Excellent	Good	Fair
Specific Conductivity ( $\mu$ S/cm)	Excellent	Poor	Good
Temperature ( $^\circ$ C)	Excellent	Excellent	
Turbidity (NTU)	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

## Deployment notes:

The log file stopped recording after October 5th; the internal batteries may have died at this time.

# Water Temperature

**12.98**  
Average (°C)

**12.40**  
Median (°C)

**8.00**  
Minimum (°C)

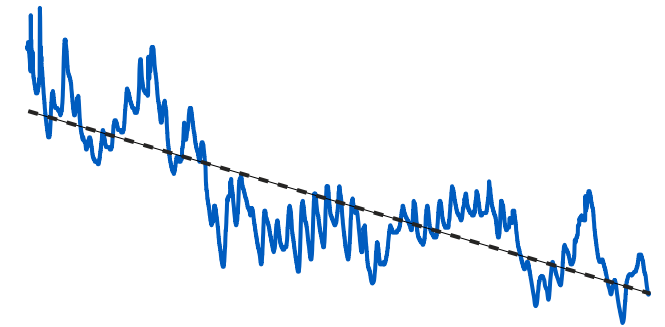
**20.90**  
Maximum (°C)



Water temperature is an important parameter for wildlife. Many organisms cannot regulate their own temperatures, and rely on surrounding air and water temperatures. Water temperature may be affected by inputs from industry or by modifying natural conditions like clearing trees and other vegetation, which eliminates the canopy protection they offer. Water temperature also affects other parameters monitored including dissolved oxygen and specific conductivity.

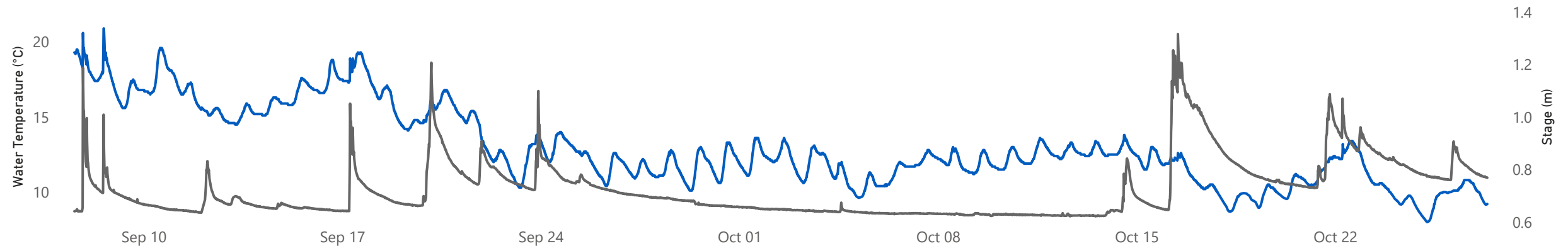
Water temperature data for this deployment was collected from 2023-09-07 until 2023-10-27. The minimum water temperature, 8.00°C, occurred on 2023-10-25. The maximum water temperature, 20.90°C, occurred on 2023-09-08. Water temperature usually falls overnight and rises during the day. Learys Brook is a shallow, urban waterway; water temperatures in shallow streams respond quickly to changes in air temperature. During this deployment period, water temperature shows an overall cooling trend, due to the cooling air temperatures and shortening days.

## Water Temperature Trendline



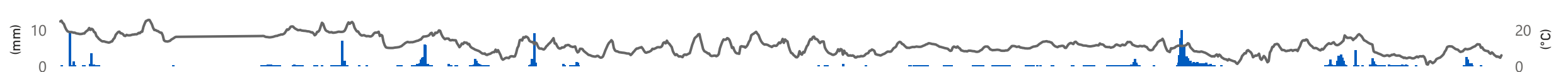
## Water Temperature and Stage at Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive

● Water Temperature (°C) ● Stage (m)



## Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. Johns

● Precipitation (mm) ● Air Temperature (°C)



# pH

**6.68**  
Average pH

**6.69**  
Median pH

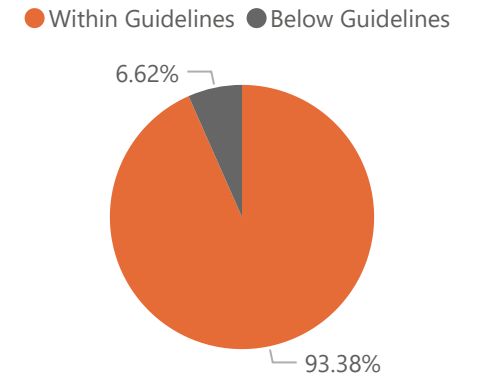
**6.33**  
Minimum pH

**7.12**  
Maximum pH

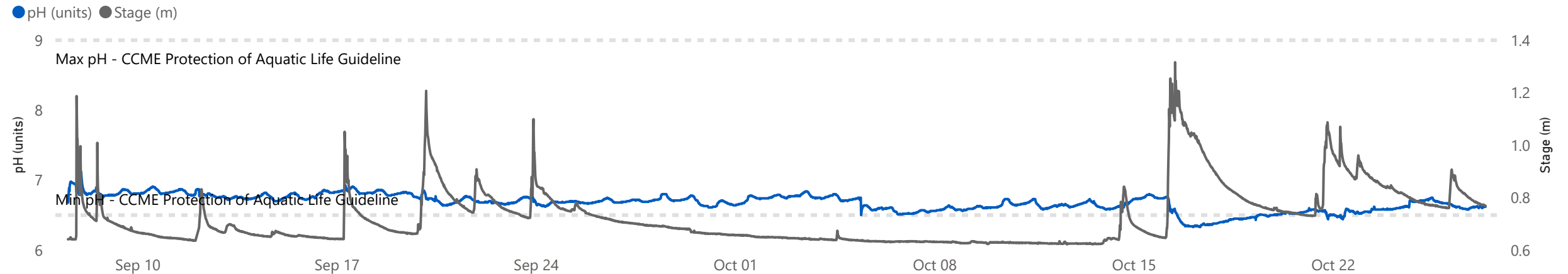


pH relates to the free hydrogen ions in water and it is a measure of acidity in water. A pH of 7 indicates a neutral pH, below 7 is considered acidic, and above 7 is considered basic. The [Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment \(CCME\) Freshwater Aquatic Life guideline](#) provides a basis by which to judge the overall health of the brook. Their freshwater guidelines recommend a minimum pH of 6.5 and a maximum pH of 9.0; however, many rivers in Newfoundland and Labrador are naturally more acidic due to the local geology. Water parameter maps can be found on the [Water Resources Management website](#).

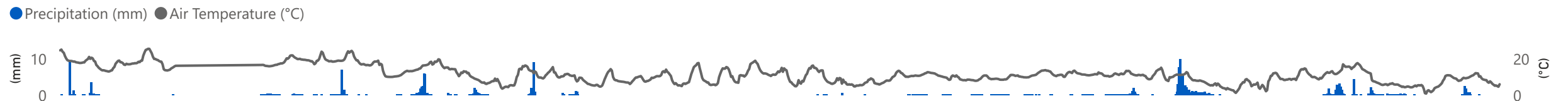
pH data for this deployment was collected from 2023-09-07 until 2023-10-27. The minimum pH, 6.33 pH units, occurred on 2023-10-17. The maximum pH, 7.12 pH units, occurred on 2023-09-08. Daily fluctuations are common due to changes in temperature and photosynthesizing of aquatic plants. During this deployment period, pH was within the guidelines 93.38% of the time. Following a large rainfall event on October 16th, the pH dropped below the guidelines, which represented 6.62% of the deployment.



## pH and Stage at Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive



## Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. Johns



# Specific Conductivity

**498.89**  
Average  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$

**546.00**  
Median  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$

**99.40**  
Minimum  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$

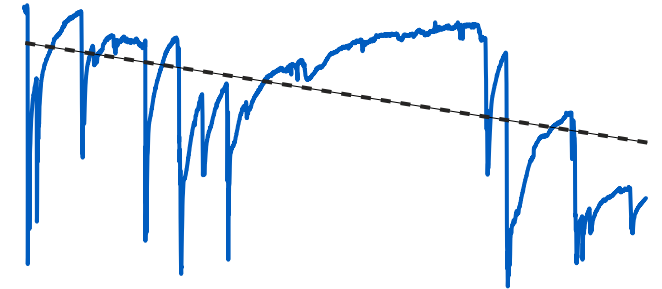
**675.00**  
Maximum  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$



Conductivity relates to the ability of an electric charge to pass through a solution. Pure water has low conductance and water with dissolved ions has higher conductance. Specific conductance is corrected to 25°C to allow comparison across temperatures. Water parameter maps can be found on the [Water Resources Management website](#).

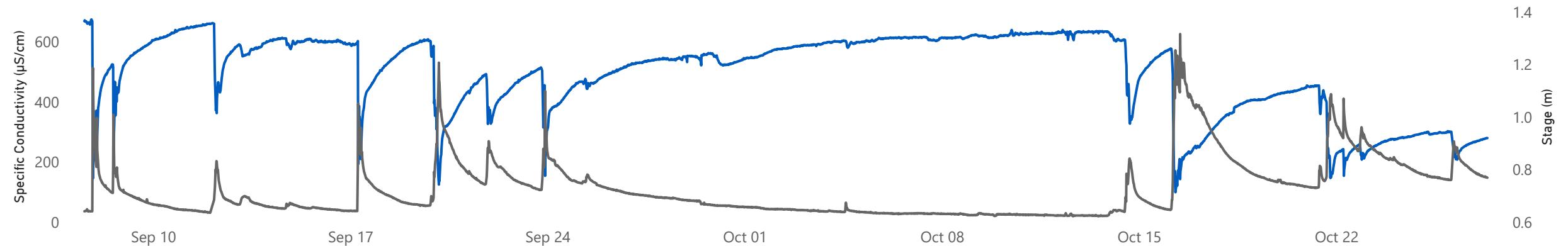
Specific conductance data for this deployment was collected from 2023-09-07 until 2023-10-27. The minimum specific conductance, 99.40  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ , occurred on 2023-10-16. The maximum specific conductance, 675.00  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ , occurred on 2023-09-07. Precipitation and specific conductivity are correlated. Rain water generally has a lower specific conductivity than surface water. There is a relatively steep downward trend for specific conductivity during this deployment. Precipitation events are flushing out road salts from the waterbody, which were applied during the winter months.

## Specific Conductivity Trendline



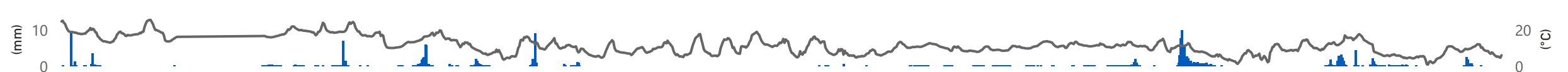
## Specific Conductivity and Stage at Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive

● Specific Conductivity ( $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ ) ● Stage (m)



## Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. Johns

● Precipitation (mm) ● Air Temperature (°C)



# Chloride Concentration

**135.01**  
Average mg/L

**147.94**  
Median (mg/l)

**25.84**  
Medium mg/L

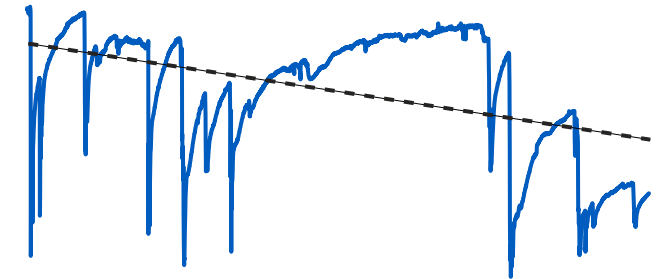
**183.84**  
Maximum mg/L



Chloride ions are calculated from specific conductivity values. Chloride is naturally found in waterways due to local geology, sea spray, and other processes. Human activities including roadway de-icing can also lead to increased concentrations of chloride. High concentrations of chloride can be toxic to aquatic life, and harm vegetation. CCME has established [freshwater quality guidelines for the protection of Aquatic Life](#). The CCME short term water quality guideline for chloride is 640mg/L and the CCME long term water quality guideline for chloride is 120mg/L.

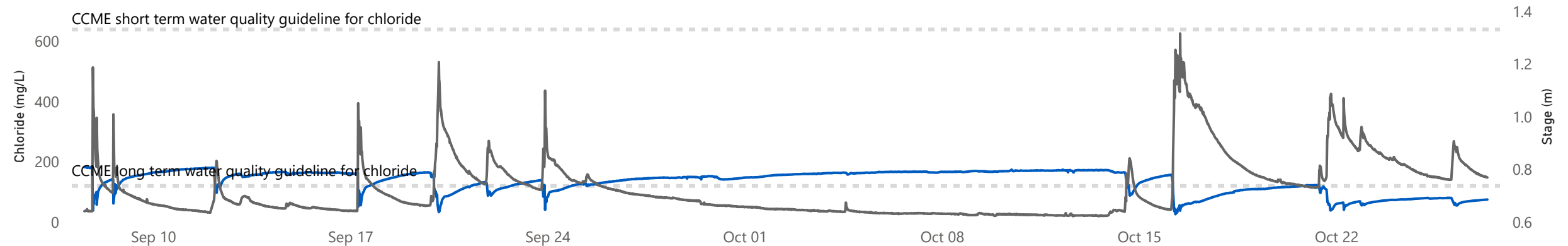
Data used to calculate chloride concentration for this deployment was collected from 2023-09-07 until 2023-10-27. The minimum predicted chloride concentration, 25.84 mg/L, occurred on 2023-10-10. The maximum predicted chloride concentration, 183.84 mg/L, occurred on 2023-09-07. In urban settings, road salts are a major source of chloride ions. Because predicted chloride concentration is calculated from specific conductivity, the trends will be similar.

## Predicted Chloride Concentration Trendline



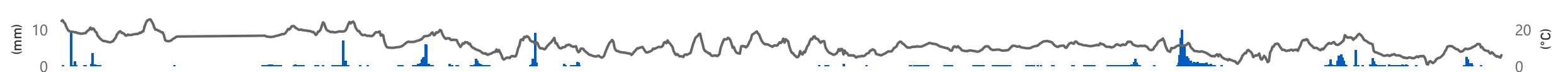
## Predicted Chloride Concentration and Stage at Learys Brook at Price Philip

● Chloride (mg/L) ● Stage (m)



## Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. Johns

● Precipitation (mm) ● Air Temperature (°C)



# Dissolved Oxygen

**10.04**  
Average (mg/L)

**10.12**  
Median (mg/L)

**8.45**  
Minimum (mg/L)

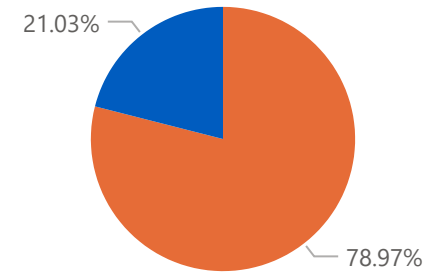
**11.51**  
Maximum (mg/L)



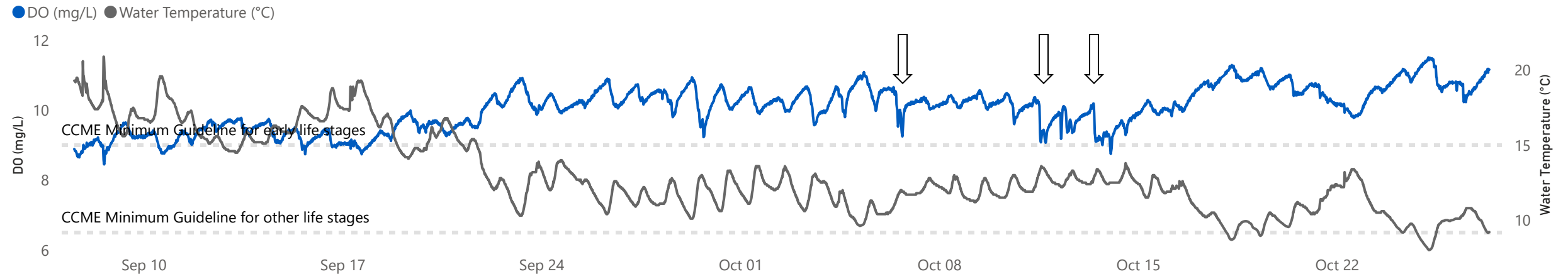
Dissolved oxygen (DO) in water is crucial for aquatic life. The [CCME \(Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment\)](#) Freshwater Aquatic Life guidelines provide a basis by which to judge the overall health of waterways. The minimum guideline for early life stages in cold water is 9.5 mg/L and the minimum guideline for other life stages is 6.5 mg/L. DO and water temperatures are correlated; colder waters can hold higher concentrations of DO than warm waters.

DO data for this deployment was collected from 2023-09-07 until 2023-10-27. The minimum DO reading, 8.45 mg/L, occurred on 2023-09-08. The maximum DO reading, 11.51 mg/L, occurred on 2023-10-25. Daily fluctuations are common due to changes in temperature and respiration of aquatic plants. During this deployment period, DO was above minimum guidelines 78.97% of the time and below early guidelines for 21.03% of the time. The DO concentration dropped below early guidelines at the start of deployment when water temperatures were higher. The arrows below indicate erratic jumps in the data. Some of these concurred with turbidity spikes and may be the result of the sensors becoming clogged or buried.

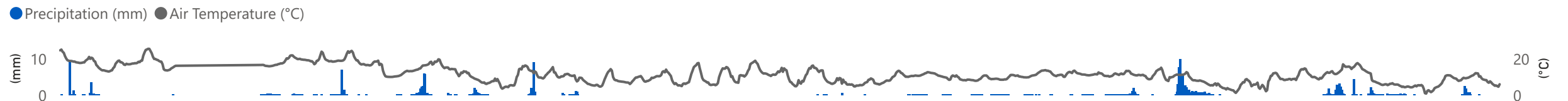
● Above Guidelines ● Below Early Guidelines



## Dissolved Oxygen and Water Temperature at Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive



## Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. Johns





# Turbidity

1.34  
Average (NTU)

0.00  
Median (NTU)

0.00  
Minimum (NTU)

166.10  
Maximum (NTU)

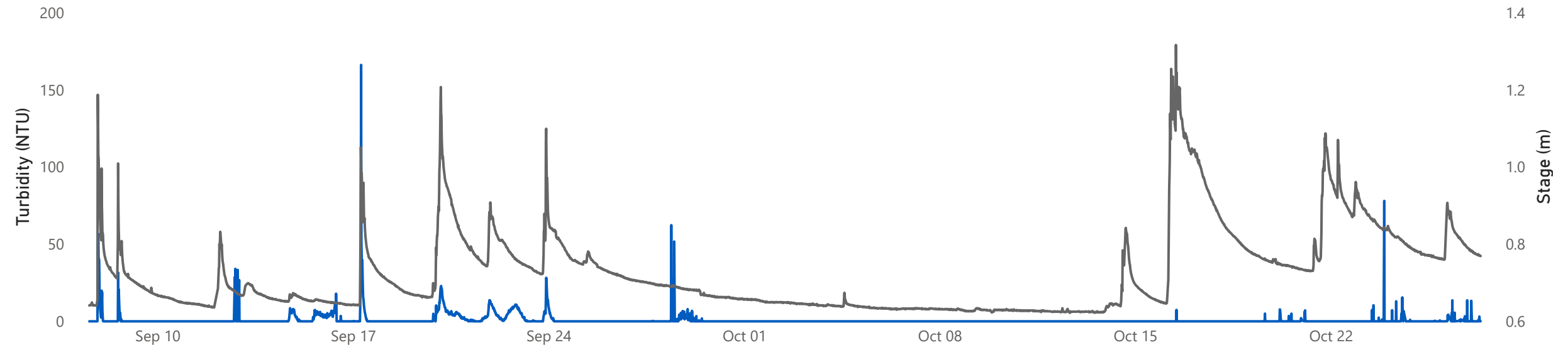


Increases in turbidity (cloudiness) are often caused by increased runoff during precipitation events. Runoff carries silt and other debris into the waterbody. Turbid conditions can prevent light from reaching plants, negatively impact benthic habitats, and clog or damage fish gills and equipment.

Turbidity data for this deployment was collected from 2023-09-07 until 2023-10-27. The minimum turbidity was 0.00 NTUs. The maximum turbidity, 166.10 NTUs, occurred on 2023-09-17. During this deployment, there were a number of cases when turbidity spikes did not align with precipitation event and returned extremely high readings. These were caused by debris trapped within the sensors. Learys Brook is an urban stream and gravel and sediment can accumulate rapidly.

## Turbidity and Stage at Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive

● Turbidity (NTU) ● Stage (m)



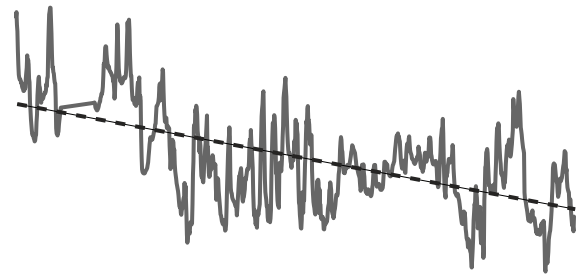
## Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. Johns

● Precipitation (mm) ● Air Temperature (°C)



# Meteorological and Hydrometric Data

Air Temperature Trendline



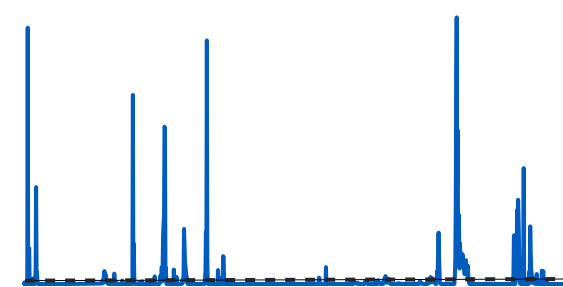
**11.59**  
Average (°C)

**11.08**  
Median (°C)

**0.98**  
Minimum (°C)

**25.88**  
Maximum (°C)

Precipitation Trendline



**0.16**  
Average (mm/hr)

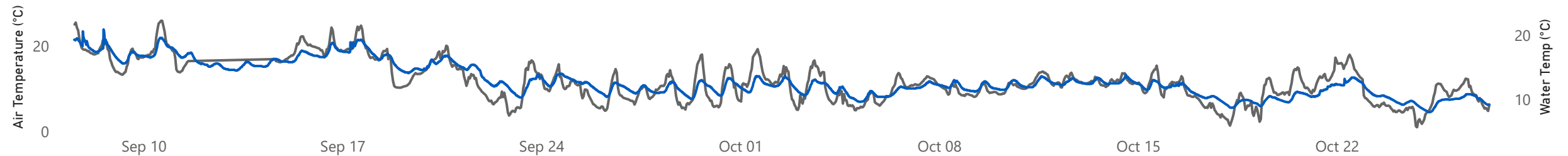
**0.00**  
Median (mm/hr)

**0.00**  
Minimum (mm/hr)

**10.06**  
Maximum (mm/hr)

Water Temperature from Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive and Air Temperature from Pippy Park in St. Johns

● Air Temperature (°C) ● Water Temperature (°C)



Precipitation from Pippy Park in St. Johns and Stage from Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive

● Precipitation (mm) ● Stage (m)

