Phase 7 WSM Development – Calibration and Refinements of the Dynamic Watershed Model (DWSM)

Modeling Workgroup Quarterly Meeting – July 2025

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Presentation Outline

Phase 7 Dynamic Watershed Model (DWSM)

- 1. Dynamic Watershed Model Overview
- 2. Review of prior model development progress
- 3. Linkage of the DWSM and Main Bay Model (MBM)
 - April 2025 Beta version
 - Incorporation of newly developed beta-parameters
 - Simulation of sediment transport in small streams
 - Review of existing calibration method
 - Implementation and testing of new calibration methods

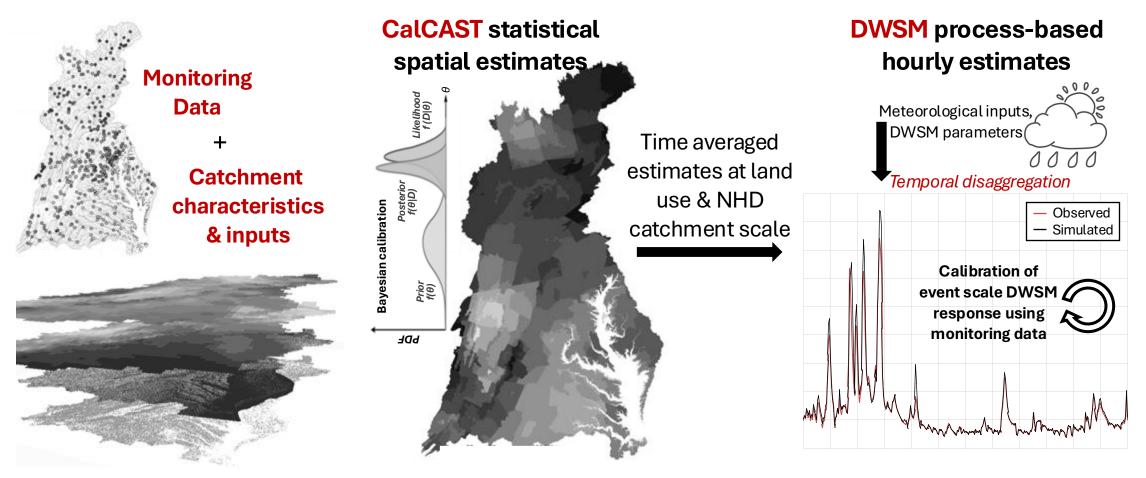
4. Summary and next steps

Purpose

NHD Scale Dynamic Watershed Model (DWSM)

- Inputs for the estuarine models (MBM/MTMs)
- Watershed model calibration and scenario applications
- Support research and collaboration activities

Framework: Statistical Model (CalCAST) → Dynamic Watershed Model (DWSM)



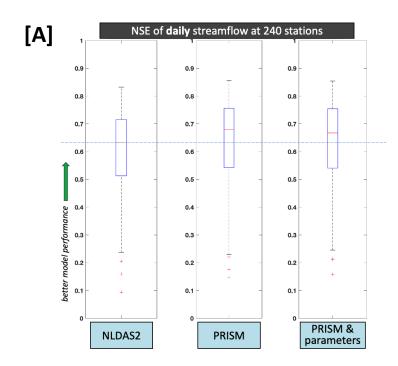
- Data-driven CalCAST informs DWSM parameters and responses.
- NHD-scale DWSM prototype is now using CalCAST average annual (a) total flow,
 (b) stormflow, (c) sediment erosion and delivery factors, and (d) total nitrogen and total phosphorus loads and delivery factors.

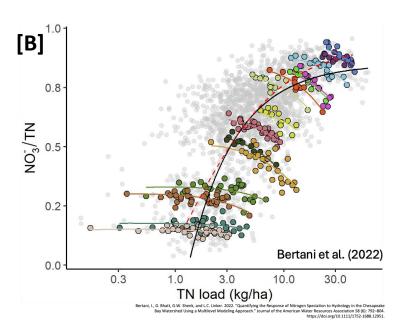
Dynamic Watershed Model (DWSM) Development

- Year 2022: NHD-scale model structure and prototypes for hydrology, sediment, and nutrients.
- Year 2023: Incremental refinements of model prototypes in terms of model segmentation, CalCAST→DWSM linkage, and simulation of the small streams.
- Year 2024: stream water quality routing based on β parameters; refinements of small stream flow and water temperature routing modules; mechanics of riverine water quality calibrations.
- Year 2025: Q1: development and testing of DWSM and MBM linkage through beta versions; Q2: April beta version, calibration and further refinements of the DWSM;

April 2025 Beta Version

- At the April Quarterly meeting we reviewed isolated DWSM calibrations showing –
 - [A] PRISM precipitation resulted in better hydrology model performance than NLDAS precipitation;
 - **[B]** A new module incorporating emergent behavior of N-speciation in Phase 7 at the interface of land and aquatic transport models improved the simulation of nitrate loads.
- We combined those elements in the April 2025
 Beta version
 - Hydrology model was recalibrated while changing the calibration period from 1985-2014 to 1985-2020.
 - Model outputs with 234,306 timeseries [{ 2,858 terminal + 10,159 tidal } x 18 variables] were archived in one NetCDF file.



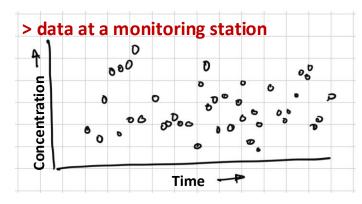


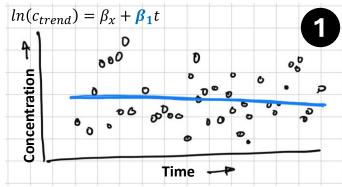
RIM stations: Phase 7 loads vs. WRTDS

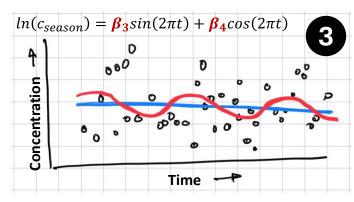
Wq20250430cal

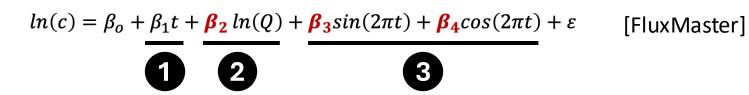
Rivers	Flow	Nitrogen	Phosphorus	Sediment
Susquehanna Conowingo MD	+00.9% (+0.910)	-09.2% (+0.665)	+18.2% (+0.763)	-32.9% (+0.534)
Susquehanna Marietta PA	-00.9% (+0.944)	-09.9% (+0.687)	-13.9% (+0.789)	-08.9% (+0.734)
Potomac Washington, DC	+00.8% (+0.929)	-20.9% (+0.670)	-05.5% (+0.541)	-00.9% (-0.211)
James Cartersville, VA	+04.8% (+0.904)	-22.8% (+0.632)	-21.8% (+0.615)	+12.2% (-2.588)
Rappa. Fredericksburg, VA	+00.1% (+0.931)	-05.7% (+0.853)	-11.3% (+0.732)	+11.1% (+0.240)
Appomattox Matoaca, VA	+00.8% (+0.826)	+10.2% (+0.702)	+12.8% (+0.713)	+11.3% (+0.212)
Pamunkey Hanover, VA	+03.6% (+0.807)	+04.9% (+0.786)	+04.2% (+0.506)	+20.6% (-0.918)
Mattaponi Beulahville, VA	+09.3% (+0.789)	+19.9% (+0.378)	+11.2% (-0.035)	+44.8% (-4.080)
Patuxent Bowie, MD	+04.0% (+0.870)	-01.6% (+0.308)	-11.8% (+0.348)	+23.9% (-0.125)
Choptank Greensboro, MD	-05.3% (+0.721)	-03.1% (+0.732)	+06.6% (+0.499)	-03.7% (-0.596)

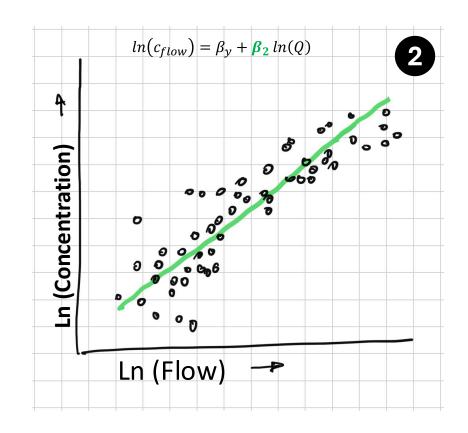
Small-stream flow and concentration (Q-C) relationship

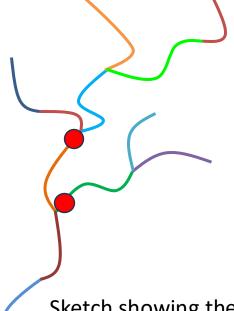












Sketch showing the network of small stream segments and water quality and streamflow monitoring stations

Small-stream flow and concentration (Q-C) relationship





UNEC model: <u>annual</u> surface and groundwater concentrations as a function of input history and estimates of lag-times













Biogeochemical processing,
Storage/deposition, Scour, etc.

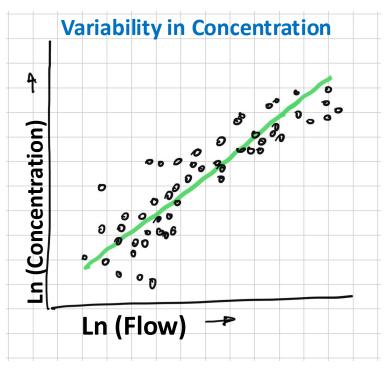
→ Fate and Transport

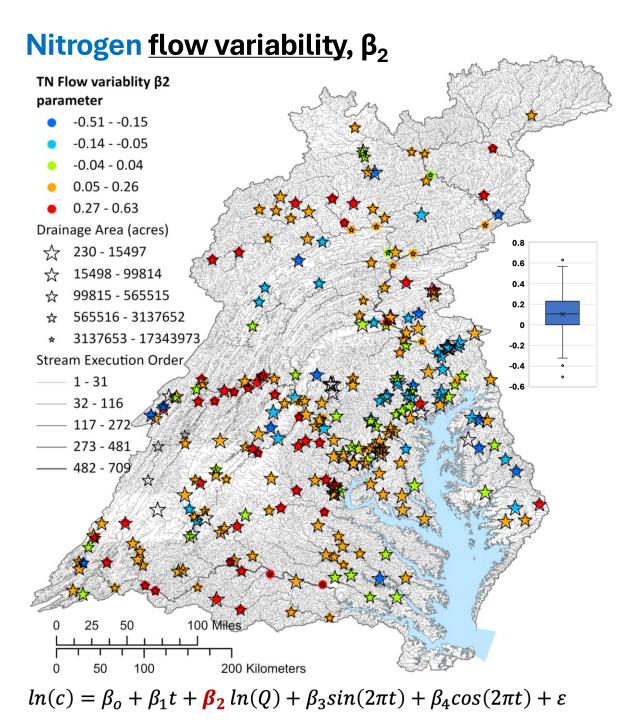


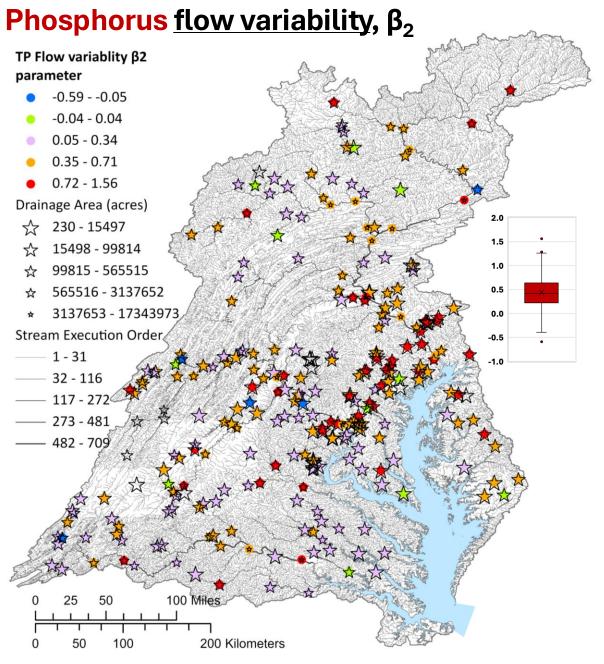


Stream Transport Factor (STF)







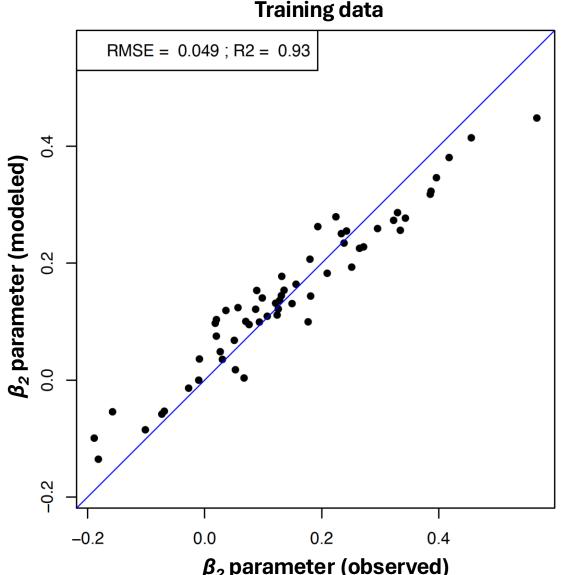


Generalization of β parameters

with contributions of Qian Zhang & Isabella Bertani

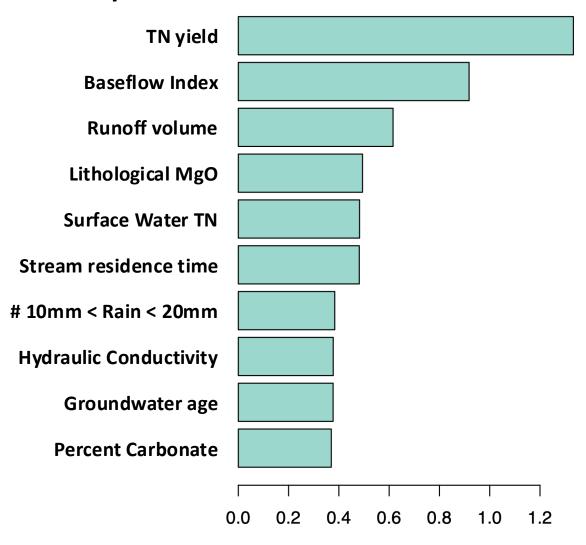
Random Forest (RF) models were developed:

- The RF models links flow variability (β_2) parameters for nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment with accumulated watershed attributes.
- Performance of the model for training data (70% vs. 30% split) is shown in the figure for nitrogen.
- RF models of seasonal (β_3 and β_4) parameters for nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment were also developed.



Generalization of β parameters

Importance of watershed attributes

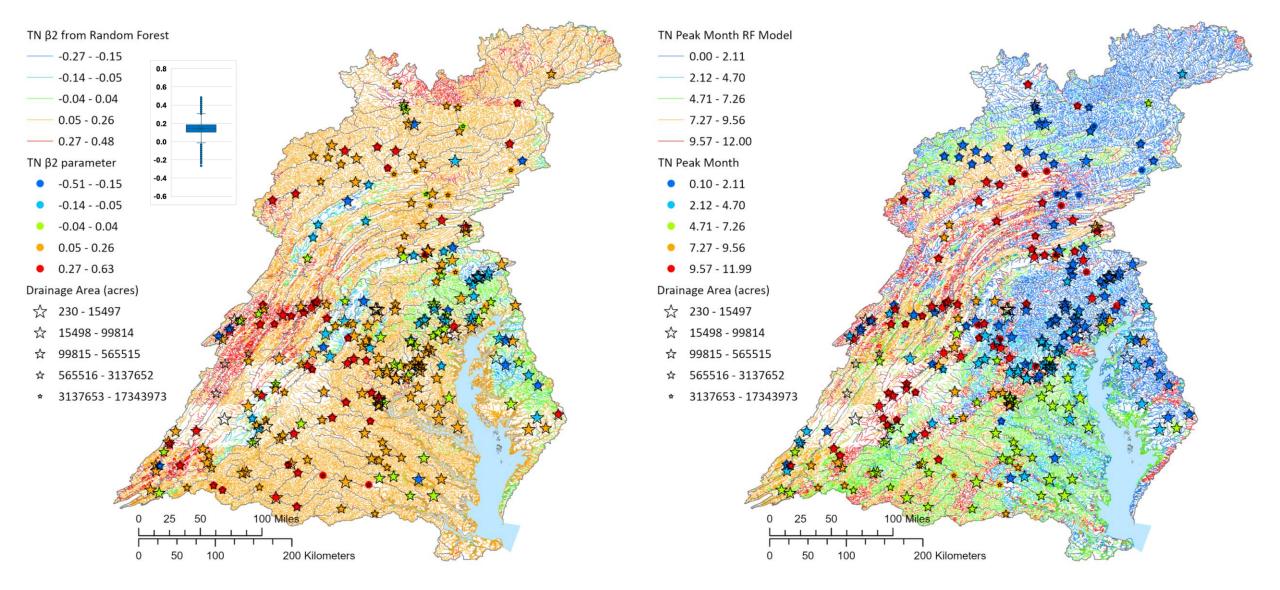


RF Model workflow -

- Evaluated predictor variables to remove those with (a) high correlation or (b) very small variance.
- Train the model using a 70% vs. 30% split between training and test data.
- Retain the 10 most important variables to reduce model complexity.
- Redo the training using all data.
- Develop predictions for the beta parameters.

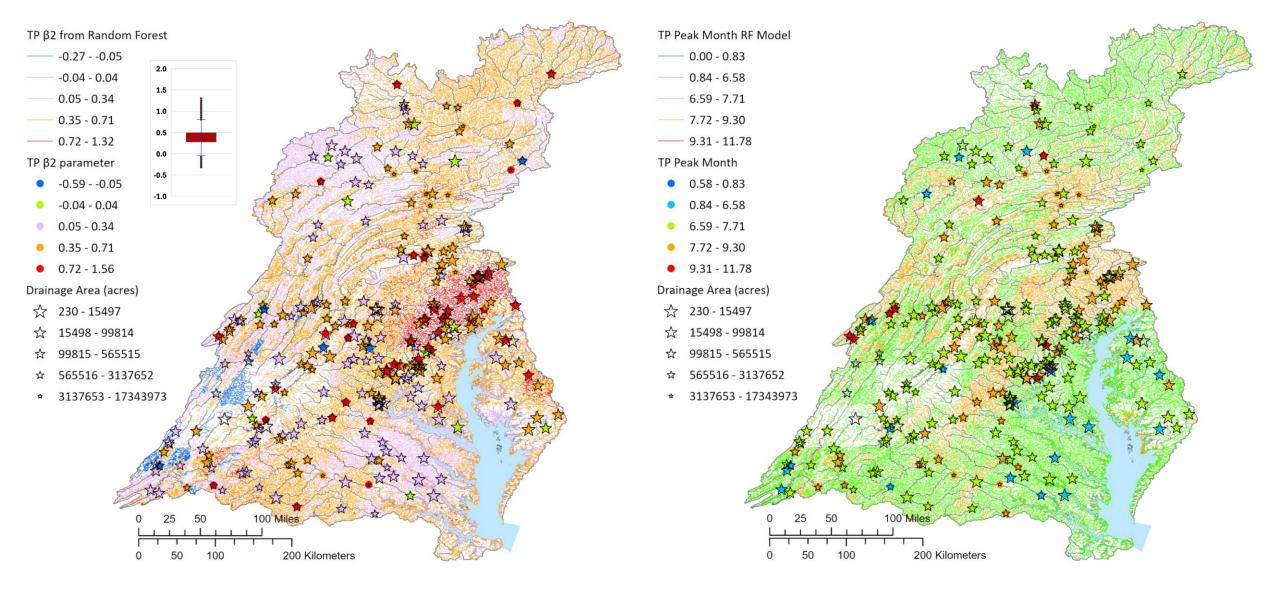
Nitrogen flow variability, β_2

Nitrogen seasonal variability, $\beta_3 \& \beta_4$



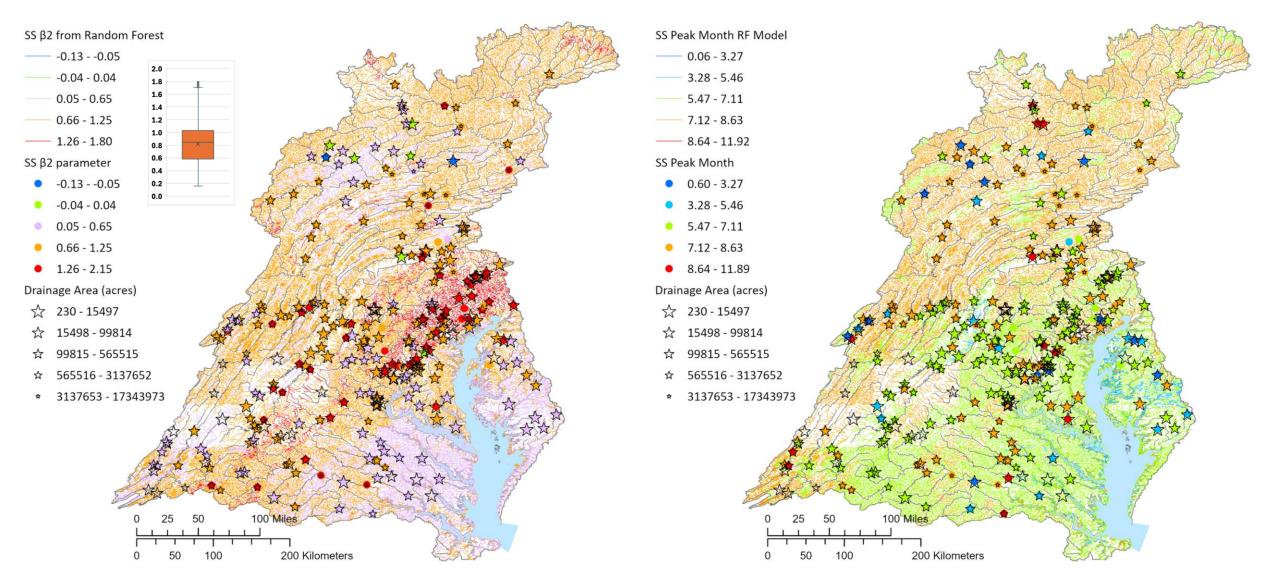
Phosphorus flow variability, β₂

Phosphorus seasonal variability, $\beta_3 \& \beta_4$



Sediment flow variability, β_2

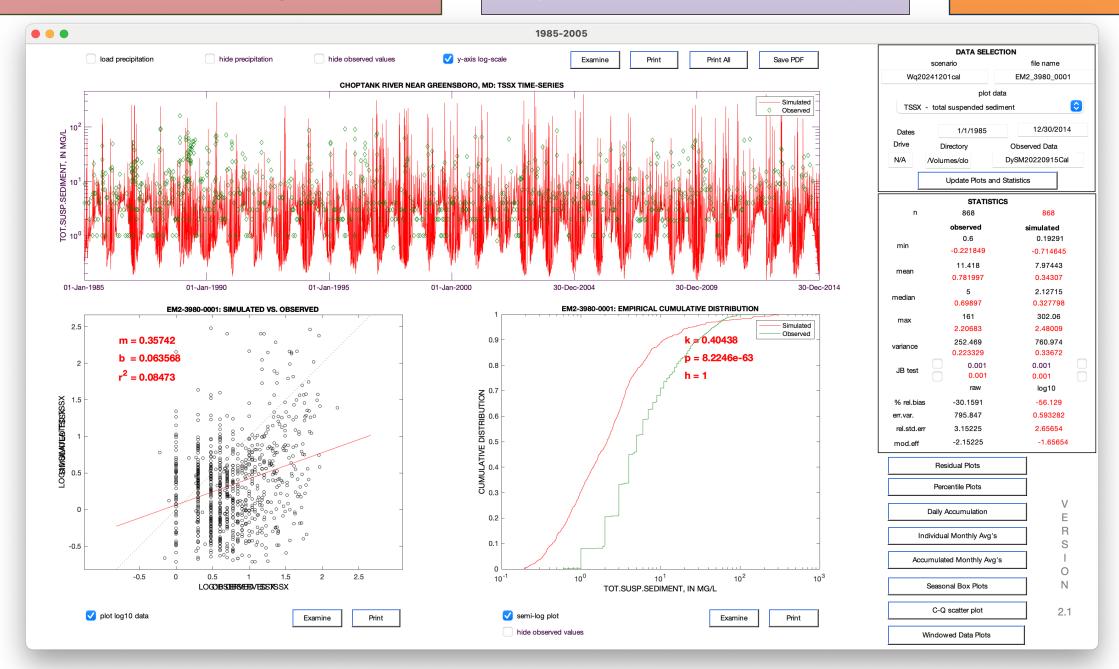
Sediment seasonal variability, $\beta_3 \& \beta_4$



HSPF Calibration Constrained by CalCAST

Choptank River Near Greensboro, MD

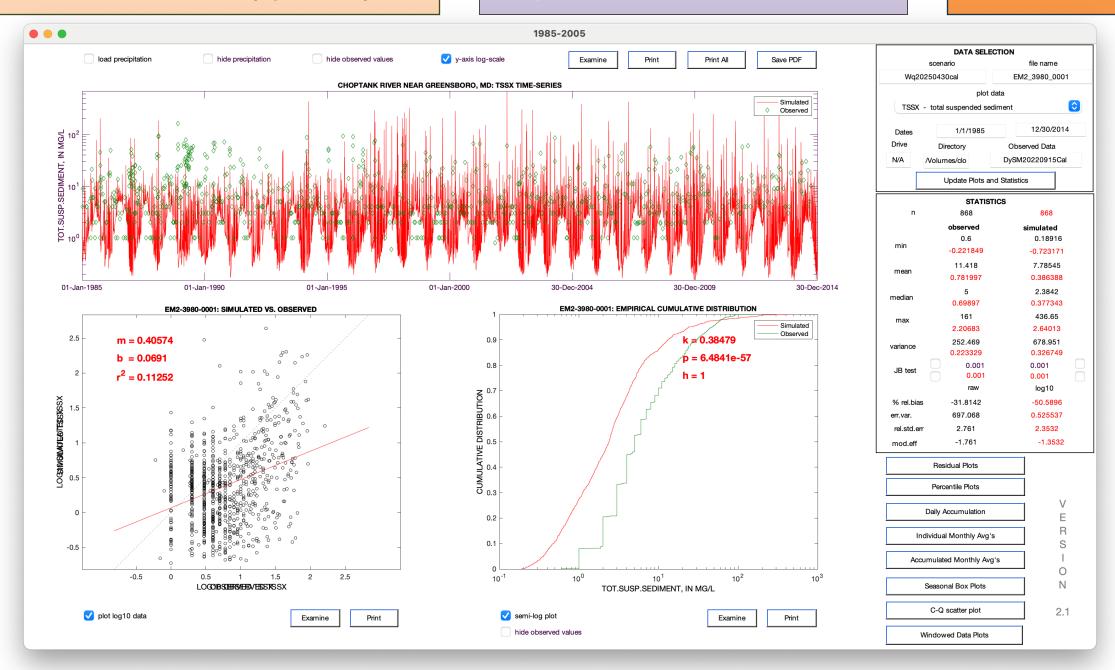
Sediment



HSPF Automated Calibration (April Beta)

Choptank River Near Greensboro, MD

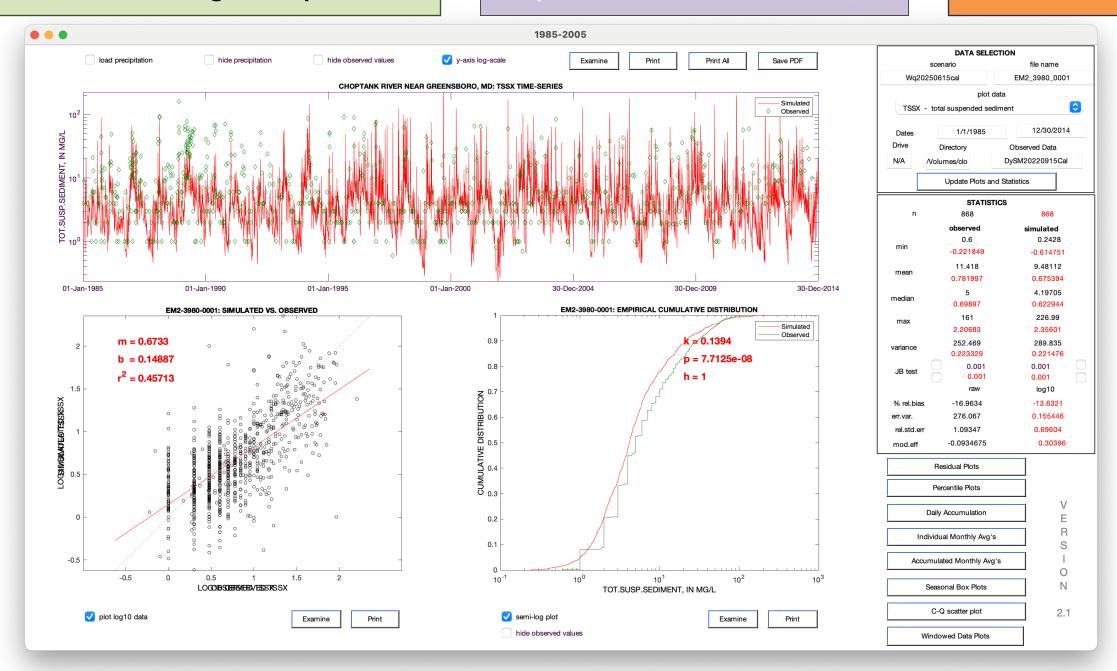
Sediment



HSPF with Stream routing & Beta parameters

Choptank River Near Greensboro, MD

Sediment

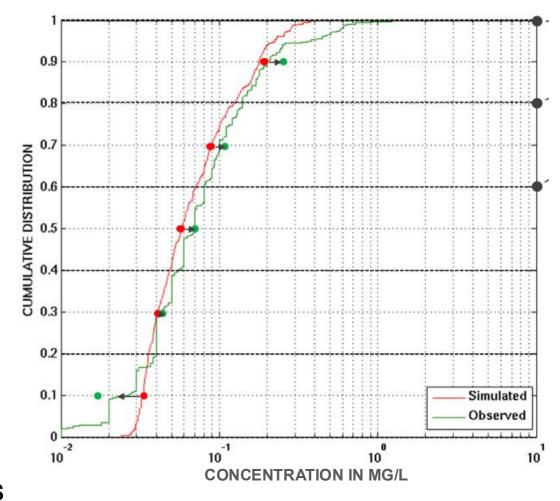


Water quality calibration methods

We calibrate DWSM/HSPF water quality parameters to improve agreement in cumulative frequency distribution (CFD) of observed and simulated concentrations.

- → Information available for the calibration of model parameters:
- Observations of daily concentrations for nutrient species at monitoring stations
- Transport factors for TN, TP, and SS for each river mainstems (CalCAST)
- WRTDS estimated loads
- QC relationships (generalized β parameters for river mainstems)

Figure: Cumulative distribution of concentrations at a monitoring station



Water quality calibration methods

Specific plan #3 – use DWM and USGS load information to set final river delivery

- CalCAST determines the best global parameters
 - However, some river input stations not good enough for estuarine model.
- Modifications to the delivery factors to better match WRTDS loads
- Similar to:
 - Phase 6
 - SPARROW model



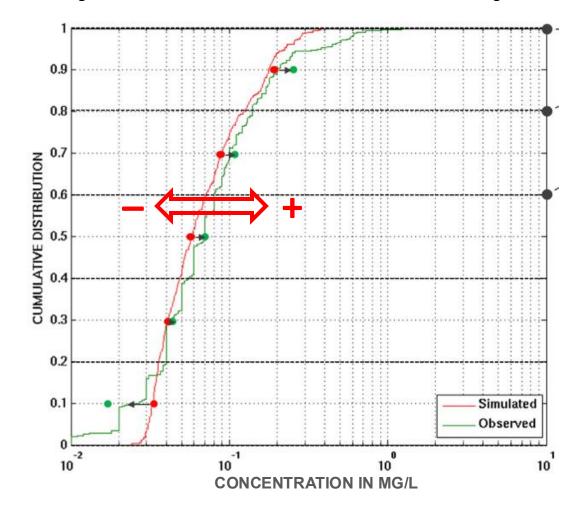
January & April 2025 MW (Shenk, G.)

Slide 19: https://www.chesapeakebay.net/files/documents/940-2025-01-07-Overall-P7-Plan-MWG-gshenk.pdf Slide 12-14: https://www.chesapeakebay.net/files/documents/930_2025-04-01-Overall-P7-WSM-Plan-MWG-gshenk_update.pdf

→ We incorporated "adjustment factor" that nudges the simulated CFD within the automated calibration.

adjustment factor shifts the CFD during each calibration iterations

Figure: Cumulative distribution of concentrations at a monitoring station



We implemented and tested a few calibration approaches...

[1] April 2025

PRISM precipitation; N-speciation; Constrained by CalCAST

Wg20250430cal

[2] June #01

Automated HSPF WQ calibration for river mainstems

Wq20250601cal

[3] June #02

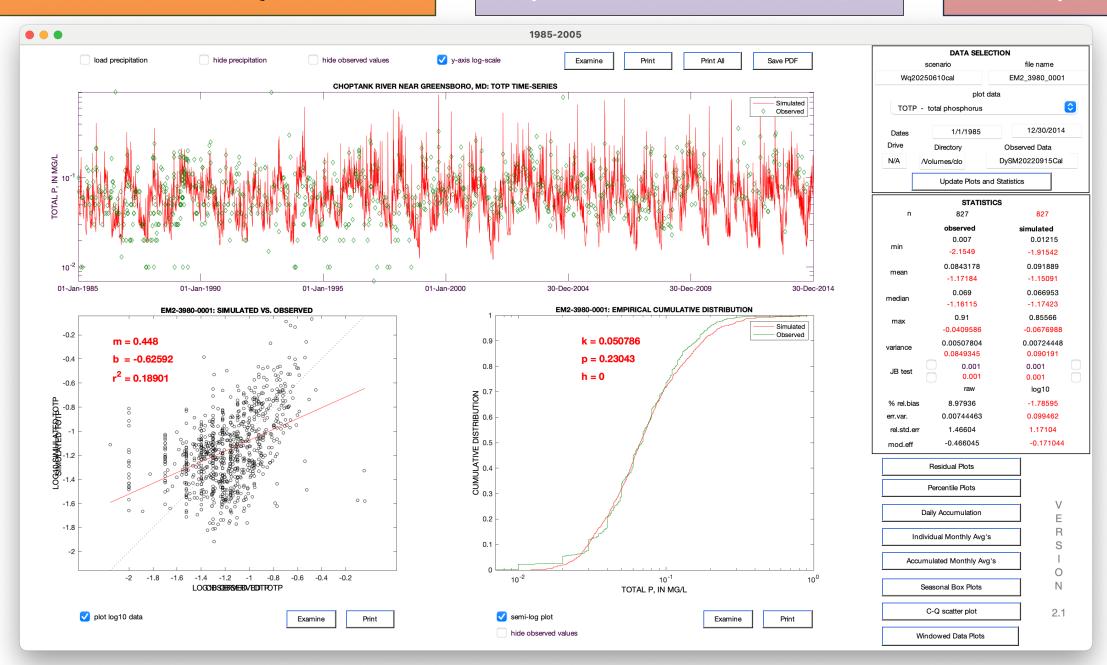
Beta parameters estimated by Random Forest Models

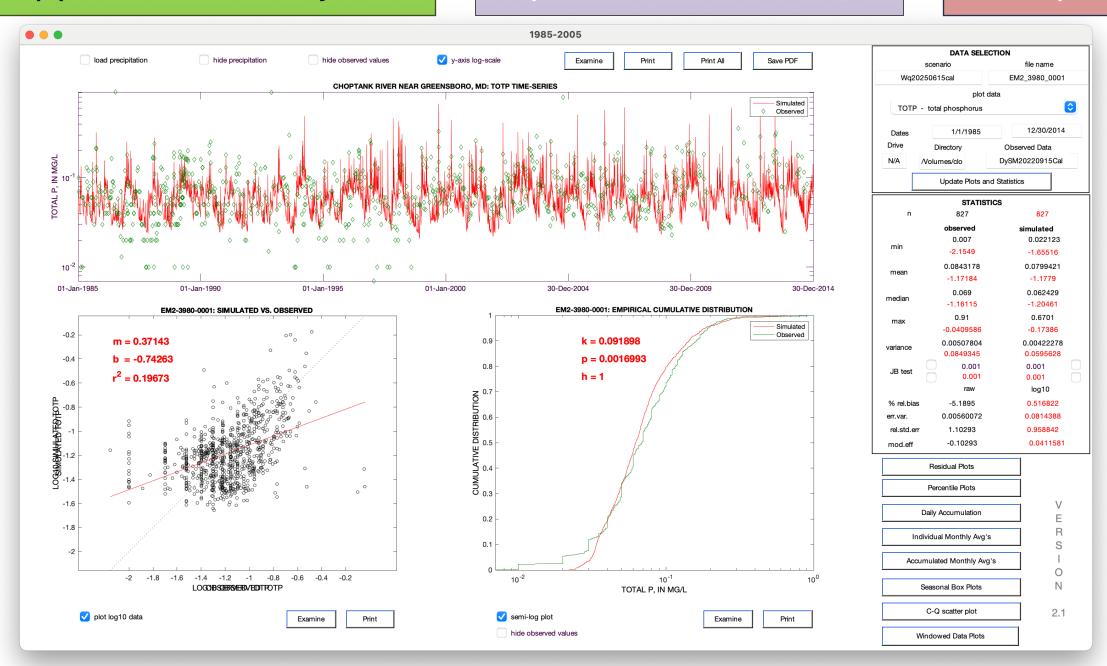
Wq20250610cal

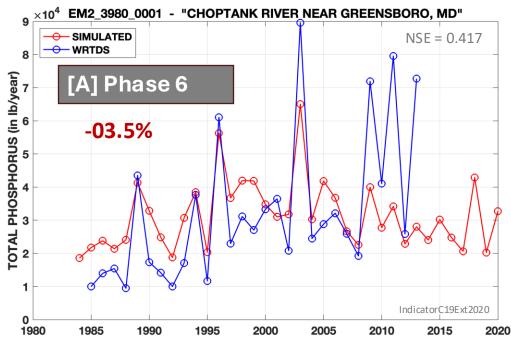
[4] June #03

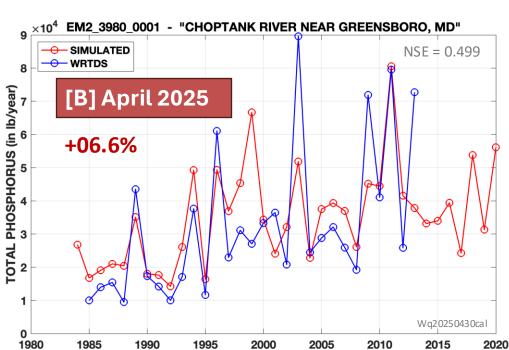
Constrained using best available loads (WRTDS)

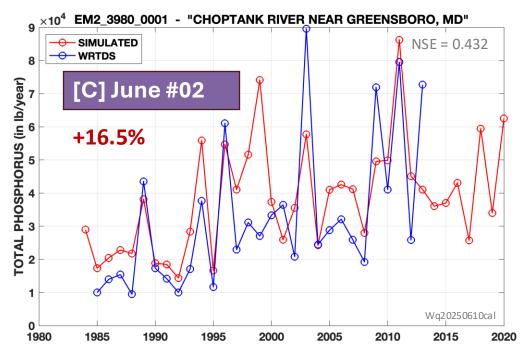
Wg20250615cal

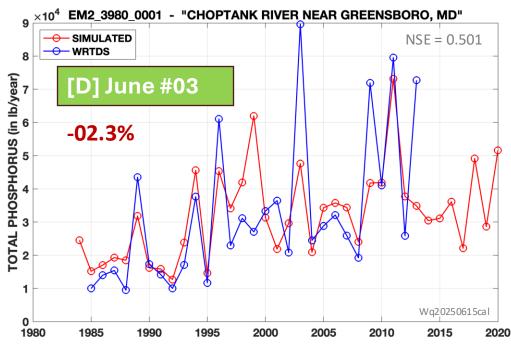












RIM stations: Phase 7 Nitrogen loads vs. WRTDS

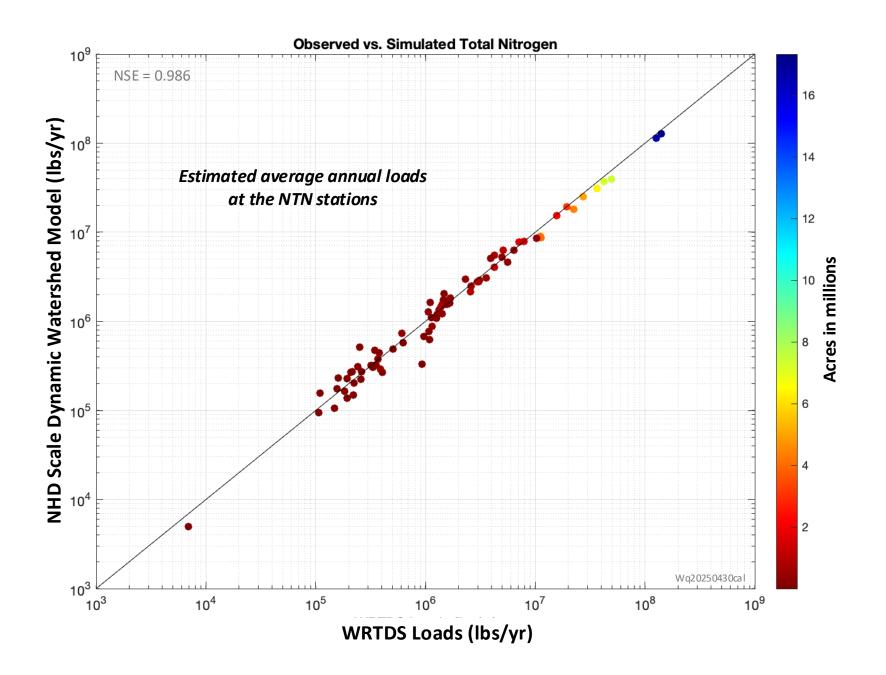
Rivers	[1] April 2025	[2] June #01	[2] June #02	[2] June #03
Susquehanna Conowingo MD	-09.2% (+0.665)	-14.2% (+0.571)	-20.7% (+0.410)	-01.1% (+0.723)
Susquehanna Marietta PA	-09.9% (+0.687)	-12.6% (+0.630)	-12.8% (+0.626)	+01.1% (+0.776)
Potomac Washington, DC	-20.9% (+0.670)	-17.0% (+0.724)	-17.3% (+0.719)	-01.6% (+0.817)
James Cartersville, VA	-22.8% (+0.632)	-23.7% (+0.607)	-24.3% (+0.599)	-01.2% (+0.902)
Rappa. Fredericksburg, VA	-05.7% (+0.853)	-00.4% (+0.868)	-04.2% (+0.860)	-05.8% (+0.854)
Appomattox Matoaca, VA	+10.2% (+0.702)	-09.1% (+0.785)	-08.0% (+0.792)	-12.0% (+0.755)
Pamunkey Hanover, VA	+04.9% (+0.786)	+11.8% (+0.724)	+11.0% (+0.722)	-07.4% (+0.771)
Mattaponi Beulahville, VA	+19.9% (+0.378)	+21.4% (+0.301)	+20.5% (+0.317)	-10.2% (+0.655)
Patuxent Bowie, MD	-01.6% (+0.308)	+15.2% (-0.029)	+14.3% (+0.044)	-04.0% (+0.300)
Choptank Greensboro, MD	-03.1% (+0.732)	+09.2% (+0.708)	+08.0% (+0.726)	-04.4% (+0.722)

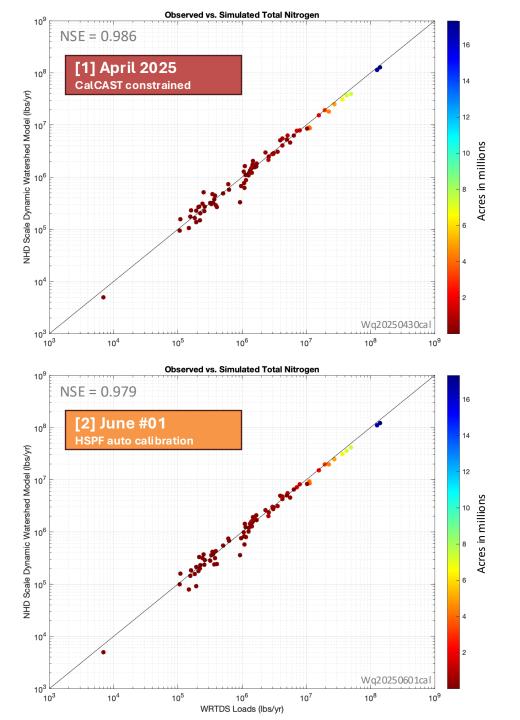
RIM stations: Phase 7 Phosphorus loads vs. WRTDS

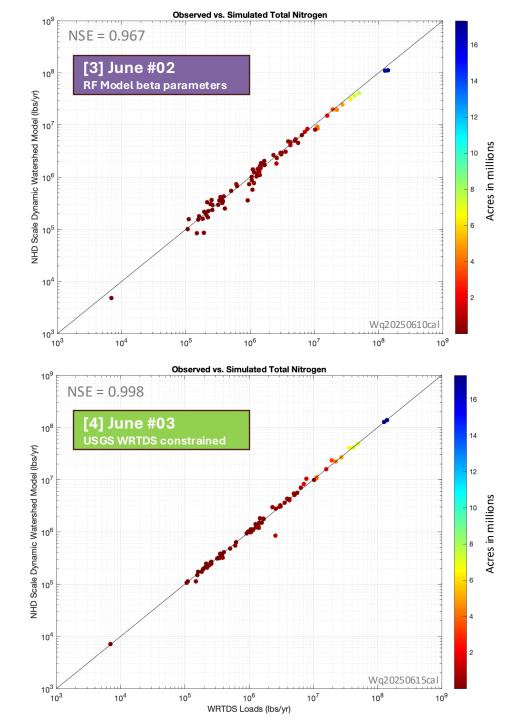
Rivers	[1] April 2025	[2] June #01	[2] June #02	[2] June #03
Susquehanna Conowingo MD	+18.2% (+0.763)	+12.9% (+0.757)	+13.1% (+0.794)	+02.2% (+0.783)
Susquehanna Marietta PA	-13.9% (+0.789)	+00.1% (+0.833)	-00.9% (+0.824)	+04.4% (+0.840)
Potomac Washington, DC	-05.5% (+0.541)	+29.8% (-0.636)	+29.1% (-0.409)	+06.9% (+0.226)
James Cartersville, VA	-21.8% (+0.615)	-12.6% (+0.749)	-20.2% (+0.774)	+01.9% (+0.850)
Rappa. Fredericksburg, VA	-11.3% (+0.732)	+24.9% (+0.276)	+30.6% (+0.059)	-03.4% (+0.680)
Appomattox Matoaca, VA	+12.8% (+0.713)	+38.4% (-0.096)	+37.9% (-0.182)	-06.2% (+0.739)
Pamunkey Hanover, VA	+04.2% (+0.506)	+42.2% (-0.628)	+39.7% (-0.485)	-02.0% (+0.243)
Mattaponi Beulahville, VA	+11.2% (-0.035)	+11.5% (-0.021)	+13.3% (+0.221)	-07.3% (+0.237)
Patuxent Bowie, MD	-11.8% (+0.348)	+49.2% (-2.156)	+23.8% (-0.636)	-07.0% (-0.015)
Choptank Greensboro, MD	+06.6% (+0.499)	+19.1% (+0.412)	+16.5% (+0.432)	-02.3% (+0.501)

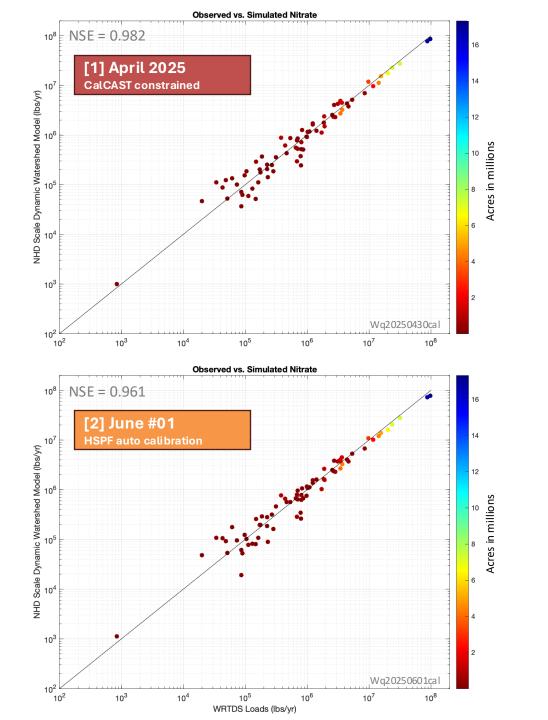
RIM stations: Phase 7 Sediment loads vs. WRTDS

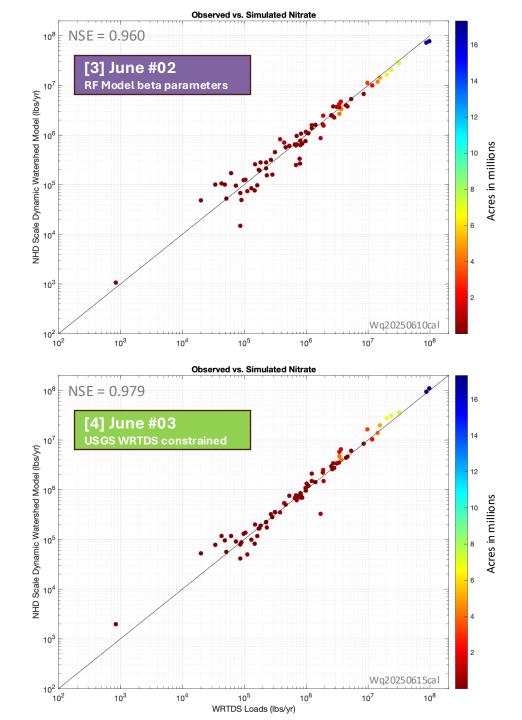
Rivers	[1] Dec 2024	[2] June #01	[2] June #02	[2] June #03
Susquehanna Conowingo MD	+18.0% (+0.433)	-32.7% (+0.535)	-19.6% (+0.681)	+04.3% (+0.808)
Susquehanna Marietta PA	+02.6% (-0.115)	-08.3% (+0.731)	-04.9% (+0.629)	+07.9% (-0.047)
Potomac Washington, DC	-08.4% (-0.503)	-03.1% (-0.041)	+06.5% (-0.509)	+10.1% (-0.623)
James Cartersville, VA	-36.0% (+0.627)	+05.0% (-1.844)	+05.9% (-1.850)	+08.0% (-2.613)
Rappa. Fredericksburg, VA	-41.9% (-0.750)	+07.9% (+0.320)	+27.7% (-0.583)	-04.1% (+0.474)
Appomattox Matoaca, VA	-32.7% (+0.534)	+10.1% (+0.244)	+31.1% (-0.650)	-06.4% (+0.449)
Pamunkey Hanover, VA	-44.2% (+0.229)	+48.8% (-3.345)	+38.3% (-2.303)	-02.4% (-0.024)
Mattaponi Beulahville, VA	+101.3% (-10.342)	+42.8% (-3.929)	+31.3% (-1.670)	-09.4% (-0.533)
Patuxent Bowie, MD	+28.7% (+0.501)	+51.7% (-1.685)	+47.4% (-2.124)	-11.0% (-0.134)
Choptank Greensboro, MD	-19.4% (+0.116)	-03.8% (-0.594)	-06.2% (-0.763)	+01.5% (-0.805)

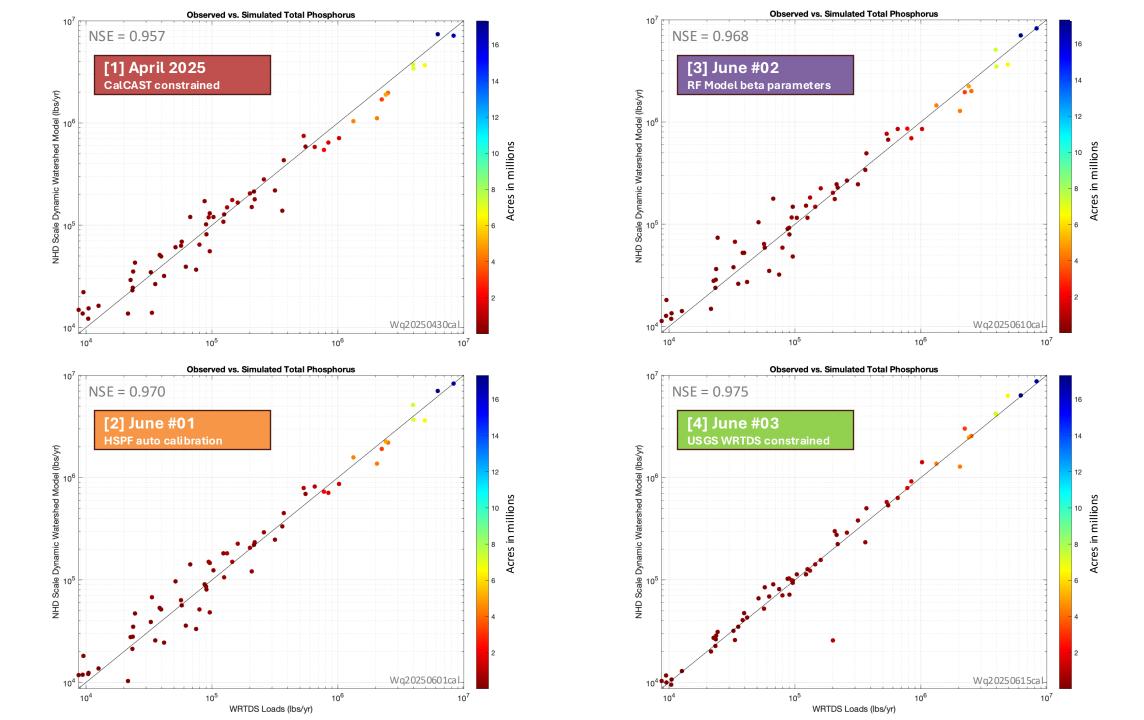


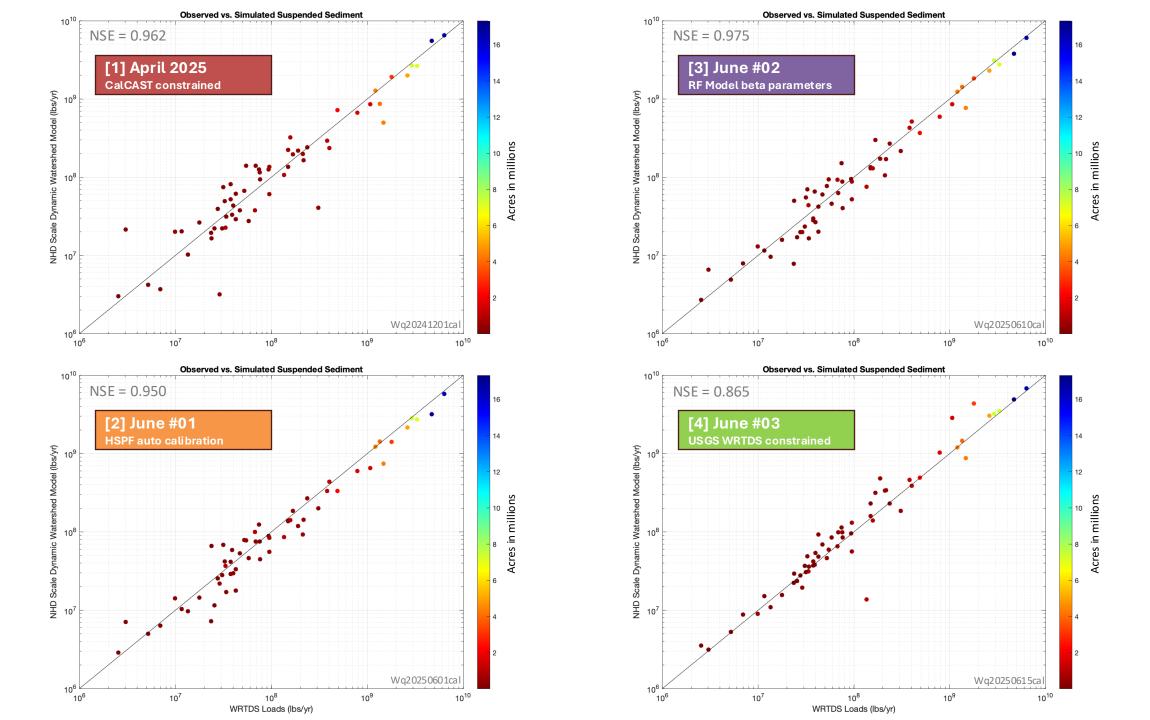










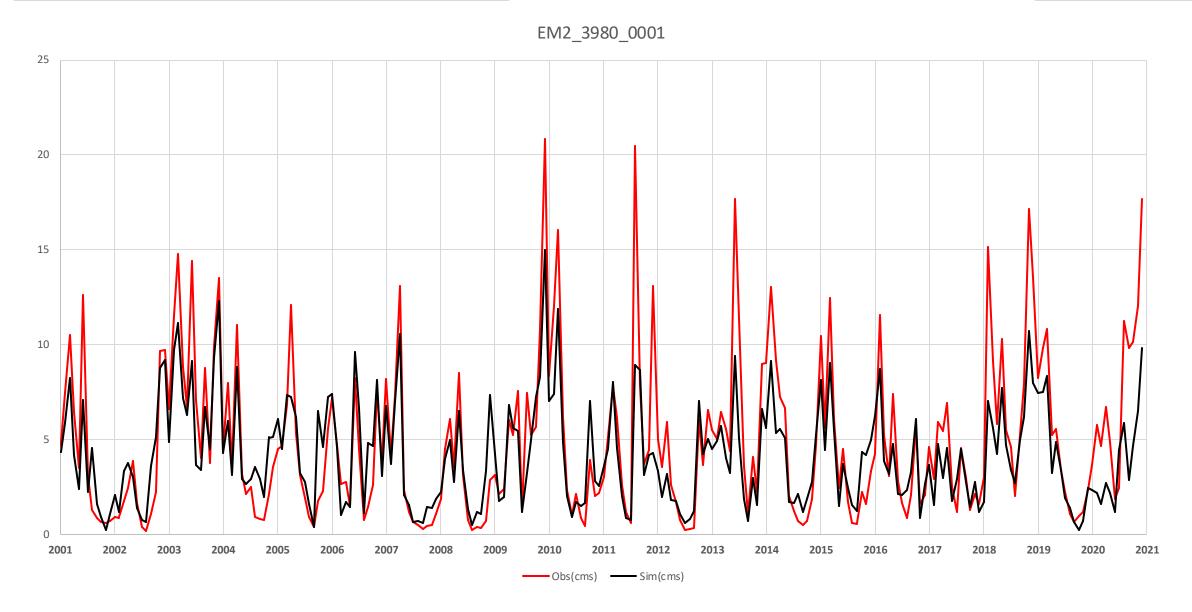


Summary

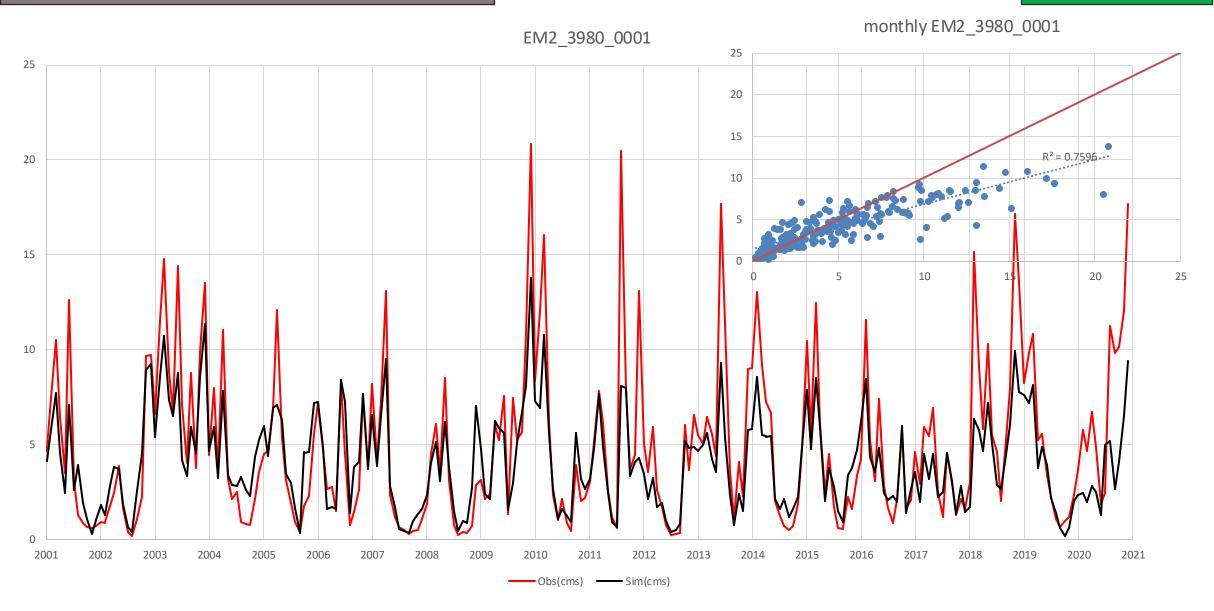
- 1. We updated beta versions and linkage of incrementally refined watershed model flows and loads with the estuarine model.
 - E.g., hydrology model recalibration and PRISM precipitation; simulation of nitrogen speciation; RF model estimated beta parameters; routing module for small stream sediment; refinements to calibration methods;
- >> Next Steps for the Phase 7 Dynamic Watershed Model (DWSM)
- 2. We have shifted towards completeness of the model: (a) model parameters (beta parameters); (b) calibration methods (RIM loads); (c) incorporation of inputs (BMPs; afo/cfo loads); (d) linkage with the MBM and MTMs (atmospheric inputs, tracking progress).

Appendices

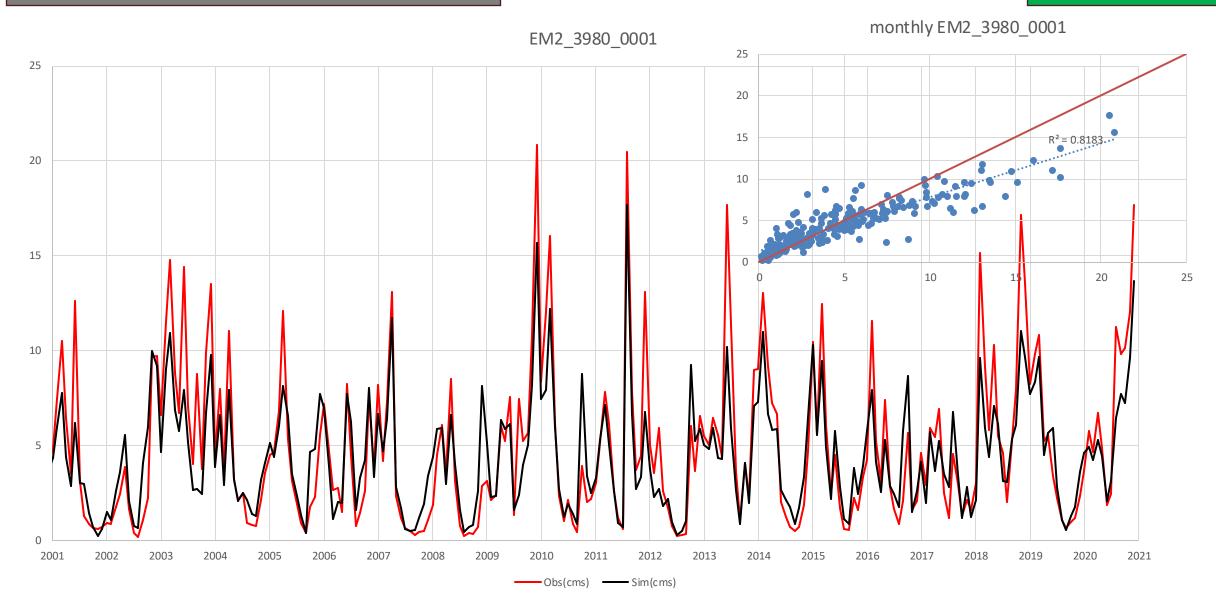
Monthly time series



Simulated flow is -15% as compared to observed.



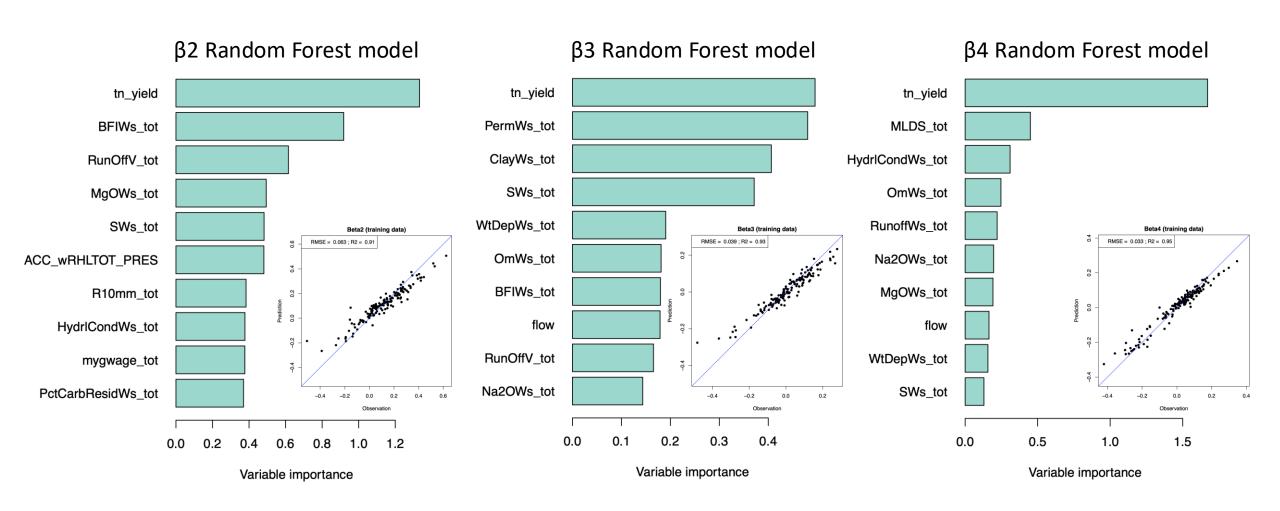
Simulated flow is -17% as compared to observed.



Simulated flow is -8% as compared to observed.

Generalization of β parameters

with contributions of Qian Zhang & Isabella Bertani



$$ln(c) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 t + \beta_2 ln(Q) + \beta_3 sin(2\pi t) + \beta_4 cos(2\pi t) + \varepsilon$$

P6 Nitrogen (auto calibrations Oct-Nov 2017)

BASIN	June Auto	#A	#B	#C	#D	#F
SUSQ	-03%	-01%	-04%	-04%	-07%	-07%
РОТО	-26%	-22%	-21%	-22%	-21%	-14%
JAME	-20%	-30%	-25%	-26%	-25%	-13%
RAPP	-11%	-14%	-20%	-20%	-18%	-07%
APPO	-07%	-09%	-02%	-02%	-02%	00%
PAMU	00%	-09%	-01%	-02%	-02%	06%
MATT	23%	13%	19%	25%	16%	16%
PATU	06%	07%	07%	06%	07%	08%
СНОР	43%	14%	18%	28%	25%	19%

P6 Phosphorus (auto calibrations Oct-Nov 2017)

BASIN	June Auto	#A	#B	#C	#D	
SUSQ	14%	20%	20%	17%	16%	
MARI	05%	06%	05%	04%	-03%	
РОТО	-18%	-17%	-17%	-17%	-10%	
JAME	-01%	-08%	-11%	-20%	-17%	
RAPP	01%	19%	16%	14%	18%	
APPO	13%	17%	11%	18%	08%	
PAMU	21%	31%	28%	23%	17%	
MATT	-14%	-17%	-19%	-16%	-20%	
PATU	11%	14%	12%	11%	12%	
СНОР	13%	-17%	-19%	10%	-20%	

P6 Sediment (auto calibrations Oct-Nov 2017)

BASIN	June Auto	#A	#B	#C	#D	#F
SUSQ	-23%	-14%	-14%	-15%	-14%	
MARI	-01%	-05%	-05%	-04%	-01%	
РОТО	-31%	-31%	-30%	-31%	-06%	
JAME	-14%	-02%	-14%	-10%	05%	
RAPP	-04%	09%	01%	08%	05%	
APPO	36%	26%	17%	25%	09%	
PAMU	40%	65%	58%	48%	36%	
MATT	91%	35%	35%	142%	41%	
PATU	53%	58%	53%	77%	61%	
СНОР	171%	07%	07%	352%	06%	

