

Interactive comment on “Tree ring-based reconstruction of October to November runoffs in the Jiaolai River since 1826” by L. Ma et al.

Anonymous Referee #1

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Manuscript hess-2011-414 presents a tree-ring based reconstruction of runoff in the Jiaolai River (China) extending back to the early 19th century. The topic addressed is of interest and timely, but the authors fail to convince the reader about the validity of results in several ways.

First of all the paper is written in a rather poor English with a substantial amount of syntax and grammar errors. The vocabulary used is not appropriate at many places which may stem from translation difficulties. In addition, the manuscript also uses familiar language and qualitative statements (e.g. "beautiful sceneries") which are not necessarily appropriate for a scientific paper.

The approaches used appear weak and the authors fail to convince the reader why the tree-ring chronology should be reflective of October and November runoff. First of all

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because the correlations are not extremely high, but also as the match between the measured and reconstructed series could be better. As an additional point, sample depth (i.e. the number of samples available for analysis is quite weak for the first half of the 20th century and can therefore bias the quality of the reconstruction. Based on the above limitations, I also strongly doubt that the overly precise average runoff values can be considered accurate.

The references in the text are not consistent with those in the reference list (e.g. Ma & Liu 2011?) and the list is not up to date, especially as far as recent international literature on streamflow reconstructions is concerned.

Based on the above considerations, I do not think that the contribution presented by Ma et al. meets the standards required for publication in international, peer-reviewed journals.

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