



# Real-Time Water Quality Report

## Leary's Brook at Prince Philip Drive

Deployment Period  
July 5, 2018 to August 31, 2018



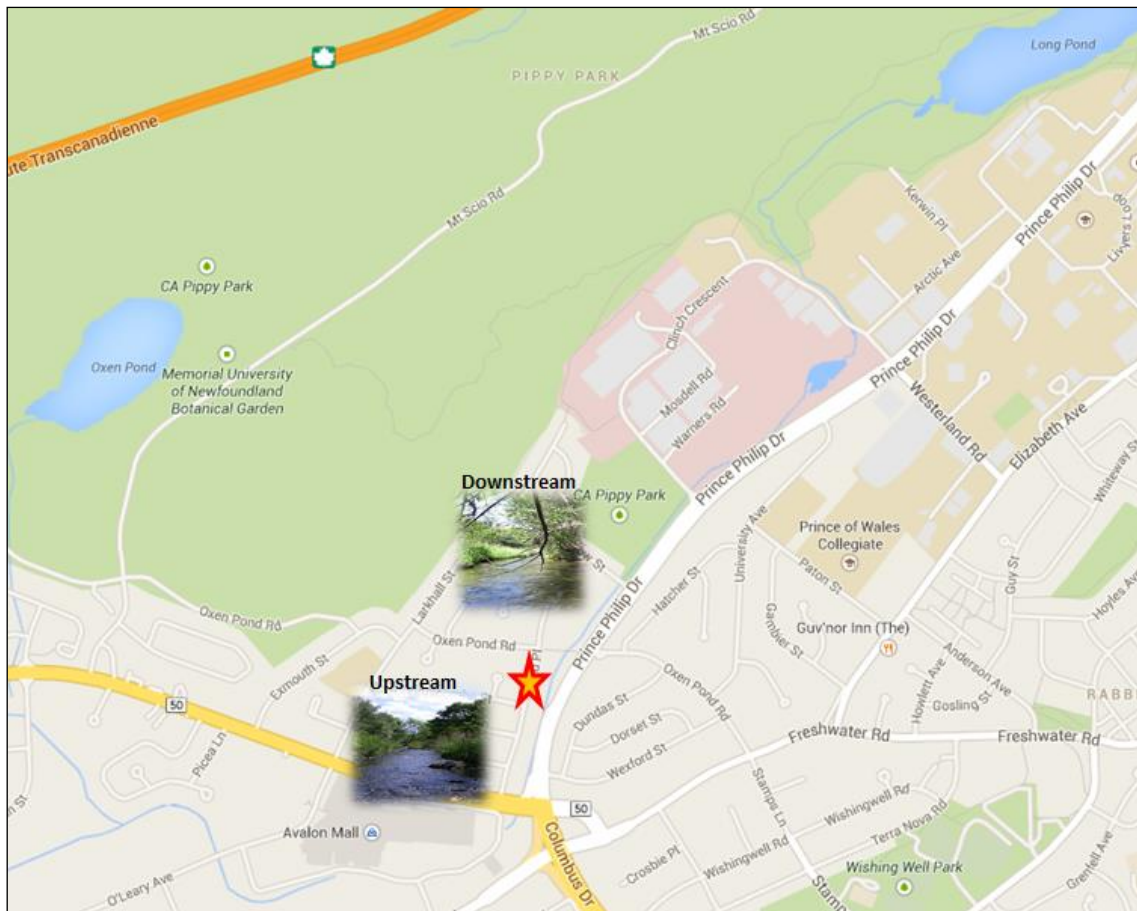
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## General

- 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 Parkway.
- The real-time station allows for assessment and management of the water body. This deployment report discusses water quality related events occurring at the Leary's Brook station.
- The purpose of this real-time station is to monitor, process and publish hydrometric (water quantity) and real-time water quality data at the real-time station. Leary's Brook is an urban stream that flows through industrial and commercial areas and adjacent to a major roadway.
- This report covers the period between the deployment on July 5, 2018 and removal on August 31, 2018.



**Figure 1: Leary's Brook Real-Time Water Quality and Quantity Station.**

## 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.
- At deployment and removal, a QA/QC Sonde is temporarily deployed alongside 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 the parameters on the Field Sonde and QA/QC Sonde at deployment and at removal, a qualitative statement is made on the data quality (Table 1).

Table 1: Instrument Performance Ranking classifications for deployment and removal

Parameter	Rank				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Marginal	Poor
Temperature (°C)	<=+/-0.2	>+/-0.2 to 0.5	>+/-0.5 to 0.8	>+/-0.8 to 1	<+/-1
pH (unit)	<=+/-0.2	>+/-0.2 to 0.5	>+/-0.5 to 0.8	>+/-0.8 to 1	>+/-1
Sp. Conductance (µS/cm)	<=+/-3	>+/-3 to 10	>+/-10 to 15	>+/-15 to 20	>+/-20
Sp. Conductance > 35 µS/cm (%)	<=+/-3	>+/-3 to 10	>+/-10 to 15	>+/-15 to 20	>+/-20
Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L) (% Sat)	<=+/-0.3	>+/-0.3 to 0.5	>+/-0.5 to 0.8	>+/-0.8 to 1	>+/-1
Turbidity <40 NTU (NTU)	<=+/-2	>+/-2 to 5	>+/-5 to 8	>+/-8 to 10	>+/-10
Turbidity > 40 NTU (%)	<=+/-5	>+/-5 to 10	>+/-10 to 15	>+/-15 to 20	>+/-20

- 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.
- Deployment and removal instrument performance rankings for **Leary's Brook** for this period are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Instrument performance rankings for Leary's Brook

Station	Date	Action	Comparison Ranking				
			Temperature	pH	Conductivity	Dissolved Oxygen	Turbidity
Leary's Brook	July 5, 2018	Deployment	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent
	August 31, 2018	Removal	Excellent	Good	Excellent	Excellent	Excellent

- At the Leary's Brook station at the time of deployment, temperature, conductivity, dissolved oxygen and turbidity ranked as "Excellent" while pH ranked as "Good".
- At the time of removal, temperature, conductivity, dissolved oxygen and turbidity ranked as "Excellent", while pH ranked as "Good".

## **Data Interpretation**

- The following graphs and discussion illustrate water quality-related events from July 5, 2018 to August 31, 2018 at the Leary's Brook station.
- With the exception of water quantity data (stage), all data used in the preparation of the graphs and subsequent discussion below adhere to this stringent QA/QC protocol. Water Survey of Canada (WSC) is responsible for QA/QC of water quantity data. Corrected and finalized data may be retrieved from the WSC website (<http://www.ec.gc.ca/rhc-wsc/>)
- Precipitation data from the deployment period was retrieved from the ECCC weather station at St. John's International Airport.

## Leary's Brook

### Water Temperature

- Water temperature ranged from 11.8 to 23.5 °C during this deployment period (Figure 2).
- Water temperature at Leary's Brook displays a typical variation over the deployment period. Water temperature is influenced by air temperature.
- The water temperature data displayed on Figure 2 is typical of shallow streams and ponds. Shallow water bodies are highly influenced by variations in ambient air temperatures. Water temperature often falls overnight and rises during daylight hours.
- Please note the stage data is raw data that is published on the ECCC web page. It has not been corrected for backwater effect. WSC is responsible for QA/QC of water quantity data. Corrected data can be obtained upon request to WSC.

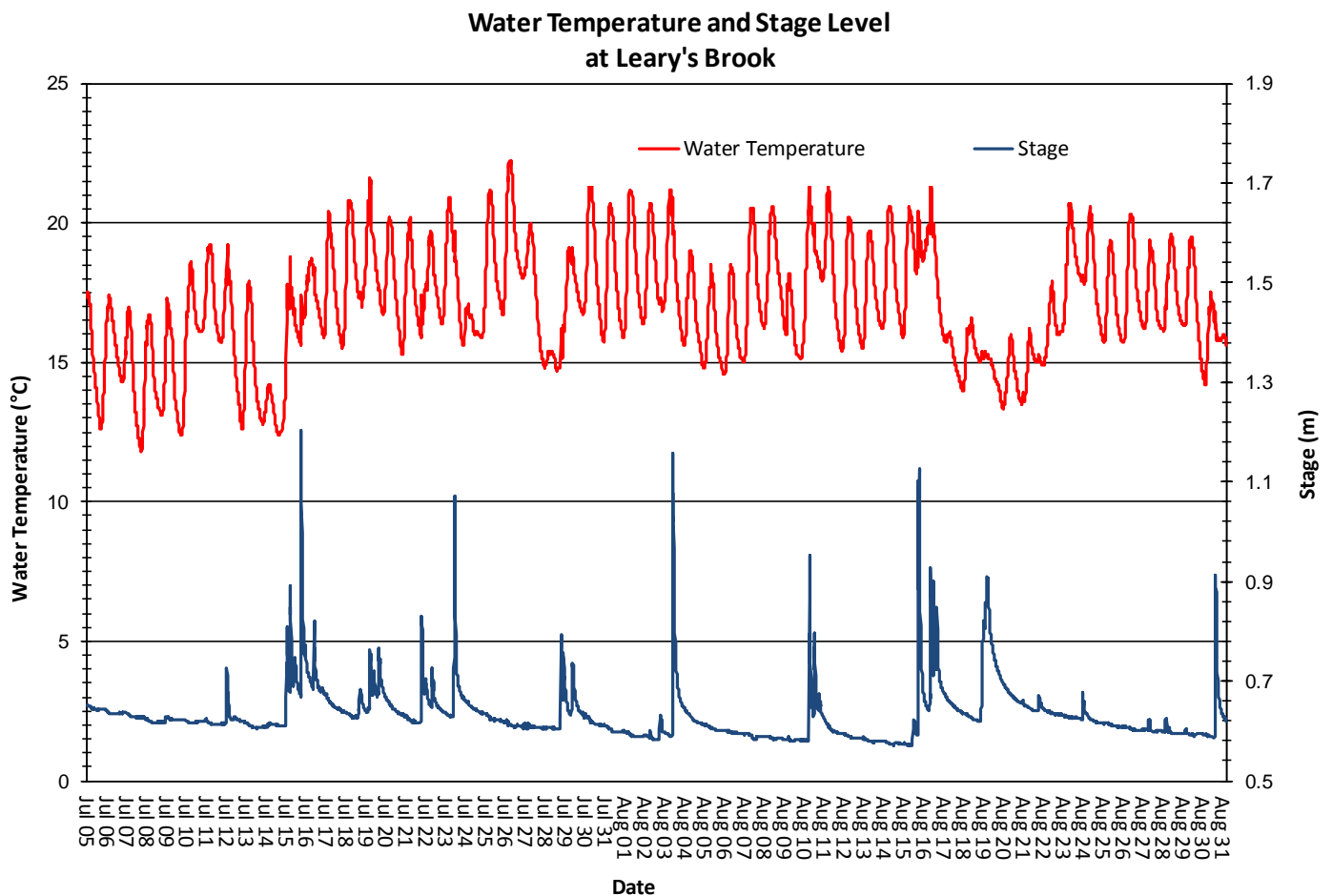


Figure 2: Water Temperature and Stage Level at Leary's Brook

### pH

- Throughout this deployment period pH values ranged between 6.41 pH units and 6.94 pH units (Figure 3).
- The CCME guideline provides a basis by which to judge the overall health of the brook. Naturally, all streams and brooks are different. Leary's Brook pH median was 6.72 (pH units) for this deployment period.
- pH typically falls slightly in Leary's Brook (the water becomes more acidic) at the same time as stage and flow are increasing. In general, precipitation entering Leary's Brook has a lower pH than local surface water and this causes a small reduction in the pH of the brook.

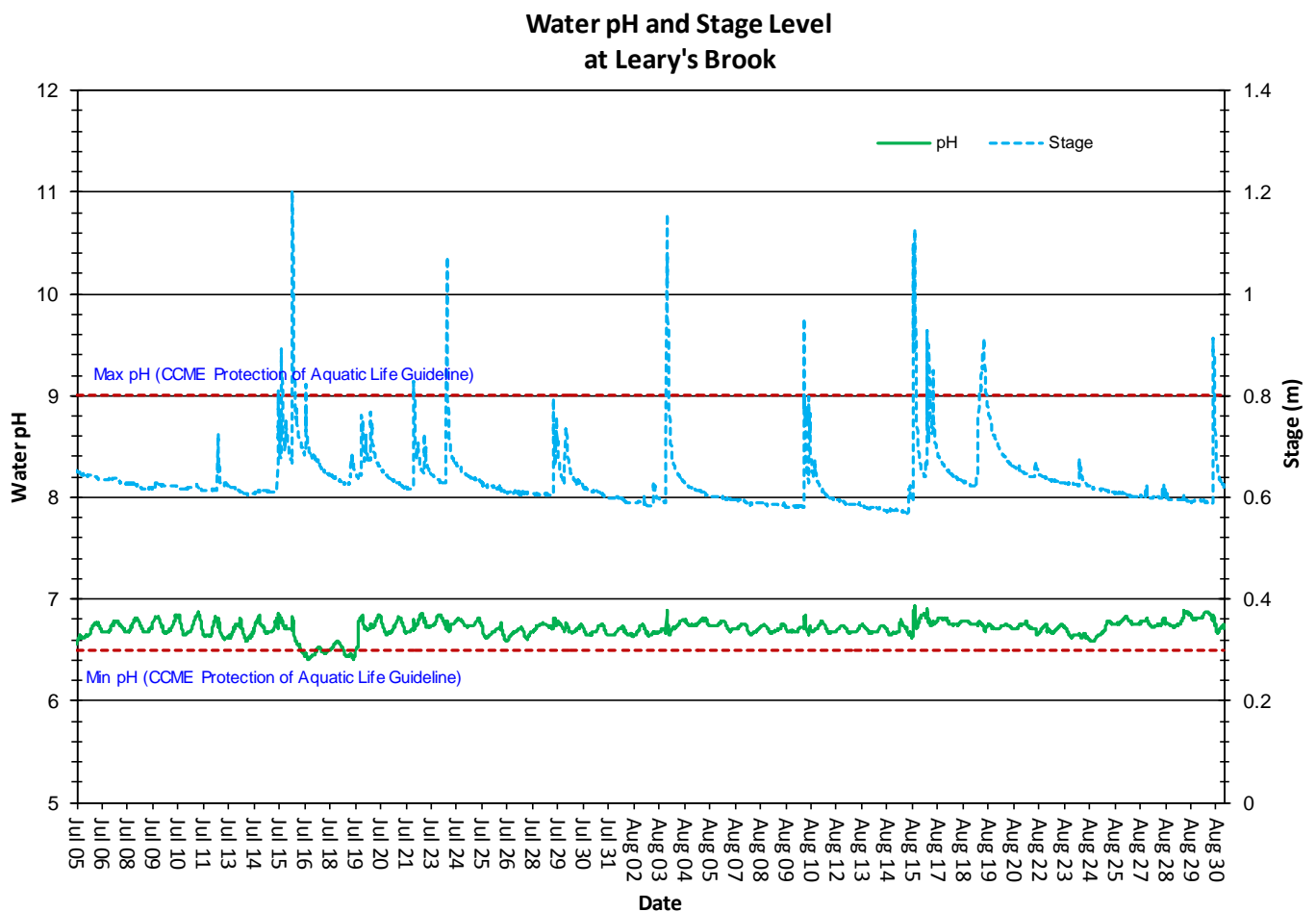
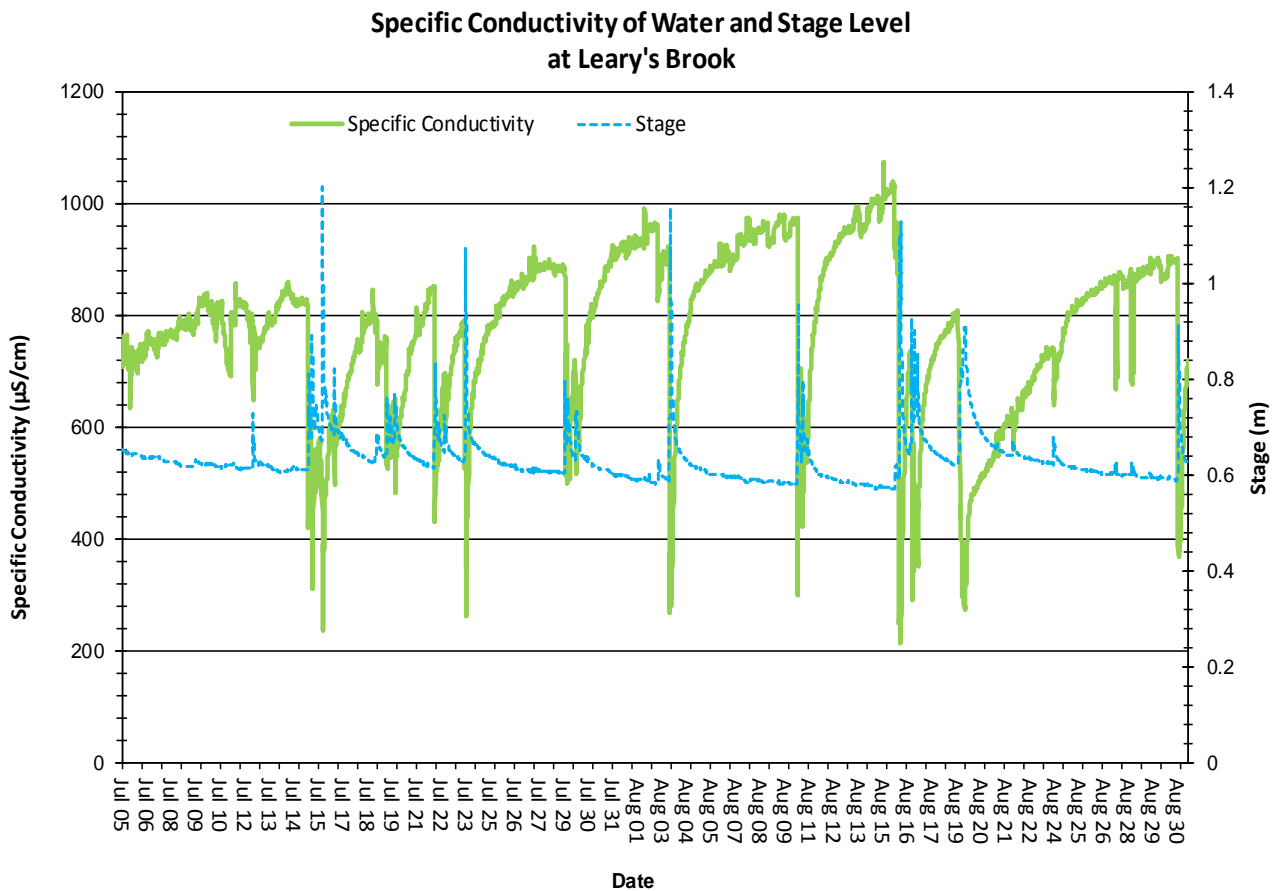


Figure 3: Water pH (pH units) values at Leary's Brook Station

### Specific Conductivity

- The conductivity levels ranged between 213.0  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  and 1073.0  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  during this deployment period. The median was 799.0  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ . TDS ranged from 0.1370 g/ml to 0.6870 g/ml. (Figure 4)
- Increases in conductivity are associated with low water levels and an increase in dissolved ion concentrations. At this time of year when road salting does not occur, conductivity rapidly falls during early stages of precipitation runoff. Dissolved ions are diluted by mineral free rainwater.



**Figure 4: Specific conductivity values at Leary's Brook Station**



### Dissolved Oxygen

- The instrument measures dissolved oxygen (mg/L) and then calculates the percent saturation (% Sat.).
- The Dissolved Oxygen % Sat levels within this deployment period were between 86.9 % Sat and 99.5 % Sat. Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L) measured between 7.84 mg/L and 10.35 mg/L. (Figure 5)
- The DO mg/L values were below the minimum DO CCME guidelines for the protection of early life stages and above the guideline for other life stages for most of this deployment period (Figure 5).
- Small decreases in available oxygen are associated with increases in water temperature. Warm water can hold less dissolved oxygen than cooler water.
- The lowest levels of DO correspond with the highest water temperatures recorded during this deployment period.

Dissolved Oxygen Concentration and Saturation at Leary's Brook

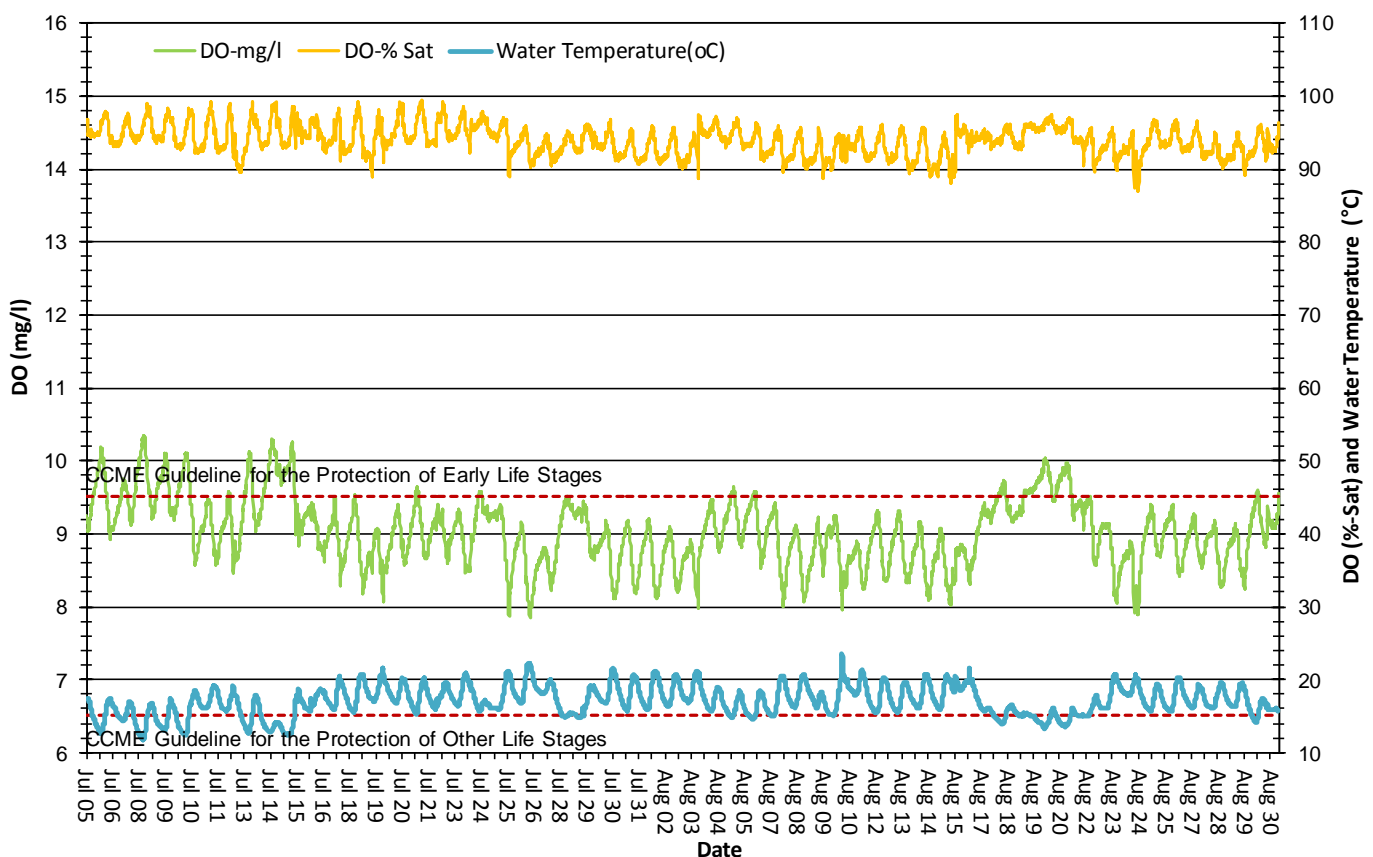


Figure 5: Dissolved oxygen (mg/L & % sat) and water temperature (°C) values at Leary's Brook Station

### Turbidity

- The turbidity sensor records values between 0 NTU and 3000 NTU. A turbidity reading of 3000 NTU is identified as an error and is not a true value. Readings of 3000 NTU should not be included in any statistical analysis.
- The turbidity readings during this deployment ranged between 0.0 NTU to 148.2 NTU (Figure 6).
- There were a number of intense turbidity events in Leary's Brook during the deployment period. It was evident that upstream man-made disturbances were periodically releasing heavy sediment loads. Though construction was ongoing near the Avalon Mall at the time, and this may have caused siltation to occur, many of the events could not be traced to that activity and appeared to come from the Oxen Pond, O'Brien's Hill area.
- Turbidity readings from July 19 to July 26 have been removed from the record as it appears that the sensor was buried in fine sediment during that period.

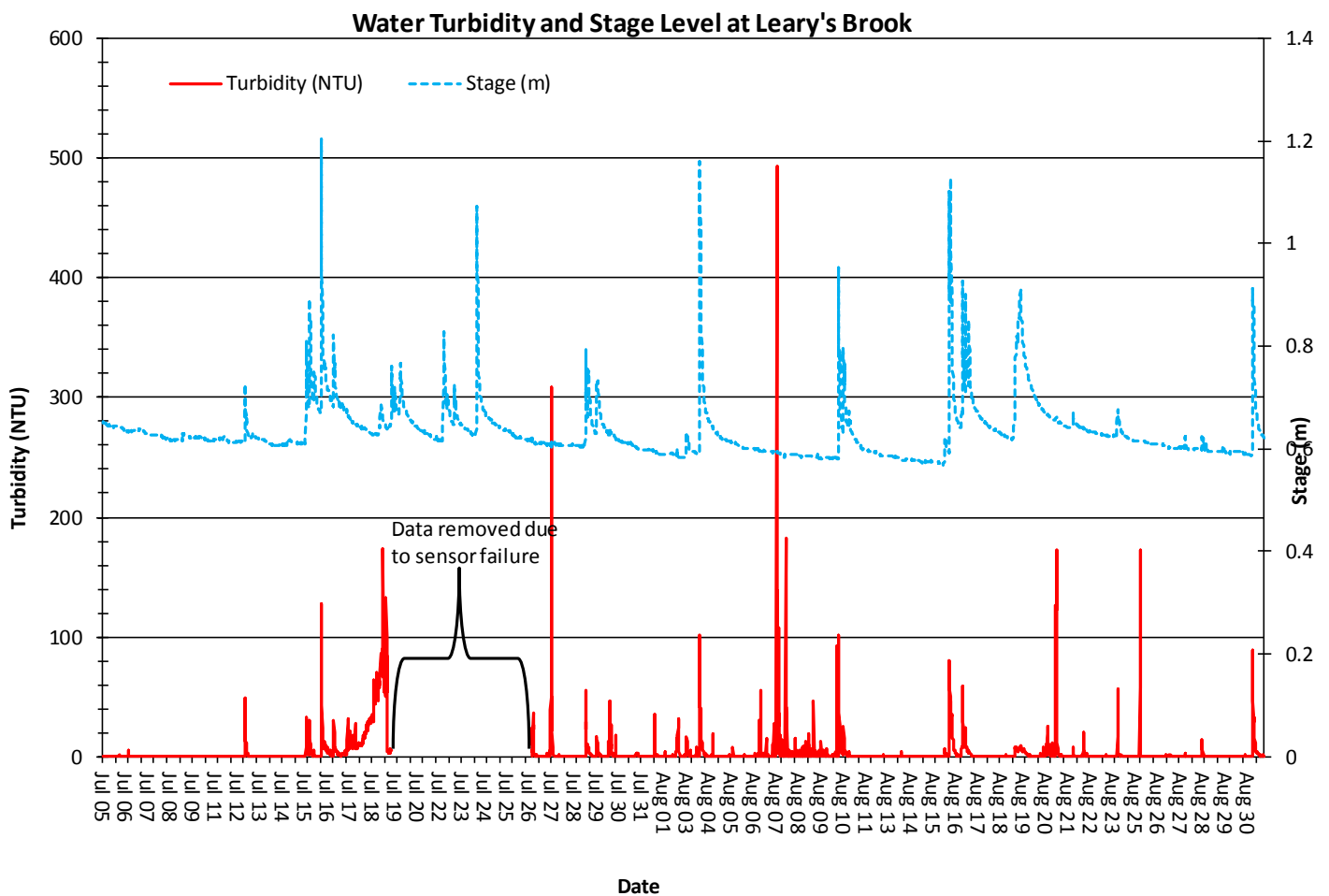
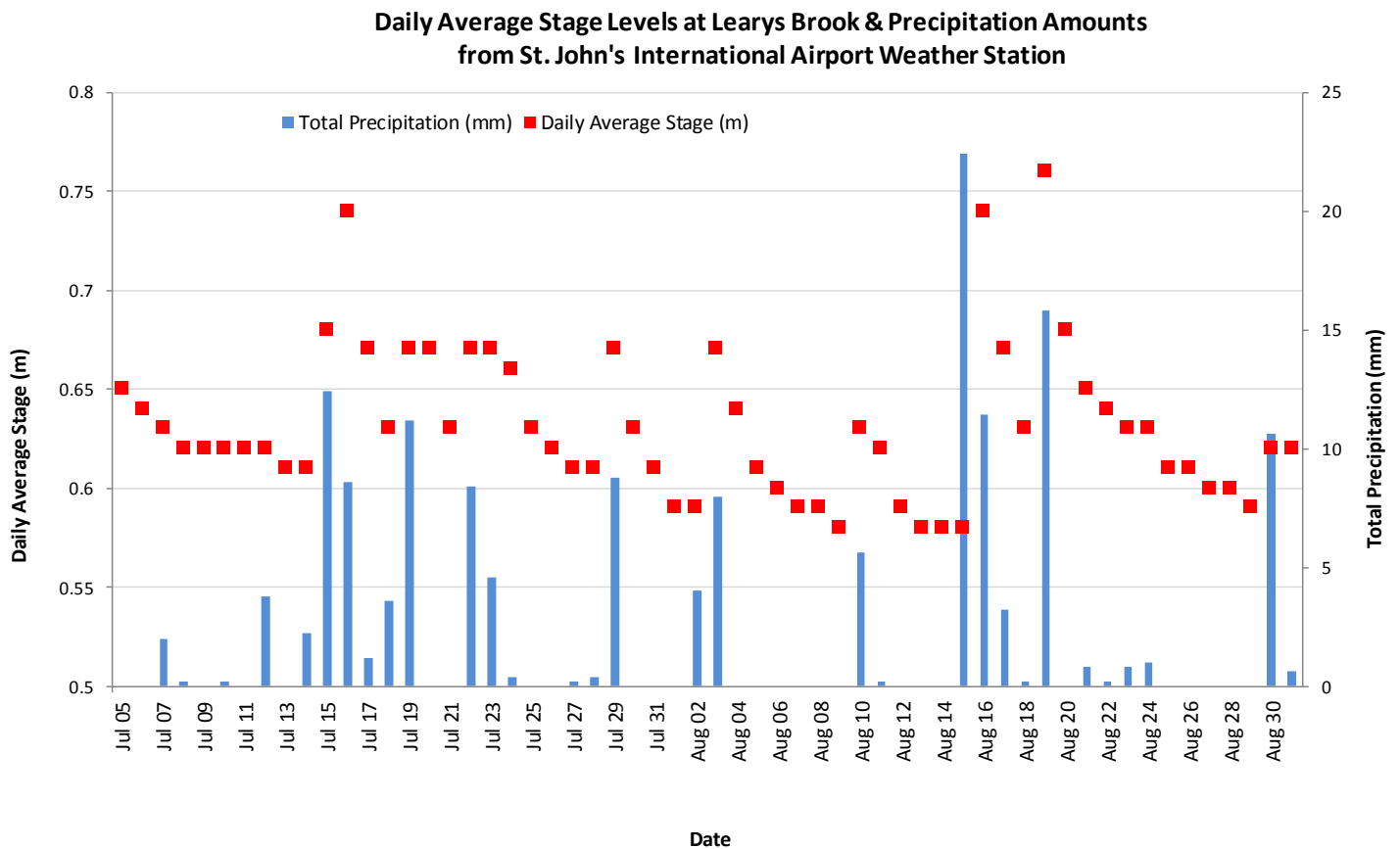


Figure 6: Turbidity (NTU) values at Leary's Brook Station

### Stage and Total Precipitation

- The graph below shows daily total precipitation data from St. John's International Airport weather station and the daily average stage (Figure 7). Please note that the stage data in this report is raw data. It has not been corrected for backwater effect. WSC is responsible for QA/QC of water quantity data. Corrected data can be obtained upon request to WSC.
- Stage (and streamflow) usually varies significantly throughout a deployment period in Leary's Brook.



**Figure 7: Daily average stage values (m) from Leary's Brook and daily total precipitation values (mm) from St. John's International Airport.**

## Conclusions

In both natural and urban environments, climate and weather conditions can contribute in large part to variations in water quality. During this deployment, however, it is evident that many of the observed and recorded changes in Leary's Brook water chemistry are related to anthropogenic disturbances.

Precipitation and runoff events during the deployment period led to expected increases in stage, which thus influenced the values of turbidity, pH, specific conductance, and TDS. Also, when ambient air temperatures increased there were correspondingly warmer water temperatures, which in turn decreased the amount of dissolved oxygen in the water.

A series of high turbidity events occurred during the deployment period that cannot be attributed to normal, weather related causes. These periods of very cloudy water were often short lived, indicating a release of contaminated water or instream construction somewhere upstream of the monitoring location. These events were reported to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, though no determination as to cause has been provided at the time of this report. See Figures 8, 9 and 10 below.

During this deployment period the median water temperature at the Leary's Brook station was 16.90°C.

The median pH value for Leary's Brook Station was 6.72 (pH units). The pH level usually decreases at this station during rainfall events and increases during dry periods.

Conductivity had a median value of 799.0 µS/cm. The maximum conductivity was 1073.0 µS/cm. At this time of year, when road salt is no longer being used, conductivity usually is at its highest in Leary's Brook when water levels are low.

Dissolved Oxygen at Leary's Brook had a median of 93.9 %Sat and 9.04 mg/L during the deployment period. Small reductions in DO (mg/L and % Sat) correspond with increases in water temperatures. DO levels were below the "CCME Guideline for the Protection of Early Life Stages" throughout much of the deployment period.



**Figure 8: Leary's Brook, St. John's on July 21, 2018**



**Figure 9: Leary's Brook, St. John's on July 27, 2018**



**Figure 10: Leary's Brook, St. John's on August 25, 2018**