

Interactive comment on “Reconstructing the natural hydrology of the San Francisco Bay-Delta watershed” by P. Fox et al.

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One can clearly see that the paper has generated a lot of interest, including from commentators who have worked in this area and have a particular perspective. Some of the comments raise contentious issues, and indicate that the paper touches on unresolved debates that have gone on for a long period of time.

I do acknowledge there are limitations of this study - including neglect of seasonal variations, which truly cannot be ignored in a study like this. Reviewer #2 has also raised a number of valid concerns about the analyses and presentation.

However, I take the view that publication of this paper, after appropriate revisions can contribute to further research that might help resolve these debates, and help the move

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towards better outcomes for the future. For this reason, I have decided to ask the authors to revise the paper in response to the comments received.

However, they need to be mindful that in responding to every one of the numerous comments of the numerous reviewers their revision does not lead to more confusion and lack of clarity. There is a danger that detailed responses to all the review comments can cause confusion, and distract from the main message of the paper (which should be reinforced and not diluted).

The comments of Reviewers #1, 2 and 3 raised a lot of technical and presentation issues, which should be addressed satisfactorily. Responses to the other reviewers should be brief - acknowledging the valid concerns, but not using the paper for a debate on contentious issues: the open discussion in HESS(D) has the advantage that these comments, including differences of opinion and disagreements, are there in public for all to see and future researchers can be informed and guided by the discussion we have had.

I look forward to seeing a revised version of the manuscript. Depending on the changes to the manuscript, I will organize a quick review by some of the reviewers.

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