



Arrowsmith Water Service and Englishman River Water Service Monthly Update – May 2026

Purpose

This document is intended to provide board members of the Arrowsmith Water Service (AWS) and the Englishman River Water Service (ERWS) with an update on the status of the joint ventures. This document is also publicly accessible through the City of Parksville’s website.

Background

Arrowsmith Water Service (AWS) was established as a joint venture between the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN), City of Parksville (Parksville), and the Town of Qualicum Beach to develop a regional water supply system. In 1996, AWS applied for a water licence to construct the Arrowsmith Dam. A conditional licence was granted in March 1997, authorizing the Dam to store 9,000,000 m³ of water for community supply and conservation.

Each year, from June 1 to October 31 — defined as the ‘operating season’ — water is released from Arrowsmith Dam to augment baseflow in the Englishman River. A Water Survey of Canada (WSC) hydrometric flow gauge (08HB002) is installed in the river near the City of Parksville to monitor flow levels and ensure operational requirements are met. Following the Order set out by the Province of BC, when a flow release reduction from Arrowsmith Dam is allowed so that less than 1.6m³/s of flow is recorded at the flow gauge, water use conservation measures are enacted for users of the ERWS. The details of the Order can be found on the City of Parksville website within the AWS section.

In 2011, the ERWS was established, as a joint venture between Parksville and the RDN, to enable year-round water withdrawal from the Englishman River. Parksville received a Permit to Operate the Englishman River Water Treatment Plant on November 8, 2019.



Arrowsmith Dam



Ultrafiltration Membranes at the water
treatment plant



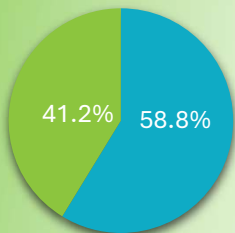
May 2026

**ERWS WTP
Production**
229,052 m³

RDN Share of ERWS
94,448 m³

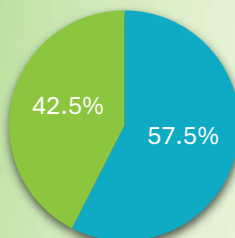
**Parkville Share of
ERWS**
134,604 m³

May 2026 ERWS Consumption Percentages



■ Parkville ■ RDN

Year to Date ERWS Consumption Percentages



■ Parkville ■ RDN

Englishman River Water Service

Increasing seasonal demand and fluctuating raw water conditions required more adjustments, particularly to flow rates, intake management, and process setpoints.

Key activities completed in May included:

- Maintenance activities focused on strainers, analyzers, and intake systems.
 - Strainer performance issues were observed, requiring adjustments to pressure setpoints, flushing parameters, and occasional cleaning.
 - Intake conditions fluctuated due to seasonal river level changes, resulting in adjustments to flow rates.
- Geobags and intake conditions required regular attention due to buildup and seasonal impacts.
- The temperature and turbidity probe, installed downstream of the intake (from June-October), is currently being repaired.

Arrowsmith Water Service

- Operators conduct the first inspection of the dam this year. The water release valves were opened and checked to ensure proper operation, in anticipation of opening for the season.
- An Order under the Water Sustainability Act was received on May 29, 2026, allowing for a flow reduction of less than 1.60m³/s but not less than 1.00 m³/s at hydrometric gauge 08HB002 for the flow release period of 2026 (June 1- October 31). The Order also stipulates that the licensees shall implement watering restrictions as per their bylaw when water from the Englishman River is being diverted and used for their water supply.
- The Arrowsmith Dam Reservoir was spilling continuously throughout the month of May (Figure 1). The dam was opened on May 31, to ensure a minimum of 1.0m³/s can be maintained at hydrometric gauge 08HB002.
- Snow Water Equivalent measurements collected near the dam continue to show record-low levels (Figure 2). By May 10, the snow had completely melted.



Figure 1. Arrowsmith Dam Reservoir Level

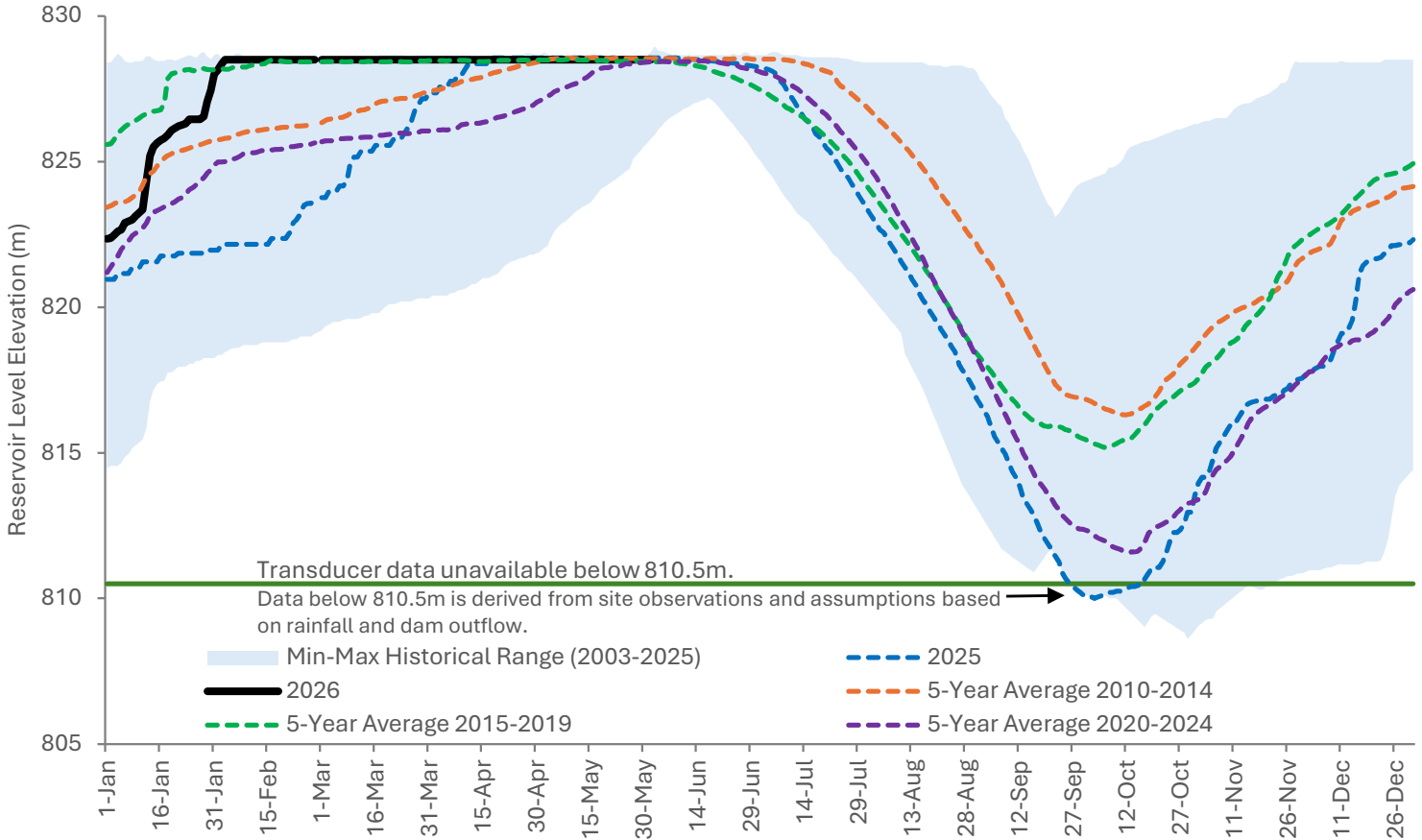


Figure 2. Snow Water Equivalent – Station 3B26P

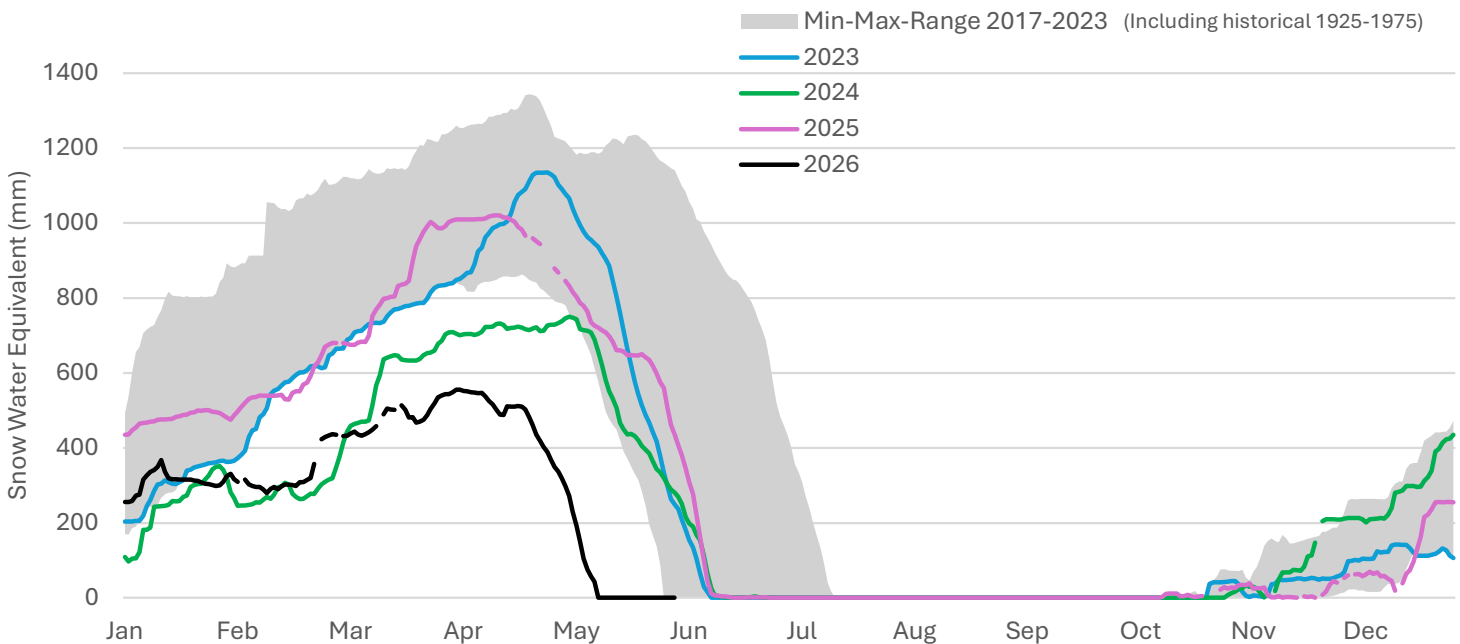
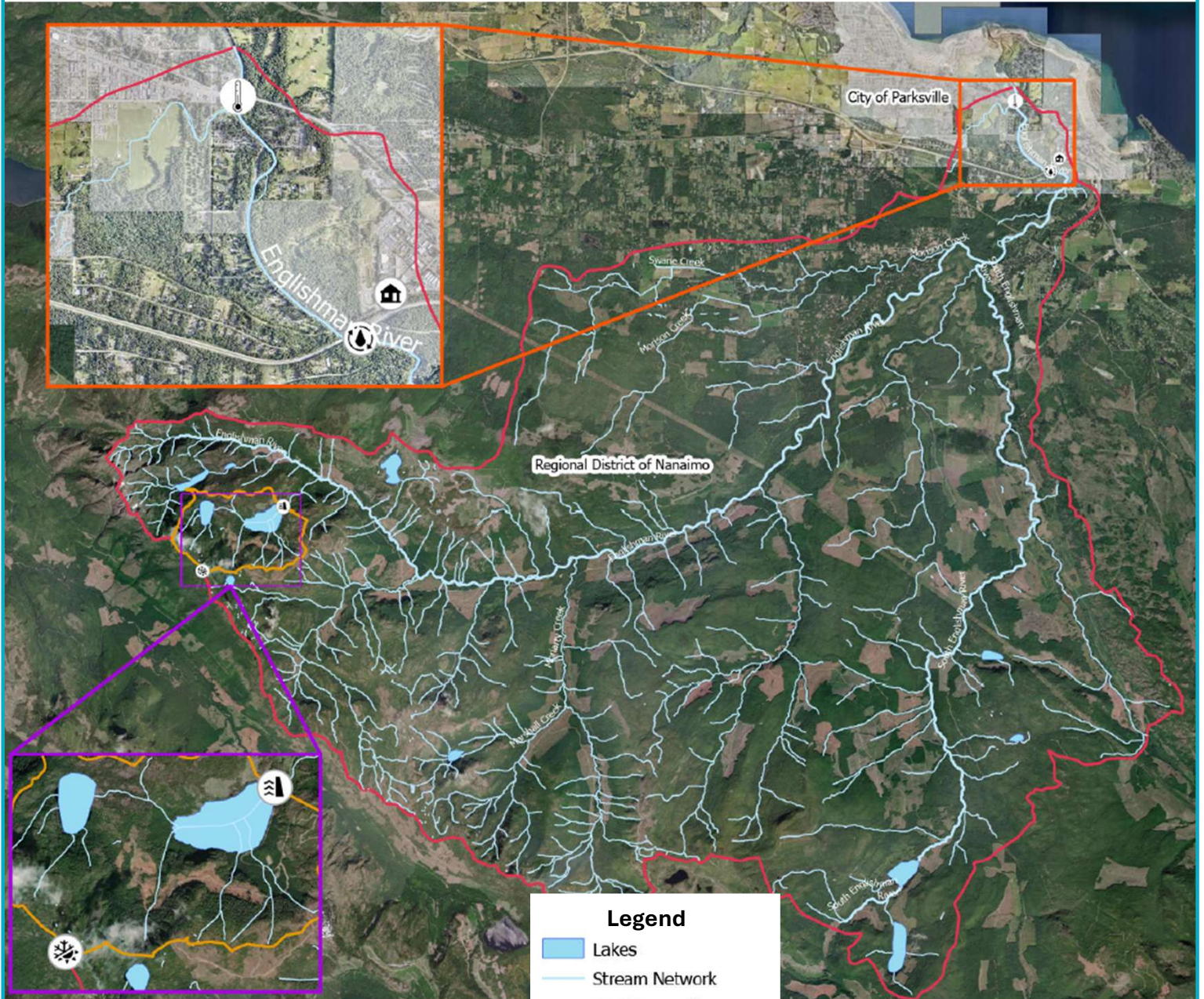




Figure 3. Englishman River Watershed



0 1.5 3
KM

Scale: 1:100,000



- Legend**
- Lakes
 - Stream Network
 - Englishman River Watershed Boundary
 - Arrowsmith Dam Catchment Area
 - Arrowsmith Dam
 - Water Treatment Plant
 - River Intake
 - Hydrometric Gauge 08HB002
 - SnowGauge