

Real Time Water Quality Deployment Report

Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive

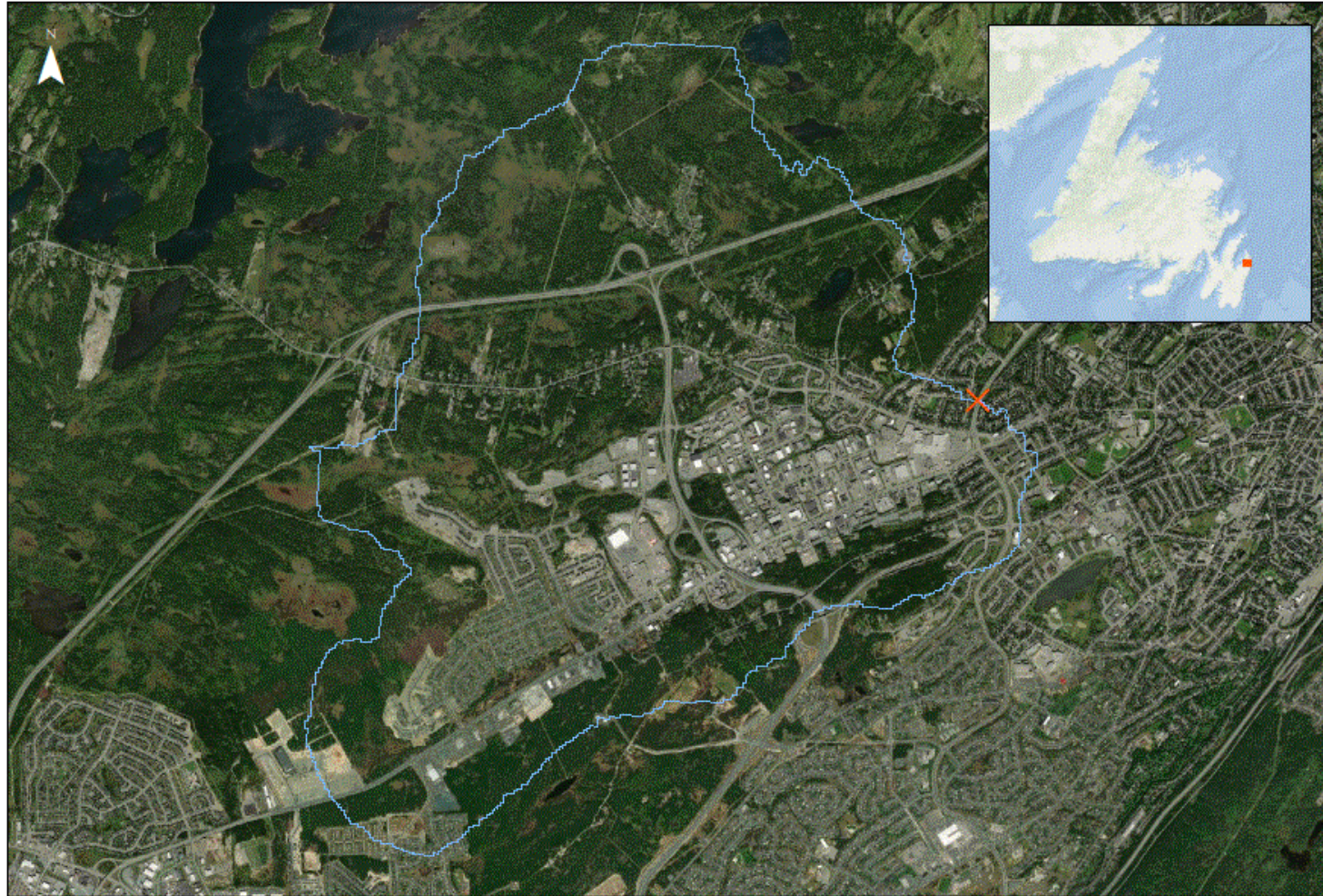
NF02ZM0178

2024-08-30 to 2024-10-29



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 Philip 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 watershed is outlined in the figure to the left in light blue. 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.

0 0.75 1.5 3 Kilometers

Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive
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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. Water Survey Canada operates the hydrometric component of this station. Due to differences in protocols, Water Survey Canada hydrometric data is quality controlled on a less frequent basis than water quality data. The hydrometric data shown in this report is provisional and has not undergone quality control checks. Corrected hydrometric data can be obtained at <https://wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/> or upon request to Water Survey Canada.

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	$\leq \pm 3$ μ S/cm or $\leq \pm 3\%$, whichever is greater	$\leq \pm 3.1 - 10$ μ S/cm or $\leq \pm 3.1 - 10\%$, whichever is greater	$\leq \pm 10 - 15$ μ S/cm or $\leq \pm 10.1 - 15\%$, whichever is greater	$\leq \pm 15.1 - 20$ μ S/cm or $\leq \pm 15.1 - 20\%$, whichever is greater	$> \pm 20$ μ 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	$\leq \pm 0.2^\circ\text{C}$	$\leq \pm 0.21 - 0.5^\circ\text{C}$	$\leq \pm 0.51 - 0.8^\circ\text{C}$	$\leq \pm 0.81 - 1^\circ\text{C}$	$> \pm 1^\circ\text{C}$

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.

QAQC Rankings

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

Leary's Brook is subject to a large amount of debris and gravel which can lodge within the sonde's cage and disrupt the sensors. At the time of removal, the turbidity sensor was gradually increasing which may indicate biofouling. On Sept 4th there was a spike in pH, specific conductivity, TDS, DO, and turbidity. This may have been reflective of a short pulse of altered water originating upstream of the station. Webcam images confirm increasingly turbid water around this time. Concrete entering the system may have caused the disturbance.

Water Temperature

12.99

Average (°C)

12.73

Median (°C)

6.95

Minimum (°C)

19.35

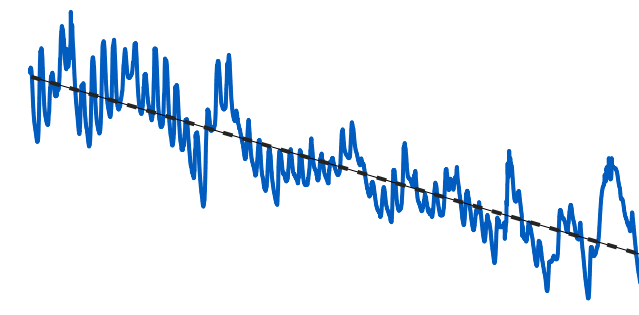
Maximum (°C)



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.

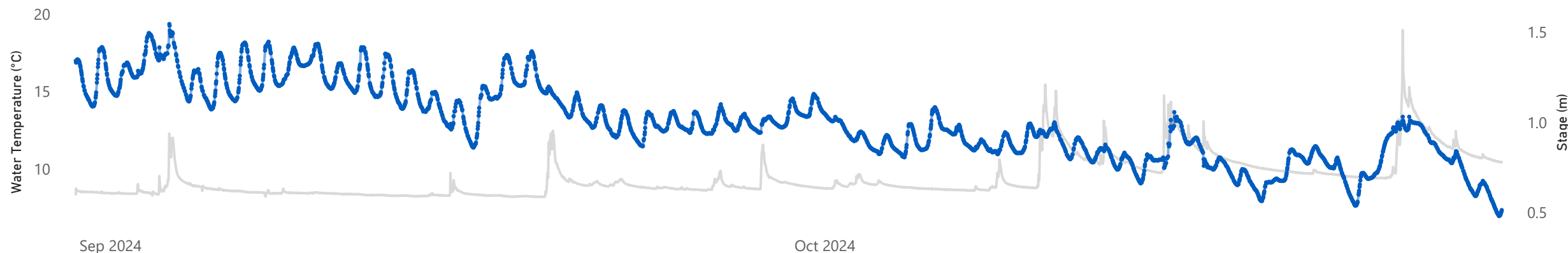
Water temperature data for this deployment was collected from 2024-08-30 until 2024-10-29. The minimum water temperature, 6.95°C, occurred on 2024-10-29. The maximum water temperature, 19.35°C, occurred on 2024-09-03. Water temperature usually falls overnight and rises during the day. Leary's Brook is 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. A gradual cooling trend in the fall is expected and the air temperature follows a similar pattern during this time. Daily fluctuations in water temperature were disrupted at the end of October due to a large precipitation event.

Water Temperature Trendline



Water Temperature and Stage at Leary's Brook at Prince Philip Drive

● Water Temperature (°C) ● Stage (m)



Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. John's

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



pH

6.88

Average pH

6.91

Median pH

6.57

Minimum pH

7.83

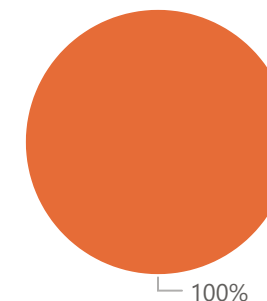
Maximum pH



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](#).

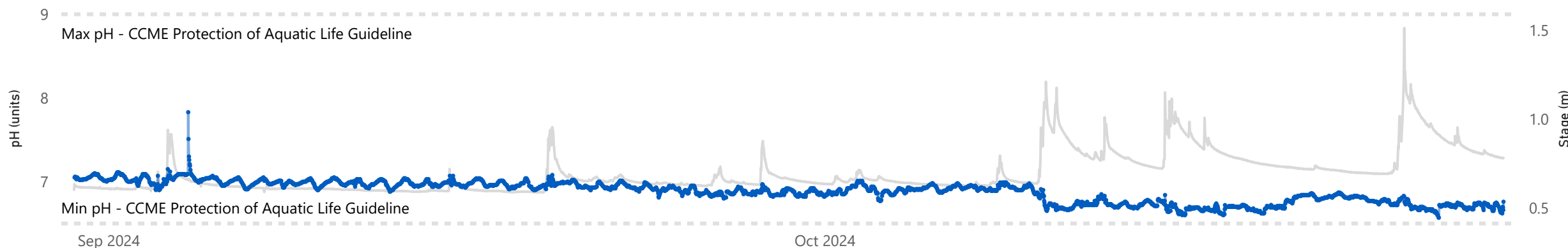
pH data for this deployment was collected from 2024-08-30 until 2024-10-29. The minimum pH, 6.57 pH units, occurred on 2024-10-26. The maximum pH, 7.83 pH units, occurred on 2024-09-04. Daily fluctuations are common due to changes in temperature and aquatic photosynthesis. During this deployment period, pH was within CCME's guidelines 100% of the time. On September the 4th, the pH spiked from 7.09 to 7.83 and then remained elevated for a few hours. Specific conductivity, DO, TDS, and turbidity were all impacted by this unknown event. A major rainfall event on October 9th and 10th caused the pH to drop from approximately 7 to a pH of 6.57 which represents the lowest pH during this deployment period.

● Within Guidelines



pH and Stage at Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive

● pH (units) ● Stage (m)



Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. John's

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



Specific Conductivity

646.67

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

703

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

93

Minumum $\mu\text{S/cm}$

1531

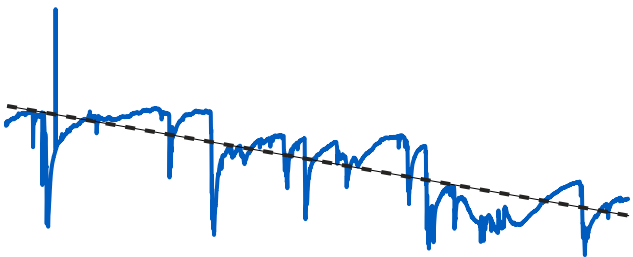
Maximum $\mu\text{S/cm}$



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](#).

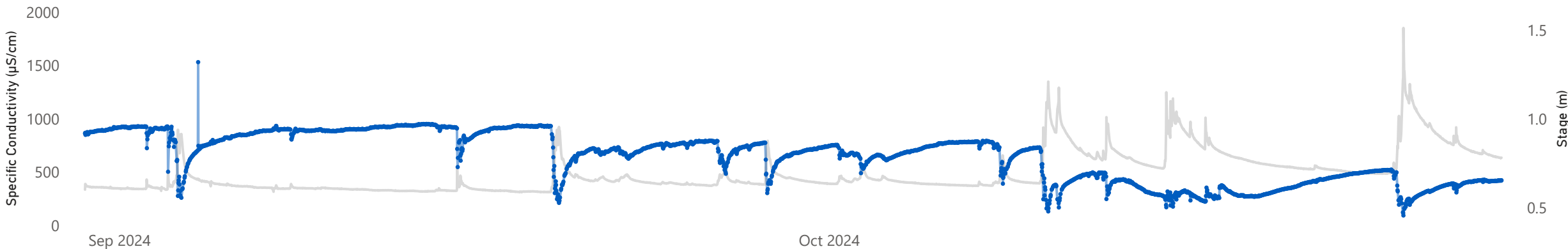
Specific conductance data for this deployment was collected from 2024-08-30 until 2024-10-29. The minimum specific conductance, 93 $\mu\text{S/cm}$, occurred on 2024-10-25. The maximum specific conductance, 1531 $\mu\text{S/cm}$, occurred on 2024-09-04. Precipitation and specific conductivity are correlated. Rain water generally has a lower specific conductivity than surface water. There is a gradual decreasing trend in specific conductivity. Rain fall events cause a sudden drop in specific conductivity. After large rainfall events the specific conductivity did not return to prior levels, which is likely the result of road salts, which were applied last winter, being gradually flushed from the system. Like pH, there was an anomalous spike in specific conductivity on September 4th.

Specific Conductivity Trendline



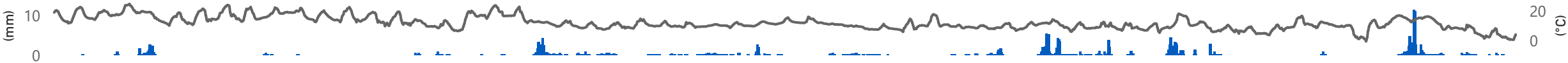
Specific Conductivity and Stage at Learys Brook at Prince Philip

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



Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. John's

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



Chloride Concentration

176.23
Average mg/L

191.66
Median mg/L

24.13
Minimum mg/L

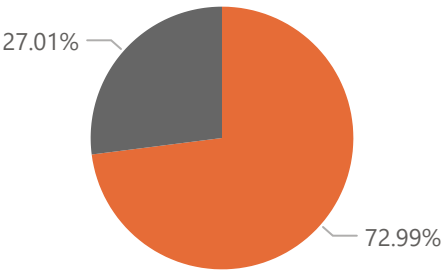
425.39
Maximum mg/L



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.

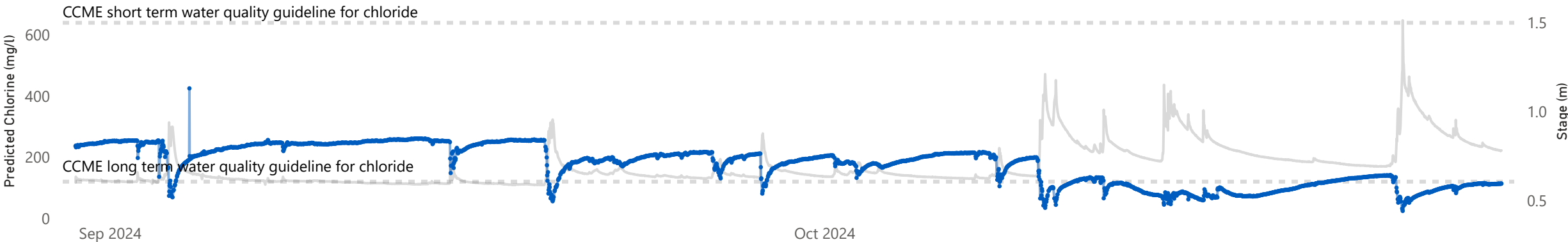
Data used to calculate chloride concentration for this deployment was collected from 2024-08-30 until 2024-10-29. The minimum predicted chloride concentration, 24.13 mg/L, occurred on 2024-10-25. The maximum predicted chloride concentration, 425.39 mg/L, occurred on 2024-09-04. In urban settings, road salts are a major source of chloride ions. Because predicted chloride concentration is calculated from specific conductivity, the trends will be similar. During this deployment the chloride concentration was above the long term guideline for 72.99% of the time, and within guidelines for 27.01% of the time.

● Above Long Term Guideline ● Within Guidelines



Predicted Chloride Concentration and Stage at Learys Brook at Prince Philip

● Predicted Chlorine (mg/l) ● Stage (m)



Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. John's

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



Dissolved Oxygen

10.00

Average (mg/L)

10.05

Median (mg/L)

8.14

Minimum (mg/L)

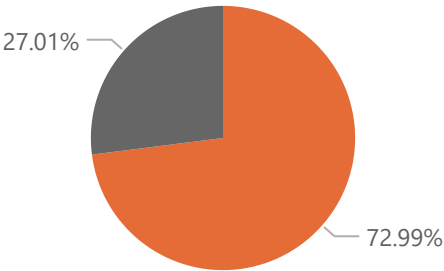
12.02

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.

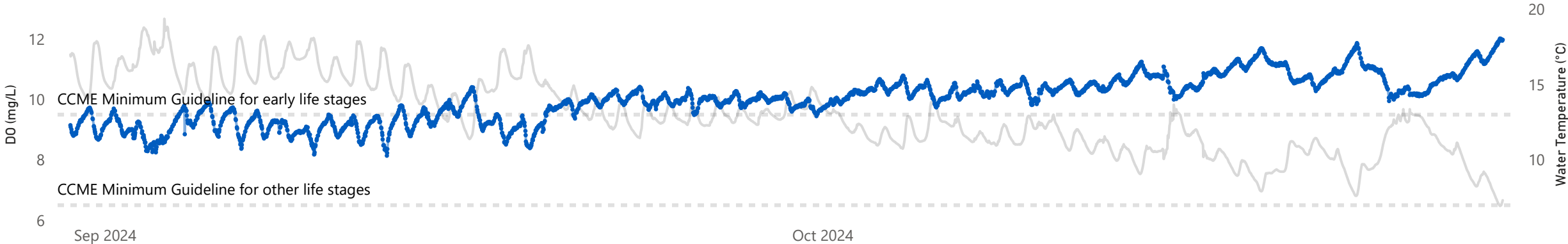
DO data for this deployment was collected from 2024-08-30 until 2024-10-29. The minimum DO reading, 8.14 mg/L, occurred on 2024-09-12. The maximum DO reading, 12.02 mg/L, occurred on 2024-10-29. Daily fluctuations are common due to changes in temperature and respiration of aquatic plants. During this deployment period, DO was above minimum guidelines for both early and other life stages 72.99% of the time and below early guidelines 27.01% of the time. This is expected for this time of year because water temperatures are cooling. Dissolved oxygen levels began to rise as the water temperature dropped in October.

● Above Guidelines ● Below Early Guidelines



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

● DO (mg/L) ● Water Temperature (°C)



Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. John's

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



Turbidity

16.52
Average (NTU)

13.40
Median (NTU)

0.00
Minimum (NTU)

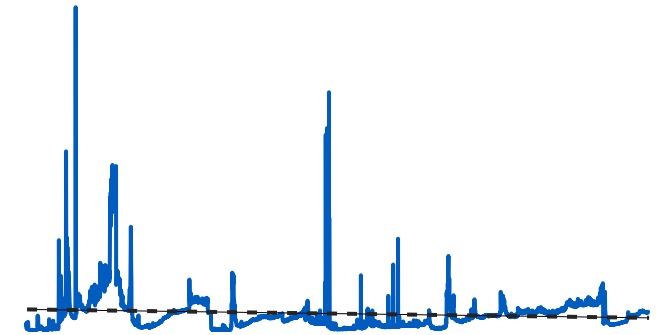
330.30
Maximum (NTU)



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.

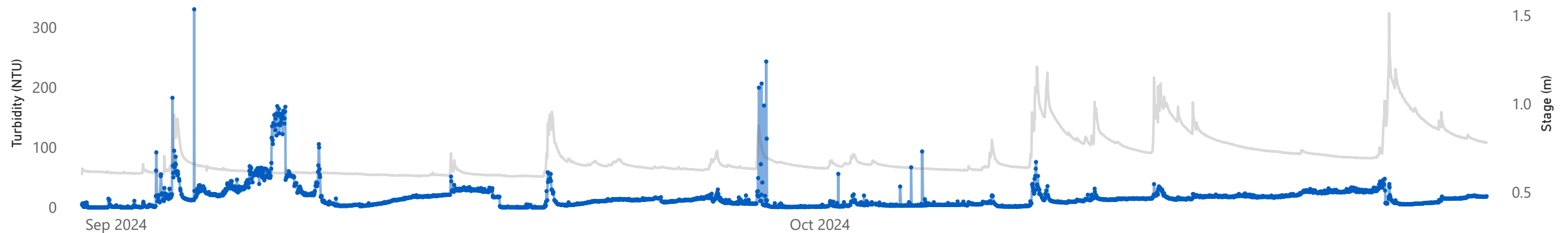
Turbidity data for this deployment was collected from 2024-08-30 until 10-29-2024. The minimum turbidity was 0.00 NTUs. The maximum turbidity, 330.30 NTUs, occurred on 2024-09-04. During this deployment period, turbidity shows a slight decreasing trend. The increased turbidity events towards the start of deployment are not closely associated with precipitation events; however, webcam images confirm regular turbidity events. During this deployment period, there was construction upstream at Prince Phillip Drive and Kenmount Road which may have contributed to the unexpected events. Precipitation caused a spike in turbidity on Sept 28th which was verified by webcam. Afterwards, the turbidity values from Sept 28th until Oct 8th bounced from 0 to 3000 NTUs in rapid succession without any corresponding turbid images from the webcam. This data was removed.

Turbidity Trendline



Turbidity and Stage at Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive

● Turbidity (NTU) ● Stage (m)



Precipitation and Air Temperature at Pippy Park in St. John's

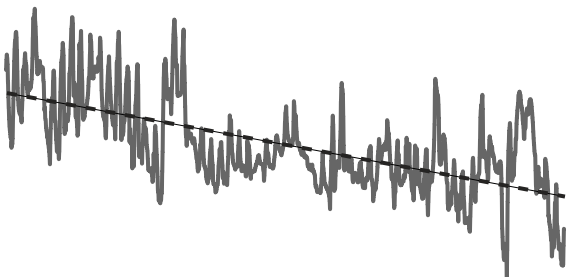
● Precipitation (mm) ● Air Temperature (°C)



Meteorological and Hydrometric Data



Air Temperature Trendline



11.90

Average (°C)

11.14

Median (°C)

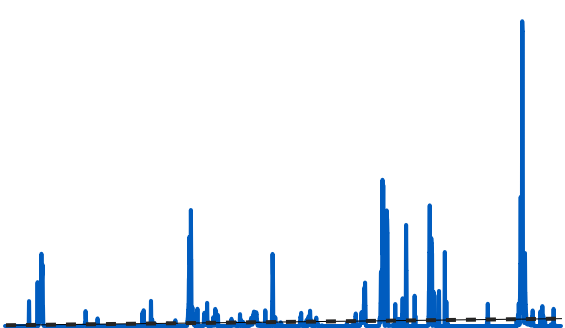
-0.59

Minimum (°C)

24.74

Maximum (°C)

Precipitation Trendline



0.15

Average (mm/hr)

0.00

Median (mm/hr)

0.00

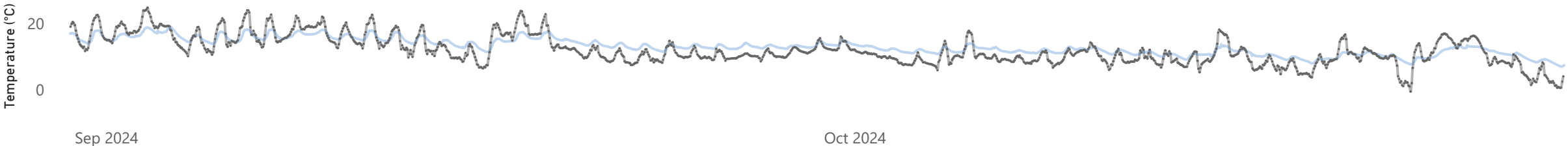
Minimum (mm/hr)

11.50

Maximum (mm/hr)

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

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



Precipitation from Pippy Park In St. John's and Stage from Learys Brook at Prince Philip Drive

● Precipitation (mm) ● Stage (m)

