

Interactive comment on “The Future of Earth Observation in Hydrology” by Matthew F. McCabe et al.

G. D. Salvucci (Referee)

gdsalvuc@bu.edu

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I recommend publication possibly subject to very minor revisions.

First off, the paper is excellent and extremely valuable to the community, and, frankly, though provoking.

I honestly had no idea about more than half of the issues raised in the paper. I can imagine that, for younger scientists/engineers, both hydrologic practitioners and researchers, the paper will be especially motivating. With faculty positions and government research tight, the paper gives some hope for a larger industry including the private sector where many of our current and recent Ph.D. students could find employment, and most importantly, contribute significantly.

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The paper is long, but that's ok. It is very well written.

I have only a few short comments that could be considered by the authors before publication:

1) In section 2.1, fundamental challenge #3, where stove-piping is criticized, i wonder if the EOS project isn't a counter-example (at least partly).

2) The point made in section 2.1, fundamental challenge #4, that due to merging "observed inter-annual fluctuations may reflect discontinuities in the constellation of satellites" is an important one, and thus could use a few citations, as this has been discussed a fair amount, and many merged products exist to attempt to overcome it.

3) in the future agency missinos discussion (3.1), the statement "Deep soil moisture could also be on the list, although soil moisture algorithms that make use of wavelengths longer than L-band are less than mature." is made without evidence. I honestly do not know the status of that research, but I support its potential importance, and am not comfortable with it being dismissed without backing.

4) Two sources of data that I was suprised were not discussed at all (or barely), are :

1) Ameriflux/Fluxnet (I beleive there was one citation to a paper that used fluxnet). I beleive fluxnet has had a huge impact on hydrologic science, and hope to see it continue and grow in scope. I think it could be argued, as well, that for the cost of a space mission (billion dollars ?), one could put together a pretty amazing network of eddy covariance stations (perhaps 5,000 stations running for 5-10 years ?)

2) AMDAR/ACARS observations (e.g. Drue et al, 2008, QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY Q. J. R. Meteorol. Soc. 134: 229–239 (2008)) which provide extremely high resolution profiles of temperature, wind and humidity that well sample the atmospheric boundary layer during takeoff and landing many hundreds of times per day all over the planet.

Signed: Guido Salvucci

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