



Real-Time Water Quality Report

Waterford River at Kilbride

Deployment Period
January 21, 2015 to April 14, 2015



Government of Newfoundland & Labrador
Department of Environment and Conservation
Water Resources Management Division

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General

The Water Resources Management Division (WRMD), in partnership with Water Survey of Canada - Environment Canada, maintain a real-time water quality and water quantity monitoring station on Waterford River at Kilbride.

This deployment report discusses water quality related events occurring at this station.

The purpose of the real-time water quality station is to monitor, process and publish real-time water quality data.

This report covers period from deployment on January 21, 2015 until removal on April 14, 2015. The extended deployment period was related to logistical challenges at the time. The instrument was frozen into the deployment protective casing and was unable to be retrieved until the air temperatures increased.



Figure 1: Waterford River at Kilbride 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).

Water Resources Management (WRMD) staff (Environment and Conservation (ENVC)) is responsible for maintenance of the real-time water quality monitoring equipment, as well as recording and managing the water quality data. Tara Clinton, under the supervision of Renee Paterson, is ENVC's main contact for the real-time water quality monitoring operation at Waterford River station, and is responsible for maintaining and calibrating the water quality instrument, as well as grooming, analyzing and reporting on water quality data recorded at the station.

Water Survey of Canada (WSC) staff (Environment Canada (EC)) under the management of Howie Wills, play an essential role in the data logging/communication aspect of the network and the maintenance of the water quantity monitoring equipment. EC-WSC staff visit the site regularly to ensure the data logging and data transmitting equipment are working properly. WSC is responsible for handling stage and streamflow issues. The quantity data is raw data that is transmitted via satellite and published online along with the water quality data on the Real-Time Stations website. Quantity data has not been corrected or groomed when published online or used in the monthly reports for the stations. WSC is responsible for QA/QC of water quantity data. Corrected stage and streamflow data can be obtained upon request to WSC.

Table 1: Instrument Performance Ranking classifications for deployment and removal

| | Rank | | | | |
|--|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|------------|
| Parameter | Excellent | Good | Fair | Marginal | Poor |
| Temperature (°C) | $\leq \pm 0.2$ | $> \pm 0.2$ to 0.5 | $> \pm 0.5$ to 0.8 | $> \pm 0.8$ to 1 | $< \pm 1$ |
| pH (unit) | $\leq \pm 0.2$ | $> \pm 0.2$ to 0.5 | $> \pm 0.5$ to 0.8 | $> \pm 0.8$ to 1 | $> \pm 1$ |
| Sp. Conductance ($\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$) | $\leq \pm 3$ | $> \pm 3$ to 10 | $> \pm 10$ to 15 | $> \pm 15$ to 20 | $> \pm 20$ |
| Sp. Conductance $> 35 \mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ (%) | $\leq \pm 3$ | $> \pm 3$ to 10 | $> \pm 10$ to 15 | $> \pm 15$ to 20 | $> \pm 20$ |
| Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L) (% Sat) | $\leq \pm 0.3$ | $> \pm 0.3$ to 0.5 | $> \pm 0.5$ to 0.8 | $> \pm 0.8$ to 1 | $> \pm 1$ |
| Turbidity < 40 NTU (NTU) | $\leq \pm 2$ | $> \pm 2$ to 5 | $> \pm 5$ to 8 | $> \pm 8$ to 10 | $> \pm 10$ |
| Turbidity > 40 NTU (%) | $\leq \pm 5$ | $> \pm 5$ to 10 | $> \pm 10$ to 15 | $> \pm 15$ to 20 | $> \pm 20$ |

It should be noted that the temperature sensor on any sonde is the most important. All other parameters can be divided into subgroups of: temperature dependant, 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.

Table 2: Instrument performance rankings for Waterford River at Kilbride

| Station | Date | Action | Comparison Ranking | | | | |
|-----------|---------------|------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------|------------------|-----------|
| | | | Temperature | pH | Conductivity | Dissolved Oxygen | Turbidity |
| Waterford | Jan 21 2015 | Deployment | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | Fair | Excellent |
| | April 14 2015 | Removal | Excellent | Excellent | Excellent | Fair | Fair |

- During the Waterford River at Kilbride station deployment, water temperature, pH, conductivity and turbidity parameters ranked as 'Excellent'. Dissolved oxygen ranked as 'Fair' during initial installment of the instrument. It is likely that an air bubble may have influenced the data ranking of 'Fair'. Air bubbles can inhibit the sensors ability to read accurately for a short span of time.
- At removal of the instrument, the water temperature, pH, conductivity data ranked as 'Excellent'. The dissolved oxygen data ranked as 'Fair' and turbidity data ranked as 'Fair' which may have been a result of the fouling present on the sensor at the time of removal.

Waterford River at Kilbride

Water Temperature

Water temperature ranged from -0.15°C to 5.23°C during this deployment period (Figure 2). There were noticeable increases and decreases in the water temperature during this deployment period. This is consistent with ambient air temperatures over this time period, generally increasing during daylight hours and cooling overnight.

The peaks in water temperature corresponded with higher stage levels; this is displayed on Figure 2. The water temperatures at this station displays diurnal variations although slightly elongated due to the depth of water at this station. Deeper streams are not influenced as significantly by natural diurnal variations in the surrounding air temperatures.

Please note, the stage data is raw data that is published on our 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.

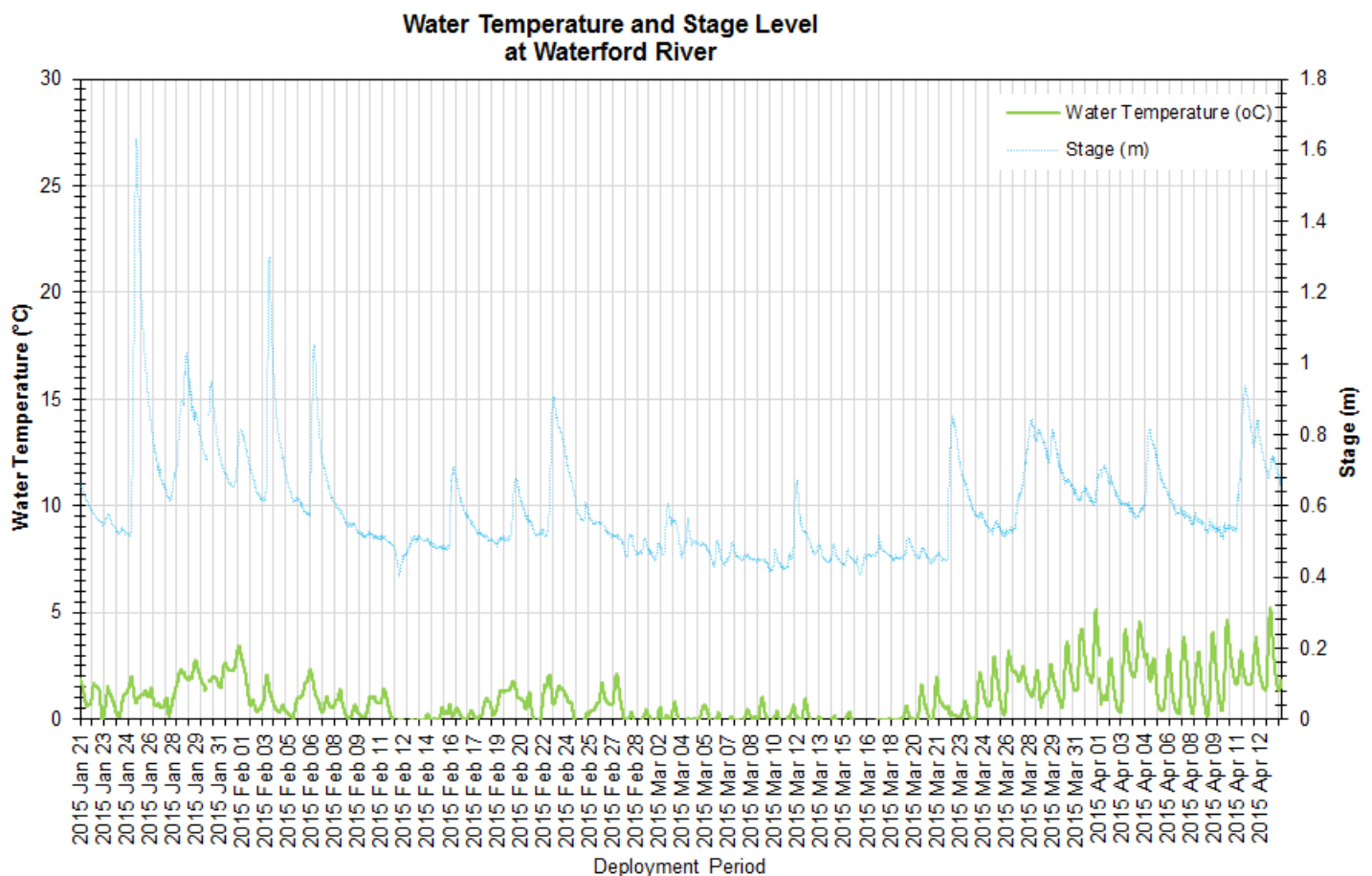


Figure 2: Water temperature (°C) and Stage (m) values at Waterford River at Kilbride

pH

Throughout the deployment period, pH values ranged between 6.86 pH units and 7.24 pH units (Figure 3).

During this deployment, the pH data was reasonably consistent. The pH values at this station were above the minimum CCME Guideline for the Protection of Aquatic Life (above 6.5 pH units).

The CCME guideline provides a basis by which to judge the overall health of the brook. Naturally, all streams and brooks are different. During the deployment period the median pH level was 7.10 pH units.

During the higher stage periods the pH values only dipped very slightly. Please note the stage data is raw data that is published on our 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.

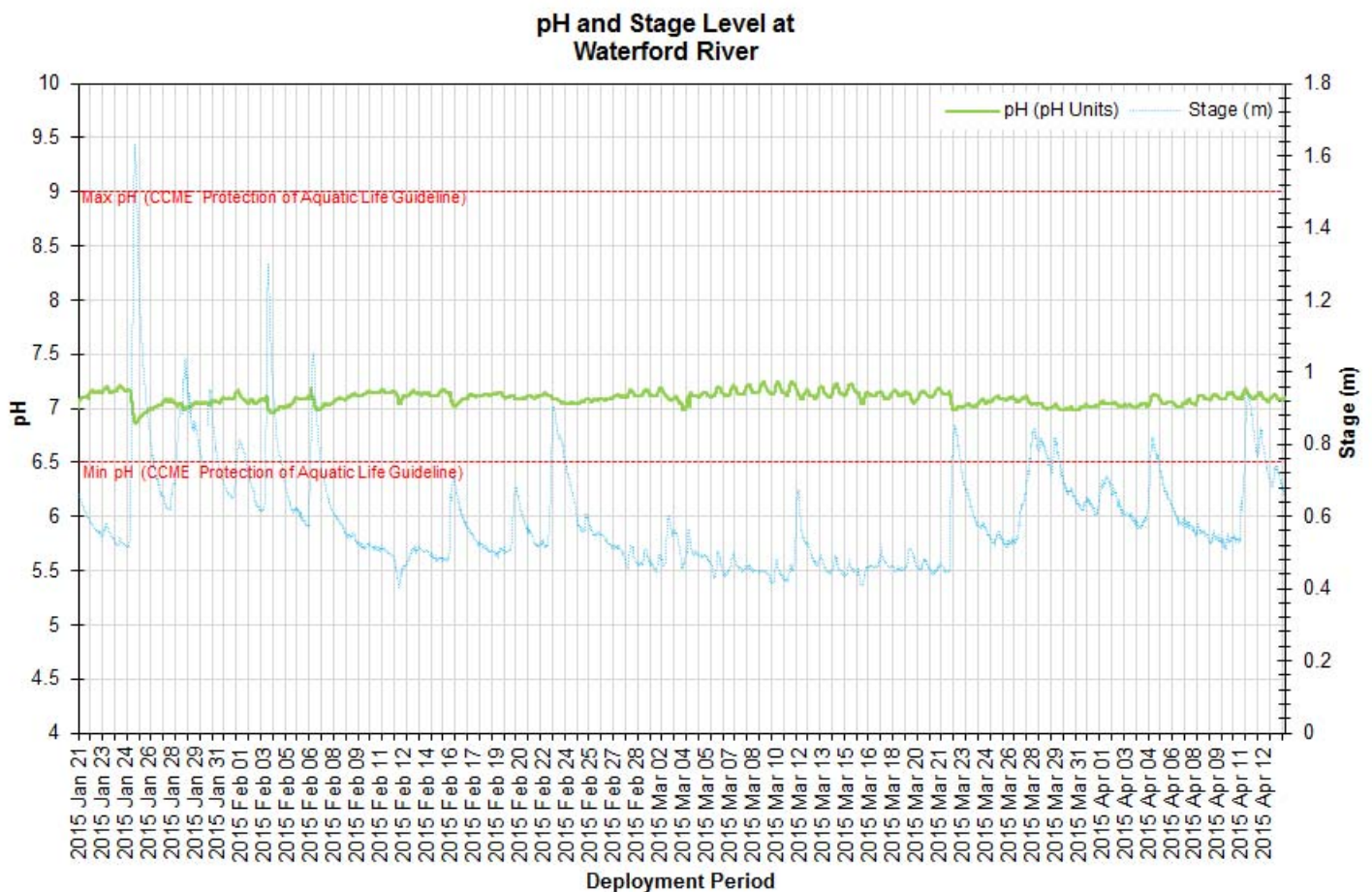


Figure 3: pH (pH units) and stage level (m) values at Waterford River at Kilbride

Specific Conductivity & TDS

The conductivity levels were within $606\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ and $4048\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ during this deployment period. TDS (a calculated value) ranged from 0.3940 g/L to 2.6310 g/L .

Commonly the relationship between conductivity and stage level is inverted. When stage levels rise, the specific conductance levels drop in response as the increased amount of water in the river system dilutes the solids that are present. However during this deployment period at several times the conductivity levels also increased with high stage levels.

Air temperatures around 0°C or below 0°C create frosty and icy road conditions, the roadways are salted and the conductivity levels increase as the residual salt is flushed into the brook through rainfall/runoff. Due to this station being located in a highly urbanized area, it is likely during road salting events the increased conductivity was due to the runoff from the salt.

On March 18th to March 20th, 2015 conductivity increases did not correspond with significant stage increases. It is not clear what caused the conductivity increase at these times. However it was likely a result of dissolved salts from salting of the surrounding roadways near the river.

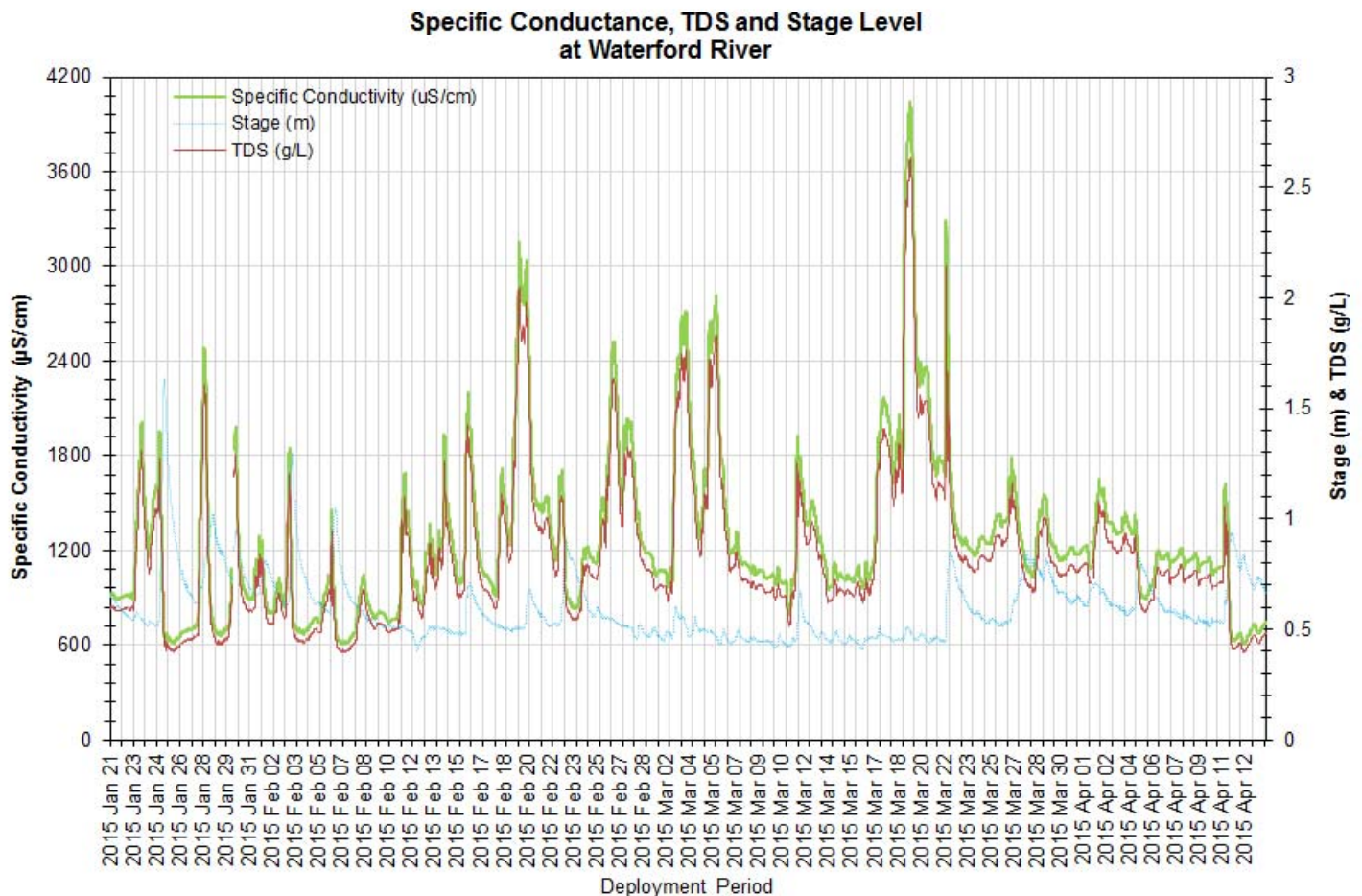


Figure 4: Specific conductivity ($\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$), TDS (g/L) and stage (m) values at Waterford River at Kilbride.

Dissolved Oxygen

The water quality instrument measures dissolved oxygen (mg/L) with the dissolved oxygen probe and then the instrument calculates percent saturation (% Sat) with water temperature.

The Dissolved Oxygen % Sat levels within this deployment period were within 107.5 %Sat to 98 %Sat. Dissolved Oxygen (mg/L) measured 15.36 mg/L to 12.99 mg/L.

During the deployment the dissolved oxygen levels were reasonably consistent. There was an evident relationship between water temperature and dissolved oxygen. As water temperatures increased toward the end of deployment, the dissolved oxygen in the brook responded by decreasing, the higher temperatures were likely during the day time.

The CCME guideline provides a basis by which to judge the overall health of the brook. Naturally, all streams and brooks are different and can have their own dissolved oxygen levels of 'normal'. During the deployment period the median dissolved oxygen level was 14.59mg/L.

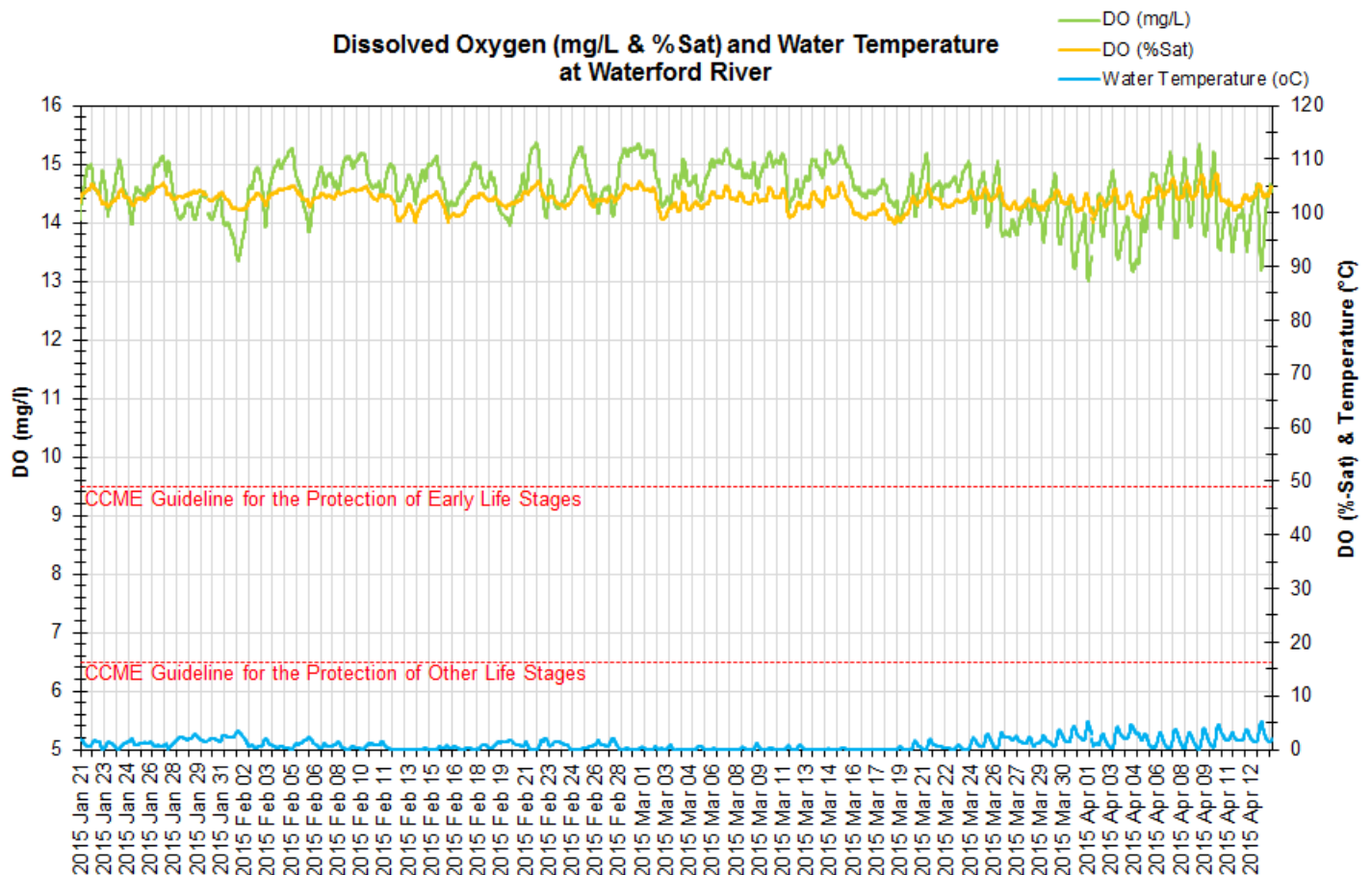


Figure 5: Dissolved oxygen (mg/L & % sat) and water temperature (°C) values at Waterford River at Kilbride.

Turbidity

Turbidity levels during the deployment ranged within 0.0 NTU and 122.5 NTU (Figure 6). The deployment data had a median of 2.6 NTU.

The turbidity sensor on this instrument can read turbidity values between 0 NTU and 3000 NTU. However a turbidity reading of 3000 NTU is always identified as an error reading and should not be used as a valid reading or included in any statistical analysis.

The majority of the turbidity events in the deployment period correlate with increases in stage potentially from precipitation (Figure 6). Precipitation can increase the presence of suspended material in water. Any type of movement in the water column can influence the values the turbidity sensor records.

The highest turbidity peak of 122.5 NTU on March 22, 2015 coincided with 19.8 mm of rainfall on the same day. The rainfall was likely the event that influenced the increase in turbidity in the water column.

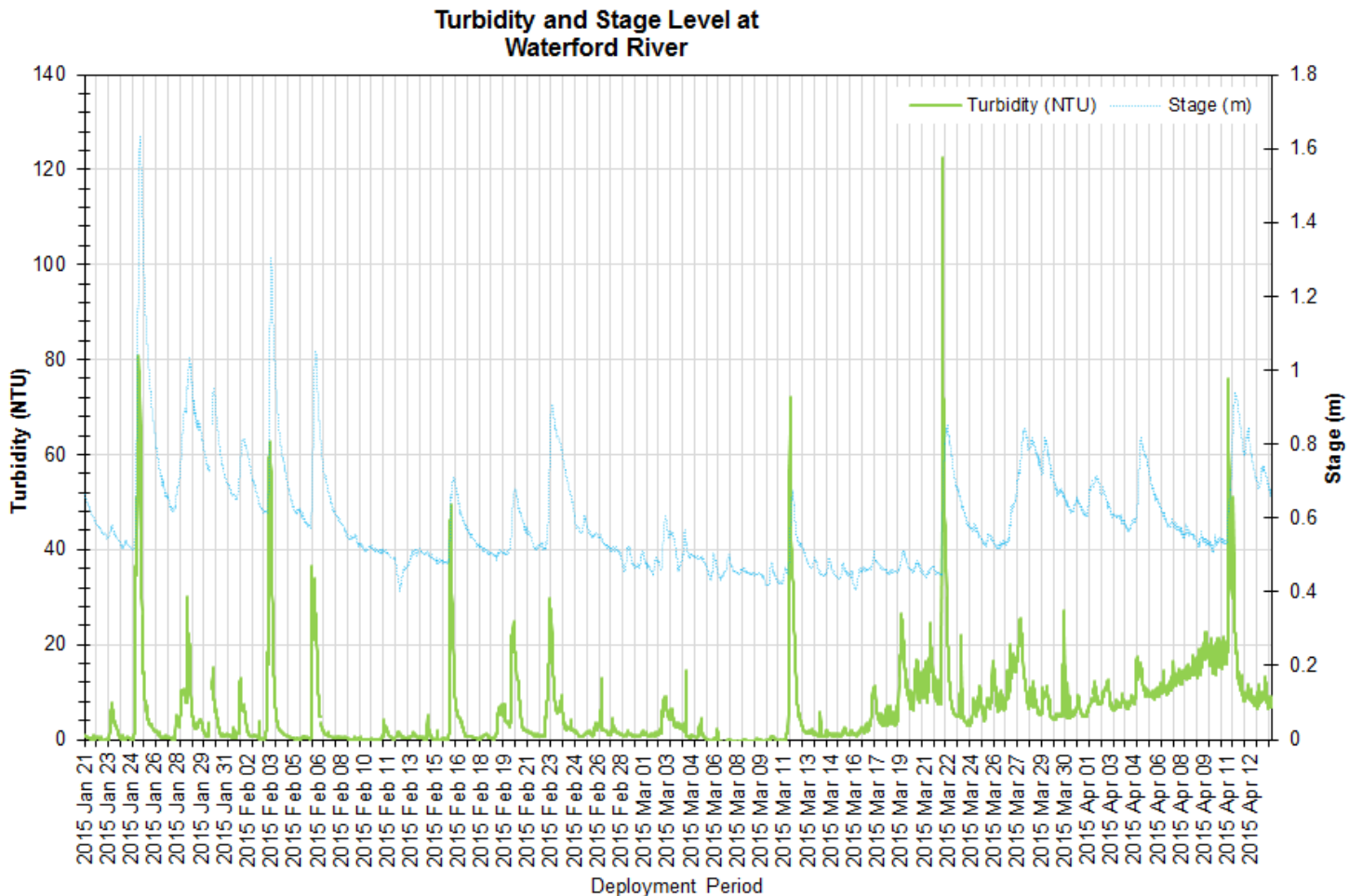


Figure 6: Turbidity (NTU) and stage level (m) values at Waterford River at Kilbride.

Stage, Stream Flow and Total Precipitation

Please note the stage and stream flow data graphed below 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 is the height or elevation of the stream's water surface above a reference elevation (sea level, gage level). Stage is important to display as it provides an estimation of water level at the station and can explain some of the events that are occurring with other parameters (i.e. Specific Conductivity, DO, turbidity). Stream flow is the volume of water in a river at a specific location and time. It is measured in cubic meters per second.

Stage and Stream flow will increase during rainfall events (Figure 7) and during any surrounding snow or ice melt as runoff will collect in the brooks. However, direct snowfall will not cause them to rise significantly.

During the deployment period, the stage values ranged from 0.40m to 1.63m. The stream flow values ranges from 0.54m³/s to 29.80m³/s. The larger peaks in stage and stream flow do correspond with substantial rainfall events as noted on Figure 7. Total Precipitation values were within a minimum of 0mm to a maximum of 28.2mm. The maximum was recorded on March 16th, 2015.

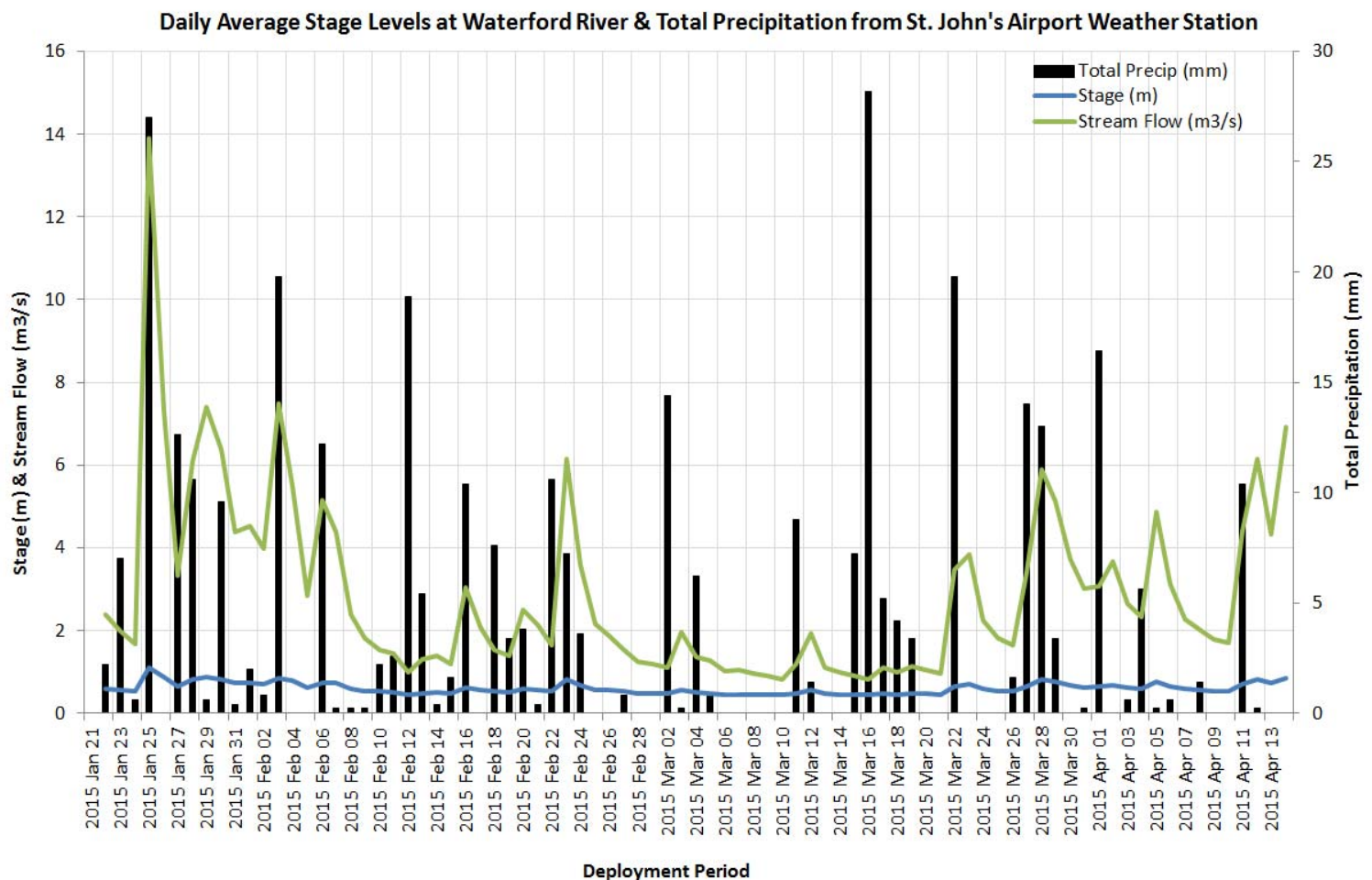


Figure 7: Daily average stage & stream flow values at Waterford River at Kilbride and Total Precipitation from St. John's Airport Weather Station

Conclusion

- As with many urban brooks and streams, precipitation and runoff events play a role in influencing the water quality within the water body. The Waterford River flows through significant developed areas, including residential and industrial zones, the brook can also be found along the boundaries of heavily used road ways. All these factors can influence the parameters that are recorded by the water quality instrument.
- It is evident by the recorded data that precipitation events have influenced fluctuations in stage and streamflow. When reviewing the graphs as a whole it is evident that the larger precipitation events did create varying effects with the water quality parameters.
- Road salting events were likely the cause of the higher conductivity levels throughout the deployment period. Rainfall was likely the contributor to the increases in turbidity in the brook for short periods of time.
- The warmer ambient air temperatures toward the end of the deployment (Appendix I) influenced the water temperature at Waterford River station. This in turn directly influences the concentration of dissolved oxygen in the brook. As the season changes from winter climate conditions into spring the water quality parameters are going to adjust accordingly.
- Overall the water quality parameters recorded at Waterford River at Kilbride displayed natural events expected of a brook in an urbanized environment.

APPENDIX I

Daily Average Water Temperature at Waterford River station and Mean Air Temperature from St. John's Airport Weather Station

