

Water Quality

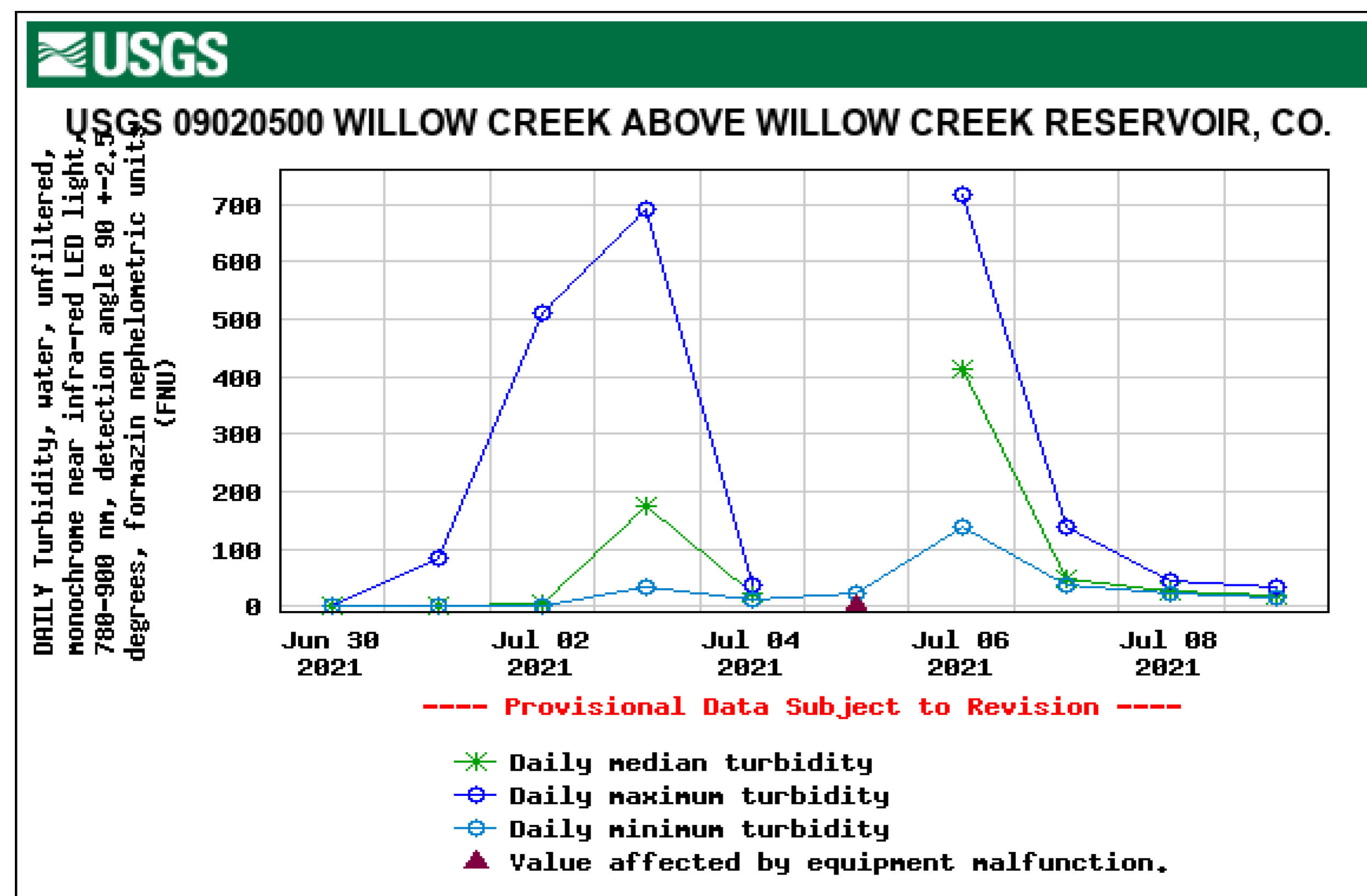
Wildfire effects on water quality are widespread, impacting the aquatic habitat and source drinking water supplies. The impacts can be seen immediately after a fire but also result in long-term degradation to lakes, rivers and wetlands. Runoff from burned areas causes sediment to wash into rivers and streams. The immediate effect is increased turbidity which can turn the water black and lower dissolved oxygen impacting the aquatic life and cause treatment issues for drinking water providers.

The sediment that is flushed into the water contains nutrients which provides food for algae. This can alter the food web and result in unsightly and sometimes toxic algal blooms.

Northern Water has an extensive monitoring network throughout the burn area to identify and understand impacts to water quality.



Highly turbid sediment laden water in the Willow Creek Watershed during early July precipitation.



Precipitation - Willow Creek Watershed - early June 2021

