



# Real-Time Water Quality Deployment Report

## Rattling Brook Network

June 29, 2022 to August 2, 2022



Government of Newfoundland & Labrador  
Department of Environment and Climate Change  
Water Resources Management Division  
St. John's, NL, A1B 4J6 Canada

## General

- Department of Environment and Climate Change staff monitor the real-time web pages consistently.
- Hydrometric data included in this report is provisional and used only for illustrative purposes. Corrected and finalized data may be retrieved from the Water Survey of Canada website ([https://wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/index\\_e.html](https://wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/index_e.html))\*.

## Maintenance and Calibration of Instrument

- As part of the Quality Assurance and Quality Control protocol (QAQC), 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.
  - Upon deployment, a QA/QC Sonde is temporarily deployed *in situ*, adjacent to the Field Sonde. Depending on the degree of difference between each parameter from the Field and QAQC sondes, a qualitative rank is assigned (See Table 1). The possible ranks, from most to least desirable, are: Excellent, Good, Fair, Marginal, and Poor. A grab sample is also taken for additional confirmation of conditions at deployment and to allow for future modelling studies.
  - At the end of a deployment period, a freshly cleaned and calibrated QAQC Sonde is placed *in situ*, adjacent to the Field Sonde. Values are compared between all parameters and differences are ranked for placement in Table 1.

Table 1: Qualitative QAQC Ranking

Station	Date	Action	Comparison Ranking				
			Temperature	pH	Conductivity	Dissolved Oxygen	Turbidity
Rattling Brook Big Pond	June 29	Deployment	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Fair	Good
	August 2	Removal	Excellent	Fair	Fair	Good	Poor
Rattling Brook below Bridge	June 29	Deployment	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent
	August 2	Removal	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
Rattling Brook below Plant Discharge	June 29	Deployment	Good	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent
	August 2	Removal	Good	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

- During the weekend of January 7<sup>th</sup>, the Vale weather station was compromised during a wind event. As data is currently suspect, this report utilizes weather data at St. John's West, 78kms NE of Long Harbour.
- Big Pond Turbidity on removal was ranked 'Poor' due to low water level and sediment around sonde.

- Data Interpretation

Temperature

*Water Temperature is a major factor used to describe water quality. Temperature has major implications on both the ecology and chemistry of a water body, governing processes such as the metabolic rate of aquatic plants and animals and the degree of dissolved oxygen saturation.*



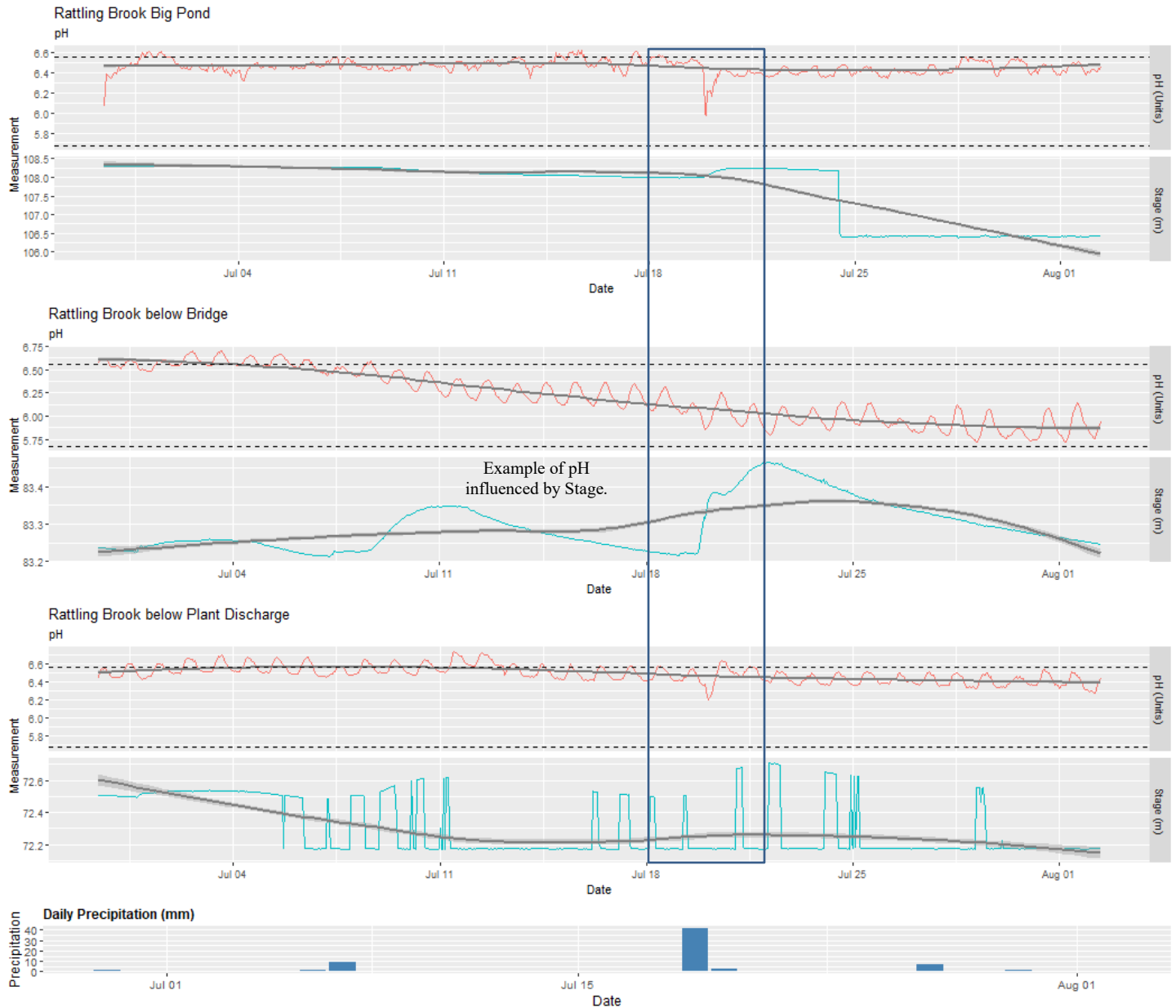
Station	Max	Min	Median	Mean
Big Pond	22.26	16.86	18.81	18.83
Below Bridge	25.10	16.48	20.50	20.54
Below Plant Discharge	25.57	15.44	20.14	20.27

- High water temperature was observed at all stations due to low water levels during this deployment period.

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## pH

*pH is used to give an indication of the acidity or basicity of a solution. A pH of 7 denotes a neutral solution while lower values are acidic and higher values are basic. Technically, the pH of a solution indicates the availability of protons to react with molecules dissolved in water. Such reactions can affect how molecules function chemically and metabolically.*



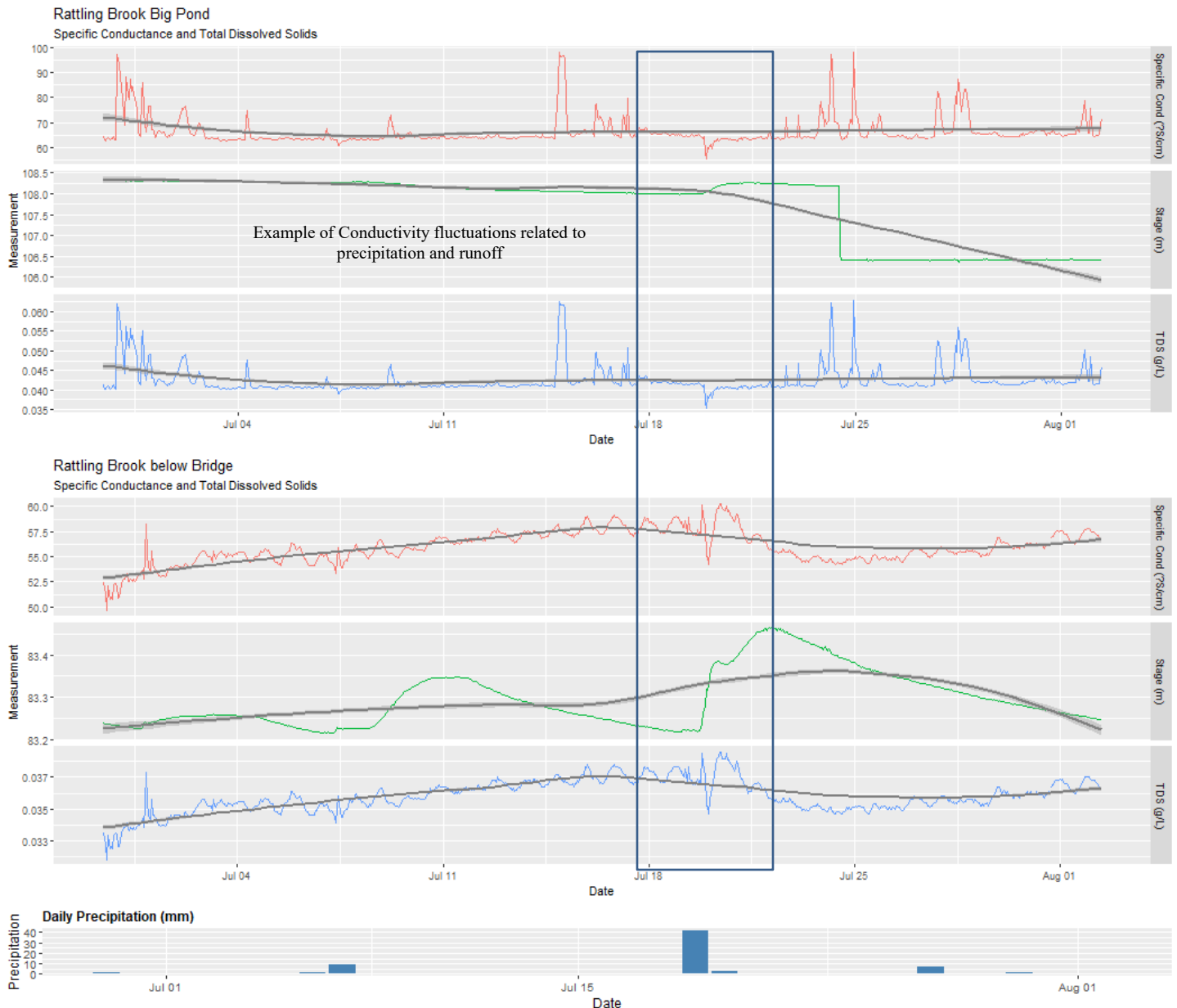
Station	Max	Min	Median	Mean
Big Pond	6.62	5.97	6.46	6.46
Below Bridge	6.70	5.72	6.19	6.21
Below Plant Discharge	6.74	6.20	6.49	6.49

- pH values were generally consistent with the majority of values within the site-specific guidelines (5.67-6.56 pH Units).

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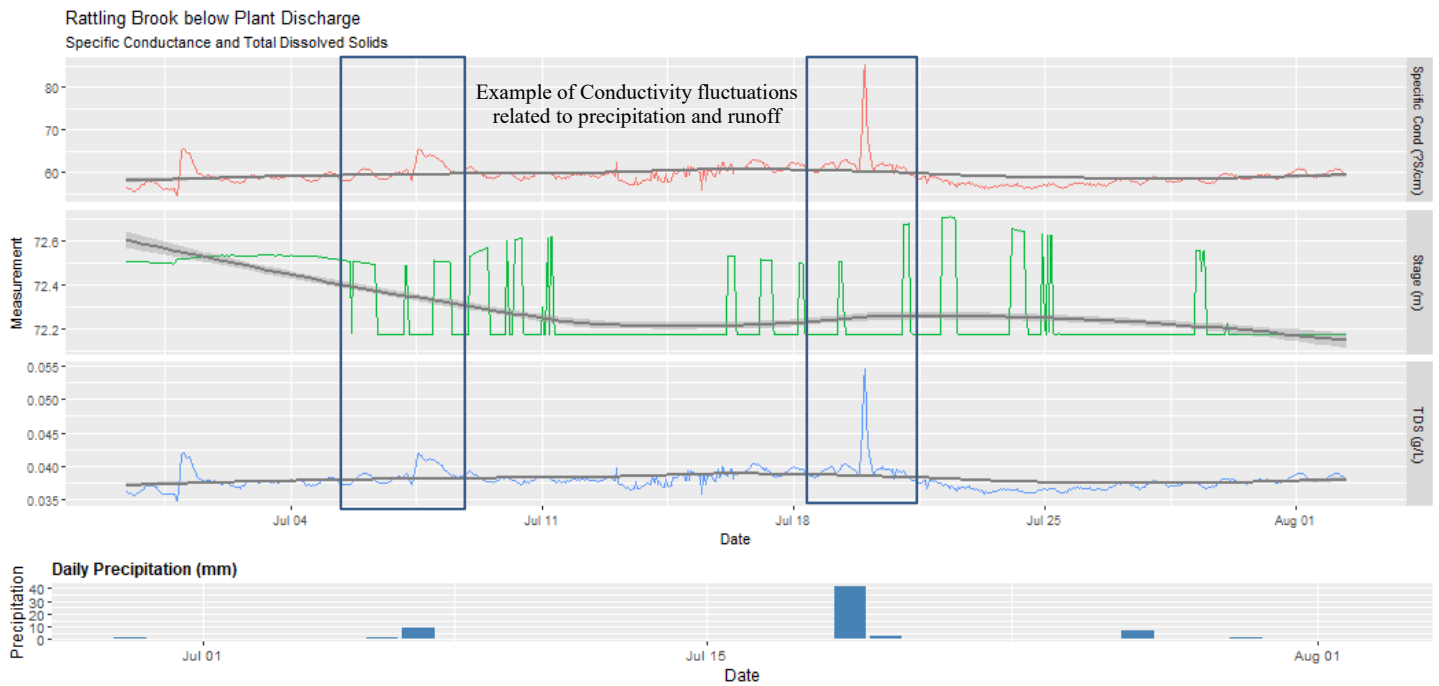
### Specific Conductivity

Conductivity relates to the ease of passing an electric charge – or resistance – through a solution. Conductivity is highly influenced by the concentration of dissolved ions in solution: distilled water has zero conductivity (infinite resistance) while salty solutions have high conductivity (low resistance). Specific Conductivity is corrected to 25°C to allow comparison across variable temperatures.



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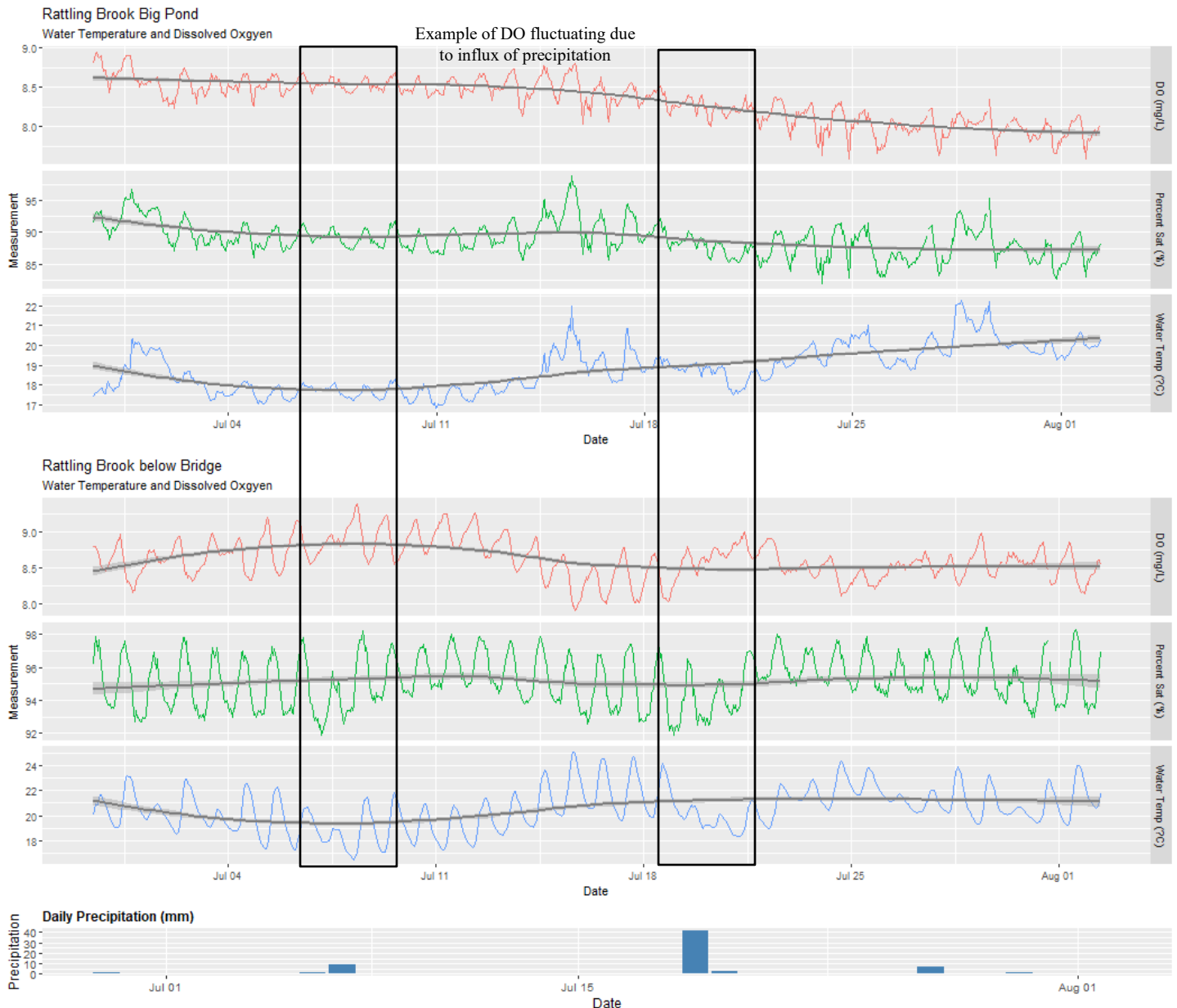
Station	Max	Min	Median	Mean
Big Pond	98.2	55.4	64.6	66.4
Below Bridge	60.3	49.6	55.8	56.0
Below Plant Discharge	85.3	54.5	59.1	59.4

- Specific conductivity was relatively stable at all stations. There were peaks at both Below Bridge and Plant Discharge stations throughout the deployment that could be attributed to low levels in the river and precipitation. Variation in conductivity at Big Pond station may be due to wave/wind action stirring sediments around the instrument.

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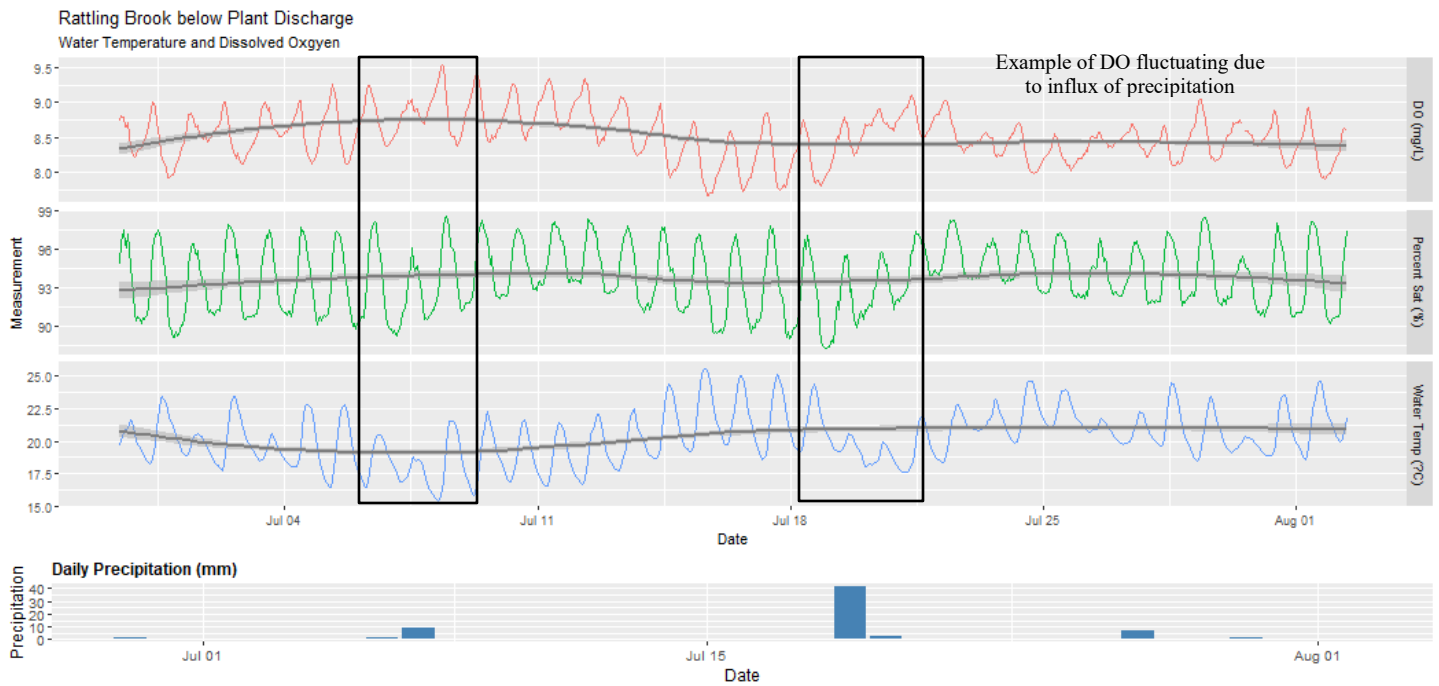
## Dissolved Oxygen

*Dissolved oxygen is a metabolic requirement of aquatic plants and animals. The concentration of oxygen in water depends on many factors, especially temperature – the saturation of oxygen in water is inversely proportional to water temperature. Oxygen concentrations also tend to be higher in flowing water compared to still, lake environments. Low oxygen concentrations can give an indication of excessive decomposition of organic matter or oxidation reactions.*



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Station	Max	Min	Median	Mean
Big Pond	8.95	7.59	8.38	8.32
Below Bridge	9.39	7.90	8.61	8.61
Below Plant Discharge	9.54	7.67	8.52	8.53

- During this deployment as water temperature increased and water level decreased, dissolved oxygen values were low due to a reduction in saturation levels. This is expected through the summer months.
- During this deployment, all measurements were above the CCME dissolved oxygen guideline of 6.5 mg/L for the protection of other life stage cold-water biota.

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## Turbidity

*Turbidity is typically caused by fine suspended solids such as silt, clay, or organic material. Consistently high levels of turbidity tend to block sunlight penetration into a waterbody, discouraging plant growth. High turbidity can also damage the delicate respiratory organs of aquatic animals and cover spawning areas.*



Station	Max	Min	Median	Mean
Big Pond	114.5	0.0	2.1	14.9
Below Bridge	98.8	0.0	0.3	0.9
Below Plant Discharge	65.0	0.0	0.0	0.4

- Turbidity levels were low during this deployment period with variation only observed during precipitation events at Below Bridge and Plant Discharge stations. Big Pond station experienced a spike on July 23<sup>rd</sup> that

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could be attributed to low water levels, fallen trees, and wave action stirring sediment around the sensor. See photo below.



Photo 1: Rattling Brook at Big Pond

### Appendix

