

Interactive comment on “Representation of Water Management in Hydrological and Land Surface Models” by Fuad Yassin et al.

Anonymous Referee #1

Received and published: 19 February 2019

The manuscript provides a review of the representation of reservoir operation in a range of hydrology models, then presents a reservoir operation model which explicitly represents storage zones. The optimization scheme AMALGAM is then used to optimize the releases and reservoir zones parameters toward reproducing observed operation. Authors evaluate the models over 37 reservoirs globally and with respect to other previously established reservoir operations schemes. Authors conclude that this explicit representation of storage zones increases the accuracy of representation of reservoir operation. Caveats include the need for data to support the optimization of the operations and the reliance on good calibration of hydrology models to reduce biases in inflow.

We would like to thank the reviewer for the time spent to carefully review our manuscript. We greatly appreciate the important points raised. We present our response to reviewer’s comments below. The reviewer comments are listed below in regular, black text, and our response in regular blue text.

The paper is very well written. The introduction summarizes the use of reservoir operation models to complement a range of hydrology models. The representation of reservoir storage zones, optimized/calibrated to match existing reservoir operation is very sound. While the introduction is nicely put together and provides a good review of water management models associated with different scales of hydrology models, it does not support the title. The contribution of the science is mostly in the representation of those new rules. In brief, this model has a very sound and promising concept for reservoir releases, but the models comes out as “oversold” because it lacks the representation of important processes (withdrawals, return flow, dynamic operations etc.) and can only applied on a fraction of reservoirs. A discussion how it could be implemented in conjunction with existing simplified representation where data is not available, including other driving dynamics such as water withdrawals would increase the impact of the paper and its leverage by others. As presented, the paper seems to be better suited for a journal presenting geophysical models development and validation, and some clarification of its usage would be necessary.

Accurate representation of water management is still a major challenge for land surface/hydrology models. In this study, we focused on reservoir representation as one of the core water management

components regulating streamflow and our aim and contribution was to introduce an improved parameterization for reservoir operation under the condition of sufficient data availability. The minimum requirements for data are time series of reasonable length for reservoir storage and release. Finally we integrate the reservoir model into a land surface model.

We agree that the title is much wider than the objective and contribution of our work and, therefore, we have changed the title to: “Representation and Improved Parameterization of Reservoir Operation in Hydrological and Land Surface Models”.

Since the reviewer comments will not be addressed by changing the title only, we have improved the manuscript by adding discussion on the following issues as suggested by the reviewer: 1) How to integrate and use the presented reservoir operation scheme with other existing reservoir operation schemes that requires less data. 2) How to link different component of water management such as water withdrawals for irrigation, return flow, prioritization among competing demands.

The responses and clarifications given below summarize the discussion and clarification we have added to the revised manuscript.

1 Discussion/contribution on the science

The specification for Hanasaki et al. (2006), Haddeland et al. (2006) and other models were specifically to not rely on observed reservoir operation due to the data challenge, and the biases in reservoir inflow estimates. The author provide some arguments on how satellite data and well calibrated hydrology models are available now. The “why it can be done now” seems to be justified yet the availability and accuracy of those required storage and release observation are not available yet and their accuracy still require research in order to meet water management requirements. This reality decrease the impact of this new model; this data challenge allowed only 37 reservoirs to be represented out of 6000+ reservoir globally with other models.

Thanks for raising this point. As demonstrated in section 2, the methods of Hanasaki et al., (2006) and Haddeland et al. (2006) and other reservoir models derived from these two require no major data. Due to limitation of data, we are not suggesting by any means to fully replace existing methods such as Hanasaki et al. (2006) with the presented reservoir model, but instead they can be used together to make better use of the data when they exist.

The challenge we are trying to highlight is that there is a lack of reservoir sub-models within land surface and large scale hydrological models that can potentially utilize existing data to appropriately represent reservoir operation across storage zones. We agree that the data requirement limits the application of DZTR at global scale, but as demonstrated in our results, for reservoirs with only limited data support, the results of DZTR method are superior to the existing

ones in terms of simulating both reservoir storage and releases. Further, in the case where inflow data are not available, the generalized parameterization can be used effectively and gave generally better results than other reservoir models at the scale of application. Part of the discussion in the revised manuscript is directed to show how to effectively use the presented (DZTR method and parameterization) approach in case of data unavailability as detailed in the coming paragraphs.

One approach is to integrate our proposed method in land surface/catchment models along with other reservoir operation methods (e.g., Hanasaki et al., 2006). Then, within the land surface/catchment models, identifier flags can be used to indicate which method applies to which reservoirs. The DZTR approach can only be activated for reservoirs with data support, while the remaining reservoirs can use other approaches as dictated by data availability. We have been following such an implementation within the MESH model. As shown in our results, reservoir regulation has a huge impact on downstream flows if the reservoir is highly regulated and/or is of multi-year type ($c > 0.5$). Thus, more emphasis can be put on those reservoirs with $c > 0.5$.

At the moment, such methods will be more effective at the regional than global scale (for example for Saskatchewan River Basin in our case), because modellers at regional scale have better access to storage-inflow-outflow data and have better understanding of the system to acquire the necessary reservoir data. In a land surface hydrologic model, important reservoirs are those causing large changes on the downstream flows and those tend to be the larger ones with generally better data availability. These points have been discussed in the revised manuscript by adding a new section (section 4.7) titled “Implementation strategies to overcome data limitation”.

We collected data for 37 reservoirs, as examples, to assess the scheme and showed that the generalized parameterization performed better than the other methods. Data on reservoir storage, inflow and release exist for most reservoirs but sometimes they are not made publically available. The generalized parameterization requires storage and release data. Storage data can be obtained from water level data which is generally available for major reservoirs, and release data can be deduced from the nearest downstream station. Data on reservoir water levels can be easily converted to storage as mentioned in Section 2.4 of the revised manuscript. Initiatives are needed to gather and archive such reservoir datasets and move beyond information on reservoir characteristics that is currently available in databases (e.g. GRanD database - Lehner et al., 2011). One of our recommendation is that the target release and storage data be archived for public use at least for highly regulated and multi-year type dams ($c > 0.5$).

The possibility of estimating storage and release data from different satellite data products was mentioned in the manuscript to highlight an optimistic view that such types of data will be more available in the future for successful expansion of use of methods like the presented reservoir

operation (optimized or generalized). More recently, Busker et al. (2019) showed an estimation of volume for 130 reservoirs using surface water dataset and satellite altimetry, which is encouraging.

The new model is presented to be better for multi objective purposes yet is compared with reservoirs for flood control mostly (Hanasaki models) because of the lack of water demand information. This is actually huge deficiency of the new model. All other models explicitly represent not only reservoir operation but also spatially distributed withdrawals and return flow.

Again, the concept of multiple zones is very sound and appreciated. The valuation of the model as one that can replace existing models which have been looking at drivers of spatio-temporal redistribution of water resources, does not seem adequate nor properly supported.

Water demand data is needed to use the Hanasaki et al. (2006) method for irrigation dams. In the case of the DZTR approach, the idea is that the DZTR model operates in such a way to infer existing operational rules which cater for those demands. Thus, the release from DZTR accounts, implicitly, for downstream demands as per the intended purpose of the reservoir whether it is for flood control, irrigation, hydropower, etc. or any combination of these. The case study dams in our study include reservoirs with different purposes as shown in Table 1 (reservoirs summary). The DZTR approach showed good performance for reservoirs with different purposes.

If the reservoir purpose is irrigation, the target releases from DZTR are to satisfy irrigation demands because the parameterization is optimized based on observed releases. The release from an irrigation dam will be available for abstraction at the predefined abstraction points downstream of the dam. The abstraction and distribution are separate modules within our land surface model (not discussed in the original manuscript) which take care of (1) actual irrigation demand for the dependant an irrigation area, (2) water abstraction from defined abstraction point along the river below the dam and (3) distribution across the irrigation fields. Regarding the return flow, the excess water flows from the irrigation areas are assumed to join the nearest stream (the grid cell each irrigation tile belongs to). These modules are currently under investigation within the MESH framework which we used as an example to show how the DZTR model can be integrated with hydrological land surface models. However, the paper only focuses on reservoirs and the title will be changed to reflect that. Thus, these issues are out of the paper scope have been briefly summarized in the revised manuscript Section 4.2.

In case of multi-purpose reservoirs, e.g. a reservoir that is used simultaneously for hydropower generation, irrigation water supply, and flood control (e.g. High Aswan Dam in Egypt which is one of the studied reservoirs), the DZTR provides the release based on the inflow, and storage conditions and that will be available for irrigation downstream. Hydropower does not consume water but returns it back to the river (except in rare cases where it returns to a different channel).

Flood control is already accounted for in the scheme and becomes relevant when storage is within the flood storage zone. The flexible formulation of DZTR allows to implicitly change the priority for selected time periods (e.g. months or seasons) by changing the target storage values during flood periods (e.g. the storage target before the onset of snowmelt). During these flood months, lowering the target storage would increase the buffer for flood control. Conversely increasing the target storage during other months would be desirable to store water and release during irrigation months. When the scheme is optimized using inflow, release, and storage data, the parameterizations capture these priorities implicitly as expressed in the data. When inflow data are lacking, the generalized parametrization will set the storage zones based on the suggested exceedance probabilities (that were based on all reservoirs used in the study) and the priorities can be assumed as pre-defined. These points has been elaborated as discussion in section 4.2 of the revised manuscript.

2 Technical comments:

Title is not adequate because the paper is mostly about the new model

We agree that the title is misleading. We, therefore, suggest to use the following title for our revised manuscript: “Representation and Improved Parameterization of Reservoir Operation in Hydrological and Land Surface Models”.

Literature review needs some clarification

In the revised version, we have expanded the literature review by adding more clarification and including more recent work as directed by reviewer #2. Please see the updates we made in section 2.

Note that for catchment model, the inflow is often bias corrected before input into the models.

Our understanding is that a catchment model simulates the inflow. In some cases bias correction is applied to precipitation or other climatic variables. In operational models, inflows may be corrected by data assimilation, but these types of models are generally more detailed and case specific. These are not the target for our DZTR reservoir model.

In cases where bias correction of inflow to reservoir is needed, it is possible to achieve it through introducing inflow multiplier parameter within the reservoir algorithm to adjust the inflow with constant multiplier factor.

RiverWare, MODSIM and OASIS are widely used across the US. Note that all those models require foresight to decide on the reservoir releases. In that context, this is how Haddeland et al. (2006) differs from Hanasaki et al. (2006): Haddeland et al. (2006) also uses foresight to decide on the reservoir releases. How is this new model handling foresight?

We appreciate this information. The models mentioned are detailed water management models that can include explicit operating rules which are not usually available. Our scheme attempts to infer those rules from the inflow (if available), storage, and release data which are more readily available. The manuscript has been updated to clarify the difference between Haddeland et al. (2006) and Hanasaki et al. (2006) in Section 2.2.

Regarding handling foresight, the manuscript has been revised to include and clarify how the DZTR approach handles the foresight:

The target release does not use long-term forecasts to decide the operational year inflows (e.g. dry year and wet year). Instead, it uses the simulated reservoir storage value to determine the zone to use to calculate the release. That means the operation with multiple zones helps buffer the dry and wet year inflows. For a dry year, the release is automatically reduced as storage will be lower due to less inflows. Conversely, it will increase for wet year as the higher inflows will increase the storage and even move it to a different zone. However, in reality some more preparation is taken to determine dry and wet years. For instance in cold regions, the snow water equivalent upstream of the dam is often monitored to determine the inflow forecast, prioritize release and adjust the water sharing among different sectors. The DZTR scheme is aimed to be included in land surface models to mimic reservoir operation in scenario simulations, not in operational models to aid the decisions on reservoir operation. See last paragraph of Section 4.1 in the revised manuscript.

Existing reservoir operations model in a catchment model: Zhao, G., H. Gao, B.S. Naz, S.-C. Kao, N. Voisin, 2016: Integrating a reservoir regulation scheme into a spatially distributed hydrological model". *Advances in Water Resources*, 98, 16-31. 2016. doi : 10.1016/j.advwatres.2016.10.014

Note that Hanasaki et al. (2006) follow one priority use. Voisin et al. (2003) introduced storage-and-release targets toward combining flood control and irrigation, i.e. multi objective use.

Although non explicit – storage zones were already implicitly represented in Hanasaki et al. (2006) and other models (Wada, Biemans, etc); Spilling when overflowing (i.e. max reservoir at 95% full), and no release when storage gets below 10% of maximum storage. The contribution is in the explicit representation of those storage zones and their calibration, which, again, is a very sound idea and approach.

Thanks for these points with which we fully agree. The idea of having zones originates from the classic methods for reservoir design and operation. Our approach attempted to make it as flexible as possible by increasing the number of zones and defining them dynamically. While the dead storage zone is usually physically constrained by the dam design, the flood control zone is subject to management decisions based on several considerations. Release from other intermediate zones are related to demands. We compared our approach to Hanasaki et al. (2006) because their releases

are strongly determined based on demands for different sectors, inflow, and forecasted inflow. The only reason we decided to put the approach Haddeland et al. (2006), Hanasaki et al. (2006) and their derivatives is that, the releases are strongly determined based on demands for different sectors, inflow, and forecasted inflow. Clarifications along those lines have been included in the revised manuscript (please see section 2.2).

Line 20: the time steps seem off in the equation. Given the time delay between precipitation and when runoff is available to drain, the equation does not seem right for an assumed time step ranging from days to half hours.

The precipitation and evaporation terms in Equation (1) are the direct quantities over the reservoir, not those over the catchment draining into the reservoir. Runoff reaching the reservoir is simulated by a hydrological model of the upstream catchment that would account for delays in the precipitation-runoff generation and routing. We regret that this point was not clear in the original manuscript, and the manuscript has been revised to reflect those clarifications (please see section 3).

Initial storage and inflow sensitivity section – I am not sure about the information brought up by the sensitivity to initial storage. A significant warm up is always required and is larger for large reservoirs. This model is expected to have storage data available so why are those not used? The use of the section needs some clarification.

The initial storage at the beginning of the simulation is an input that needs to be specified to the model. As you mention, the initial values can be prescribed from the observations if available. However, the simulation of a hydrological/land surface model could start at any different time period where there is no observation to prescribe, such as in the case of a future scenario simulation or a hypothetical historical scenario. Additionally, in a long-term simulation, the initial storage may result from a previous model simulation and may not be as close to observations as desired. The aim of the experiment is to examine and show to what extent the initial storage value affects the simulation performance. The outcome at least shows it is better to start with any historical observation for the same starting month of the simulation as well as to what extent the warm-up period needed for large vs smaller reservoirs. The manuscript has been modified accordingly to clarify the purpose of sensitivity to initial storage (please see the added clarification in section 4.3). We acknowledge that it is well known that longer warm-ups are needed for larger reservoirs and the analysis can be used as a guide for the required warm-up period when regressed against the storage capacity. The application of the scheme in a large scale modelling framework can benefit from those guidelines.

References

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Liebe, J., van de Giesen, N. and Andreini, M.: Estimation of small reservoir storage capacities in a semi-arid environment: A case study in the Upper East Region of Ghana, *Phys. Chem. Earth, Parts A/B/C*, 30(6–7), 448–454, doi:10.1016/J.PCE.2005.06.011, 2005.

Lehner B, Liermann CR, Revenga C, Vörösmarty C, Fekete B, Crouzet P, Döll P, Endejan M, Frenken K, Magome J, et al. 2011. High-resolution mapping of the world's reservoirs and dams for sustainable river-flow management. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 9 (9): 494–502 DOI: 10.1890/100125

Interactive comment on “Representation of Water Management in Hydrological and Land Surface Models” by Fuad Yassin et al.

Anonymous Referee #2

Received and published: 24 February 2019

The paper “Representation of Water Management in Hydrological and Land Surface Models” presents a new scheme for representing reservoir operation in large-scale hydrological and land-surface models. The paper is relevant to HESS readership. It starts by providing a relatively good review of the reservoir operation algorithms both in operational and large-scale models, although several new contributions have missed (please see below just as a sample). The paper is well-written, particularly in the first two sections and the way different algorithms are classified is interesting because it provides a fresh perspective on taxonomy of existing reservoir operation models. The algorithm proposed is simple conceptually and therefore is suitable for the application suggested, although it may end up awfully over-parameterized, in the case of suggested configuration when storage/release thresholds are updated at each month.

This makes the algorithms very limited in scope because the data support for such parametrization is not available in many places of the globe, even in North America despite what mentioned in the paper. Overall, the paper makes a modest contribution to the discussion around representing reservoir operation in large-scale models by providing a new modeling hypothesis, however while the pros of the algorithm is well highlighted, the cons are not really discussed. In addition, I do not believe a new reservoir algorithm, which potentially requires a lot of parameters and cannot represent the dynamics of water withdrawals, can solve the diverse set of grand challenges embedded in “Representation of Water Management in Hydrological and Land Surface Models”.

As a result, I do agree with the Anonymous Referee #1 that the contribution made is largely oversold. Finally, some of the details in the modeling and results should be better summarized and very important implications, particularly on the trade-off between representing reservoir storage and release, should be better discussed. I suggest the paper undergoes major revisions to address the specific issues raised below:

We would like to thank the reviewer for all the helpful comments and for the time spent to carefully review our manuscript. We present our response to the reviewer’s comments below. The reviewer comments are listed below in regular, black text, and our response in regular blue text.

We appreciate the above important point raised by the reviewer. Since each of the reviewer's above points are separately expanded below, our response addresses the above point in the appropriate section of the numbered list below.

1) The title should be changed: A new reservoir algorithm cannot solve all problems in representing water management in large-scale models.

We agree with the reviewer that the original title was misleading, and as per the objective and contribution of our work, we have changed the title for our revised manuscript: "Representation and Improved Parameterization of Reservoir Operation in Hydrological and Land Surface Models".

2) Although pre-2015 contributions are covered relatively well, new contributions are largely overlooked. Please update the literature review. The contributions named below are just a very limited sample of important new contributions missed in the paper and are given only to help authors to start refurbishing their introduction and framing their algorithm in a wider context:

Pokhrel, Y. N., Hanasaki, N., Wada, Y., & Kim, H. (2016). Recent progresses in incorporating human land–water management into global land surface models toward their integration into Earth system models. *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Water*, 3(4), 548-574.

Hanasaki, N., Yoshikawa, S., Pokhrel, Y., & Kanae, S. (2018). A global hydrological simulation to specify the sources of water used by humans. *Hydrology and Earth System Sciences*, 22(1), 789.

Ehsani, N., Vörösmarty, C. J., Fekete, B. M., & Stakhiv, E. Z. (2017). Reservoir operations under climate change: storage capacity options to mitigate risk. *Journal of Hydrology*, 555, 435-446.

Masaki, Y., Hanasaki, N., Biemans, H., Schmied, H. M., Tang, Q., Wada, Y., ... & Hijikawa, Y. (2017). Intercomparison of global river discharge simulations focusing on dam operation at multiple models analysis in two case-study river basins, Missouri–Mississippi and Green–Colorado. *Environmental Research Letters*, 12(5), 055002.

Solander, Kurt C., John T. Reager, Brian F. Thomas, Cédric H. David, and James S. Famiglietti. "Simulating human water regulation: The development of an optimal complexity, climate-adaptive reservoir management model for an LSM." *Journal of Hydrometeorology* 17, no. 3 (2016): 725-744.

Coerver, H. M., Rutten, M. M., & van de Giesen, N. C. (2018). Deduction of reservoir operating rules for application in global hydrological models. *Hydrology & Earth System Sciences*, 22(1).

We thank the reviewer for the suggestions. Some of these papers were not included in the original manuscript, because their contribution about reservoir operation was minimal. In the revised

version, we have expanded the literature review by adding more clarification and including more recent work as suggested. Please see the updates we made in section 2.

3) Section 3.3: The authors suggest updating the storage/release parameters on the monthly scale to represent the seasonality: So should we end up with 72 parameters for a single reservoir?! Is this something really suitable for using in the context of large-scale models that have already a lot of parameters and face with scarce and low quality observations particularly in terms of human-water interactions? Because of being heavily over-parameterized, this scheme is only suitable where there are at least multiple years of continuous and high quality data available: Even in North America, such data availability is widely limited considering the discontinuity in in-situ measurements of storage and release across regional reservoir networks even in western Canada and US, where most of the case studies of this work are located. The fact that many large dams are privately owned and therefore the data are not publicly available is not mentioned anywhere in the paper: This is the particularly the case of large hydroelectric dams in US, Canada and Brazil that together account for large proportion of annual reservoir storage globally. Please discuss properly this important issue of the scheme along with other limitations of the proposed model at least with the same weight as its strengths. Highlighting the limitation of the proposed algorithm must be a key consideration during revisions.

We agree with the reviewer that the DZTR scheme become over parameterized. However, its parameters are external to those of land surface model and are determined a priori from storage and release data. The decision of the time scale to use for specifying the parameters is left to the modeller. Given that storage (or level) and outflow data are required to calculate the parameters, the modeller will have the ability to see the seasonal patterns of the data and decide whether a monthly or a coarser time scale (e.g. quarterly) would be sufficient. The scheme is flexible in that regard. On the data issue, the actual operation rules are not usually known for privately owned reservoirs and that is why we are inferring them from release and storage data. Releases can be estimated from the nearest downstream station if direct releases are not available. Water levels of reservoirs are widely available and can be converted to storage data using the level volume relationship if known or a generalized one if not known (Liebe et al., 2005). If the data to parameterize the scheme cannot be found or reasonably estimated, then a simpler scheme like Hanaski et al. (2006) could be used.

The other point to keep in mind is that a land surface hydrology model can have several reservoir operation methods in parallel and use a reservoir identifiers as to which method to use for each reservoir. In a large scale modelling context, one would only consider reservoirs that have a considerable impact on the flow regime and those will tend to be larger important ones that have

reasonable flow and level records. As shown in Figure 4, we checked the reservoir locations in Canada and many of major ones have Water Survey Canada level records. Additionally, Alberta Environment and Parks make available such data for most reservoirs within Alberta (<https://rivers.alberta.ca/>). Similar high quality data is available for some basins in the US as well (Upper Colorado: <https://www.usbr.gov/rsvrWater/HistoricalApp.html>, Texas: <https://www.waterdatafortexas.org/reservoirs/statewide>). Obtaining water level and flow data via satellites (Busker et al., 2019) may alleviate the issue in the future as discussed in the revised manuscript. The manuscript has been revised to discuss those data issues and limitation to wider applicability of the DZTR scheme (see sections 4.4 and 4.7 in the revised manuscript).

4) Section 4.1: What are the uncertainties in the generalized parameterizations? The percentiles corresponding to monthly target storage and release should be different for different reservoirs and I can imagine that it might be several combinations of percentiles that can provide similar modeling efficiency even in one single reservoir: Please discuss and provide some evidence on the uncertainty in these generalized parameterizations.

We agree with the reviewer that the uncertainty aspect has been overlooked in the manuscript. The following discussion points has now been included in the revised manuscript (see section 4.6: Uncertainties in reservoir operation and DZTR parameterization)

Reservoir operation on its own involves considerable uncertainties that is attributed to several factors. One major source of uncertainty in reservoir operation is future inflows (long-term and short-term inflow forecast). The forecast contains errors deep-rooted in the forecast method, the driving climate forecast, snowpack measurements, timing of snowmelt and the statistical (stationarity) assumptions to generate inflows based on historical inflows. The inflow forecast uncertainty is more significant during flood seasons because it involves subjective decisions of operators to averse the risk of dam overtopping and downstream flooding. Other sources of uncertainty in reservoir operation include changes in demand over time because of increases in demand for irrigation, power, water supply, etc. The purpose of the reservoir can also change from its initial intended purpose (e.g. adding a hydropower station to an irrigation dam). These changes are only implicitly captured by the DZTR scheme as implied in the storage and release time series used for parameterizing it for a specific reservoir.

Given the above uncertainties, even the actual reservoir operation may deviate from the designed reservoir operation rule curve. Some of the decisions of reservoir operators are spontaneous, ad-hoc, and depend on experiences that are not usually documented. Thus, there are difficulties to accurately represent the historical operation or to establish accurate relationships between reservoir storage, inflow, and release. These relationships typically contain considerable noise e.g., different release values at the same storage level during the same season. As a result, these uncertainties

considerably influence the parameterization of the model derived to represent the reservoir operation based on historical observations of each reservoir. This is particularly true for the algorithm presented because of two main factors. Firstly, the presented reservoir algorithm assumes that the relationship between reservoir storage and releases follow piecewise linear functions. There is a chance that other functional forms represent such relationship better for some reservoirs. Secondly, in the case of the generalized parameterization, the piecewise bending points (zone classification points) are estimated based on fixed probabilities of exceedance extracted from historical data for all reservoirs. A different dataset (of reservoirs and/or time periods) could result in different quantiles. The assumption of having similar bending points of the piecewise linear functions for all reservoirs cannot provide optimal zones for each reservoir. However, this is true for any type of generalization of parameters and we showed that the generalized parameterization performs better compared to other widely used algorithms. One way to reduce such type of uncertainty is to optimize the parameters based on observed data if it is available. Using all the optimal solutions usually encompasses the observed behaviour within a narrow bandwidth as shown in the example plot below. This model with parameterized using all the data available for Trinity reservoir in the US (Figure 1). We added Figures similar to Figure 1 in the revised manuscript (see Figures 12, 13 and 14).

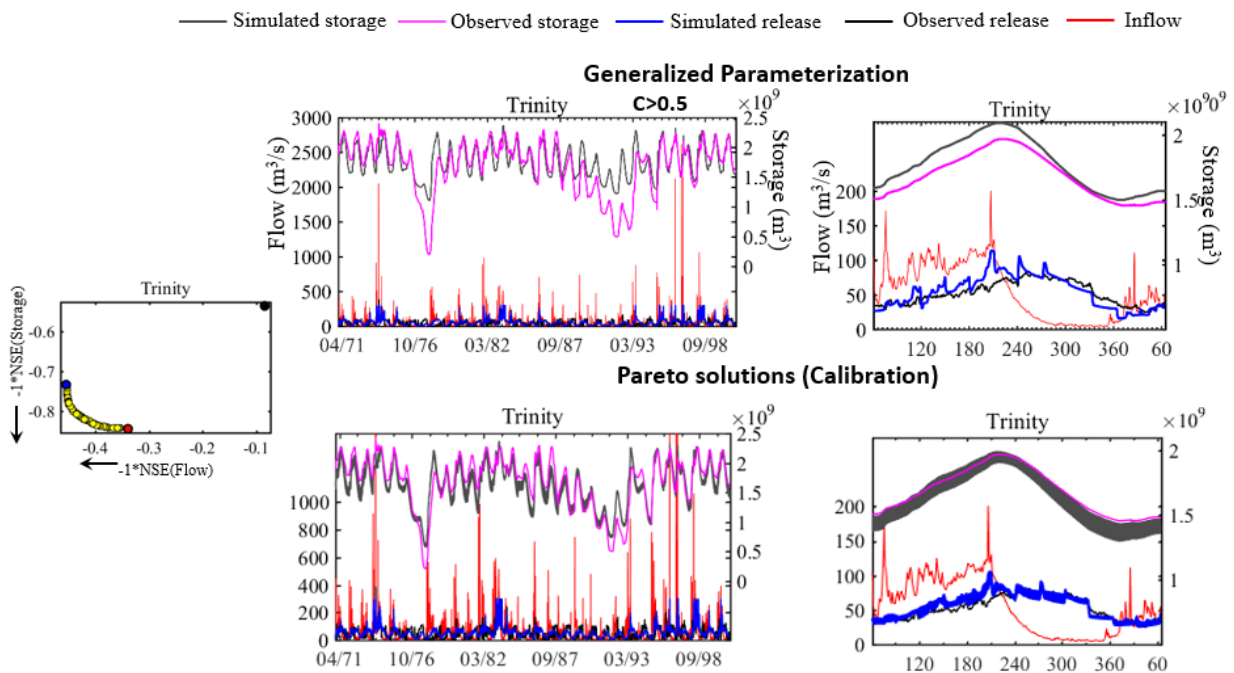


Figure 1: comparisons of Trinity dam simulation with generalized parametrization and multicriteria calibration

5) Figure 11 in the shows an explicit trade-off between reservoir release and reservoir storage during calibration: This means that it is impossible to reach the skill in representing each objective function without compromising on the other, implying that the algorithm is unable to track both reservoir release and storage optimally at the same time: Isn't it a limitation in the model? How much this uncertainty contributes into uncertainty in identifying the role of reservoir in modifying the natural streamflow regime? This very important point seems to be wholly ignored at this stage and should be addressed in revisions.

Thanks for raising this point. Further discussions on the model uncertainty has been included in the revised version as follows (please see section 4.6 “uncertainties in reservoir operation and DZTR parameterization” :

Only in the case of a perfect model and perfect data the trade-off between objectives converges to a single point. The proposed model, like many other types of model is not an exception because of the uncertainties discussed in the previous point. Thus, the trade-off between storage and release objectives can be viewed as a way to evaluate the limitation of the reservoir algorithm (piece-wise linear functions, fixed number of zones, etc.) and observation errors. To examine the level of uncertainty of the trade-off, it is important to look at the shape and range of the trade-off on each objective function axis.

As shown in Figure 11 in the manuscript, except for few reservoirs, the value range of Pareto solutions for each objective function is generally narrow (check the axes) with good NSE values. In such cases the associated uncertainties are minimal and the trade-off between improving simulated releases and improving simulated storage is minimal. The figure above is a good example of this case, it shows how the simulations of reservoir release and storage using the parameter sets of the Pareto solutions enveloped the majority of the storage and release observations within a narrow uncertainty band. Conversely, in some cases, the extended spread of the tread-off in one of the axes (objective function) are observed, indicating a higher uncertainty of the algorithm or parameter sensitivity for the process the axis represent i.e. reservoir storage or release. This indicates further investigations of the datasets and parameterization for those reservoirs and their history of operations. Shifts in operational management of reservoirs do occur and these may obscure the parameterization. These may be detected by careful examination of the available records as well as metadata records of the reservoir history if accessible. The level of noise when determining the parameters could be an indicator of changes in operation.

Overall, given the good performance of the algorithm for almost all reservoirs using both the generalized and calibrated parameterization, it is suitable to simulate the effect of reservoir in modifying the natural flow regime with less uncertainty compared to other methods.

6) Figure 11 again: It is surprising that the results during validation do not show the trade-off observed during calibration in several reservoirs: Doesn't this show that the parametrization is very sensitive to the period used for parameter identification? Also, the results during calibration are non-dominated by definition; however, do the results during validation also remain non-dominated when compared with other possible parametrizations that have been dominated during the calibration? The sensitivity of model parameters to training data and the robustness of results during validation should be well discussed during the revision and supported by experimental results.

Thanks for pointing this point out. We incorporated this issue in the revised manuscript as (Section 4.4 last 2 paragraphs and Figure 12 in the revised manuscript):

Indeed, the calibration period used to identify the parameters influences the performance and shape of the Pareto front during validation period. One of the reasons the calibrated Pareto solution does not show the same trade-off during validation is when there is considerable change of inflow as a result of consecutive wet or dry years. As shown below (Figure 2) as an example for Glen Canyon (similarly Bhumibol, Fort Randall, Fort Peck), the calibration period has more wet and high inflow years than the validation period. Such considerable change of inflow, storage, and release results in performance failure during validation period.

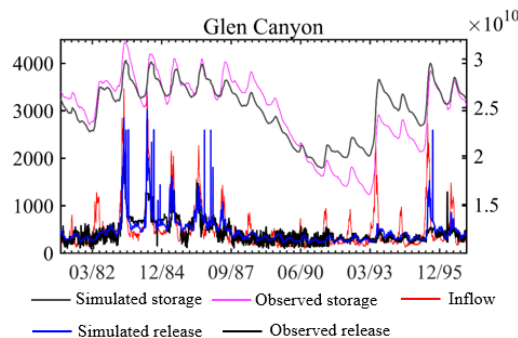


Figure 2: Simulation of Glen Canyon dam with generalized parametrization

A small change of inflow, storage, or release in the validation period can change the shape of the trade-off, however, the calibrated parameters was still capable of reproducing good performance during validation close to or better than the generalized parameterization performance.

In the revised version, we calibrated every reservoirs using the whole observational record and all of them show the trade-off between storage and release fitting (please see figure 13 and 14). Additional discussion and clarification on the effect of calibration period has been added in the revised version please see section 4.4.

7) Incorporation of the algorithms in the considered large-scale model seems to be limited to one reservoir at the time. Whereas in real cases, multiple reservoirs are built over one river and therefore the cal/val procedure and the skill of the reservoir algorithm should be tested when the outflow from one reservoir is the inflow to the next reservoir. The paper ignores this as many other similar contributions do. But I believe this is worth at least proper discussion because the challenge is out there and has remained, indeed, unsolved. Up to the time that the problem of considering multiple reservoirs in one basin is not properly solved, the results of large-scale models remain only as naive simulations of a virtual hydrologic reality at the basin-scale, which contributes to a huge uncertainty at regional, continental and global scales.

Thanks for pointing out this issue. It is indeed a major challenge to accurately represent reservoir operation for a cascade of reservoirs. The parametrization and formulation of the algorithm implicitly accounts, to some extent, for the upstream regulation effects from the upstream cascade reservoirs. This is because the regulated inflow is used for parametrizing downstream reservoirs. The regulated inflow is assumed to reflect the regulation of upstream reservoirs in the cascade. In reality, the operations of some cascade reservoirs are highly interlinked, particularly during the flood season. The decision regarding the release from one reservoir accounts for the (forecasted) state of other reservoirs. Such dual- or multi-linked operation is however not accurately accounted in the presented algorithm because it assumes that each reservoir operates using its own storage state, inflow and target storage and releases. Such systems require detailed modelling of operations that is not usually attainable in large scale hydrological models. Depending on the purpose of the model, the modeller may decide to lump those reservoirs together to improve simulations downstream. The issue raised is a general issue with the state of the art, and we agree that, as a community, we should look for innovative ways to handle the issue. In the revised manuscript, these discussion and clarification has been included, please see section 4.1.

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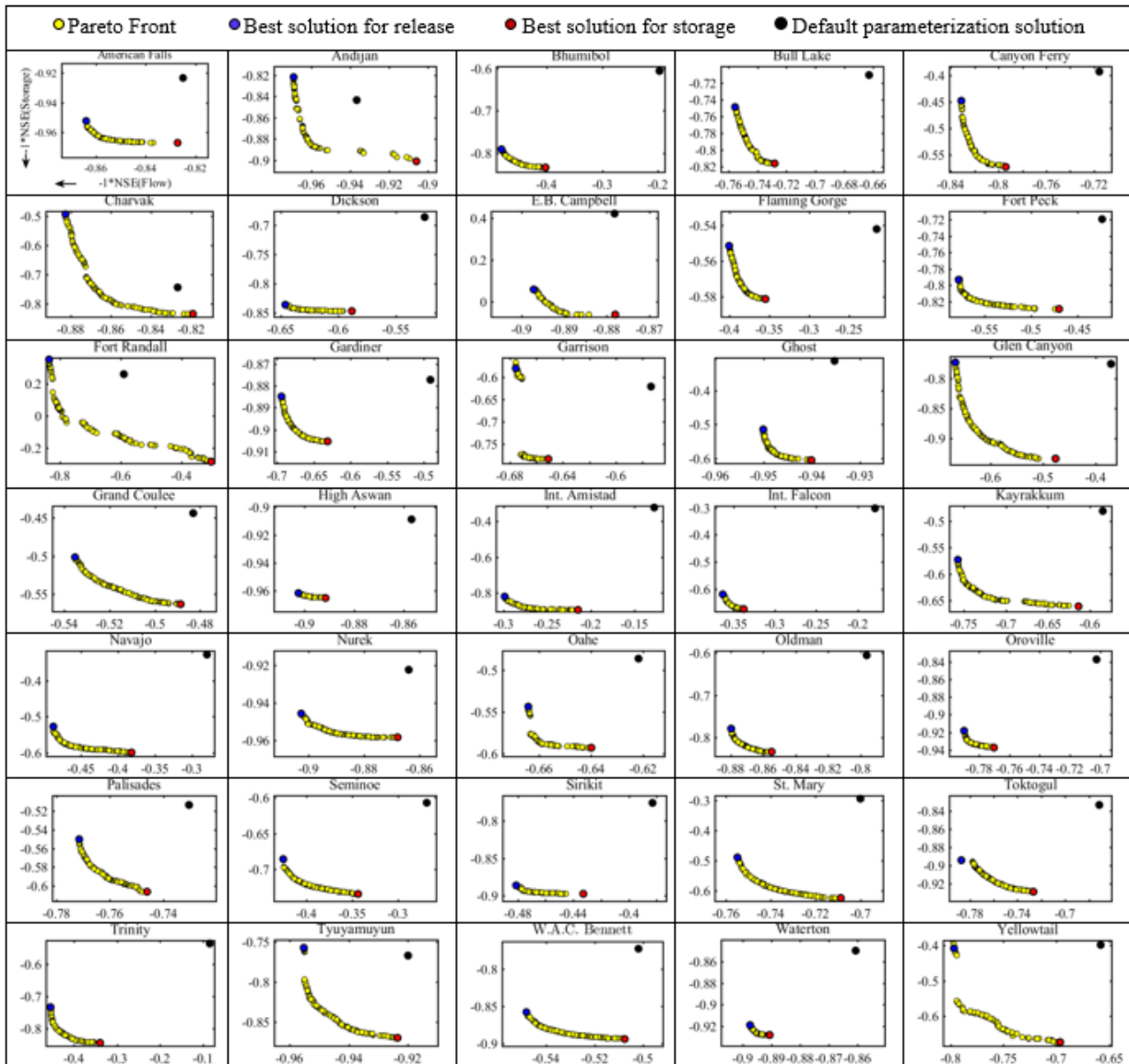


Figure 3: Calibration using the whole observational record

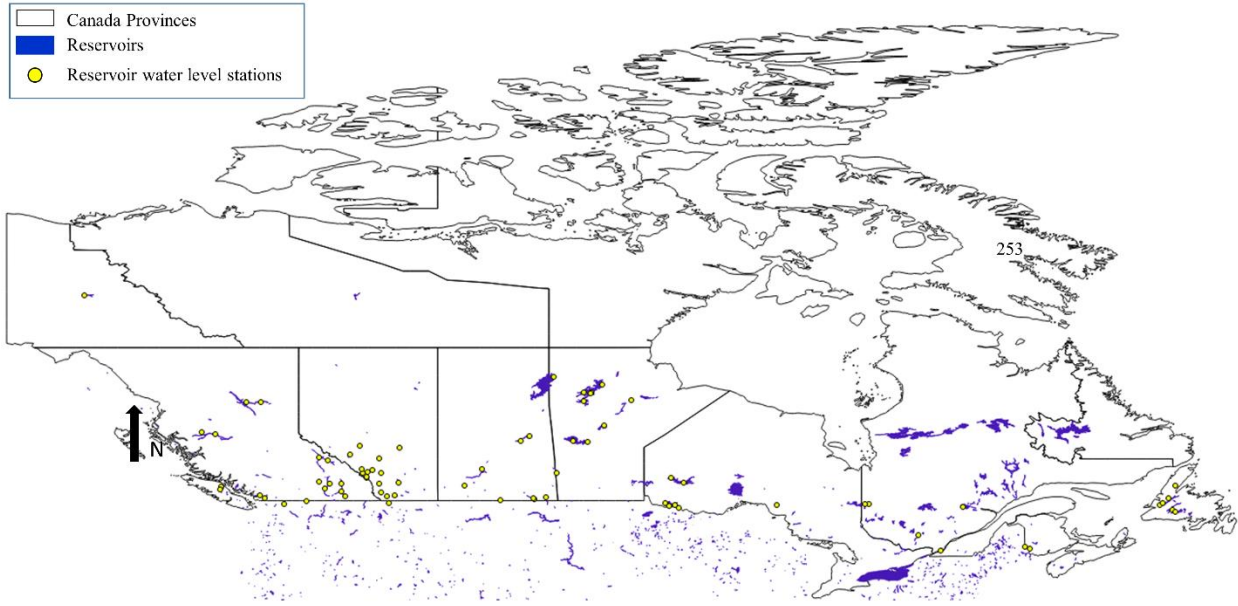


Figure 4: Reservoir water level stations of Water Survey Canada

Representation and Improved Parameterization of Reservoir Operation in Hydrological and Land Surface Models **Representation of Water Management in Hydrological and Land Surface Models**

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Abstract. Reservoirs significantly affect flow regimes in watershed systems by changing the magnitude and timing of streamflows. Failure to represent these effects limits the performance of hydrological and land surface models (H-LSMs) in the many highly regulated basins across the globe and limits the applicability of such models to investigate the futures of watershed systems through scenario analysis (e.g., scenarios of climate, land use, or reservoir regulation changes). An adequate representation of reservoirs and their operation in an H-LSM is therefore essential for a realistic representation of the downstream flow regime. In this paper, we present a general parametric reservoir operation model based on piecewise linear relationships between reservoir storage, inflow, and release, to approximate actual reservoir operations. For the identification of the model parameters, we propose two strategies: (a) a “generalized” parameterization that requires a relatively limited amount of data; and (b) direct calibration via multi-objective optimization when more data on historical storage and release are available. We use data from 37 reservoir case studies located in several regions across the globe for developing and testing the model. We further build this reservoir operation model into the MESH modelling system, which is a large-scale H-LSM. Our results across the case studies show that the proposed reservoir model with both of the parameter identification strategies leads to improved simulation accuracy compared with the other widely used approaches for reservoir operation simulation. We further show the significance of enabling MESH with this reservoir model and discuss the interdependent effects of the simulation accuracy of natural processes and that of reservoir operation on the overall model performance. The reservoir operation model is generic and can be integrated into any H-LSM.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and Motivation

30 Human interventions in natural hydrologic systems, through damming and storing water, diversion, surface and groundwater abstraction, irrigation, and land use change, have significantly altered the natural river flow regimes and the

terrestrial water cycle of many river basins (Vörösmarty et al., 1997, 2003; Oki and Kanae, 2006; Wisser et al., 2010; Haddeland et al., 2014; [Biemans et al., 2011](#)). These interventions are to fulfil different types of demands such as domestic, industrial, irrigation, and hydropower demands, and to meet other needs such as flood control and conservation of aquatic habitats. With a total storage volume of more than 8000 km³ (ICOLD, 2003; [Vörösmarty et al., 2003](#); Hanasaki et al., 2006; ~~Vörösmarty et al., 2003~~), more than 50,000 dams have been constructed globally to regulate more than half of the world's large river systems (Nilsson et al., 2005). The aggregate storage volume of these dams is greater than 20% of the global mean annual runoff (Vörösmarty et al., 1997) and is three times the annual average water storage in world's river channels (Hanasaki et al., 2006).

Despite the benefits in terms of enhancing water availability in support of food security, power supply, etc., dams result in several negative environmental and social consequences. Adverse environmental effects include changes in natural river dynamics in terms of water temperature, sediment and nutrient transport, etc. and the fragmentation and loss of biodiversity (Vörösmarty et al., 2010). Reservoirs can also intensify evaporation, by increasing the surface area of water exposed to direct sunlight and air, and through water supply for irrigation (de Rosnay et al., 2003; Pokhrel et al., 2012). Other environmental impacts of dams include the alteration of landscape due to dam construction and changes to land-atmosphere interaction that can have a profound impact on local/regional climate (Hossain et al., 2012; [Degu et al., 2011](#)). Adverse social effects include the displacement of people living near the dam site, changes to fishing patterns, and downstream erosion (Strobl and Strobl, 2011, p. 449). There are research gaps remaining in evaluating both positive and negative social impacts of dams (Kirchherr et al., 2016). Such gaps have been the subject of many studies in both academia and industry for years, and recently, have led to the formalization of this study area of “socio-hydrology” (Sivapalan et al., 2012; Sivakumar, 2012).

Dams and reservoirs change the natural flow regimes in rivers, both in terms of magnitude and timing of flows. As a result, for rivers that contain large or small dams and reservoirs, flow regimes are a combination of natural and managed flows. Various modeling communities manage this mix of natural and managed flows differently. Archfield et al. (2015) compare three ~~communities-families~~ of models that can be used at continental scales: catchment models (CM), global water security models (GWSM), and land-surface models (LSM). CMs generally ignore water management and focus on unmanaged headwater catchments. GWSMs have been utilized in global-scale streamflow simulations and generally ~~consider-focus on~~ large-scale water management issues, which ~~is-are~~ made difficult by a lack of data on large-scale water management and operational decisions. LSMs have traditionally focused on providing lower boundary conditions for atmospheric models, but are increasingly being used for hydrological applications in which they are referred to as Hydrologic Land Surface Models (H-LSMs). LSMs generally ignore water management (Clark et al., 2015; Davison et al., 2016), with a few exceptions (e.g., Voisin et al. 2013a, 2013b). A fourth ~~community-family~~ of water models, that is relevant to the work presented here, are water management models (WMM) ([Labadie, 1995](#); Yates et al., 2005; ~~Labadie, 1995~~). Water modellers who know how the water is managed within their basins of interest generally use WMMs (Lund and Guzman, 1999; Labadie, 2004; Kasprzyk et al., 2013). These models contain very detailed representations of water management decisions, but often consider natural flow processes in a much more rudimentary fashion than CMs.

Modeling the many managed basins around the world using [the current generation of](#) CMs or LSMs can result in models with limited fidelity and question the credibility of their predictions of future water resources in basins with dams and reservoirs. Therefore, there is a pressing need for better characterization and integration of the operation of dams and reservoirs into hydrological modelling frameworks using CMs and LSMs (Nazemi and Wheater, 2015a and 2015b; [Pokhrel et al., 2016](#); Wada et al., 2017; ~~Pokhrel et al., 2016~~). This need motivated the objectives of this study, described in Section 1.2, and some previous research, outlined in Section 2. The integration of reservoir regulation into hydrological modeling frameworks will improve our ability to simulate highly regulated basins around the globe, leading to better understanding of historical conditions of water resource systems and improved assessment and prediction of their future vulnerability to climate and environmental change.

10 1.2 Objectives

Building upon previous research, this study aims to:

- Develop and test an improved reservoir operation model that can be integrated into any CM and LSM at any scale, but in particular at large scales. Of interest is a simple but effective parametrization that can [be adjusted](#) to varying levels of data availability.
- Integrate the developed reservoir operation model into an LSM and evaluate its performance when working in combination of other processes in the model. Also of interest is to assess the potential conceptual and technical issues in this integration.

~~This paper looks to improve the representation of dams and reservoirs within CMs and LSMs.~~ Another [potentially very fruitful, but largely unexplored approach](#) would be to couple CMs and LSMs with WMMs, but that approach is not examined here due to the fact that WMMs generally require [extensive](#) information on how water is managed within a basin, ~~and~~ [whereas](#) we are particularly interested in the more generic case when this information is likely to be limited or unavailable.

The organization of the remainder of the paper is as follows. Section 2 reviews different existing approaches in the literature for the representation of reservoir operation in hydrologic models. Section 3 presents the proposed reservoir operation model and the metrics used to evaluate it, in comparison with other existing models. Section 4 provides a description of the reservoir dataset used for the developments and testing. Section 5 presents the assessment results and comparisons. Section 6 ends the paper with a summary of the main findings and conclusions.

2 Existing Reservoir Models in Catchment Models and Land Surface Models

An adequate representation of human interventions in Earth systems models is a major challenge. Systematic approaches towards full integration are needed as outlined in the recent studies of Nazemi and Wheater (2015a and 2015b), Wada et al. (2017), and Pokhrel et al. (2016). In this work, our focus is on the representation of dam and reservoir operation in catchment models (CMs) and Land Surface Models (LSMs), particularly when used at large scales. While there has been

tremendous progress in the last decades in modelling the operation and management of reservoir systems at local to regional scales (e.g., [Castelletti et al., 2010](#); [Chang et al., 2010](#); [Fraternali et al., 2012](#); [Razavi et al. 2012](#); [Asadzadeh et al. 2013](#); [Guo et al., 2013](#); ~~[Castelletti et al., 2010](#); [Chang et al., 2010](#); [Fraternali et al., 2012](#); [Kasprzyk et al., 2013](#)~~), a gap still exists between the methodologies applied for local/regional-scale reservoir operation and management and the representation of reservoir operation in Earth systems models, particularly in LSMs. This gap is due to a two-fold challenge. First, the upscaling of methodologies used at smaller scales to larger scales is non-trivial; and second, the availability of data on reservoir operation and water use is often limited in many parts of the world. For example, the reservoir purpose and operational details are not always known and large reservoirs typically serve several purposes ([Wisser et al., 2010](#)). As a result, most current hydrological modeling activities with CMs and LSMs, if not all, offer only a limited capability in simulating reservoir operations, whereas reservoir operation in practice involves a complex set of human-driven processes and decisions.

The existing reservoir operation methods in hydrologic models can be categorized roughly into three groups, based on their level of complexity in representing flow regulation; (I) natural lake methods, (II) inflow-and-demand based methods, [III\) artificial neural network techniques, and IV\) target storage-and-release based methods.](#)

2.1 Natural lake methods

~~The most primitive~~ [M](#) methods ~~in the first category~~ use formulations developed for the simulation of natural lakes or uncontrolled reservoirs. In these methods, the downstream release is calculated as a function of reservoir storage characterized by some empirical parameters ([Meigh et al., 1999](#); [Döll et al., 2003](#); [Pietroniro et al., 2007](#); [Rost et al., 2008](#)). For instance, [Meigh et al. \(1999\)](#) calculate the release by $Q_t = S_t^{1.5}$ where Q_t and S_t are release and reservoir storage, respectively. Their method was later modified by [Döll et al. \(2003\)](#) such that $Q_t = b_1(S_t - S_{min})\left(\frac{S_t - S_{min}}{S_{max} - S_{min}}\right)^{b_2}$ where b_1 and b_2 are release coefficients, and S_{min} and S_{max} are minimum and maximum allowable reservoir storages. The advantage of this method, as shown in [Döll et al. \(2003\)](#), is its minimal data requirement, which supports its global applicability to model lakes, reservoirs and wetlands. However, it has limited functionality to adequately represent managed reservoirs due to not accounting for reservoir operation policies to constrain or increase releases at different phases of reservoir storage dynamics. Such simplistic methods ignore the fact that the operation of a reservoir depends on the reservoir purpose and the seasonal pattern of the mismatch between the demands it supports and the inflow it receives.

2.2 Inflow-and-demand based methods

The inflow-and-demand based methods [include reservoir water balance models that](#) determine reservoir release using [a function that accounts for](#) inflow or a combination of inflow and demands. ~~The simplest method assumes the downstream release is equal to inflow minus the sum of seepage and evaporation loss, i.e., there is no change in reservoir storage over time. This method is, for example, one of the reservoir operation options of SWAT (Arnold et al., 1998). Obviously, this method is~~

~~handicapped as it neglects the reservoir storage dynamics.~~ The simplified method in this group is the method used in Wisser et al. (2010), is more elaborate as it estimates the release as a function of mean annual inflow and a set of empirical parameters that can be calibrated in the absence of information on the actual operation of a reservoir.

5 Hanasaki et al. (2006) pioneered the development of -inflow-and-demand reservoir models and laid the foundation
for many subsequent developments. The method of Hanasaki et al. (2006) simulates reservoir release at a monthly time step
within a global routing model, and accounts for water withdrawals for reservoirs categorized as irrigation reservoirs. They
grouped reservoirs serving all others purposes as non-irrigation reservoirs. This approach first estimates a provisional total
annual release at the beginning of the water year based on the long-term mean annual inflow adjusted by an annual release
coefficient. Then, a monthly provisional release is estimated based on the purpose of the reservoir (irrigation or non-irrigation).
10 Downstream demands are accounted for in irrigation reservoirs only. The provisional monthly release for large reservoirs is
then modified by the annual release coefficient to calculate the actual monthly release, and the provisional monthly release for
small reservoirs is additionally adjusted based on the monthly inflow to calculate the actual monthly release. The release
coefficient is estimated as a function of the reservoir storage at the beginning of the operational year and the reservoir capacity
(the formulation of Hanasaki et al. (2006) is briefly explained in section 3.4). The release coefficient reduces the current year
15 release if the storage at the beginning is low and vice-versa. Thus, the release coefficient accounts for inter-annual variability
and facilitates the representation of strategies to overcome reservoir depletion in dry years and flood overtopping in wet years.

The implementation of the release coefficient is one of the limitations of Hanasaki et al. (2006), because it depends
only on the year's initial storage and does not account for the actual inflow of the current operational year, i.e. it does not use
foresight. The initial storage reflects the recent past of the operation of the reservoir, while the actual inflow could be
20 considerably different than the long-term mean annual inflow. For instance a sequence of low flow years would result in a low
initial storage while the current year inflow (which is not known yet) could be high, and vice versa. Additionally the
simplification of complex reservoir operation in Hanasaki et al. (2006) by using the mean annual inflow and a release
constraining coefficient produces errors. However, the method is generic and has low data requirements which are
advantageous. The results showed that the reservoir algorithm improved monthly discharge simulation compared to the natural
25 lake method (Hanasaki et al., 2006). The approach is effective and has found wide applicability in several global hydrological
and land surface models.

The original Hanasaki et al. (2006) reservoir model has been modified in subsequent studies to address some of its
limitations. For example, it has been modified for water extraction and other reservoir functions such as fulfilling
environmental flows (Hanasaki et al., 2008a, b; Pokhrel et al., 2012a), and been adjusted to address direct precipitation over
30 and evaporation from the reservoir (Döll et al., 2009).

Biemans et al. (2011) added new functionalities to the Hanasaki et al. (2006) reservoir model related to irrigation
water demand and supply distribution and ran it at a daily time step. Their contributions include: 1) modifying irrigation
withdrawals to account for conveyance losses and irrigation efficiency, 2) adjusting the minimum release to 10% of the mean
monthly inflow, 3) prioritizing irrigation over flood control, 4) using regulated flow instead of natural flow, to estimate mean

annual inflow, 5) storing the “flow to be released” for five days in the reservoir – to -mimic the storage within the conveyance system – before it is released to the river. Voisin et al. (2013a) further modified the reservoir model of Hanasaki et al. (2006) to include multipurpose functionalities (irrigation and flood control) by changing the operation to release more before the onset of snowmelt-flood season so that there will be sufficient room to store flood waters form snowmelt in the reservoir. The modification requires the specification of a flood control period. Voisin et al. (2013a) have also evaluated the uncertainty of reservoir simulation by comparing withdrawal vs. consumptive demands, and natural vs. regulated flow for configuring operating rules. The results of Voisin et al. (2013a) demonstrated that adding flood control in reservoir operation, along with a parametrization using mean annual natural inflow, and mean monthly withdrawals, improves the reservoir storage and flow simulation.

Haddeland et al. (2006) developed another pioneering generic reservoir model that has been implemented in a routing model at a daily time step to study the impact of reservoir and irrigation water withdrawals on continental surface water fluxes. The model is retrospective, i.e., it assumes full knowledge of the upcoming operation year reservoir inflow. The reservoir operation is conducted using an optimization scheme to determine the optimal release to satisfy different sectoral demands and targets that are defined in the form of objective functions. In the case of a multipurpose reservoir, the model gives priority to irrigation demand, followed by flood control and hydropower production. Minimum flow is estimated using natural flow based on seven-day consecutive low flows with a ten year recurrence period. The flood protection objective function is minimizing reservoir release above the bankfull discharge, which is estimated using the long-term mean of annual maximum discharge. Irrigation is optimized to satisfy downstream irrigation demand, while hydropower is optimized to increase power production. Predicting inflows for the current operational year, if possible, would allow the method to optimize the release while accounting for the whole operational year, otherwise to optimize day to day release without accounting for the remaining operational year would require several constraints. The maximum daily release is set based on the reservoir water balance that sets the storage at the end of the operational year to vary between 60 to 80% of the maximum capacity.

Similar to Hanasaki et al. (2006), the model of Haddeland et al. (2006) is favourable due to its generic formulation and capability to operate multipurpose reservoirs, and to extract water for irrigation from reservoir. These make the model applicable for large-scale hydrologic models, when data on operational policies are limited- (Adam et al., 2007; Van Beek et al., 2011). One limitation of Haddeland et al., (2006) is that it requires knowledge of the future inflow for each reservoir so that the optimization can be conducted to determine the optimal release. Another limitation is that the release can deviate from the actual value because of simplifications of the objective function and errors from irrigation demand calculation. The algorithm does not represent reservoirs with multi-year operational policies (Adam et al., 2007); and also requires to run the model many times to optimize the reservoir release.

Adam et al. (2007) modified the Haddeland et al. (2006) reservoir model parameterization to include: 1) estimated minimum flow based on observed mean winter flow, 2) reservoir filling phase, 3) storage-area-depth relationship following the regular shape approximation of Liebe et al. (2005), 4) a seasonally varying hydropower production economic value that can be calibrated for hydropower production instead of a constant one. van Beek et al. (2011) further modified the retrospective

inflow assumption to prospective model by approximating the upcoming operational year inflow based on previous years' inflow; (requires historical inflow observation) and then adjusting the release and demand every month using the actual inflow as estimated from a hydrologic model.

Solander et al. (2015) tested and compared six generic equations to represent reservoir release and storage simulations.

5 The complexity of equations tested varies from the simplest case that assumes reservoir outflow equals inflow (no-reservoir assumption), to a more complex representation using separate linear functions during reservoir filling and release periods. While the reservoir filling and release seasons were identified using long-term mean temperature, their respective release equations are configured as a function of reservoir inflow, storage, and optimized seasonal empirical parameters. Their results on California reservoirs showed that the equation dependent on inflow is best for recharge season, while release during the
10 drawdown season was better represented as a function of storage. Despite failing for highly regulated reservoirs, their study demonstrated the possibility of generalizing the seasonal empirical parameters as a function of the ratio between winter inflows to storage capacity. However, further testing is required to examine the usefulness of Solander et al. (2015)'s in different region, such as cold regions, with different filling and release seasonality.

15 Although the inflow-and-demand based models provide improved results compared to the natural lake approach, these models do not accurately reproduce observed flows (Adam et al, 2007; Haddeland et al., 2006; Coerver et al., 2018). Overall, while the above methods have better flexibility for coupling with global hydrological and land surface models, the methods have limitations in accounting for details of reservoir operation. For an adequate representation of reservoirs, particularly multi-purpose reservoirs and/or those with multi-year carry-over capacity, it is important to consider *reservoir zoning* and adjust reservoir release formulations for different storage levels. The absence of this consideration may limit the
20 capability of this group of methods in representing complex reservoir operations (Wu and Chen 2012).

2.3 Neural network-based methods

25 Artificial neural network (NN) models have been applied to establish data-driven rules that relate reservoir storage, inflow and release data. This type of models (1) extensive data on reservoir release, storage, inflow, but minimal prior expert knowledge of the reservoir operation, and (2) extensive training of a model for each individual reservoir to deduce the reservoir operation rules. Neural network techniques have been widely used beyond reservoir operation applications (e.g., flood forecasting, streamflow simulation, water quality (Maier and Dandy, 2001; Razavi and Karamouz, 2007)) and more recently has shown promise in reproducing historical reservoir operations (Coerver et al., 2018).

30 The study of Coerver et al. (2018) provides detailed background on NN applications for deduction of reservoir operation rules, and also demonstrates the performance of NN-based fuzzy rules to describe the reservoir release decisions. The analysis of Coerver et al. (2018) involves different levels of input complexity for the neural network setups, such as the importance of accounting for inflow prediction and time of the season on the reservoir operation performance. Another similar application was shown by Ehsani et al. (2016) who demonstrated a general reservoir operation scheme that uses an NN technique to map the general input/output relationships to actual operating rules of seventeen dams. Ehsani et al. (2016)

demonstrated the possibility of aggregating multiple reservoirs that are closely located, so that their integrated effect can be accounted for in large-scale hydrological modeling studies. In a subsequent study, Ehsani et al. (2017) integrated the reservoir model of Ehsani et al. (2016) into a global water security model to study reservoir operations under climate change.

While these studies demonstrated that, the NN-based models can reproduce historical reservoir operation data and possibly outperform the widely used reservoir simulation models such as those of Hanasaki et al. (2006) and Wisser et al. (2010), the user of such models may have to deal with a fundamental limitation, i.e., their “black-box” nature. This limits their ability to provide insight into the underlying mechanisms of reservoir operation, and might mask possible shortcomings in a derived NN model. Further, the credibility of their performance in extrapolation beyond the historical data can be in question, as they fully ignore the expert knowledge available on the actual physical and socio-economic processes that govern reservoir operations. Together, these limit the interpretation of results and their applicability in a changing environment. There has been some recent research efforts to reformulate neural networks such that they can overcome these limitations (e.g., see Razavi and Tolson, 2011).

2.4 Target storage-and-release based methods

The target storage-and-release based methods aim to emulate actual rule curves (i.e., reservoir target storage and release for different times of the year) that guide reservoir operators to decide on downstream releases (Burek et al., 2013; Yates et al., 2005; Neitsch et al., 2011, 2005). The target levels of storage divide the total reservoir storage capacity into multiple zones. For example, in the SWAT model (Arnold et al., 1998), a reservoir model is available in which the total storage of a reservoir is divided into sediment, principal, flood control, and emergency flood control zones where ~~In the SWAT model, the each zones is either specified by the user or asae classified based on user specification and as~~ a function of soil moisture wetness (Neitsch et al., 2005). Wu and Chen (2012) modified this approach by changing ~~its-the~~ reservoir zoning model and developed a reservoir release simulation strategy that uses a decision-based parameterization ~~that to may~~ better fit both storage and release of multi-purpose reservoirs. However, they reported only one application of this strategy to a local-scale reservoir, and its comprehensive evaluation needs to be performed on other reservoirs in other regions with different climates, levels of regulation, and allocation objectives.

Zhao et al. (2016) integrated a reservoir regulation module into a hydrology model, requiring user-specified (based on observed data) values to divide the reservoir into inactive, conservation and flood control zones. In their module, the release from the conservation zone is determined using water demand, which includes multi-sectorial demand and environmental flow. The release from the flood storage zone is decided as a function of inflow (classified as flood inflow or non-flood inflow), downstream channel current discharge and downstream maximum discharge. At the time of flood, if the downstream discharge is below the maximum limit, release from flood storage zone is estimated using available storage above conservation zone, multiplied by a weight parameter which allows to release more water. If the downstream discharge is at maximum capacity there is no release from flood storage zone. Finally, any storage above the flood storage zone is automatically released. Additionally, Zhao et al. (2016) added the possibility to operate reservoirs ~~conjunctively~~conjunctively by giving release

priorities to immediate downstream demands and by limiting the release if the downstream reservoir is within flood storage zone. The results of reservoir integration showed improved capability of the hydrological model to simulate storage and release for Lake Whitney and Auilla Lake in Texas. The limitation of Zhao et al. (2016) for wider application is that there is no generic formulation of reservoir zoning (requires user specification) and evaluation was only performed on two reservoirs.

5 ~~Similarly the LISFLOOD model,~~ Burek et al. (2013) divided the total reservoir storage into conservative, normal and flood zones within the LISFLOOD model, and defined release in accordance with these storage zones using multiple-linear regression.- Zajac et al. (2017) showed the applicability of this method to capture the effects of lakes and reservoirs globally using a parameterization that depends on naturalized inflow and maximum storage. Their results showed that the inclusion of reservoirs and lakes in a hydrologic model through this method helped improve streamflow simulation for many stations, but
10 the performance in replicating observed storage dynamics was not reported.

 Overall, the primary advantage of methods in ~~this third group category~~ is that they allow approximation of reservoir-release policy and have the potential of making use of detailed data on a reservoir when available. Their main limitation, however, is their relatively high data demands. When data are available, methods under this category have the potential to enhance the representation of dams and reservoirs in terms of both reservoir storage and release, while adapting to the
15 seasonality and change in operations on different time scales from daily to seasonal. These methods seem advantageous to NN-based models as their functioning are transparent, accounting for the governing processes, while requiring similar data.

 Given the advances in the field and the growing availability of data sources, the target storage-and-release methods seem to be the most promising, as they can better simulate the reservoir operation dynamics (the dynamics of both storage and release). The data requirement includes data on observed inflow, observed release, observed storage (level) and reservoir
20 physical characteristics. Reservoir level data are available for most lakes and reservoirs in the public domain, particularly in North America. These data can be converted to reservoir storage using reservoir elevation-area-volume relationships or by using area-volume relationships approximated by regular geometric shapes (Yigzaw et al., 2018; Liebe et al., 2005; Lehner et al., 2011). Inflows to and releases from a reservoir can be approximated by streamflow stations located upstream and downstream of the reservoir, respectively. Further, satellite missions such as MODIS (Savtchenko et al., 2004) and satellite
25 radar altimetry are providing information on lake and reservoir surface area dynamics and reservoir water elevation for some large reservoirs. The combination of MODIS and satellite radar altimetry allows to derive storage-area-depth relationships (Gao et al., 2012; Andreadis et al., 2007; Zhang et al., 2014; Yoon and Beighley, 2015). The planned SWOT (2021) mission (Garambois and Monnier, 2015) will increase the availability of water level data for smaller rivers (with widths going down to 100m) that can be potentially converted to discharge to estimate reservoir inflows and downstream reservoir releases.

30 ~~This study is an attempt to develop an improved method that better emulates reservoir operations for large scale hydrologic modelling applications in terms of both reservoir storage and release, as outlined in section 2.~~

3 Material & Methods

This study aimed to develop an improved reservoir model that better emulates reservoir operation for large-scale hydrologic modelling application in terms of both reservoir storage and release, following the previous advances in target-storage-and release-based methods reviewed in Section 2.4. In this section, we present the characteristics and formulation of our reservoir model. The reservoir water balance is maintained using the continuity equation, as shown in finite difference form in Equation 1. ~~(P and E) are. When integrated an~~ The aim is to estimate unknown storage S_t and release Q_t at the current time step based on the storage at the previous time step S_{t-1} and precipitation (P) over the reservoir, evaporation (E) from the reservoir and inflows (I) during the current time step. When integrated within an H-LSM model, the inflow will be the modelled value of the upstream catchment that would account for delays in the precipitation-runoff generation and routing. This equation is solved in conjunction with the parametrization equations presented in the next section for reservoir releases to compute S_t and Q_t .

$$\frac{S_t - S_{t-1}}{\Delta t} = \frac{I_t + I_{t-1}}{2} - \frac{Q_t + Q_{t-1}}{2} + \frac{P_t + P_{t-1}}{2} - \frac{E_t + E_{t-1}}{2} \quad (1)$$

3.1 Proposed Reservoir Operation Model

A detailed description of our proposed target storage-and-release model (or target-release model for brevity) is provided here. This model is formulated in the form of parametric piecewise linear functions that approximate the reservoir release rules that may be used by reservoir operators. This model can be set up on any time scale; in the case studies reported here, we define the target levels to *dynamically* change ~~on a monthly basis~~ over time. We call the model the “Dynamically Zoned Target Release (DZTR)” Model. Piecewise linear function-based reservoir operation models have already been used to solve complex reservoir operation and water resources management problems (e.g., Razavi et al., 2013; Asadzadeh et al., 2014). A systematic integration of such models into large-scale hydrological modeling has been reported in Burek et al. (2013) as implemented in the LISFLOOD hydrological model, and in Neitsch et al. (2012, 2005) as implemented in the SWAT model. Our DZTR model is a generalization of the method developed by Razavi et al. (2013), which may also be viewed as a modification to the model proposed by Burek et al. (2013) in terms of parametrization and reservoir zoning. FigureFig. 1 shows the schematic representation of DZTR; FigureFig. 1a shows the reservoir zoning and FigureFig. 1b shows the piecewise-linear functions to estimate the release for each zone based on DZTR.

The DZTR model divides reservoir storage into five zones in a similar fashion to Wu and Chen (2012) and Burek et al. (2013), namely dead storage, critical storage, normal storage, flood storage, and emergency storage. Whenever storage is below the emergency storage zone, release only occurs through the bottom outlet, but when the storage is within that zone, release happens through both of bottom outlet and the spillway. In the absence of data, the dead storage (Zone 0) is assumed to be 10% of the maximum storage after Döll et al. (2009). To estimate the remaining storage zones in cases where no operational information on a reservoir is available, we propose two alternative strategies: (1) setting the zones based on ~~some~~

suggested exceedance probabilities ~~based~~ on historical reservoir storage time series, (2) optimizing these zones to reproduce the observed storage and release time series. Target releases for each zone can be obtained in a similar fashion. These target storages and releases are allowed to vary each month (or on any other arbitrarily selected time resolution) to allow a better representation of the seasonality of reservoir operation.

5 When reservoir storage is within the dead storage zone (Zone 0), the reservoir release is zero (equation 3). In Zone 1 (critical storage zone), the reservoir release is a function of storage at a given time step and the critical release target value (equation 4). In this zone, the reservoir operates to avoid storage depletion while trying to support environmental flow requirements defined as a critical (or minimum) release. In Zone 2 (normal storage zone), the reservoir release is purely governed by reservoir storage and varies between critical and normal release targets (equation 5). In this zone, the downstream
10 release is greater for higher levels of storage. In Zone 3, the release decision considers both reservoir storage and inflow in that time step as well as the normal and maximum release targets (Equation 6). When in this zone, two scenarios may occur: (A) the amount of inflow in a time step is equal to or less than the normal release rate; (B) the amount of inflow in this time step is greater than the normal release rate. As formulated in Equation 6, in the case of scenario B, the inflow rate comes to play to augment the release in an attempt to keep the reservoir level within the normal storage zone. Scenario B is expected to
15 occur more frequently in smaller reservoirs that only have “within-year” storage capacity, while scenario A should be more commonly seen with larger reservoirs that have “multi-year” carry over capacity. Hanasaki et al. (2006) suggested that reservoirs that have a ratio of storage capacity to mean annual inflow (referred to as c) of less than 0.5 be assumed as within-year reservoirs and the ones with a ratio of 0.5 and above be considered as multi-year reservoirs. Other values for this threshold were also suggested in the literature; e.g., Wu and Chen (2012) used a c value of 0.3. In this study, scenario A is used for
20 reservoirs that have multi-year capacity ($c > 0.5$) and scenario B for reservoirs that have within-a-year capacity ($c < 0.5$). Lastly, in Zone 4 (emergency storage zone) the reservoir algorithm operates to avoid reservoir overtopping by releasing the larger of the maximum release target or all excess storage above the maximum storage value (the flood storage) constrained to the downstream channel capacity Q_{mc} . If not specified, a rough estimate of the downstream channel capacity value could be the
99 percentile of non-exceedance probabilities of discharges from historical data.

25

Zone 0	$Q_t = 0$	$[S_t < 0.1S_{max}]$	(2)
Zone 1	$Q_t = \min\left(Q_{ci}, \frac{S_t - 0.1S_{max}}{\Delta t}\right)$	$[0.1S_{max} < S_t \leq S_{ci}]$	(3)
Zone 2	$Q_t = Q_{ci} + (Q_{ni} - Q_{ci}) \frac{(S_t - S_{ci})}{(S_{ni} - S_{ci})}$	$[S_{ci} < S_t \leq S_{ni}]$	(4)
Zone 3A	$Q_t = Q_{ni} + (Q_{mi} - Q_{ni}) \frac{(S_t - S_{ni})}{(S_{mi} - S_{ni})}$	$[S_{ni} < S_t \leq S_{mi}]$	(5A)
Zone 3B	$Q_t = Q_{ni} + \max\{(I_t - Q_{ni}), (Q_{mi} - Q_{ni})\} \frac{(S_t - S_{ni})}{(S_{mi} - S_{ni})}$	$[S_{ni} < S_t \leq S_{mi}]$	(5B)

Zone 4	$Q_t = \min([\max(\frac{(S_t - S_{mi})}{\Delta t}, Q_{mi})], Q_{mc})$	$[S_{mi} < S_t]$	(6)
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where I_t , Q_t and S_t are inflow, release and storage at time step t . S_{ci} , S_{ni} and S_{mi} are critical, normal and maximum storage targets for month i . Q_{ci} , Q_{ni} and Q_{mi} are critical, normal and maximum release targets for month i . Q_{mc} is maximum channel capacity parameter.

5 3.2 Evaluation Criteria

We evaluated the performance of the proposed reservoir operation model in emulating the outflow and storage data collected for many reservoirs around the world. As this model was intended to be integrated into large-scale H-LSMs, we further evaluated it when embedded in the MESH model (Modélisation Environnementale–Surface et Hydrologie) (Pietroniro et al., 2007). For all of these evaluations, we used Nash-Sutcliffe Efficiency (NSE) (Nash and Sutcliffe, 1970) and Kling-Gupta Efficiency (KGE) (Gupta et al., 2009), as the metrics to assess the goodness of fit of the model to observed reservoir outflow and storage data.

3.3 Identification of Reservoir Operation Model Parameters

As demonstrated in Section 3.1, the proposed reservoir operation model has six parameters (S_{ci} , S_{ni} , S_{mi} , Q_{ci} , Q_{ni} and Q_{mi}) that can vary for different times of the year. We recommend varying these parameters on a monthly basis, while other time resolutions are also possible. To normalize the parameters and their ranges across different types and sizes of reservoirs, for every reservoir, we use cumulative distribution functions (CDFs) of historical storage and release values; see Figure Fig. 2 for example CDFs of the Lake Diefenbaker reservoir (Gardiner dam) in the Saskatchewan River Basin, Canada. Our preliminary analysis indicated that target storage and release values corresponding to 10%, 45%, and 85% non-exceedance probabilities generally perform reasonably well. We call these our ‘generalized parameterization’.

However, optimal values of parameters for a given reservoir can be identified, when data are available, through optimization and parameter identification techniques (Maier et al., 2019; Guillaume et al., 2019). For this purpose, we used a bi-objective optimization approach, as follows, that begins with the generalized parameter values as the starting point and optimizes the model fit to both storage and release data simultaneously:-

~~The first objective function measures the performance in reproducing releases and the second objective function measures the storage dynamics performance. Section 3.2 mentioned the performance metrics used.~~

$$\underset{x \in \Omega}{\text{maximize}} \quad F(x) = (f_1(x), f_2(x)) \quad (9)$$

where x is a vector of decision variables (parameter values), and Ω is decision space, $f_1(x)$ is NSE(flow) measuring the goodness-of-fit in reproducing observed release, and $f_2(x)$ is NSE(Storage) measuring the goodness-of-fit in reproducing observed storage dynamics.

For parameter identification on a monthly basis, a total of 72 decision variables ~~are~~ were used in the optimization. We chose rather arbitrarily the storage and release target intervals that correspond to [5-35%], [35-75%], [75-95%] non-exceedance probabilities as the ranges of variation for critical, normal, and maximum (flood) storage and release, respectively.

~~For $f_1(x)$ and $f_2(x)$ in Equation 9, we used NSE(flow) that measures the goodness of fit to observed downstream flows and NSE(Storage) that measures the goodness of fit to observed reservoir storage.~~

The ~~bi~~ multi-objective optimization problem to calibrate 72 reservoir target release and storage parameters was conducted using the AMALGAM evolutionary multi-objective optimization algorithm (Vrugt and Robinson, 2007). AMALGAM was selected because it provides effective and reliable solutions for multi-objective optimization using multiple search operators (genetic algorithm, particle swarm optimization, adaptive metropolis search, and differential evolution) and self-adaptive offspring creation. Vrugt et al. (2009), Wöhling and Vrugt (2011); Zhang. (2011); Raad et al. (2009); Dane et al. (2010) and others showed that the performance of AMALGAM model parameter calibration was better than or equivalent to some other calibration algorithms across different complex response surfaces. ~~Further detail on AMALGAM is provided in Vrugt and Robinson (2007).~~ AMALGAM was run using an initial population size of 100, resulting in a total of 15,000 model evaluations to estimate final Pareto solutions for every single reservoir.

3.4 Comparison of reservoir operation models

We compared the performance of our DZTR model against those of Hanasaki et al. (2006) and Wisser et al. (2010) using NSE and KGE performance metrics defined on both storage and release simulations. The comparisons were made only for selected non-irrigation reservoirs because their irrigation reservoir formulation requires additional data on water demands. For the method of Wisser et al. (2010), reservoir release was estimated under two conditions as shown in Equation 10. ~~and storage dynamics are estimated from the reservoir water balance (Equation 11).~~

$$Q_t = \begin{cases} \kappa I_t & I_t \geq I_m \\ \lambda I_t + (I_m - I_t) & I_t < I_m \end{cases} \quad (10)$$

~~$$S_t = S_{t-1} + (I_t - Q_t) \Delta t \quad (11)$$~~

where κ and λ are empirical constants set to 0.16 and 0.6 respectively and I_m is the mean annual inflow (m^3/s) and I_t is inflow to the reservoir (m^3/s) at time t .

In the method of Hanasaki et al. (2006), the release ~~of~~ from non-irrigation reservoirs was estimated by multiplying the mean annual inflow ~~with~~ by release constraining coefficients (Equation ~~12~~11). The release ~~constraining coefficients for every given operational year were~~ is estimated by dividing the initial storage of ~~a given operational year that year~~ by the maximum storage ~~and the value is calculated for each simulation year~~ (equation ~~13~~12). The start of the operational year ~~was considered to be~~ is the month when the mean monthly inflow shifts from being greater ~~to being lower~~ than the mean annual inflow ~~to being lower than the mean annual inflow~~.

$$r_{m,y} = \begin{cases} k_{r_{ls,y}} * r'_{m,y} & (c \geq 0.5) \\ \left(\frac{c}{0.5}\right)^2 * k_{r_{ls,y}} * r'_{m,y} + \left(1 - \left(\frac{c}{0.5}\right)^2\right) * i_{m,y} & (0 \leq c < 0.5) \end{cases} \quad (12)$$

$$k_{r_{ls,y}} = \frac{S_{first,y}}{\alpha * S_{max}} \quad \text{---} \quad (13)$$

where c is the ratio of maximum reservoir storage to the mean total annual inflow; and $k_{r_{ls,y}}$ is the release coefficient; $r'_{m,y}$ is the provisional monthly release (m^3/s) which is equal to mean annual inflow (m^3/s); α is a non-dimensionless constant set to 0.85. Equation 12 differentiates between multi-year and single year storage reservoirs based on a threshold value of 0.5 for c .

3.5 MESH Modelling System

MESH is Environment and Climate Change Canada's Land Surface-Hydrology Modelling System (Pietroniro et al., 2007) and has been widely used in different parts of Canada (Davison et al., 2016; Haghnegahdar et al., 2017; Yassin et al., 2017; Sapriza-Azuri et al., 2018; Berry et al., 2017). MESH is a grid-based modelling system composed of three components: (1) the Canadian Land Surface Scheme (CLASS) (Verseghy, 1991; Verseghy et al., 1993), (2) lateral movement of surface (overland) runoff and sub-surface water (interflow) to the channel system within a grid cell and (3) hydrological routing using WATROUTE from the WATFLOOD hydrological model (Kouwen et al., 1993).

Currently, the reservoir representation in MESH model is rudimentary. MESH offers two approaches to account for reservoir operation. In the first approach, the observed reservoir release rate at the reservoir location is provided as input to the model. In this approach, the flow from the catchment upstream of the reservoir is discarded as the release is replaced by observations, a process referred to as “*streamflow insertion*”, which limits the utility of the model to simulate future scenarios for which releases are not yet known. This approach violates the water conservation law in the model and also creates discontinuities within the model setup, especially if there are reservoir cascades. Nevertheless, streamflow insertion could be used when coupling water management models with MESH, and these coupled models could be used to formulate scenarios for reservoir operations. As mentioned in the objectives, however, model coupling is not the focus of this study as we are looking to examine the internal representation of reservoir operations within CMs and LSMs. The second approach is a natural lake or uncontrolled reservoir representation model similar to that of Döll et al., (2003), which was shown to be unsuitable for highly managed reservoirs. To improve the reservoir representation in MESH, this study aims to incorporate the DZTR model for controlled reservoirs into the MESH framework and evaluate its performance.

3.6 Case Studies and Data

The data set required to build and evaluate a reservoir operation model includes (1) reservoir physical characteristics such as the volume-level-area relationship and maximum capacity, which are static (in the absence of sedimentation or dam heightening), (2) time series of hydrologic variables such as inflow, release, and water level (or storage), and (3) environmental flows. In this study, we assembled such a dataset for 37 reservoirs located in several regions across the globe (Figure Fig. 3) to

test the model. These dams represent a wide range of storage sizes, from $0.132 \times 10^9 \text{ m}^3$ to $162 \times 10^9 \text{ m}^3$, spanning multiple orders of magnitudes. Most of these are located in the Western US and Western Canada, while some are located in Vietnam, central Asian countries and Egypt. Table 1 provides a summary of reservoir locations, construction years, main purposes, data periods, and other dam characteristics. Measured inflow, release, and storage time series were collected from different sources.

5 ~~Most of them were provided by the authors of previous studies (Hanasaki et al., (2006) and Coerver et al., (2018)). The inflow, release, and storage data f~~For reservoirs located in Canada, the data were acquired from Water Survey Canada, Alberta Environment and Parks, and the Saskatchewan Water Security Agency. Data for the High Aswan dam were acquired from the Nile Basin Encyclopaedia via the Nile Basin Initiative. The data for other reservoirs were provided by the authors of previous studies (Hanasaki et al., 2006 and Coerver et al., 2018). Additional information about the degree of regulation, dam height, 10 and catchment area ~~were~~ obtained from GRanD database (Lehner et al., 2011). Reservoir operation simulations were performed on daily and monthly bases with simulation periods varying from 8 to 62 years. The choice of simulation period and time scale was based on data availability (Table 1). The first year of the reservoir simulations was used for spin-up, while the first half of the remaining data periods were used for calibration and the second half ~~of the data periods were used~~ for model validation.

15 We also evaluated the integration of our reservoir model into the MESH model on six reservoirs in two major ~~basins~~basins in Western Canada. Six of the test reservoirs (Gardiner, St Mary, Waterton, Oldman, Ghost and Dickson dams) are located ~~in~~within the heavily regulated Saskatchewan River basin (SaskRB) and one reservoir (Bennet dam) is located in the Mackenzie River Basin (MRB). For both of the basins, the MESH model was set up on a grid resolution of 0.125° and the data required to build the MESH model were obtained from different sources. The topographic data are based on the Canadian 20 Digital Elevation Data (CDED) at a scale of 1:250,000 and were obtained from the GeoBase website (<http://www.geobase.ca/>). The data on seven climate forcing variables at a 30-min temporal resolution were obtained from Global Environmental Multi-scale (GEM) NWP model (Côté et al., 1998) and Canadian Precipitation Analysis (CaPA) (Mahfouf, et al., 2007). The land cover data used are based on 2005 land-cover map from the Canada Centre for Remote Sensing (CCRS). Soil texture data were obtained from Soil Landscapes of Canada (SLC) data of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada. The MESH parameter values 25 were taken from previous studies for~~estimated using MESH model~~ calibration ~~to~~ streamflow at major subbasins of SaskRB and MRB.

4 Results and Discussion

4.1 Evaluation of the dynamically zoned target release (DZTR) model with generalized parameters

Individual reservoir simulations were conducted by the DZTR model with generalized monthly storage and release 30 parameter values set at non-exceedance probabilities recommended in Section 3.3 for~~of 10%, 45%, and 85%~~, representing the reservoir storage zones and their respective target releases. The evaluation of the DZTR model ~~is~~was based on the performance ~~evaluation~~ metrics and a comparison with the~~against~~ other reservoir operation approaches and a “base case” where the

existence of a reservoir ~~is was~~ ignored in a model. ~~(we referred to as this base case as~~ the “no-reservoir assumption”). Under the no-reservoir assumption, the release was considered equal to inflow, and storage was considered constant, and as such, the performance metrics were ~~estimated-computed~~ by directly comparing inflow with observed release.

5 ~~FigureFig.~~ 4 shows performance metrics results of the DZTR model in terms of NSE and KGE for storage and release simulations compared to those of the base case. As shown in ~~FigureFig.~~ 4a, both NSE (Flow) and NSE (Storage) results are greater than 0.25 and 0.5 for 90% and 50% of reservoirs, respectively. Although NSE (Flow) results are greater than zero for all reservoirs, 1% of reservoirs resulted in a negative NSE (Storage) values. The no-reservoir assumption resulted in NSE (base-case) values of greater than 0.25 and 0.5 for 45% and 30% of reservoirs respectively, which, in general, are much lower than those but when compared to NSE (Flow) of the DZTR model, a few reservoirs showed comparable performance while
10 ~~the majority are much better represented by the DZTR model.~~ Under the no-reservoir assumption, 48% of the reservoirs resulted in a negative NSE (base-case). Almost all positive NSE (base-case) results were observed on reservoirs with $c < 0.5$ such as Dickson, E.B. Campbell, Kayrakkum, Oldman and Tyuyamuyun (as explained in Section 3, c is the ratio of storage capacity to annual inflow volume). However, for reservoirs with $c > 0.5$ such as Bhumibol, Flaming Gorge, Fort Peck, High Aswan, W.A.C. Bennett, the NSE (base-case) is negative, which indicates the significant influence of their regulations on the
15 hydrograph shape.

Similarly, Fig. 4b shows the evaluation of the different reservoir models based on the KGE metric (Gupta et al., (2009)). The values of KGE (Flow) and KGE (Storage) are greater than 0.25 and 0.5 for 100% and 86% of the reservoirs, respectively. The KGE (base-case) values of 21% of reservoirs are less than 0, while those of 57% and 49% of the reservoirs are greater than 0.25 and 0.5, respectively. The NSE and KGE results show that the DZTR with the generalized parameter
20 values is capable of simulating flow and storage simulation well.

Fig. 5 shows the scatter plots between KGE, and NSE, and along with the regulation level scale represented by c . These plots orientation of the scatter plot between NSE and KGE on flow and storage shows a strong positive correlation between the evaluation metrics which indicates that both metrics provide somewhat similar evaluation information. The relation between regulation scale and evaluation metrics shows that the performance in simulating the release improves in
25 most cases as the scale of reservoir regulation reduces, as shown in Figure 5a and 5bFig. 5a and 5b show that both no-reservoir assumption and DZTR estimate the release more accurately for lower levels of regulation. As expected, the degradation of performance was pronounced for no-reservoir assumption as the regulation level increased, while DZTR performance reduced by a much smaller extent (still positive values). Almost all low regulation level reservoirs ($c < 0.5$) showed positive performance metrics which means the reservoir regulation does not strongly modify the flow regime, whereas the opposite case is true for
30 highly regulated reservoirs ($c > 0.5$) in which the reservoir regulation strongly changes the reservoir release. Coerver et al. (2018) also noted that low regulation level reservoirs are more dependent on the current time step inflow knowledge because their smaller influence on the flow regime. The method of Hanasaki et al. (2006) also recognizes the strong dependence of $c < 0.5$ reservoirs on inflow to determine the release by configuring the release as a function of monthly mean inflow.

Conversely, the relationship between the regulation ~~scale-level~~ and the storage simulation performance (in terms of both KGE (Storage) and NSE (Storage)) ~~did~~ not show a strong correlation (Fig. 5c).

Figure 6 compares the reservoir simulation and observation time series for the whole simulation period, while Figure 7 shows the long-term average of these simulations. Inflows are also included in Figure 6 and Figure 7 to show the regulation pattern and changes caused by reservoir operation. Both figures indicate that the DZTR model captures well both release and storage dynamics well, in terms of reproducing the daily and monthly seasonality and as well as in terms of both the magnitude and timing of storage and releases for almost all reservoirs, especially for reservoirs with high regulation (multipurpose, multiyear reservoirs) such as American Falls, Bhumibol, High Aswan, Sirikit, Trinity, and Bennett dams. However, the simulations also show some systematic over- and under-estimations; for example, the simulations of Bhumibol, Fort Peck, High Aswan, Int. Falcon, Navajo, Bennet, and Int. Amistad reservoirs show continuous underestimation and overestimation of reservoir storage. Some reservoirs such as Trinity, Palisades, Kayrakkum, Flaming Gorge, and Garrison show underestimation and overestimation of reservoir storage only for some seasons. A closer look at American Falls, Flaming Gorge, Fort Peck, Glen Canyon, Navajo dams in Figure 6 indicates that the DZTR model reliably captured storage and release seasonality, inter-annual trends, and release pattern shifts during consecutive wet years 1982-1986 followed by consecutive dry years 1987-1993. Similar patterns can be observed for the Gardiner dam with good simulation during both dry years (1984-1986, 1988-1989, 1999-2004) and wet years (1993, 2005, 2010-2011). Furthermore, as expected, Figure 7 shows that lowly-regulated reservoirs ($c < 0.5$) have less impact on the flow regime, but with fairly significant storage seasonality (Oldman, E.B. Campbell, Palisades, Andijan). In general, the DZTR model with the generalized parameterization of reservoir zones and releases showed an improved performance and can be applied to any hydrological model (CM or H-LSM) that involves reservoir simulation.

It is important to note that for the case of a cascade of reservoirs, the parametrization of the DZTR model implicitly accounts, to some extent, for the upstream regulation effects by the upstream cascade reservoirs. This is because the regulated inflow is used for parametrizing downstream reservoirs, which reflects the regulation information of upstream reservoirs in the cascade. In reality, the operation of some cascade reservoirs are highly interlinked, particularly during the flood season. The decision regarding the release from one reservoir accounts for the (forecasted) state of other reservoirs. Such dual- or multi-linked operation is however not accurately accounted for in the presented algorithm, because it assumes that each reservoir operates using its own storage state, inflow and target storage and releases. Such systems require detailed modelling of operations that is not usually attainable in large scale hydrological models. Depending on the purpose of the model, the modeller may decide to lump those reservoirs together to improve simulations downstream as in e.g., Ehsani et al. (2016).

4.2 ~~A~~ Comparison with previously developed reservoir operation models

To further illustrate the reliability of DZTR model in representing reservoir simulation, a comparison with the methods of Hanasaki et al. (2006) and of Wisser et al. (2010) was conducted as shown in Figure 8. The comparison shows

that the DZTR model provides a considerable improvement according to all of the performance criteria, notably NSE (Storage) and NSE (Flow), except in the case of the E.B. Campbell dam where Hanasaki et al.'s method showed similar performance to DZTR. Also, the method of Hanasaki et al. (2006) outperforms that of Wisser et al. (2010). Out of the thirteen reservoirs compared, the DZTR resulted in positive values for both NSE (Storage) and NSE (Flow) for all except for E.B. Campbell storage. However, the method of Hanasaki et al. (2006) and Wisser et al. (2010) resulted in only five, eight and five reservoirs with positive NSE (Flow) respectively (Fig. 8a), and NSE (Storage) values, whereas that of Wisser et al. (2010) generated only three positive NSE (Flow) values while both produced negative values for NSE (Storage) for all the reservoirs compared (Fig. 8c). A similar performance pattern was observed for KGE metrics for flow and storage. In addition, we compared the DZTR result shown in Figure Fig. 7 and 8 with the results reported in a study by Coerver et al. (2018) who applied a fuzzy-neural network model logic concept to extract 11 reservoir operating rules. This comparison showed that the performance of our generalized parameterization is comparable with to that Coerver et al. (2018) in simulating reservoir release; note that performance on storage is not reported in Coerver et al. (2018). This indicates that the simple parameterization applied in the DZTR model can provide a solution that is at least as effective as that of a neural network-based model. Equally importantly, the DZTR model is and transparent, as opposed to solutions comparable to those of Coerver et al., (2018) to neural network methods that are often criticized as being a "black box" models.

The above comparisons were conducted for non-irrigation reservoirs because water demand data is needed to use the Hanasaki et al. (2006) method for irrigation reservoirs. In the case of the DZTR approach, the idea is that the DZTR model operates in such a way to infer existing operational rules which cater for those demands. Thus, the release from DZTR accounts, implicitly, for downstream demands as per the intended purpose of the reservoir whether it is for flood control, irrigation, hydropower, etc. or any combination of these. The case study dams in our study include reservoirs with different purposes as shown in Table 1. The DZTR approach showed good performance for reservoirs with different purposes.

If the reservoir purpose is irrigation, the target releases from DZTR are to satisfy irrigation demands because the parameterization is optimized based on observed releases. The release from an irrigation dam will be available for abstraction at the predefined abstraction points downstream of the dam. The abstraction and distribution can be implemented as separate modules as done within the MESH land surface model (Yassin et al., 2019). In such an implementation, MESH takes care of (1) calculation of actual irrigation demand for a configured irrigation area, (2) water abstraction from defined abstraction point along the river below the dam and (3) distribution across the irrigation fields. Regarding the return flow, the excess water flows from the irrigation areas are assumed to join the nearest stream within the model grid cell.

The DZTR model can in principle handle multi-purpose reservoirs, e.g., a reservoir that is used simultaneously for hydropower generation, irrigation water supply, and flood control (e.g., High Aswan Dam in Egypt which is one of the studied reservoirs), the DZTR provides the release based on the inflow, and storage conditions and that will be available for irrigation downstream. Hydropower does not consume water but returns it back to the river (except in rare cases where it returns to a different channel). Flood control is directly accounted for in the scheme and becomes relevant when storage is within the flood storage zone. Further, the flexible formulation of DZTR allows to implicitly change the priorities in operation for selected time

periods (e.g., months or seasons) by changing the target storage values during flood periods (e.g., the storage target before the onset of snowmelt). During these flood months, lowering the target storage would increase the buffer for flood control. Conversely increasing the target storage during other months would be desirable to store water and release during irrigation months. When the scheme is optimized using inflow, release, and storage data, the parameterizations capture these priorities implicitly as expressed in the data. When inflow data are lacking, the generalized parametrization will set the storage zones based on the suggested exceedance probabilities (that were deduced based on all reservoirs used in the study) and the priorities can be assumed as pre-defined.

4.3 Initial storage and inflow sensitivity test

The initial storage at the beginning of the simulation is an input that needs to be specified to the model. The initial values can be prescribed from the observations if available. However, the simulation of a hydrological/land surface model could start at any point in time when there is no observation to prescribe (e.g., some time in far past, a future scenario simulation, or a hypothetical scenario). Additionally, in a long-term simulation, the initial storage may result from a previous model simulation, which may not be as close to observations as desired. The aim of the experiment is to examine and show to what extent the initial storage value affects the simulation performance.

To test the effect of initial storage used in the reservoir simulation performance, two experiments were conducted on three reservoirs with different scale of regulations 1) Charvak ($c=0.28$), 2) Gardiner ($c=1.46$), and 3) High Aswan ($c=2.84$). In the first experiment, the initial storage was allowed to vary between ~~within~~ ten percent of maximum storage ($0.1 * S_{max}$) to maximum storage (S_{max}). In the second experiment, the initial storage range was narrowed to starting simulation month minimum and maximum historical observations. In both tests, 150 simulations were conducted by sampling the initial storage using uniform random sampling from the defined storage range.

Figure 9 and Table 2 shows the results of these initial storage perturbation experiments. For both experiments the simulations on the Charvak dam showed a similar range for NSE (Flow) [0.79, 0.83] and NSE (storage) [0.61, 0.74]. Using one year as a spin-up period on Charvak dam simulations stabilized the initial storage effects, resulting in NSE (Flow) of 0.82 and NSE (Storage) of 0.74. The simulations on Gardiner dam in the first experiment showed a range of [0.35, 0.51] for NSE (Flow) and [-0.43, 0.88] range for NSE (storage), while in the second experiment the ranges were narrowed to [0.44, 0.49] for NSE (Flow) and [0.87, 0.88] for NSE (storage). For a one year spin-up period on the Gardiner dam this simulation converged the NSE (Flow) range to [0.49, 0.51] and the NSE (Storage) range to [0.76, 0.87] in the first experiment and to 0.49 NSE (Flow) and 0.87 NSE (Storage) for the second experiments. On the other hand, the simulation on the High Aswan dam showed a range of [-0.28, 0.85] for NSE (Flow) and [0.38 0.91] for NSE (storage) for the first experiment and [0.52, 0.85] for NSE (Flow) and [0.42 0.91] for NSE (storage) for the second experiment. Excluding a one year spin-up period from the metric calculation on the High Aswan dam simulation narrowed the NSE (Flow) range to [0.62, 0.85] and the NSE (Storage) range to [0.58 0.91] for both experiments. Overall, as expected, the experiments suggest that the effect of initial storage on reservoir simulation performance depends on the regulation scale. Starting from observed storage values and using a one-year warm-up

period allows stabilization of the initial storage effect for low and medium regulated reservoirs. However, for highly regulated reservoirs, as in the case of High Aswan, longer spin-up periods are needed to stabilize the simulations. For example, a five-year spin-up period was required to fully stabilize the performance for the High Aswan dam simulations.

The existence of inflow bias is inevitable in any hydrological modeling practice. To understand the behaviour of the DZTR model under biased inflow conditions, we conducted a sensitivity experiment on the Charvak, Gardiner and High Aswan reservoirs. To do so, the DZTR model performance was tested using five simulations in which the entire inflow time series was changed by -50%, -25%, 0%, +25%, and +50%. The sensitivity of simulations to bias in inflow was evaluated using the NSE (Flow) and NSE (Storage) performance metrics.

FigureFig. 10 and Table 3 shows the results of the inflow bias test and that the reservoir simulation performance significantly changes as a result of this bias. Reducing the inflow by 50% considerably reduced the reservoir storage and release and led to negative values of NSE (Flow) and NSE (Storage) for all reservoirs. For such a large negative inflow bias, the reservoir operation tries to recover the storage to the target (observed) level by releasing a low as possible. Conversely, the positive inflow bias increased simulated storage and releases for all reservoirs, which led to negative performance metrics for all reservoirs except on Gardiner NSE (Storage). As shown in **FigureFig. 10**, with large positive inflow bias, storage quickly moves towards flood and maximum storage targets resulting in insufficient storage left to attenuate flood peaks and the operation model starts discharging large releases through the spillway to maintain the storage at the maximum storage target. Inflow bias of -25% and +25% showed similar **behaviorbehaviour** as -50% and +50% bias for all reservoirs, but the simulation performance metrics during -25% and +25% provide significant positive NSE values for the Charvak and Gardener dams except for the Gardiner NSE(Flow) for +25% which resulted a negative NSE value. However, on the highly regulated High Aswan dam, the $\pm 25\%$ inflow bias significantly reduced the performance to negative values.

4.4 Parameter calibration and validation of the DZTR model

We tried to improve upon the generalized parameterization by calibrating the DZTR parameters via bi-objective optimization for two objective functions, Nash Sutcliffe on reservoir storage (NSE (Storage)) and Nash Sutcliffe on reservoir release (NSE (Flow)). This is an important step when the data and computational resources for optimization are available, to enhance reservoir simulation and consequently hydrological modeling of the region of interest. **FigureFig. 11** shows the multi-criteria reservoir calibration (yellow circles) and validation (red circles) Pareto solutions for all reservoirs. The Pareto solutions show strong tradeoffs between fitting observed reservoir storage versus downstream release, which also reflects the fact that the problem is multi-objective by nature and it is required to consider both storage and release, instead of fitting one at the cost of degrading the other. The generalized parameterization solution for the calibration (Yellow Square with blue border) and validation periods (red square with blue border) is also added in **FigureFig. 11** for each reservoir to show the improvement gained through parameter calibration. Relative to the generalized solution for the calibration period, reservoir parameter calibration improved both NSE (Flow) and NSE (Storage) for all reservoirs with a median improvement of 0.11 and 0.21, respectively. The NSE (Flow) improvement ranged from 0.017 to 0.575, and NSE (Storage) improvement ranged from 0.02

to 0.66. The Parameter calibration has shown significant improvement on reservoirs that have lower performance with generalized parameterization. The best examples of this case are Fort Randall, Int. Amistad, Trinity, Int. Falcon, and E.B. Campbell, as shown in ~~Figure~~Fig. 11. Small improvements in performance have also been observed on reservoirs that have greater performance with generalized parameterization such as American Falls, Andijan, Nurek, High Aswan, Waterton, and Charvak. The validation of calibrated solutions improved the NSE (Flow) and NSE (Storage) for 56% of the reservoirs with a median improvement of 0.035 and 0.092, respectively. The NSE (Flow) improvement in the validation period ranged from 0.001 to 0.335, and NSE (Storage) improvement ranged from 0.004 to 1.02. During validation, the remaining reservoirs (44% of them) resulted in NSE (Flow) and NSE (Storage) reductions with a median reduction of 0.032 and 0.089, respectively. The reductions of NSE (Flow) ranged from 0.001 to 0.073, and those of NSE (Storage) ranged from 0.001 to 0.257.

Overall, considerable improvement was ~~observed~~achieved for both ~~in~~ calibration and validation periods for several reservoirs such as the Dickson, Gardiner, Ghost, Int. Amistad, Int. Falcon, Kayrakkum, Sirikit, Yellowtail, and Glenmore. However, as shown in Fig 11, the improvements of DZTR model performance during calibration do not usually guarantee performance improvement in validation. This is because, as for any other types of model as well, the properties of the calibration and validation periods might differ significantly. In particular, the calibrated Pareto solution does not show the same trade-off or level of performance during validation when there is considerable change in inflow properties as a result of consecutive wet or dry years. Examples of this condition are shown for Glen Canyon (similarly Bhumibol, Fort Randall, and Fort Peck) where the calibration period had more wet and high inflow years than the validation period. Such considerable changes of inflow, storage, and release results in performance degradation during the validation period.- In general, a small change in inflow, storage, or release for the validation period can change the shape of the trade-off. However, the calibrated parameters in most cases were still capable of producing good performance during validation close to or better than that of the generalized parameterization for the same period.

To further test the role of the calibration period, we calibrated all reservoirs using the whole observational record. The result of this test is shown in Fig. 12 which demonstrates the strong role of the calibration period. All reservoirs showed trade-off between storage and release fitting. The solution resulted in a consistent Pareto pattern similar to the split-sample calibration results. The median NSE (Flow) and NSE (Storage) improvement when using the whole observational record for calibration are approximately 0.1 and 0.12 respectively, while the maximum improvement reached 0.45 and 0.55 for some reservoirs. High improvements on storage and flow simulations in the case of whole-period-calibration are mostly observed on reservoirs that have considerable shift of observed storage and flow across the period of observation period. Fig. 13 shows some example reservoirs that had considerable improvements such as Bhumibol, Canyon Ferry, Int. Amistad, Int. Falcon, Navajo, and Trinity dams, compared to generalized parameters (Fig. 6). Similarly, for the remaining reservoirs, calibrating the whole period showed (Fig. 13) better agreement of daily and monthly simulations with the observations, even for years with extreme deviations that are most likely associated with extreme dry and wet conditions. Additionally, the long-term average simulations (Fig. 14) showed that calibrating using the whole period reduced the deviation between simulations and

observations, and in most cases the Pareto simulation range encompasses the observation. Overall, the calibration period test indicates the benefit of using long-term observation for parametrization (even for generalized parameterization) to allow the parametrization to represent behaviour in extreme periods. Thus, we recommend using as much data as available to parameterize the model for a specific reservoir so that all information on reservoir operation will be accounted for.

5 ~~The DZTR scheme introduces more parameters to the host land surface model. can easily become over parameterized.~~
~~However, its parameters are external to those of land surface model and are determined a priori using storage and release data.~~
~~The decision of the time scale to use for specifying the parameters is left to the modeller. Given that storage (or level) and~~
~~outflow data are required to calculate the parameters, the~~ The user has ~~modeller will have~~ the ability to investigate ~~see~~ the
10 ~~seasonal patterns in~~of the storage and release data and decide whether a monthly or a coarser time scale (e.g., quarterly) would
~~be sufficient. The scheme is flexible in that regard.~~In fact, the configuration of DZTR is also flexible to use any user-specified
zoning that are available from observation, reservoir information or zoning values specified in other studies such as Zhao et
al. (2016).

4.5 DZTR model test within the MESH model

15 Finally, the generalized parametrization of the DZTR model was integrated into the MESH model and tested to
simulate six reservoirs in the Saskatchewan River Basin (Gardiner, St Mary, Waterton, Oldman, Ghost and Dickson dams)
and one reservoir (Bennet dam) in the Mackenzie River Basin, both in Western Canada. The reservoir simulation was run
using MESH ~~modeled~~modelled inflows at a half-hourly time step, the ~~same as the usual~~ MESH ~~modeling~~ time step, and the
performance metrics were calculated at a daily time step. The MESH modelled inflows are considered to represent the base-
case scenario, and the inflow can be assumed as ~~the regulated or~~ natural flows depending on ~~if~~ whether there are dams upstream
20 or not ~~respectively, that would have occurred if there had been no reservoirs.~~

~~Figure~~Fig. 12–15 illustrates that the ~~uncalibrated~~generalized DZTR model generally improves upon having no
representation of the reservoirs in the model. This improvement is apparent in the NSE values of the flow, which increase with
the DZTR model. The only exception is Dickson dam with a small reduction in NSE. The importance of integration of the
DZTR model was predominant for the Gardiner and Bennett dams, which are highly regulated reservoirs ($c > 0.5$) when
25 compared to the other reservoirs tested in MESH.

 This general improvement of flow simulation when comparing a reservoir model to the no-reservoir assumption is,
of course, not surprising. What is important to note, however, is that the improvement in NSE can be dramatic without
calibration of the DZTR parameters. This is important for many LSM applications where calibration is generally not performed.
Hanasaki et al. (2006) illustrated d that their method is superior to the natural lake (or unregulated reservoir) method applied in
30 many CMs and H-LSMs, and this paper shows that the DZTR model improves upon the results of Hanasaki et al. (2006).
Therefore, it is natural to assume that the DZTR model would also be an improvement in uncalibrated H-LSM applications.
However, calibration is very common in CM or H-LSM applications in which the DZTR model would likely be employed. A
full comparison of calibrated results between a no-reservoir case, natural lake (or unregulated reservoir), and the DZTR model

(and the other reservoir models) is beyond the scope of this paper. Again, given the improvements shown with the uncalibrated DZTR model when compared with other uncalibrated models, and the general improvements shown here when calibrating the DZTR model, it is assumed that calibrating the DZTR model within a CM or H-LSM would improve upon calibrating an unregulated reservoir model, or the other reservoir models compared in this paper.

5 The storage simulation showed low NSE (Storage) value for St. Mary and Waterton dams and negative NSE (Storage) for Oldman and Ghost dams. However, the simulation showed a reasonable representation of storage variability, but with considerable underestimation. This underestimation in storage in ~~Figure~~Fig. 12-15 is attributable to the fact that the modelled inflow is underestimated. It is expected that calibration of the land-surface parameters in conjunction with the DZTR parameters in MESH would improve the modelled inflows and resulting modelled reservoir storage.

10 It is worth mentioning again that H-LSMs, such as MESH, can also be used for the original purpose of LSMs, which is to represent fluxes from the land-surface to the atmosphere. If the approach improves modelled flows where reservoirs operate, it could result in a better parameterization of the LSM, which should in-turn improve land-surface [fluxes and feedbacks to the atmosphere](#). ~~Improving the land surface parameterization requires that the reservoir flows and/or storages are used to inform the land surface parameterization through parameter estimation techniques. This is as an area requiring future research.~~

15 4.6 Uncertainties in reservoir operation and DZTR parameterization

Reservoir operation on its own involves considerable uncertainties that is attributed to several factors. One major source of uncertainty in reservoir operation is future inflows (long-term and short-term inflow forecast). The forecast contains errors rooted in the forecast method, the driving climate forecast, snowpack measurements, timing of snowmelt and the statistical (stationarity) assumptions to generate inflows based on historical inflows. The inflow forecast uncertainty is more significant during flood seasons because it involves subjective decisions of operators to avoid the risk of dam overtopping and downstream flooding. Other sources of uncertainty in reservoir operation include changes in demand over time because of increases in demand for irrigation, power, water supply, etc. The purpose of the reservoir can also change from its initial intended purpose (e.g., adding a hydropower station to an irrigation dam). These changes are only implicitly captured by the DZTR scheme as implied in the storage and release time series used for parameterizing it for a specific reservoir.

25 Given the above uncertainties, even the actual reservoir operation may deviate from the designed reservoir operation rule curve. Some of the decisions of reservoir operators are spontaneous, ad-hoc, and depend on experiences that are not usually documented. Thus, there are difficulties to accurately represent the historical operation or to establish accurate relationships between reservoir storage, inflow, and release. These relationships typically contain considerable noise e.g., different release values for the same storage level during the same season. As a result, these uncertainties considerably influence the parameterization of the model derived to represent the reservoir operation based on historical observations of each reservoir. This is particularly true for the algorithm presented because of two main factors. Firstly, the presented reservoir algorithm assumes that the relationship between reservoir storage and releases follow piecewise linear functions. There is a chance that other functional forms represent such relationship better for some reservoirs. Secondly, in the case of the

generalized parameterization, the bending points in the piece-wise linear functions (zone classification points) are estimated based on fixed probabilities of exceedance extracted from historical data for all reservoirs. A different dataset (of reservoirs and/or time periods) could result in different quantiles. The assumption of having similar bending points of the piecewise linear functions for all reservoirs cannot provide optimal zones for each reservoir. However, we showed that the generalized parameterization performs better compared to other widely used algorithms.

Optimizing storage and release parameters allows to overcome the limitation of generalized bending points of the piecewise linear function by adjusting the bending points so that the best fit can be identified. However, optimization usually does not provide a perfect storage release relationship (i.e., in general, the trade-off between objectives never converges to single point), because the perfect representation only happens in the case of a perfect reservoir model and perfect data. The proposed model, like many other types of models is not an exception because of the uncertainties highlighted in the previous point. Thus, the trade-off between storage and release objectives can be viewed as a measure of the limitation of the reservoir algorithm (piece-wise linear functions, fixed number of zones, etc.) and observation errors. To examine the level of uncertainty of the trade-off, it is important to look at the shape and range of the trade-off on each objective function axis.

As shown in Fig. 11 and Fig. 12, except for few reservoirs, the range of Pareto solutions for each objective function is generally narrow with good NSE values. In such cases, the associated uncertainties are less and the trade-off between improving simulated releases and improving simulated storage is minimal. Conversely, in some cases, an extended spread of the trade-off along one of the axes (objective function) was observed, indicating a higher uncertainty of the algorithm for the process that the axis represent, i.e., reservoir storage or release. This requires further investigations of the datasets and parameterization for those reservoirs and their history of operations. Shifts in operational management of reservoirs do occur and these may obscure the parameterization. These may be detected by careful examination of the available records as well as metadata records of the reservoir history if accessible. The level of noise when determining the parameters could be an indicator of changes in operation.

4.7 Implementation strategies to overcome data limitation

The data requirement is the main limitation of the DZTR model for application at continental and global scales. One approach to overcome data limitations is to integrate our proposed method in land surface/catchment models along with other reservoir operation methods (e.g., Hanasaki et al., 2006). Then, within the land surface/catchment models, identifier flags can be used to indicate which method applies to which reservoirs. The DZTR approach can only be activated for reservoirs with data support, while the remaining reservoirs can use other approaches as dictated by data availability. We have been following such an implementation within the MESH model.

As shown in our results, reservoir regulation has a huge impact on downstream flows if the reservoir is highly regulated and/or is of multi-year type ($c > 0.5$). Thus, more emphasis can be put on those reservoirs with $c > 0.5$. At the moment, such methods will be more effective at the regional than global scale (for example for Saskatchewan River Basin in our case), because modellers at regional scale have better access to inflow-storage-outflow data and have better understanding of the

system to acquire the necessary reservoir data. In a land surface hydrologic model, important reservoirs are those causing large changes to the downstream flows and those tend to be the larger ones with generally better data availability.

Data on reservoir storage, inflow and release exist for most reservoirs but sometimes they are not made publically available. Storage data can be obtained from water level data which is generally available for major reservoirs and can be converted to storage. Release data can be deduced from the nearest downstream station. In addition, new initiatives are needed to gather and archive such reservoir datasets and move beyond information on reservoir characteristics that is currently available in databases (e.g., GRanD database - Lehner et al., 2011). One of our recommendation is that the target release and storage data be archived for public use at least for highly regulated and multi-year type dams ($c > 0.5$).

The possibility of estimating storage and release data from different satellite data products is promising: such new data sources will potentially improve the use of methods like the presented reservoir operation (optimized or generalized). More recently, Busker et al. (2019) showed an estimation of volume for 130 reservoirs using surface water dataset and satellite altimetry, which is encouraging.

5 Summary and Conclusions

Human interventions in hydrologic systems through dams and reservoirs significantly change the flow regime of many rivers.

In this paper, we presented an improved reservoir operation model, called the Dynamically Zoned Target Release (DZTR) model that can be integrated into any large-scale hydrological model; here we integrated ~~DZTR~~-it into the MESH hydrology-land surface model. The DZTR model is based on parametric piecewise linear functions that approximate reservoir release rules that may be used by reservoir operators. We proposed two strategies to identify the parameters of this model: one based on the distributions of historical storage and release to generate the so-called “generalized parameters” and the other one based on direct calibration to observed storage and release time series via multi-objective optimization. We first tested the DZTR model individually across a number of reservoirs around the globe, and then tested its performance when plugged into the MESH model for a subset of those reservoirs. Our conclusions include can be summarized as:

- The DZTR reservoir operation model performed well in reproducing observed storage and release time series in (almost) all reservoirs tested and outperformed the existing reservoir models proposed by Hanasaki et al. (2006) and Wisser et al. (2010). The model was capable of capturing inter- and intra-annual variability of both reservoir storage and release.
- As expected, calibration significantly improved the performance of the DZTR model compared with the performance of the “generalized parameters”. There often exists, however, a significant tradeoff between fitting reservoir storage versus release, signifying the importance of accounting for both storage and release in a multi-objective fashion.
- The integration of the ~~DZTR~~ reservoir model into the MESH hydrology-land surface modelling system was straightforward and improved the overall model performance compared with the traditional methods of accounting

for reservoirs in H-LSMs. This integration can be viewed as a successful example for improving the representation of reservoir operation in CMs, LSMs and GWSMs.

Future research work may include (1) examining the applicability of the [DTZTR](#) model for regions with severely-limited data by examining the utility of other data sources such those derived from satellite-based observations (Savtchenko et al., 2004; Garambois and Monnier, 2015; Gao et al., 2012) and using area-volume relationship approximated by regular geometric shapes (e.g., Yigzaw et al., 2018); and (2) ~~an~~ [examining](#) direct one- and/or two-way coupling of WMMs with CMs and LSMs towards developing a seamless coupled framework for the simulation of natural-engineered watershed systems.

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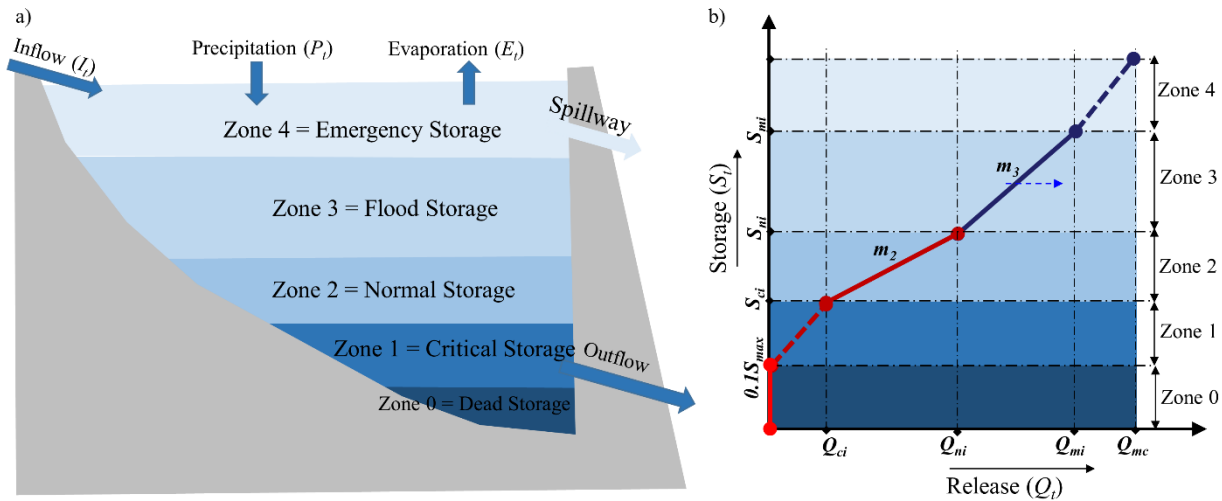
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Figure 1: The schematic representation of reservoir zoning and storage-release function: a) Four (active) reservoir zones with inflow and outflows; b) piecewise linear reservoir release function, m_1 , and m_2 control the slope of the release curve and they change monthly. The upward blue arrow is to indicate that inflow to the reservoir may also be considered in determining the release in zone 3.

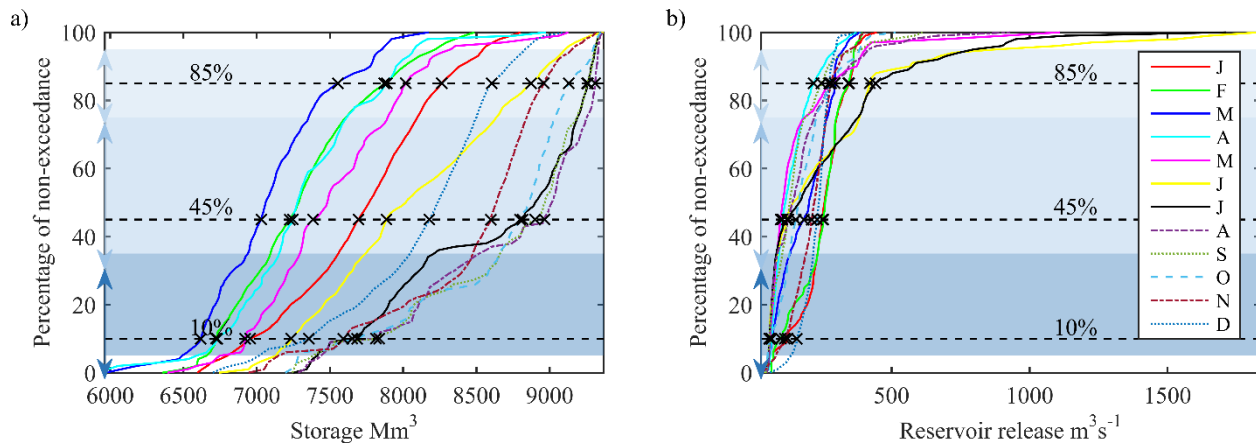
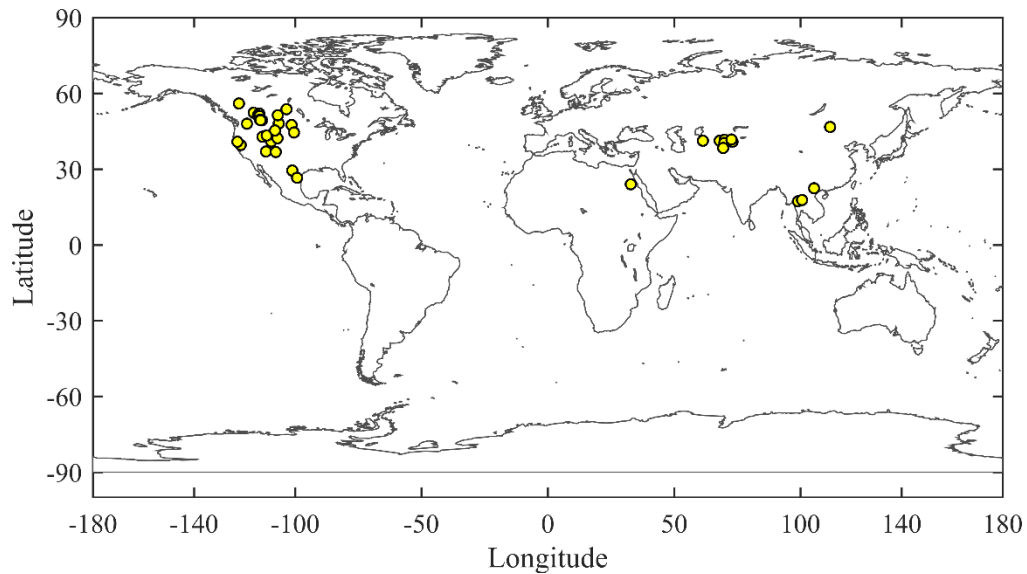
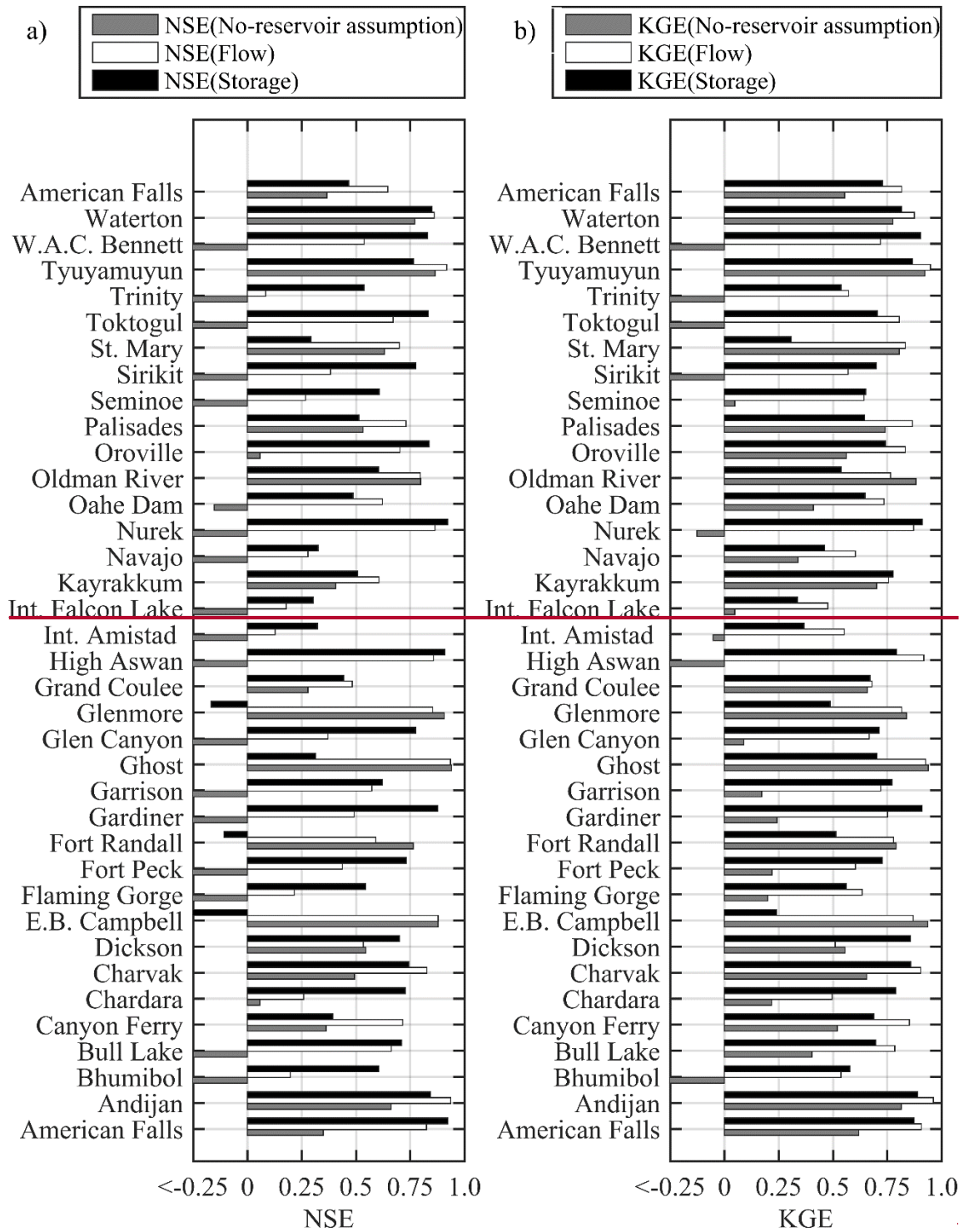


Figure 2: Cumulative Distribution Function (CDF) a) Storage CDF of Gardiner dam b) Reservoir release CDF of Gardiner dam. Double arrows on y-axis shows parametrizations ranges for each generalized parameters.



5 Figure 3: Locations of dams used to evaluate reservoir routing model.



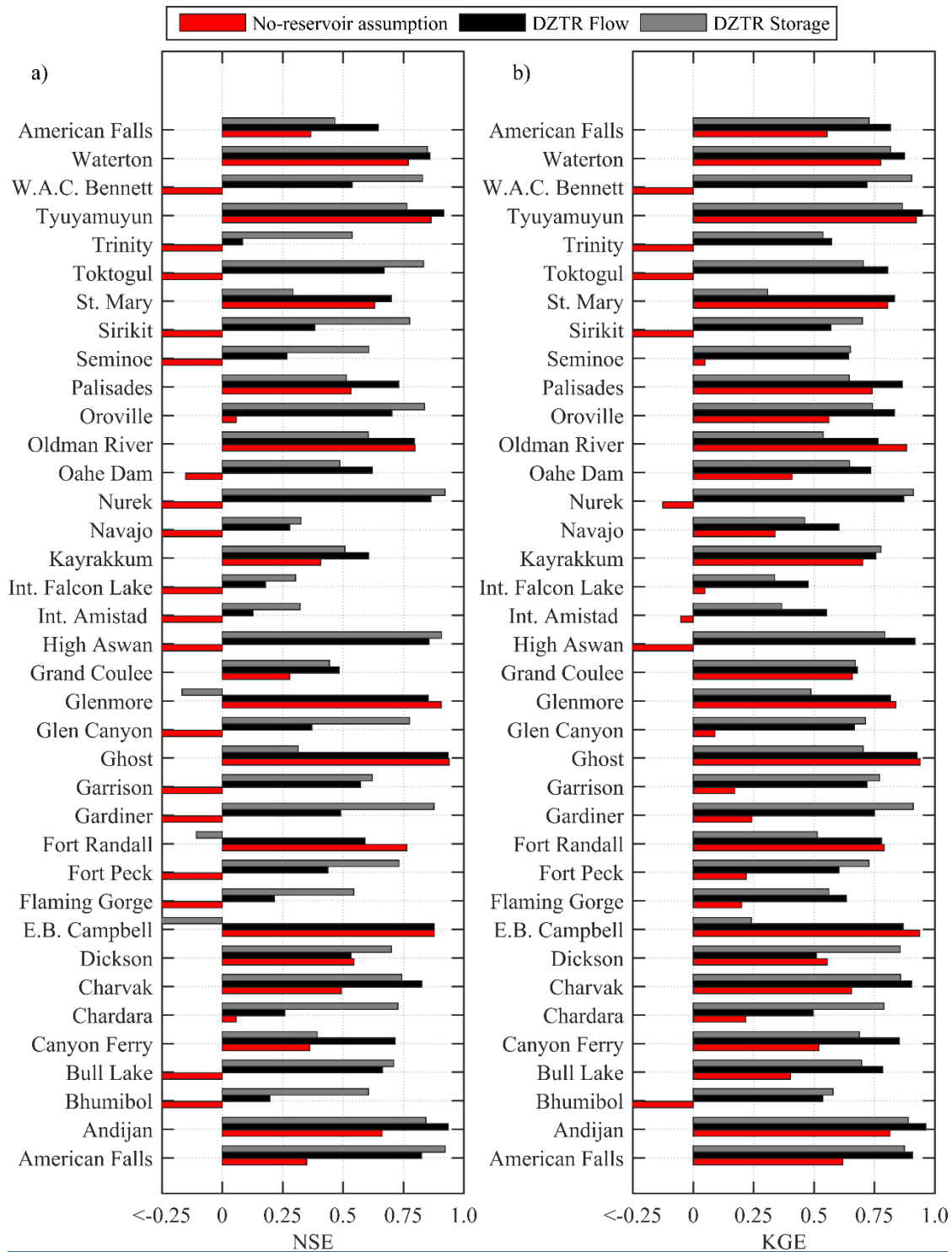
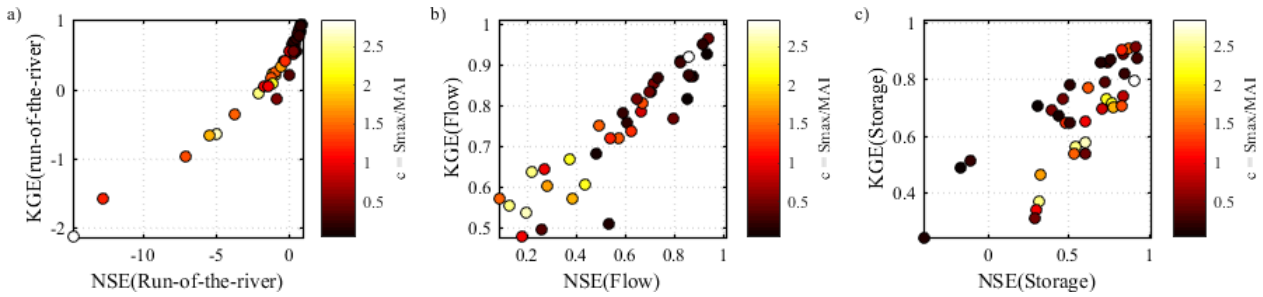


Figure 4: Performance evaluation result of the DZTR model reservoir operation algorithm a) NSE performance metrics, b) KGE performance metrics.



5 Figure 5: Scatter plot between KGE and NSE with regulation scale represented in terms of c a) KGE and NSE on no reservoir condition, b) KGE and NSE on DZTR release, and c) KGE and NSE on DZTR storage.

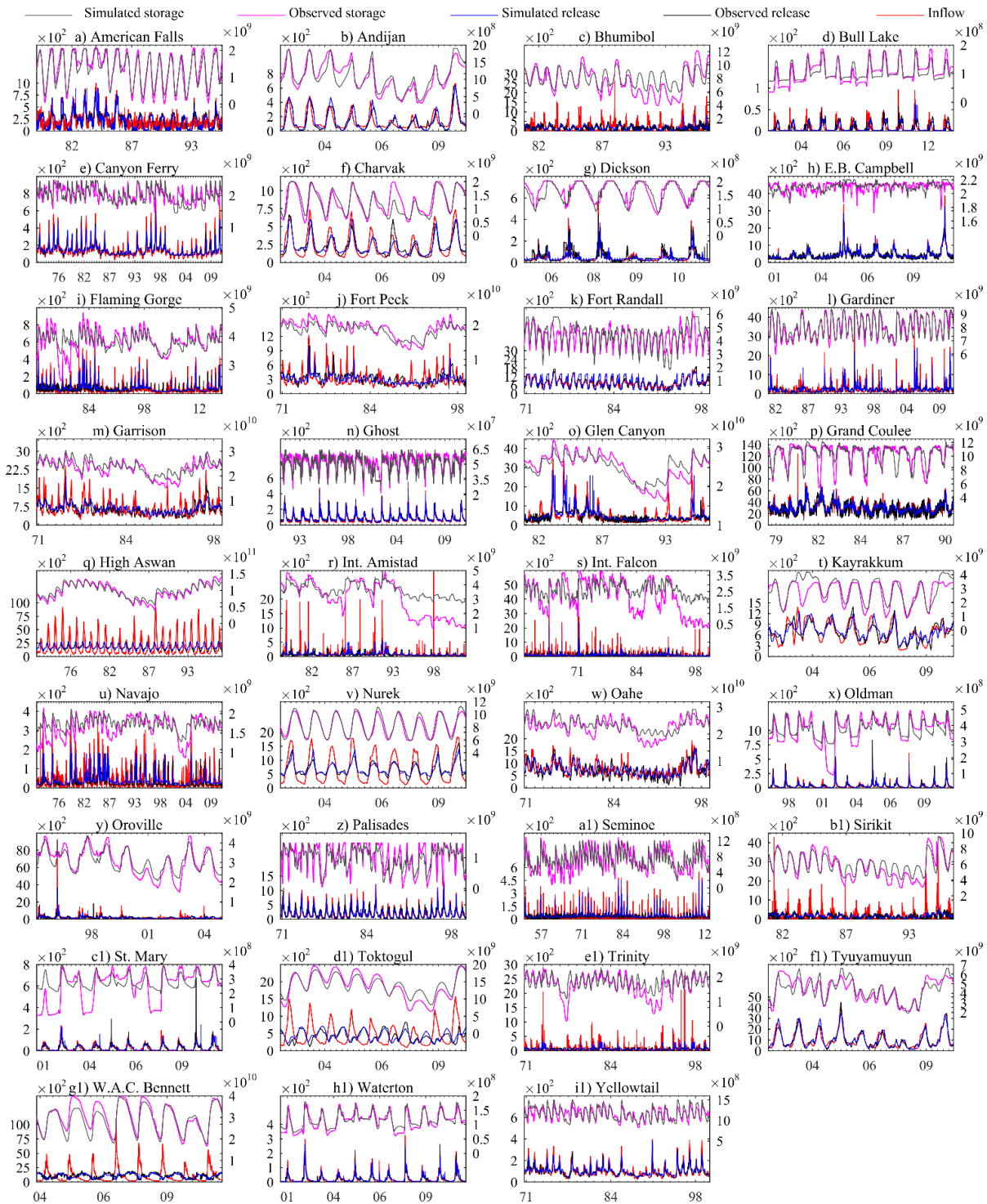


Figure 6: Daily and monthly reservoir simulations using DZTR model with a generalized parametrization, x-axis shows month/year, the primary y-axis shows release (m^3/s) and the secondary y-axis shows storage (m^3).

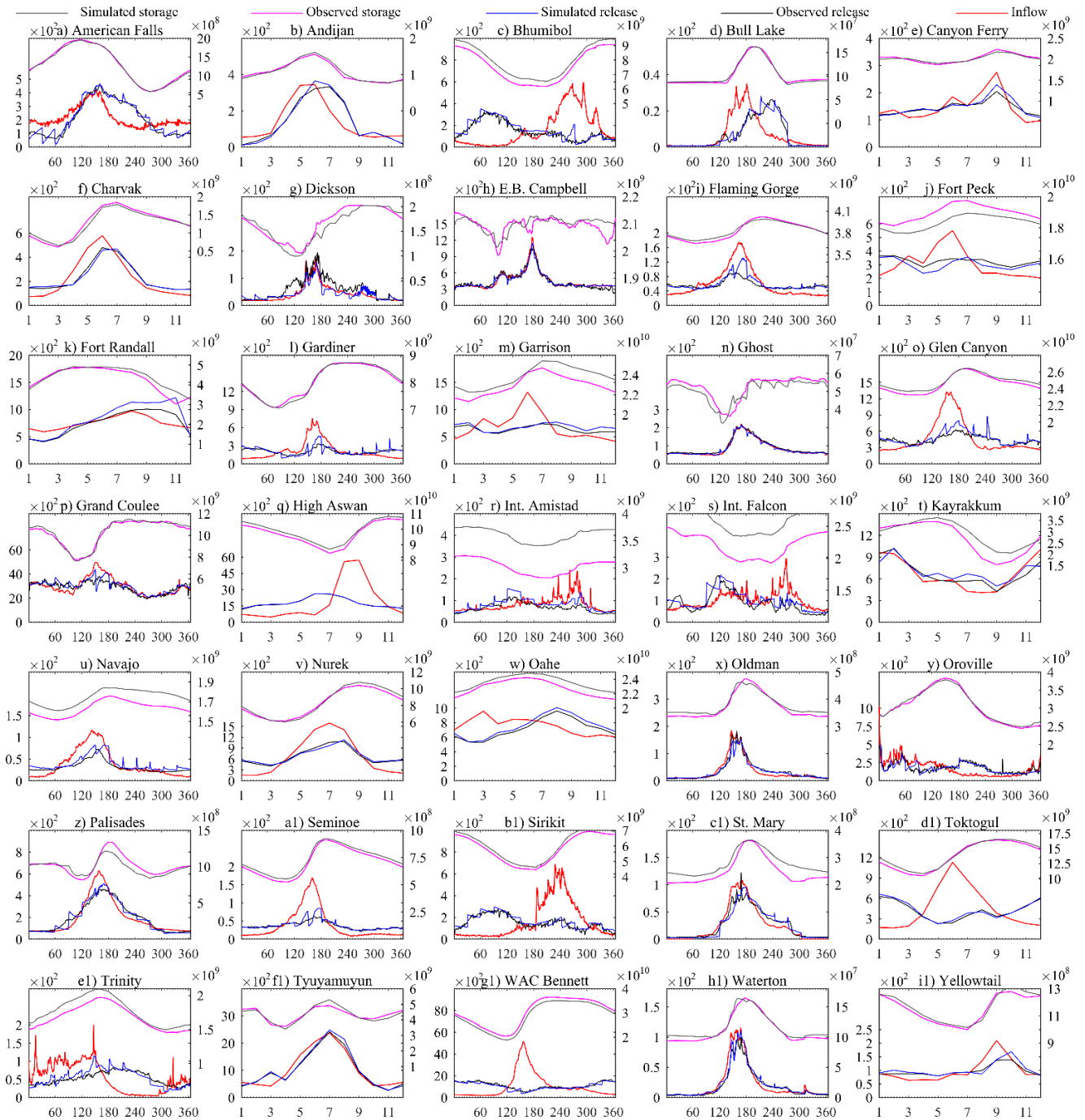
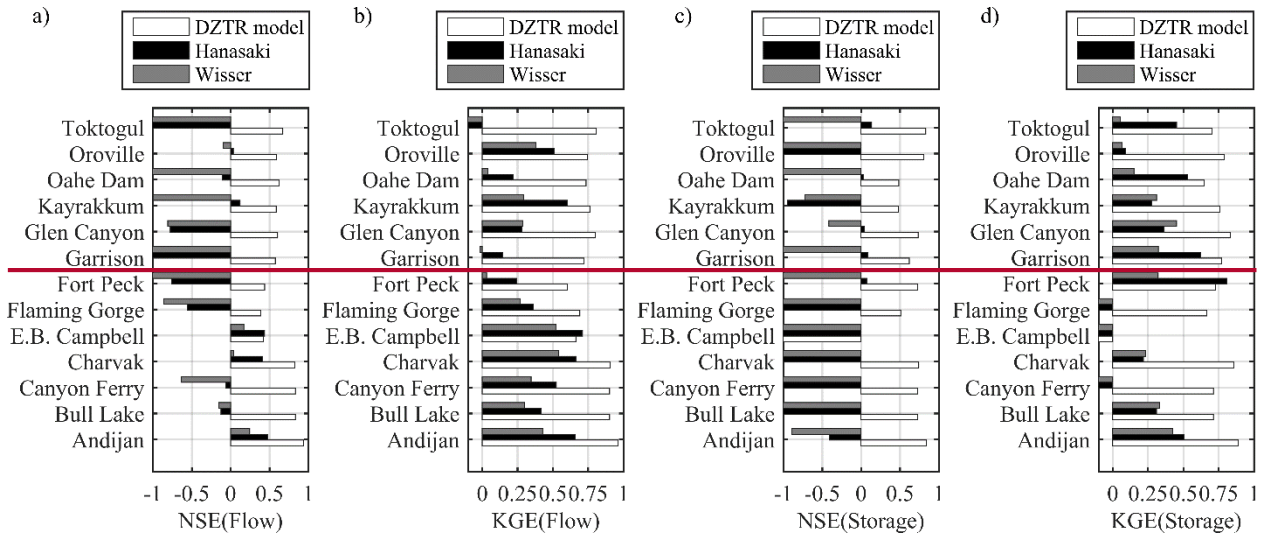


Figure 7: Long-term average daily or monthly reservoir simulations with generalized parametrization, the x-axis shows days (1-365) or months, (1-12) the primary y-axis shows release (m³/s) and the secondary y-axis shows storage (m³).



Here we made correction on the comparison result and the figure below is the correct version

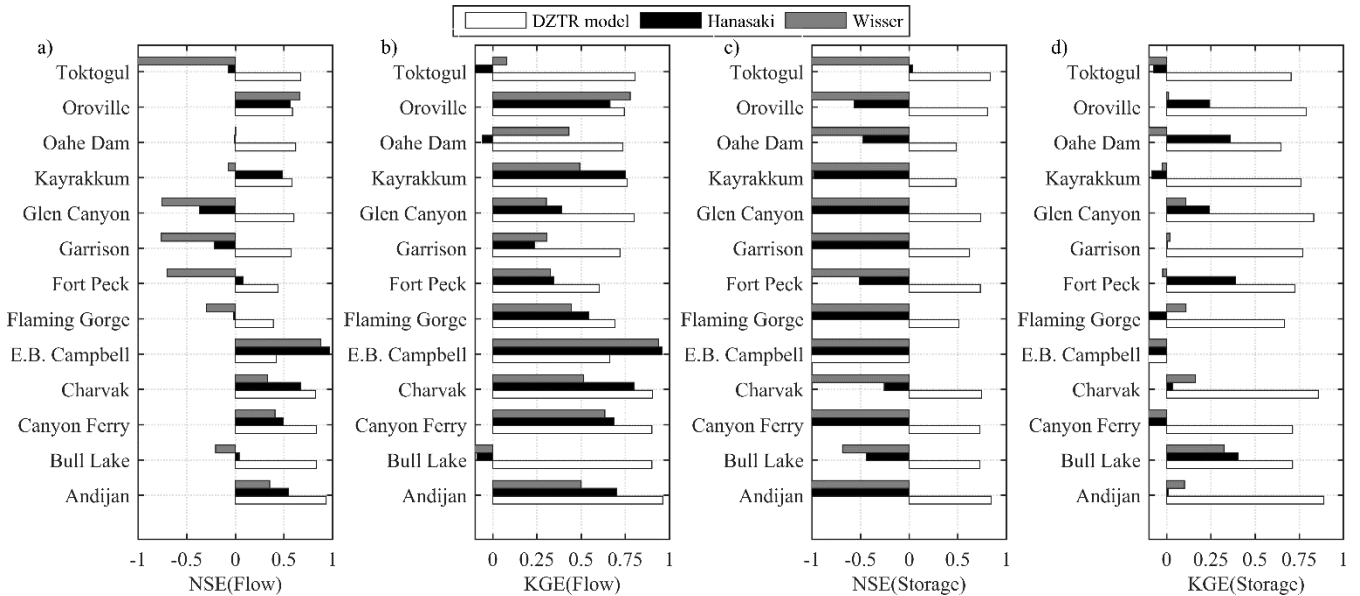


Figure 8: A comparison of our proposed reservoir operation model with generalized parameters with the models of Hanasaki, et al. (2006) and Wisser et al. (2010): a) NSE(Flow), b) KGE(Flow), c) NSE(Storage), d) KGE(Storage).

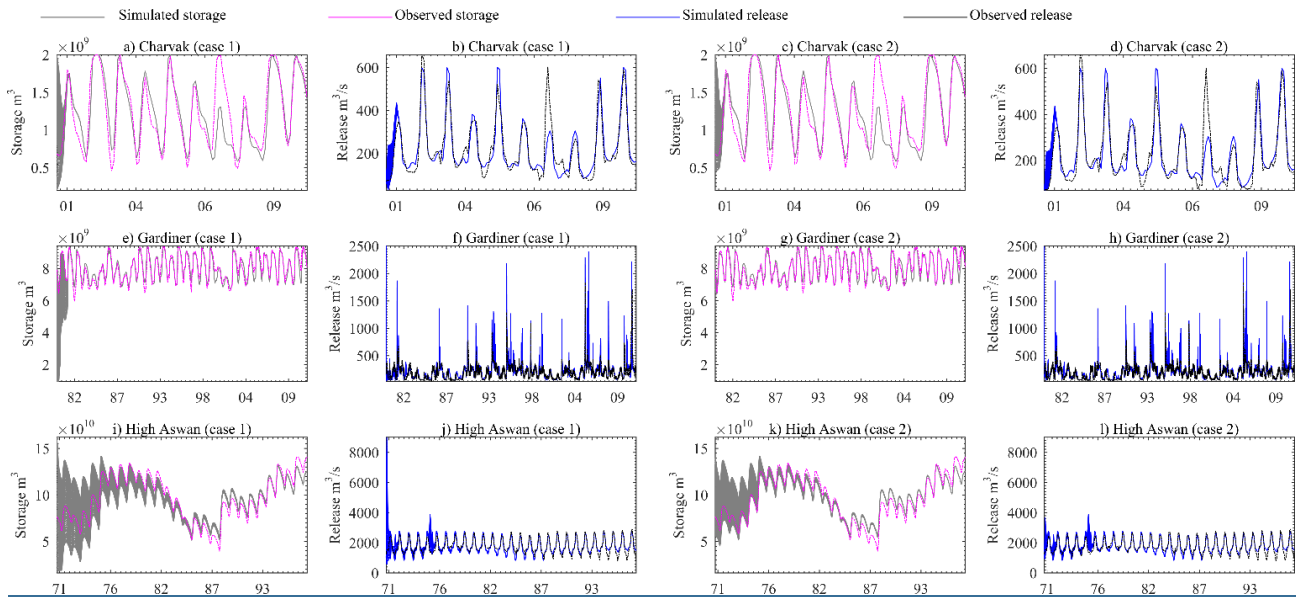


Figure 9: Reservoir initial storage effect on storage and release simulation: a) Charvak storage case 1, b) Charvak release case 1, c) Charvak storage case 2, d) Charvak release case 2, e) Gardiner storage case 1, f) Gardiner release case 1, g) Gardiner storage case 2, h) Gardiner release case 2, i) High Aswan storage case 1, j) High Aswan release case 1, k) High Aswan storage case 2, l) High Aswan release case 2

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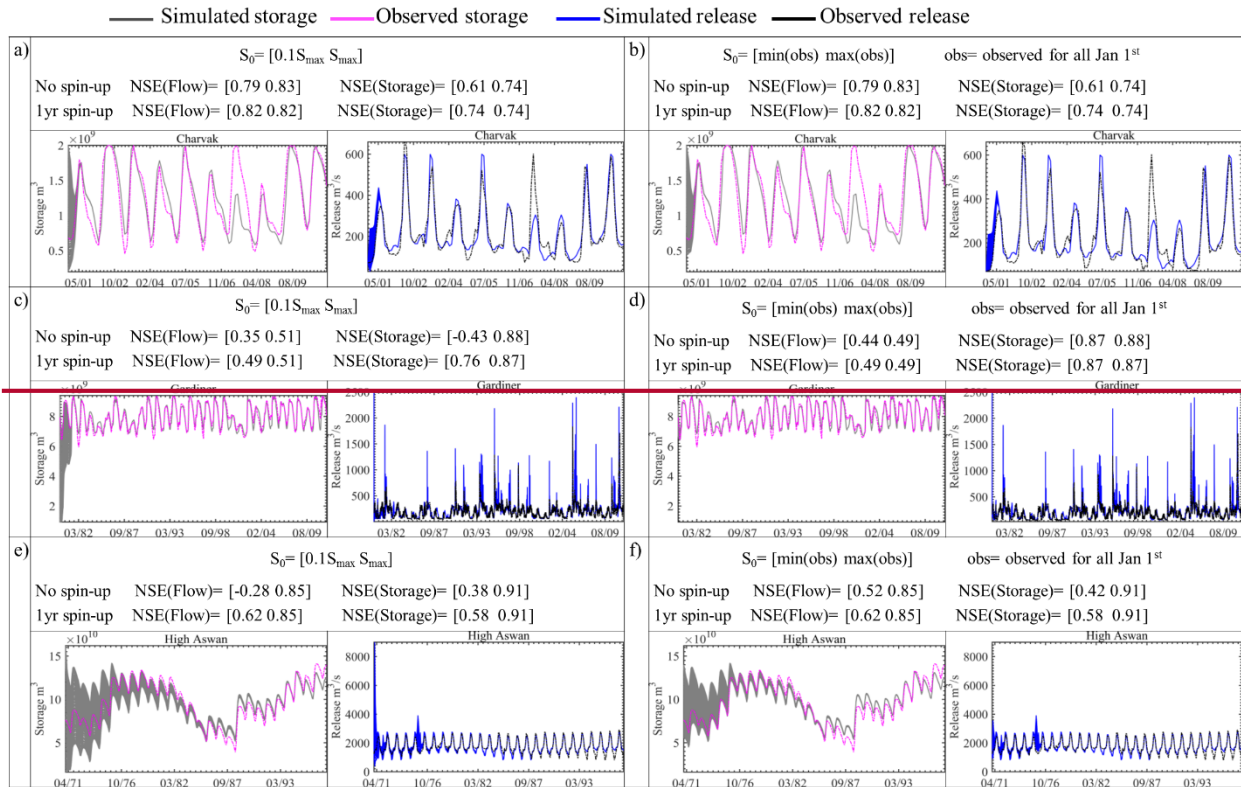


Figure 9: Reservoir initial storage effect on storage and release simulation.

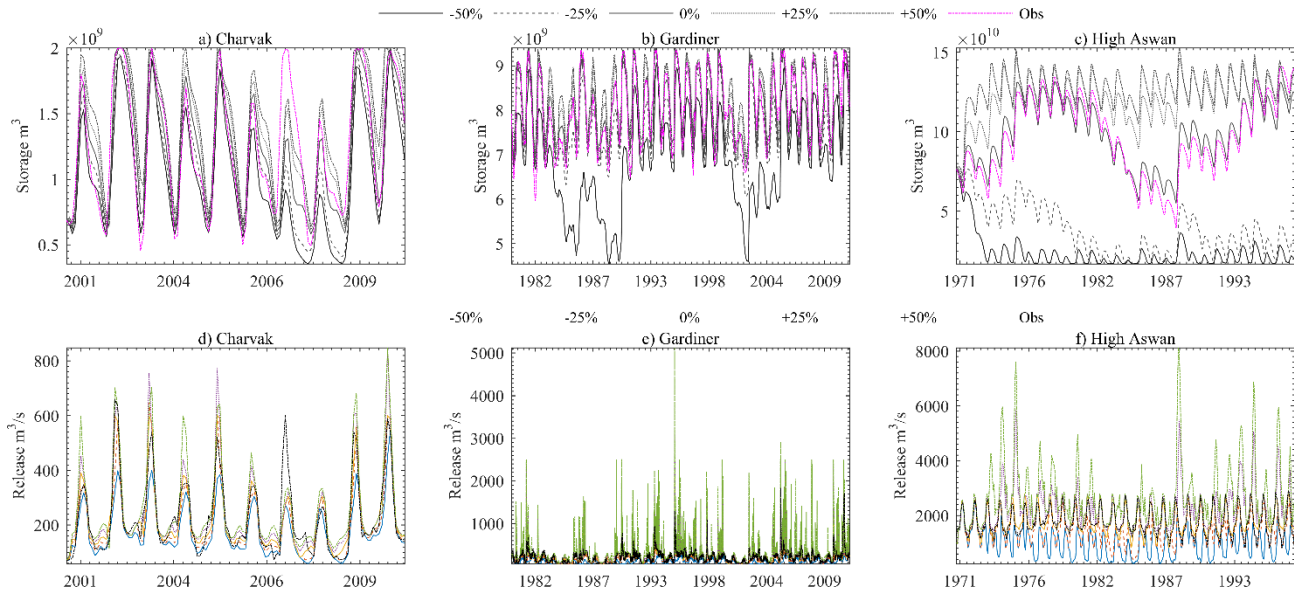


Figure 10: Inflow bias sensitivity test on storage and release simulation; a) Charvak storage, b) Gardiner storage, c)

5 High Aswan storage, d) Charvak release, e) Gardiner release, f) High Aswan release

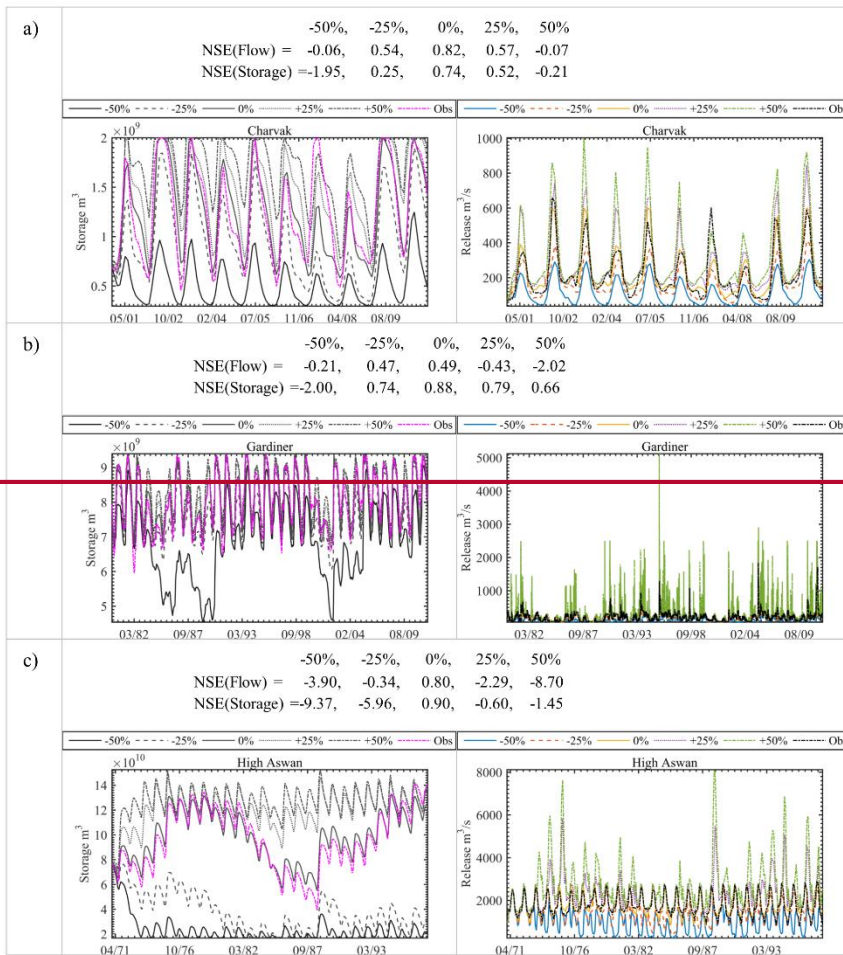


Figure 10: Inflow bias sensitivity test on storage and release simulation.

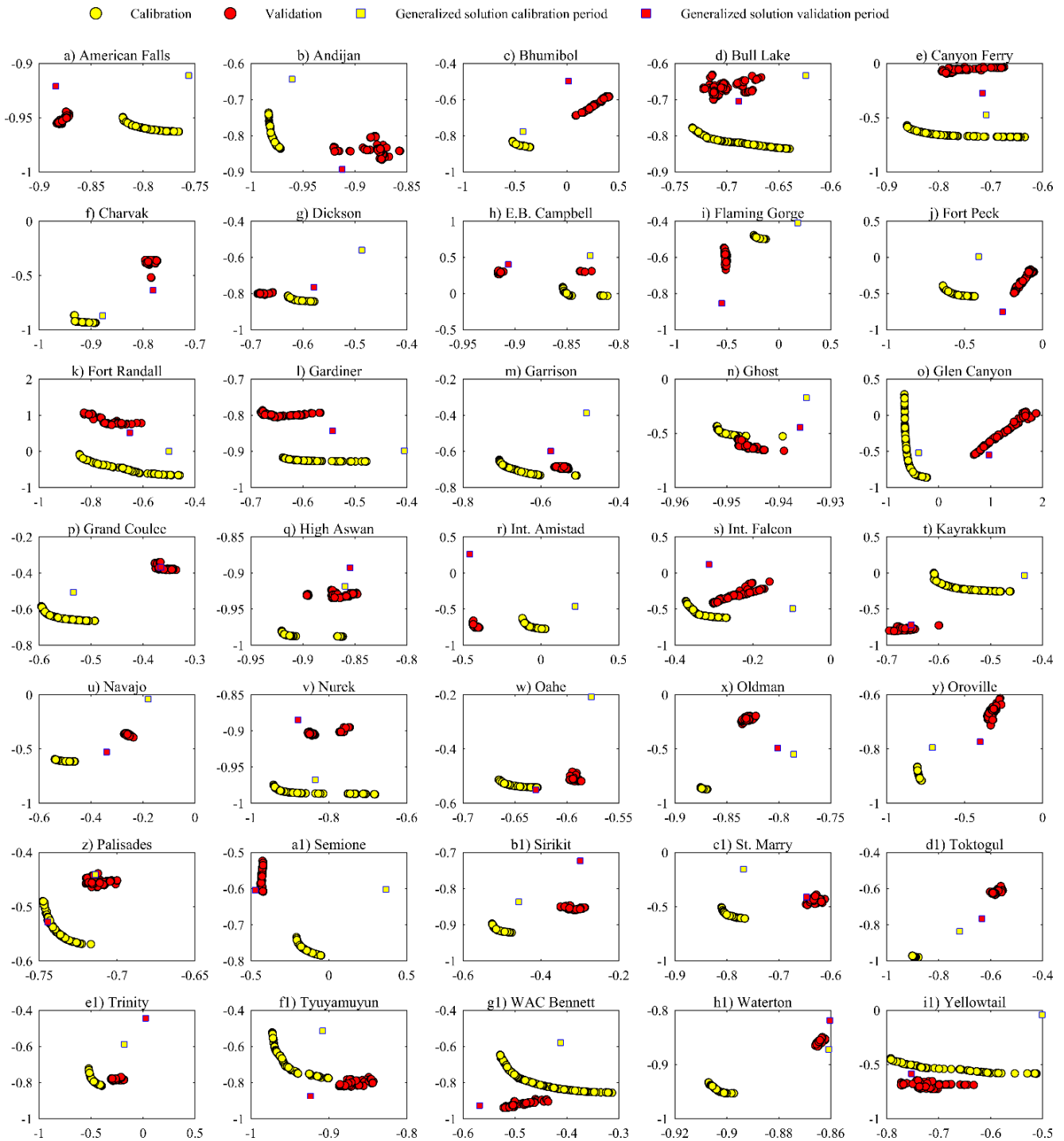


Figure 11: Reservoir release parameter multi-objective calibration result, x-axis shows NSE (flow) multiplied by -1 and the y-axis shows NSE (storage) multiplied by -1.

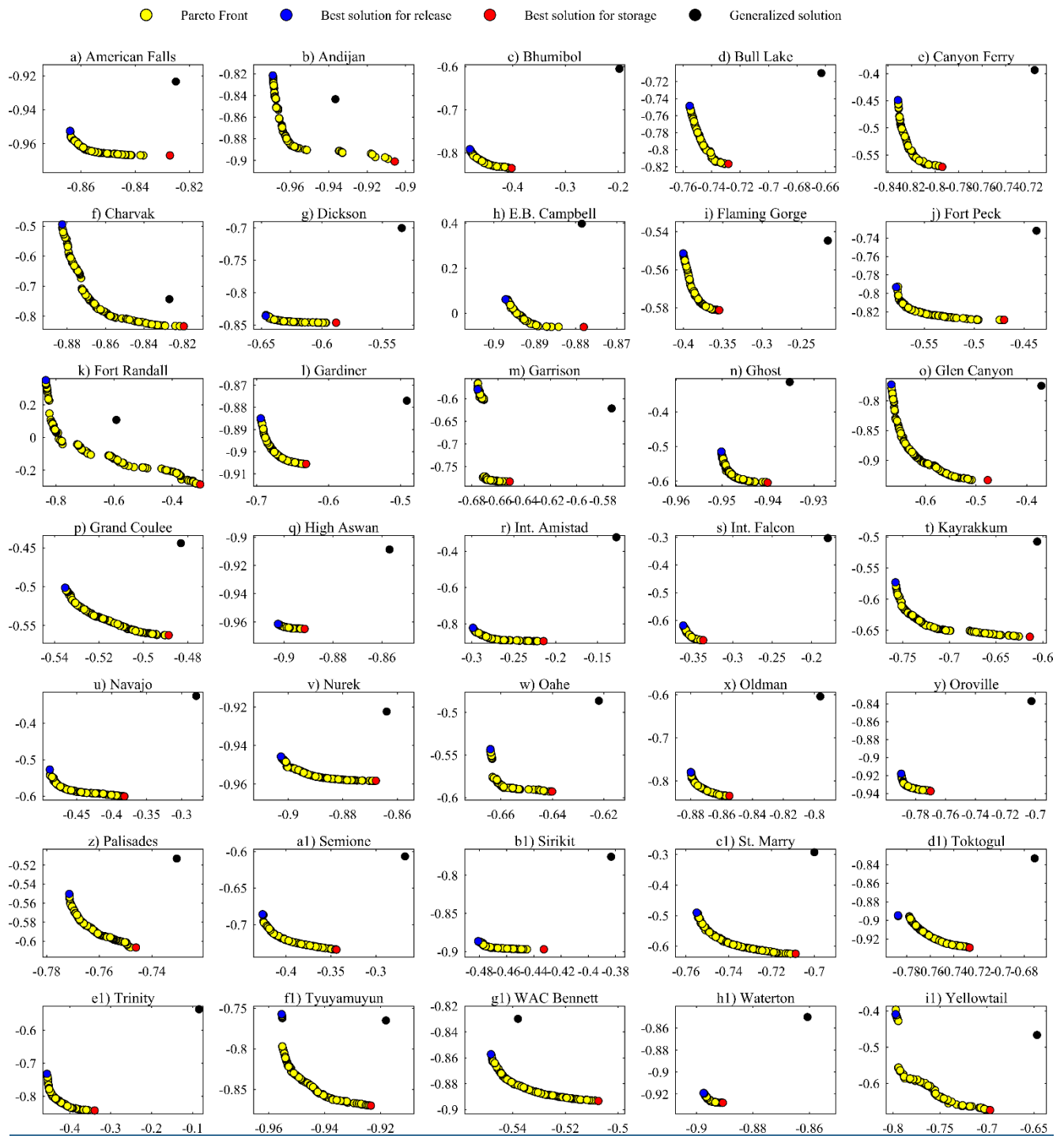


Figure 12: Reservoir release parameter multi-objective calibration using all available data for each reservoirs, x-axis shows NSE (flow) multiplied by -1 and the y-axis shows NSE (storage) multiplied by -1.

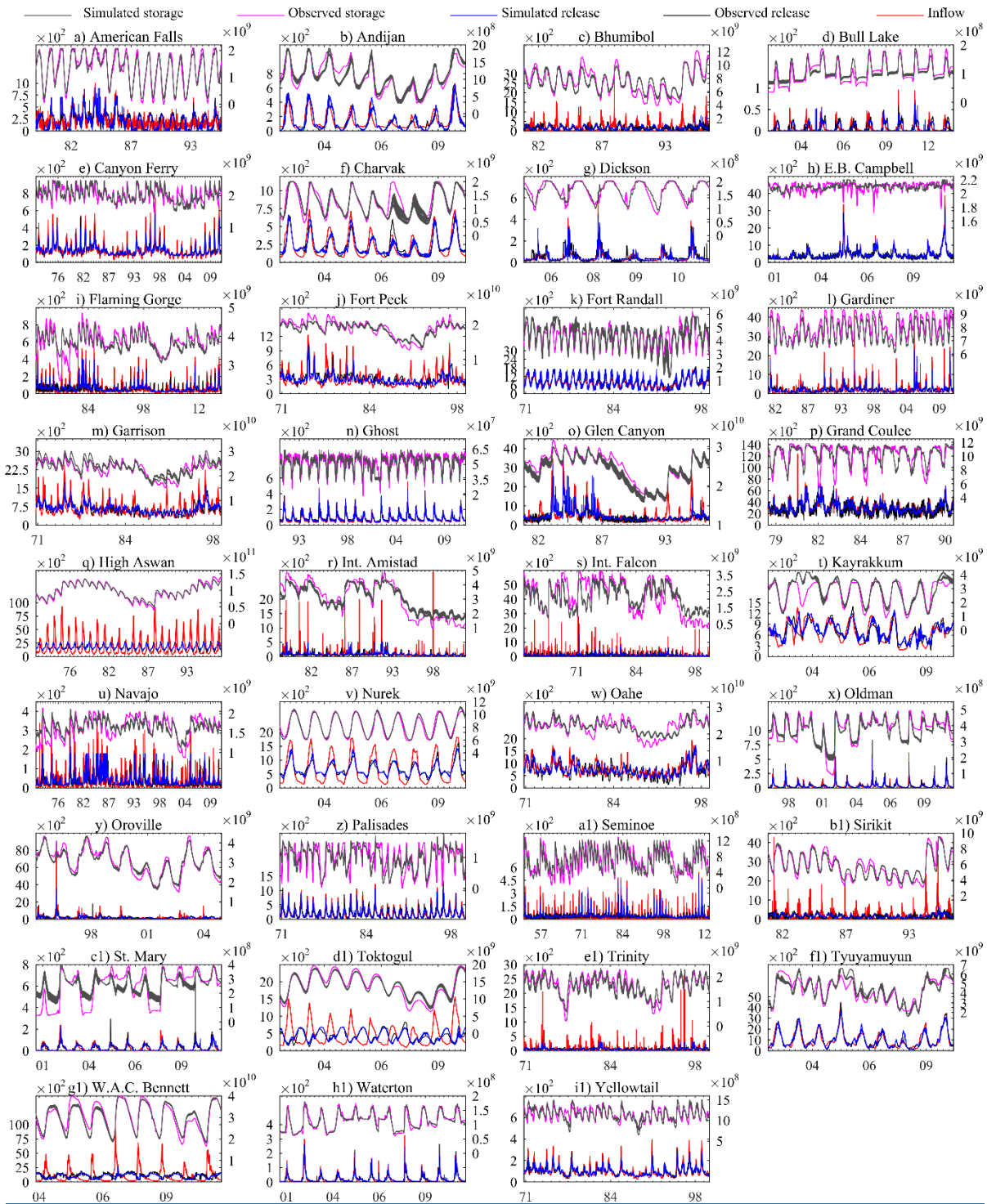


Figure 13: Daily and monthly reservoir simulations using DZTR model with a generalized parametrization, x-axis shows month/year, the primary y-axis shows release (m^3/s) and the secondary y-axis shows storage (m^3).

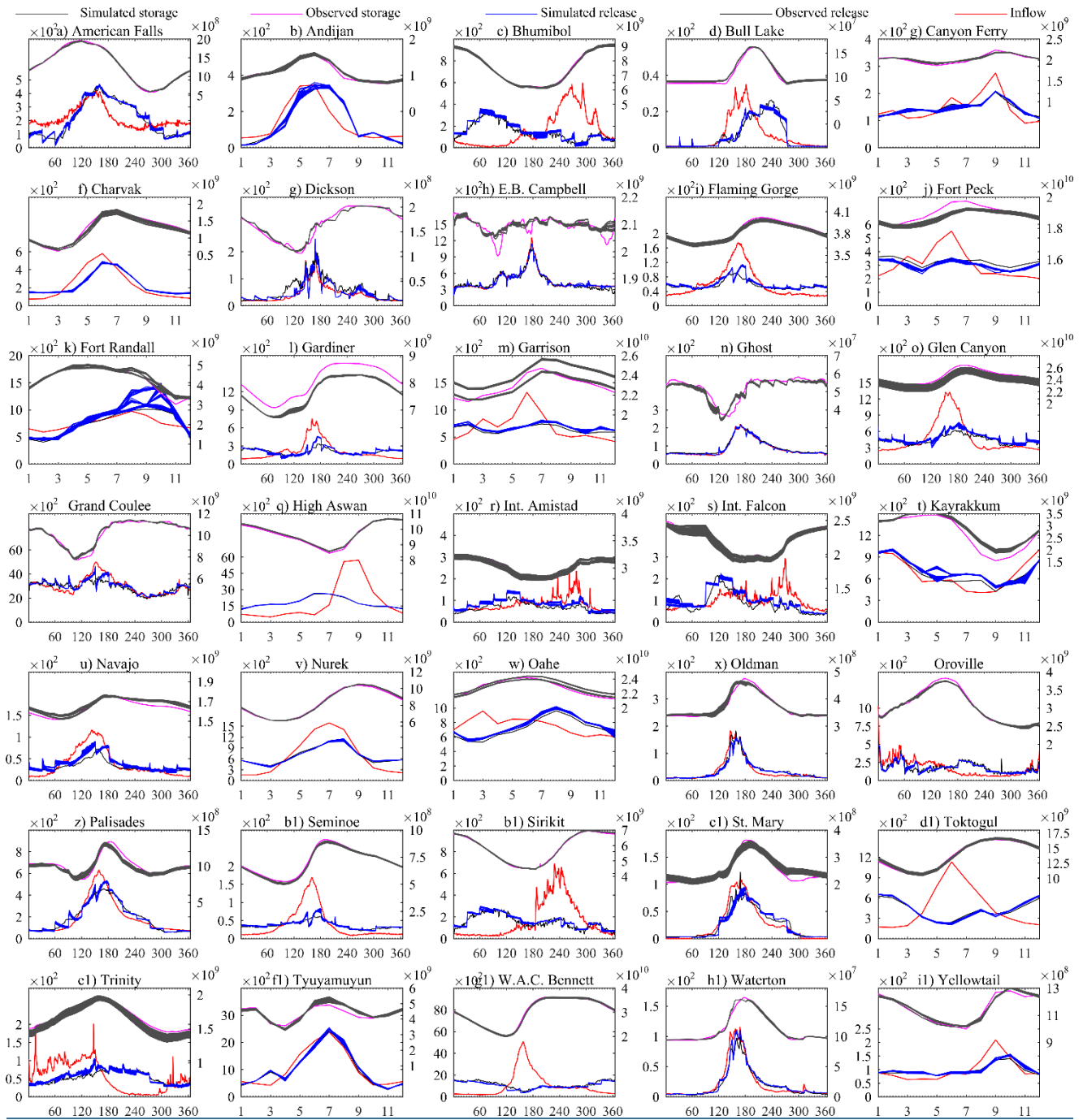


Figure 14: Long-term average daily or monthly reservoir simulations with generalized parametrization, the x-axis shows days (1-365) or months, (1-12) the primary y-axis shows release (m^3/s) and the secondary y-axis shows storage (m^3).

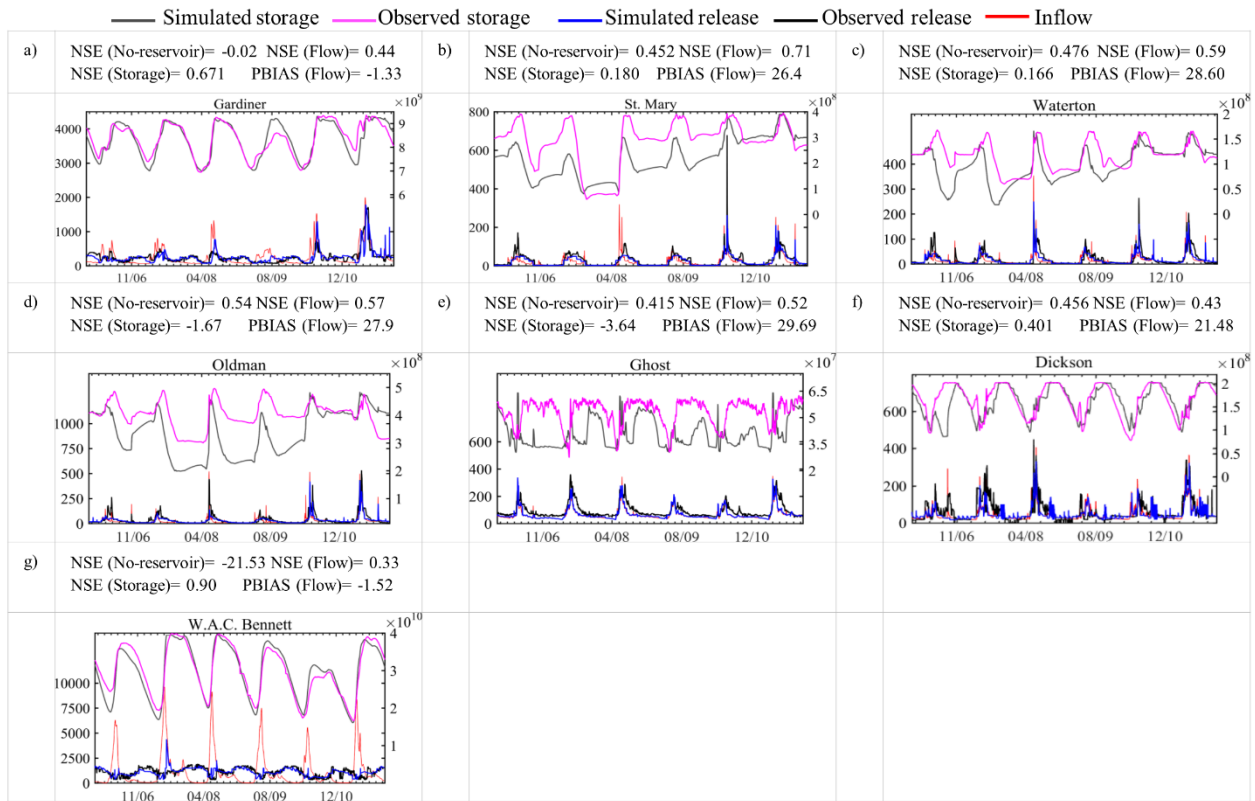


Figure 12.15: Reservoir simulation results within MESH model run for selected reservoirs. X-axis shows time (days), the primary y-axis shows release (m^3/s) and the secondary y-axis shows storage (m^3).

5 Table 1: Summary of reservoirs

Dam name	Country	Year	Main Purpose	LONG (°)	LAT (°)	Dam height (m)	Capacity (MCM)	$c = \left(\frac{Capacity}{MAI} \right)$	Simulation Period (years)	Percentage Bias (PBIAS) Release vs Inflow
American Falls	USA	1977	IR	-112.87	42.78	32	2061.5	0.303	1978-1995 (18)	-3.29
Andijan (y)	Uzbekistan	1974	HP	73.06	40.77	115	1900	0.444	2001-2013 ^m (13)	-0.98
Bhumibol	Thailand	1964	IR	98.97	17.24	154	13462	2.645	1980-1996 (16)	-10.29
Big Horn	Canada	1972	HP	-116.32	52.31	150	1770	0.747	2002-2011 (10)	16.08
Bull Lake (y)	USA	1938	IR	-109.04	43.21	24	187.2	0.883	2001-2013(13)	-3.74
Canyon Ferry (y)	USA	1954	HP	-111.73	46.65	69	2464.4	0.543	1971-2011 ^m (40)	-1.46
Chardara	Kazakhstan	1968	IR	67.96	41.24	27	6700	0.354	2001-2010 ^m (10)	7.57

Charvak(y)	Uzbekistan	1977	HP	69.97	41.62	168	2000	0.284	2001-2010 ^m (10)	1.6
Dickson	Canada	1983	WS	-114.21	52.05	40	203	0.167	2005-2011(6)	27.3
E.B. Campbell(y)	Canada	1963	HP	-103.40	53.66	34	2200	0.153	2000-2011(12)	-1.69
Flaming Gorge(y)	USA	1964	WS	-109.42	40.91	153	4336.3	2.460	1971-2017(46)	-6.37
Fort Peck(y)	USA	1957	FC	-106.41	48.00	78	23560	2.210	1970-1999 ^m (30)	6.33
Fort Randal	USA	1953	FC	-98.55	43.06	50	6683	0.240	1970-1999 ^m (30)	-1.43
Gardiner	Canada	1968	IR	-106.86	51.27	69	9870	1.460	1980-2011(32)	-3.44
Garrison(y)	USA	1953	FC	-101.43	47.50	64	30220	1.436	1970-1999 ^m (30)	-5.79
Ghost	Canada	1929	HP	-114.70	51.21	42	132	0.048	1990-2011(22)	5.43
Glen Canyon(y)	USA	1966	HP	-111.48	36.94	216	25070	2.230	1980-1996(17)	-6.87
Grand Coulee	USA	1942	IR	-118.98	47.95	168	6395.6	0.124	1978-1990(12)	-3.37
High Aswan	Egypt	1970	IR	32.88	23.96	111	162000	2.843	1971-1997 ^m (26)	-3.34
Int. Amistad	USA/Mexico	1969	IR	-101.05	29.45	87	6330	2.457	1977-2002(25)	-20.28
Int. Falcon Lake	USA/Mexico	1954	FC	-99.17	26.56	53	3920	1.045	1958-2001(43)	-14.48
Kayrakkum(y)	Tajikistan	1959	HP	69.82	40.28	32	4160	0.199	2001-2010 ^m (10)	1.19
Navajo	USA	1963	IR	-107.60	36.80	123	1278	1.744	1971-2011(40)	-21.07
Nurek	Tajikistan	1980	IR	69.35	38.37	300	10500	0.540	2001-2010 ^m (10)	0.28
Oahe Dam(y)	USA	1966	FC	-100.40	44.45	75	29110	1.244	1970-1999 ^m (30)	-5.366
Oldman River	Canada	1991	IR	-113.90	49.56	76	490	0.446	1996-2011(16)	3.98
Oroville(y)	USA	1968	FC	-121.48	39.54	235	4366.5	0.804	1995-2004(11)	4.20
Palisades	USA	1957	IR	-111.20	43.33	82	1480.2	0.242	1970-2000(31)	0.48
Seminole	USA	1939	IR	-106.91	42.16	90	1254.8	1.048	1951-2013 ^m (63)	-4.10
Sirikit	Thailand	1974	IR	100.55	17.76	114	9510	1.834	1981-1996(16)	-7.32
St. Mary	Canada	1951	IR	-113.12	49.36	62	394.7	0.492	2000-2011(12)	0.16
Toktogul(y)	Kyrgyzstan	1978	HP	72.65	41.68	215	19500	1.393	2001-2010 ^m (10)	-6.34
Trinity	USA	1962	IR	-122.76	40.80	164	2633.5	1.470	1970-2000(31)	-4.18
Tyuyamuyun	Turkmenistan	N/A	IR	61.40	41.21	N/A	6100	0.204	2001-2010 ^m (10)	-2.43
W.A.C. Bennett	Canada	1967	HP	-122.20	56.02	183	74300	1.200	2003-2011(9)	5.41
Waterton	Canada	1992	IR	-113.67	49.32	55	172.7	0.258	2000-2011(12)	-10.34
Yellowtail	USA	1967	IR	-107.95	45.30	160	1760.6	0.489	1970-2000 ^m (31)	-1.693

²Main purpose: **WS**-Water Supply, **HP**-Hydropower **IR**-Irrigation **FC**-Flood Control

(m) Represents monthly data and simulation

(y) Represents multiple reservoir models are compared on this reservoir

Table 2: Reservoir initial storage effect on storage and release simulation

		<u>Case 1</u>		<u>Case 2</u>	
		$S_0 = [0.1S_{max} S_{max}]$		$S_0 = [\min(\text{obs}) \max(\text{obs})]$ obs= observed for all Jan 1 st	
		<u>NSE(Storage)</u>	<u>NSE(Flow)</u>	<u>NSE(Storage)</u>	<u>NSE(Flow)</u>
Charavak	<u>No spin-up</u>	[0.61 0.74]	[0.79 0.83]	[0.61 0.74]	[0.79 0.83]
	<u>1yr spin-up</u>	[0.74 0.74]	[0.82 0.82]	[0.74 0.74]	[0.82 0.82]
Gardiner	<u>No spin-up</u>	[-0.43 0.88]	[0.35 0.51]	[0.87 0.88]	[0.44 0.49]
	<u>1yr spin-up</u>	[0.76 0.87]	[0.49 0.51]	[0.87 0.87]	[0.49 0.49]
High Aswan	<u>No spin-up</u>	[0.38 0.91]	[-0.28 0.85]	[0.42 0.91]	[0.52 0.85]
	<u>1yr spin-up</u>	[0.58 0.91]	[0.62 0.85]	[0.58 0.91]	[0.62 0.85]

Table 3: Inflow bias sensitivity test on storage and release simulation

		<u>-50%</u>	<u>-25%</u>	<u>0%</u>	<u>25%</u>	<u>50%</u>
<u>Charavak</u>	<u>NSE(Storage)</u>	<u>-1.95</u>	<u>0.25</u>	<u>0.74</u>	<u>0.52</u>	<u>-0.21</u>
	<u>NSE(Flow)</u>	<u>-0.06</u>	<u>0.54</u>	<u>0.82</u>	<u>0.57</u>	<u>-0.07</u>
<u>Gardiner</u>	<u>NSE(Storage)</u>	<u>-2.00</u>	<u>0.74</u>	<u>0.88</u>	<u>0.79</u>	<u>0.66</u>
	<u>NSE(Flow)</u>	<u>-0.21</u>	<u>0.47</u>	<u>0.49</u>	<u>-0.43</u>	<u>-2.02</u>
<u>High Aswan</u>	<u>NSE(Storage)</u>	<u>-9.37</u>	<u>-5.96</u>	<u>0.90</u>	<u>-0.60</u>	<u>-1.45</u>
	<u>NSE(Flow)</u>	<u>-3.90</u>	<u>-0.34</u>	<u>0.80</u>	<u>-2.29</u>	<u>-8.70</u>