

## Real-Time Water Quality Report

### Waterford River at Kilbride

Deployment Period  
April 15, 2015 to June 2, 2015



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

Waterford River at Kilbride, Newfoundland and Labrador

Prepared by:

Tara Clinton  
Environmental Scientist  
Water Resources Management Division  
Department of Environment & Conservation  
4th Floor, Confederation Building, West Block  
PO Box 8700, St. John's NL A1B 4J6  
Ph. No.: (709) 729 - 5925  
Fax No.: (709) 729 - 0320  
[taraclinton@gov.nl.ca](mailto:taraclinton@gov.nl.ca)

## 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 the 55-day period from deployment on April 15, 2015 until removal on June 2, 2015.



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).

### Waterford River at Kilbride, Newfoundland and Labrador

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**

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 ( $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ )	<=+-3	>+-3 to 10	>+-10 to 15	>+-15 to 20	>+-20
Sp. Conductance > 35 $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$ (%)	<=+-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

### Waterford River at Kilbride, Newfoundland and Labrador

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	April 15 2015	Deployment	Excellent	Excellent	Good	Fair	Good
	June 2 2015	Removal	Excellent	Fair	Good	Marginal	Fair

- During the Waterford River at Kilbride station deployment, water temperature and pH ranked as 'Excellent'. Conductivity and turbidity data ranked as 'Good'. 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 data ranked as 'Excellent', conductivity data ranked as 'Good'. pH and turbidity data ranked as 'Fair' and dissolved oxygen data ranked as 'Marginal'. The rankings at removal may have been influence by the presence of the biofouling caught within the sensors on the instrument. There was a significant amount of silty sand debris captured inside the protective cap on the sonde.

## Waterford River at Kilbride

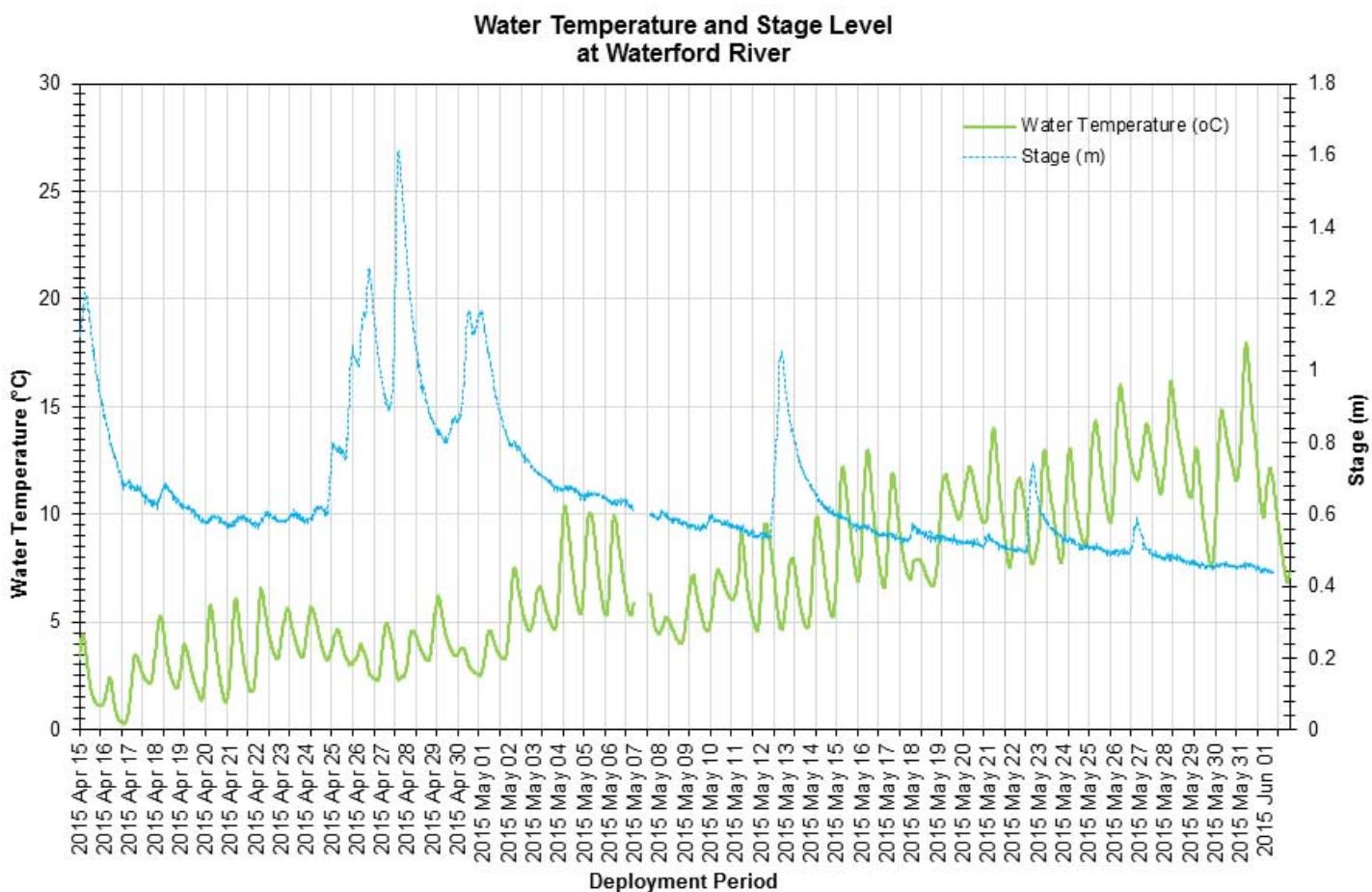
### Water Temperature

Water temperature ranged from 0.28°C to 17.95°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 water temperature 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.

As the deployment period continued the water temperature steadily increased.

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**

## Waterford River at Kilbride, Newfoundland and Labrador

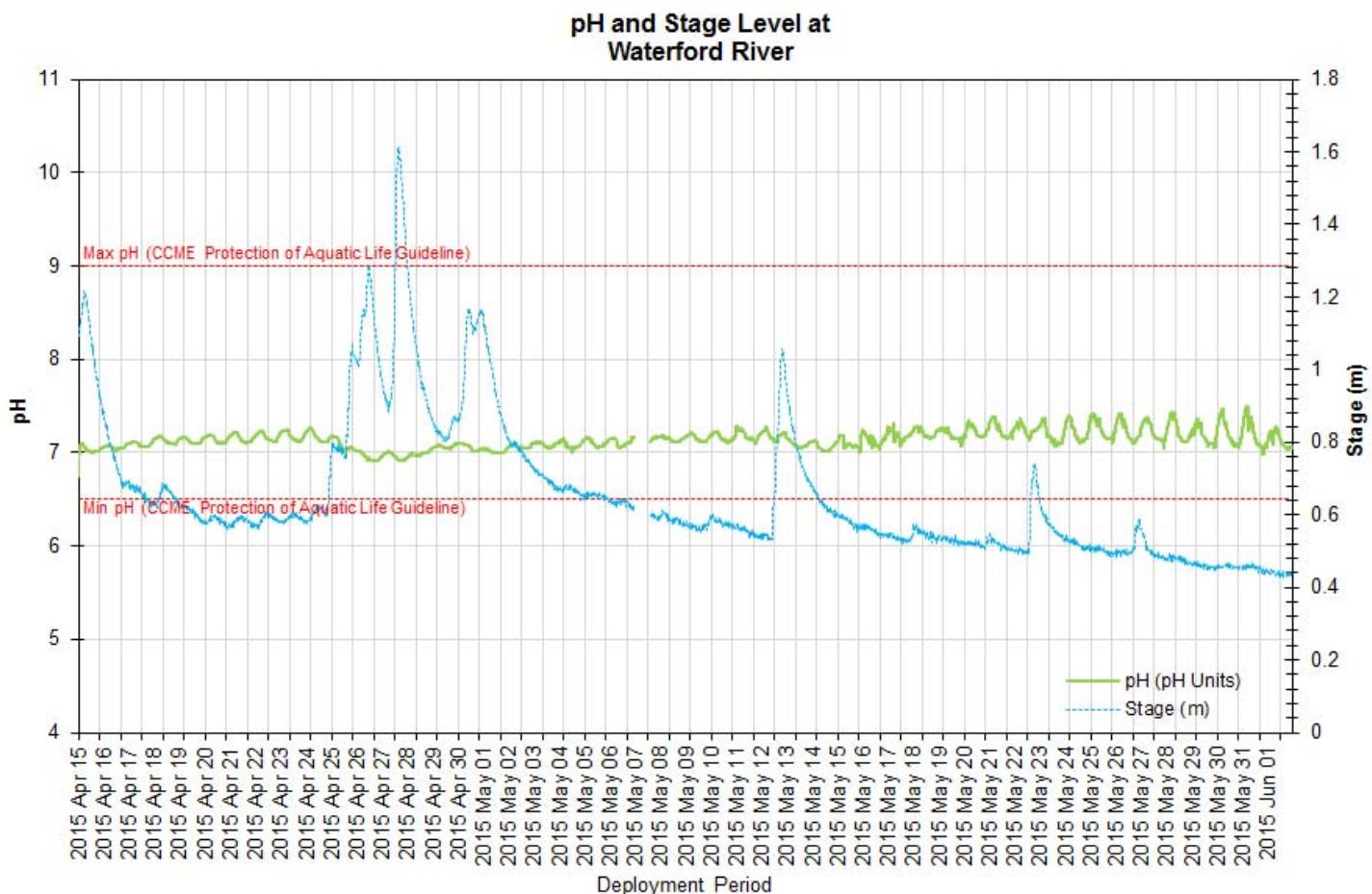
### pH

Throughout the deployment period, pH values ranged between 6.87 pH units and 6.97 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 7.13 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.

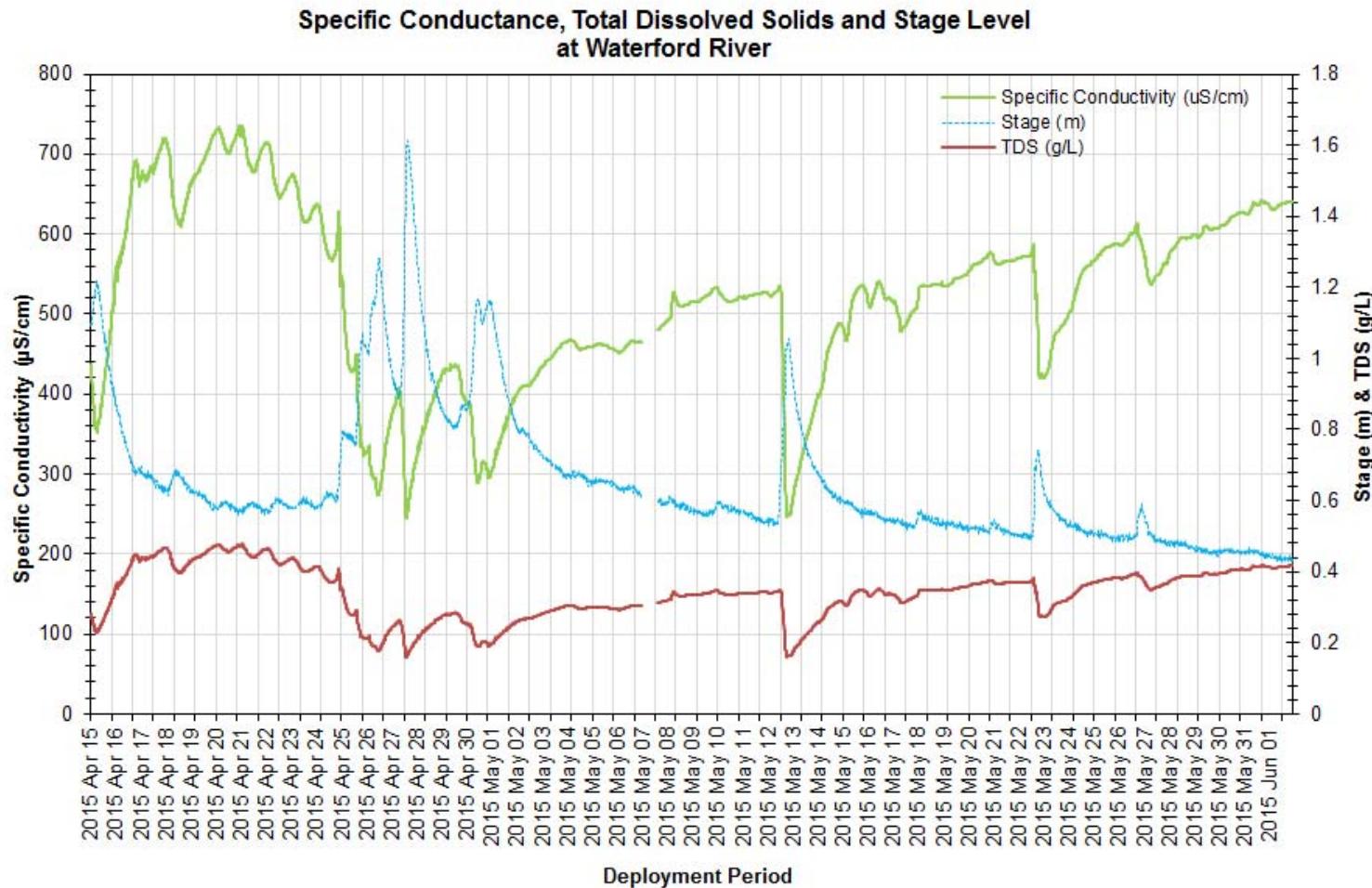


**Figure 3: pH (pH units) and stage level (m) values at Waterford River at Kilbride**

### Specific Conductivity & Total Dissolved Solids

The conductivity levels were within 244  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  and 736  $\mu\text{S}/\text{cm}$  during this deployment period. TDS (a calculated value) ranged from 0.1590 g/L to 0.4780 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. This relationship is evident in this deployment period. At several times the conductivity levels decreased with high stage levels.



**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.

During the deployment the dissolved oxygen levels did not represent Waterford River normal water quality. It was determined on removal that the dissolved oxygen probe on the instrument have failed and needed to be replaced. None of the dissolved oxygen data will be used in this report.

There was a replacement instrument installed for the next deployment period.

## Turbidity

Turbidity levels during the deployment ranged within 0.0 NTU and 116.6 NTU (Figure 6). The deployment data had a median of 6.5 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 turbidity spike on May 17<sup>th</sup> 2015 was likely debris passing over the sensor at the exact moment the instrument was capturing a reading of Waterford River. This data point would not be used in statistical analyses.

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. The large turbidity event on April 28<sup>th</sup> corresponds with a stage increase.

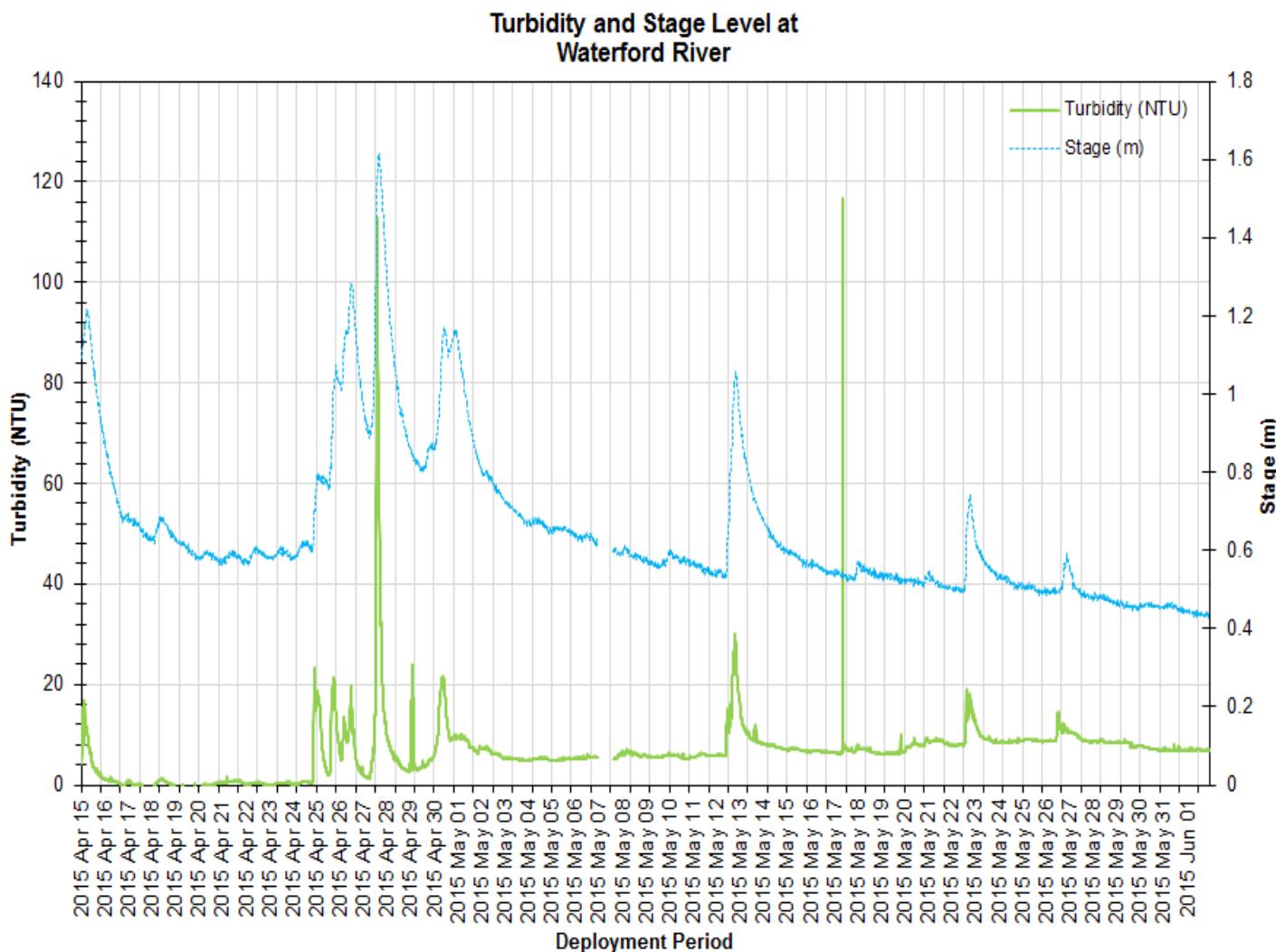


Figure 6: Turbidity (NTU) and stage level (m) values at Waterford River at Kilbride.

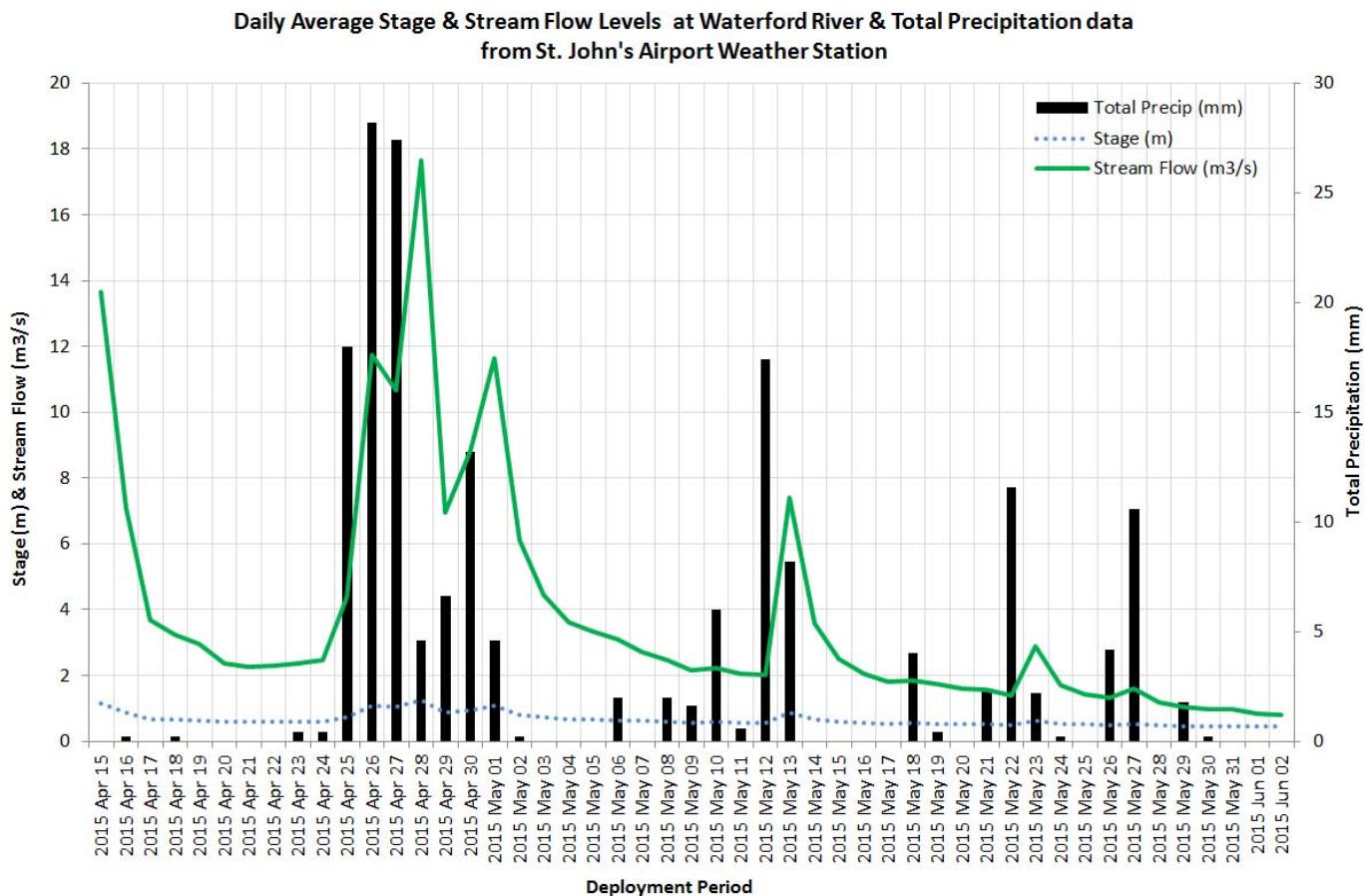
## Stage, Stream Flow and Precipitation

Please note the stage and streamflow 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 can be defined as 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 can be defined as 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 0.44m to 0.82m. The stream flow values ranges from 0.82m<sup>3</sup>/s to 17.65m<sup>3</sup>/s. The larger peaks in stage and stream flow do correspond with substantial rainfall events as noted on Figure 7.

Precipitation data was obtained from Environment Canada's St. John's Airport weather station. Precipitation ranges for the deployment period were a minimum of 0.0 mm and a maximum of 28.4 mm.



**Figure 7: Daily average stage & stream flow values at Waterford River at Kilbride and daily 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. This 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.
- The cooler ambient air temperatures in the evening hours and the warmer temperatures throughout the day time hours (Appendix I) influenced the water temperature at Waterford River station. This in turn would have directly influenced the concentration of dissolved oxygen in the brook however this was not represented in the dissolved oxygen data and the data was removed.
- 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 & Mean Air Temperature at St. John's Airport Weather Station**

