Developing a tile drainage module for Cold Regions Hydrological Model: Lessons from a farm in Southern Ontario, Canada

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Abstract

Systematic tile drainage is used extensively in agricultural lands to remove excess water and improve crop growth; however, tiles can also transfer nutrients from farmlands to downstream surface water bodies, leading to water quality problems. Thus, there is a need to simulate the hydrological behaviour of tile drains to understand the impacts of climate or land management change on agricultural runoff. The Cold Regions Hydrological Model (CRHM) is a physically based, modular modeling system developed for cold regions. Here, a tile drainage module is developed for CRHM. A multi-variable, multi-criteria model performance evaluation strategy was deployed to examine the ability of the module to capture tile discharge under both winter and summer conditions (NSE>0.29, RSR<0.84 and PBias <20 for tile flow and water table simulations). Initial model simulations run at a 15-min interval did not satisfactorily represent

tile discharge; however, model simulations improved when the time step was refined to hourly but also with the explicit representation of capillary rise for moisture interactions between the rooting zone and groundwater, demonstrating the significance of capillary rise in the hydrology of tile drains in loam soils. Novel aspects of this module include the shorter time step relative to some existing models, which may enable future water quality modules to be added, and the use of field capacity and its corresponding pressure head to provide estimates of drainable water and the thickness of the capillary fringe, rather using than detailed soil retention curves that may not always be available. An additional novel aspect of our results is the demonstration that flows in some tile drain systems can be better represented and simulated when related to shallow groundwater dynamics.

Keywords: tile drainage, cold regions, hydrological model, capillary fringe, drainable water, water level fluctuations

1. Introduction

Harmful algal blooms and eutrophication in large freshwater lakes surrounded by agricultural lands are major environmental challenges in Canada and globally. The transport of nutrients, particularly phosphorus, in runoff from agricultural fields into rivers, ponds and eventually lakes is an important contributor to the increased frequency of algal blooms being experienced in North America and elsewhere (Sharpley et al., 1995; Correll, 1998; Filippelli, 2002; Ruttenberg, 2005; Schindler, 2006; Quinton et al., 2010; Costa et al., 2022). Nutrient transport from

agricultural fields can occur via both surface runoff and tile drainage (Radcliffe et al., 2015), and recent increases in the frequency and magnitude of algal blooms in Lake Erie in North America have been attributed to tile drainage (King et al., 2015; Jarvie et al., 2017). Tile drain systems reduce the retention time of soil water, lessening waterlogging in fields and improving both crop growth and field trafficability for farmers (Cordeiro and Ranjan, 2012; Kokulan et al., 2019a). However, they are also important pathways for dissolved and particulate nutrients (Kladivko et al., 1999; Tomer et al., 2015). It has been estimated that 14% of farmlands in Canada (ICID, 2018) and 45% of fields in Southern Ontario, Canada (ICID, 2018; Kokulan, 2019) are drained by tile systems. In Alberta, tile drains have also been used to address salinity issues (Broughton and Jutras, 2013). Given their importance in hydrological budgets and biogeochemical transport, there is a need to understand the controlling mechanisms of water and nutrient export from tile systems as an integral part of the broader, modified hydrological system. The ability to integrate a dynamic quantification of tile drainage from fields in hydrological models can help understand the relative importance of this human-induced process as it interplays with an array of other phenomena, including energy and physical mass balance hydrological processes, climate change, and the impacts of modified land management practices on runoff and nutrient export.

There are several models that can represent tile drainage at the small basin scale, such as HYPE (Lindstrom et al., 2010; Arheimer et al., 2015), DRAINMOD (Skaggs, 1978, 1980a; Skaggs et al., 2012), MIKE SHE (Refsgaard and Storm, 1995) and SWAT (Arnold et al., 1998; Koch et al., 2013; Du et al., 2005; Du et al., 2006; Green et al., 2006; Kiesel et al., 2010). These models include conceptual components for many key hydrological processes, but research shows that they have been primarily designed and tested for temperate regions (Costa et al., 2020a). In Canada and other cold regions, some unique hydrological processes such as frozen soil,

snowmelt, rain on snow, and runoff over and infiltration into frozen or partially-frozen soils may be very important (Rahman et al., 2014; Cordeiro et al., 2017; Pomeroy et al., 1998, 2007; Fang et al., 2010, 2013). Many hydrological processes, such as the sublimation of snow, energy balance snowmelt, and infiltration into frozen soils, are strongly affected by temperature and the phase changes of water, which make many existing models developed for warm regions less appropriate for regions with cold seasons (Pomeroy et al., 2007; Pomeroy et al., 2013; Pomeroy et al., 2016; Fang et al., 2010, 2013). Even for temperate regions, the representation of cold season processes is often underrepresented in models (Costa et al., 2020a).

Since the use of tile drainage is becoming popular in many cold regions, it has become important to integrate such human-induced process in specialized hydrological modelling tools for these regions, such as the Cold Regions Hydrological Modelling platform (CRHM, Pomeroy et al., 2007; 2013; 2022). CRHM was initially developed in 1998 to assemble and explore the hydrological understanding developed from a series of research basins spanning Canada and elsewhere into a flexible, modular, object-oriented, multiphysics platform for simulating hydrological processes and basin response in cold regions (Pomeroy et al., 2007; 2022). The modular CRHM platform allows for multiple representations of forcing data interpolation and extrapolation, hydrological model spatial and physical process structure and parameter values. Many existing models typically operate at default daily or monthly time intervals, which is inadequate for the prediction of many short-duration “flashy” hydraulic responses often observed in tiles (Pluer et al., 2020; Vivekananthan, 2019; Vivekananthan et al., 2019; Lam et al., 2016a, 2016b; Macrae et al., 2019). Indeed, the ability to simulate shorter time intervals (e.g., hourly) facilitates the ability to capture both the rising and falling limbs of tile flow hydrographs, as well

as the magnitude of peak flows, both of which are important to tile drain chemistry and export (Rozemeijer et al., 2016; Williams et al., 2015, 2016; Macrae et al., 2019).

Hydrological process models such as DRAINMOD, MIKE SHE and SWAT use a combination of empirical and physically based formulations for the simulation of tile flow derived by Hooghoudt (1940), Kirkham (1957), van Schilfgaarde (1974), Bouwer and van Schilfgaarde (1963) and Skaggs et al., (1978). Such formulations contemplate both cases where the water table is below and above the ground surface (Kirkham, 1957). In contrast, simulations of tile drainage in other models such as HYPE use empirically derived recession curves (Eckersten et al., 1994) to simulate tile flow and soil hydrological storage (typically represented as water table). In cases where there is a need for more focus on soil matrix hydrology and less need for understanding hydrological processes at the catchment scale and the relative contribution of tiles (and its interplay), modellers tend to use specialised porous-media PDE-based (partial differential equation-based) numerical models such as HYDRUS (Simunek et al., 2011) and MACRO (Larsbo and Jarvis, 2003).

The amount of water transported by tiles depends on soil moisture dynamics and the positioning of the water table, which are in turn affected by many factors, including soil type, surface topography and morphology, as well as the local climate and the hydrological characteristics of the field (Frey et al. 2016; Klaiber et al., 2020; Coelho et al., 2012; King et al., 2015). Thus, to provide reliable estimations of water loss from farmland via surface runoff and tile flow, models must be able to predict soil moisture storage and the water table position accurately (Brockley, 1976; Rozemeijer et al., 2016; Javani-Jouni et al., 2018). Many studies have shown that in some soil types, including silty loam and clay loam soils, the drainable water is less than expected based on the effective porosity (*e.g.*, Skeggs et al., 1978; Raats and

Gardner, 1974). Raats and Gardner (1974) have argued that the calculation of drainable porosity requires knowledge of water table position and the distribution of soil moisture above the water table. Skaggs et al. (1978) added that the calculation of drainable porosity should take into account "the unsaturated zone drained to equilibrium with the water table". However, because the soil column is often composed of different soil layers with varying physical characteristics, drainable porosity varies with evapotranspiration rate, soil water dynamics and the depth of saturated water (Logsdon et al., 2010; Moriasi et al., 2013). In a sandy loam soil, Lam et al. (2016a, 2016b) demonstrated that tile drainage was not initiated until soil was at or above field capacity. Williams et al. (2019) observed in the American Midwest that tile drainage was not initiated until the field storage capacity had been exceeded. It has also been shown that despite the presence of tile drains, the soil above the tile may not always drain all gravitational water following a rainfall/snowmelt event and the soil may remain at or above field capacity (Skaggs et al., 1978; Lam et al., 2016a). Therefore, the soil drainable water content may be considerably smaller than the storage capacity. This is related to matric potential within the vadose zone, which is driven by the soil characteristics but can also be due to the development of a capillary fringe that reduces the rate of vertical percolation through the unsaturated zone, reducing tile flow (Youngs, 2012). Despite this evidence, some saturated flow models that simulate tile flow overlook the effect of capillary rise and over-estimate the soil drainable water. Other models that represent unsaturated flow (i.e., HYDRUS 3D, Simunek et al., 2011) using Richard's Equation (Richards, 1931) capture the effect of capillary rise and saturation-pressure variation within the soil profile and assess the soil drainable water more accurately. Although the effect of capillary rise is considered in DRAINMOD through the concept of drainable porosity (represented as a "water yield") (Skaggs, 1980b), and is calculated for layered soil profiles (Badr,1978), it requires

136 detailed information surrounding the soil water characteristic curve (Skaggs, 1980b). Although it
137 is indeed optimal to use soil-specific water characteristic curves, Twarakawi et al. (2009) found
138 that it was possible to employ average representative values from the soil water characteristic
139 curve to represent soil drainable water where a soil-specific curve was not available. They found
140 in this case that the model performance was reduced.

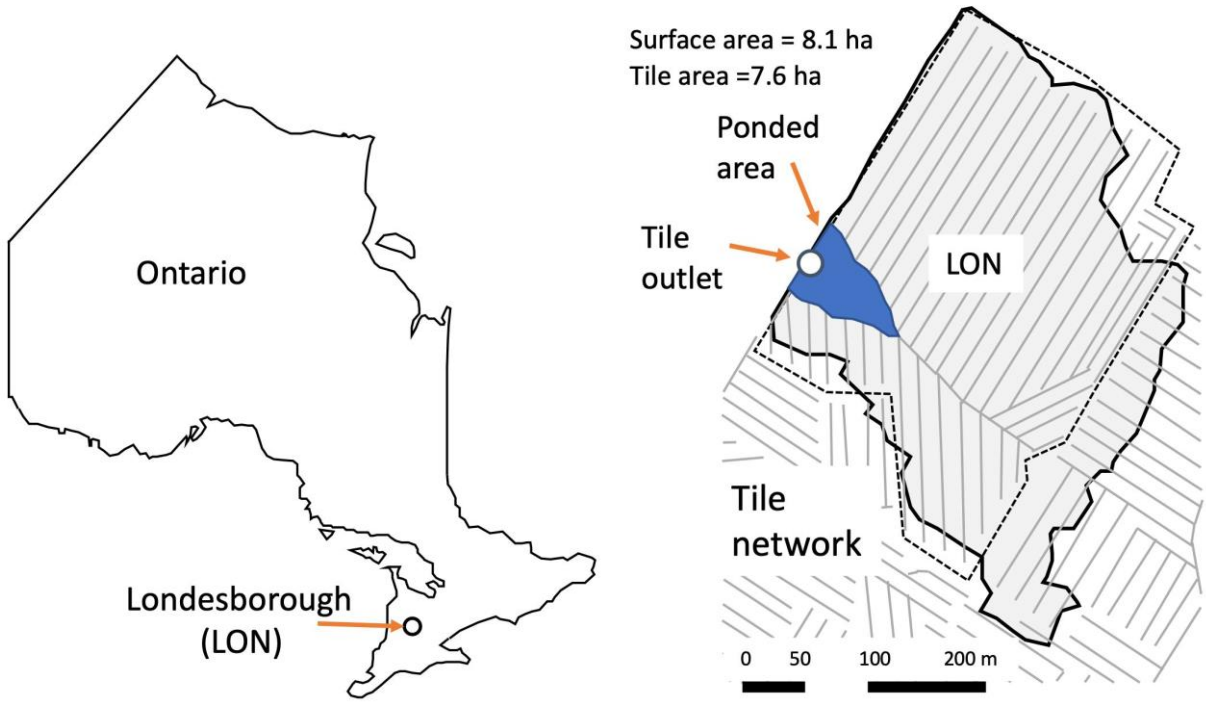
141 In this study, a new tile drainage module was developed and incorporated within the
142 physically based, modular Cold Regions Hydrological Modelling (CRHM) platform (Pomeroy et
143 al., 2022) to enable hydrological simulations in tile-drained farm fields in cold agricultural
144 regions. As a first iteration, the new module was developed for a field with sloping ground and
145 loam soil with imperfect drainage. Such landscapes are common in the Great Lakes Region (e.g.
146 Michigan and Vermont, USA and Ontario, Canada) and tile drainage in such landscapes has not
147 been as widely studied as it has been in clay-dominated soil. In this module, considerations were
148 explicitly included for the effects of capillary rise and annual groundwater water table
149 fluctuations on drainable soil water storage. The use of field capacity and groundwater/soil water
150 elevation head (Twarakawi et al., 2009) to modulate soil drainable water across the soil profile,
151 including the capillary fringe region, is an innovative aspect of the model that has been
152 demonstrated to circumvent the need for water characteristic curves. The development of this
153 physically based module provides insight into hydrological processes in tile drainage from
154 sloping landscapes with imperfect drainage, which are increasingly being artificially drained.
155

2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Study area

The study site is a ~10 ha farm field located near Londesborough, Ontario at UTM 17T 466689m E, 4832203m N, shown as LON in Fig. 1a. Mean annual precipitation recorded in this region is 1247 mm (ECCC, 2020). Mean air temperature is 7.2 ^{o}C, with annual maxima in July (25.9 ^{o}C) and minima in January (-10.2 ^{o}C), (ECCC, 2020). Soil texture has been identified as Perth clay loam (Gr. Br. Luvisolic), with a slope between 0.2 and 3.5%. The field is systematically drained with a tile depth of 0.9 m and a spacing of 14 m (laterals). The tile network collects infiltrated water from about 75% of the field (~ 7.6 ha) but may also receive lateral groundwater flow from neighbouring fields. Water yields from the tile drain laterals (10 cm diameter) are discharged via a common tile outlet (main, 15 cm diameter) below ground. Surface runoff from the field is directed toward a common outlet on the surface using plywood berms installed along the field edge (see van Esbroeck et al., 2016). The tile and surface runoff outlets do not join into a common outlet and are fully separated from one another, even during surface ponding events. The field is a corn-soy-winter wheat rotation with cover drops and rotational conservation till (shallow vertical tillage every three years). Additional details related to farming practices are provided in Plach et al. (2019), soil characteristics are provided in Plach et al. (2018a) and Plach et al. (2018b) and equipment and monitoring are provided in van Esbroeck et al., (2016). The outlets for both surface and tile flow are located at the edge of the field and drain into an adjacent field (Fig. 1b). Water tends to accumulate in a topographic low in the field, in front of the field outlet during snowmelt or high-intensity rainfall events, presumably due to either surface runoff or return flow (see ponded area, Fig. 1b). However, surface water or elevated soil moisture conditions are not observed in this topographic low during smaller events or dry periods of the

year, suggesting that this saturated ponding is not in a perennial groundwater discharge zone. Although surface ponding is observed in the topographic depression within the field, water discharges freely at the opposite end of the culvert, facilitating the measurement of flow.



a) b)

b) Figure 1. (a) Location of the study area in South of Ontario and the (b) Londesborough (LON) farm with its tile network.

2.2 CRHM: The modelling platform

The modular CRHM platform includes options for empirical and physically based calculations of precipitation phase, snow redistribution by wind, snow interception, sublimation, sub-canopy radiation, snowmelt, infiltration into frozen and unfrozen soils, hillslope water movement, actual evapotranspiration, wetland fill and spill, soil water movement, groundwater flow and

streamflow (Pomeroy et al., 2007; 2022). Where appropriate, it calculates runoff from rainfall and snowmelt as generated by infiltration excess and/or saturated overland flow, flow over partially frozen soils, detention flow, shallow subsurface flow, preferential flow through macropores and groundwater flow. Water quality can also be simulated (Costa et al., 2021). Modules of a CRHM model can be customized to basin setup, such as delineating and discretizing the basin, conditioning observations for extrapolation and interpolation in the basin, or are process-support algorithms such as for estimating longwave radiation, complex terrain wind flow, or albedo dynamics, but most modules commonly address hydrological processes such as evapotranspiration, infiltration, snowmelt, and streamflow discharge. CRHM discretizes basins into hydrological response units (HRU) for mass and energy balance calculations, each with unique process representations, parameters, and position along flow pathways in the basin. HRU are connected by blowing snow, surface, subsurface and groundwater flow and together generate streamflow which is routed to the basin outlet. The size of TDM HRUs is flexible and can be as small as the size of a single tile pipe (e.g., 1 m) times the pipe spacing (which was 14 m in our case study region), and as large as entire tile networks within a given farm or study area. CRHM does not require a stream within a modelled basin. The feature allows CRHM to model the hydrology of cold regions dominated by storage and episodic runoff, such as agricultural fields.

Although CRHM has the capability to represent many hydrological and thermodynamic processes, not all processes need/must be represented in all situations. The modular design of the CRHM platform enables the user to activate or inactive specific processes to optimize the model for a particular situation. This is a modelling approach that enables testing different modelling hypotheses and has been pioneered by CRHM and other models, which has inspired a range of

hydrological (e.g., SUMMA, Clark et al., 2015a, 2015b), hydrodynamic (e.g., mizuRoute, Mizukami et al., 2015) and biogeochemical (e.g., OpenWQ, Costa et al., 2023a, 2023b) modelling tools. For example, in the current study, blowing snow was not employed in CRHM as it does not appear to be significant at the study site (periodic snow surveys showed relatively uniform snow cover). Preferential flow into tile drains was not developed for the current simulation as although it is a key process in heavy clay soil, as it does not appear to be a significant driver of preferential flow into tile drains in coarse textured soil (Pluer et al., 2020; Macrae et al., 2019). Freeze-thaw processes in soil were also not employed here as there is very little seasonal soil frost in the temperate Great Lakes region due to the persistent snow cover, and where soil frost occurs, it is restricted to brief periods and shallow depths (above 10 cm depth) (Macrae unpublished data).

2.3 Observations and input data for the model

Tile flow, water table position (water table elevation head) and surface flow were measured at the site between Oct. 2011 and Sept. 2018 at 15-minute intervals. It was not possible to install more than one measuring station for water table position and soil moisture at the site due to farming activity; consequently, water table elevation head and soil moisture were measured at the approximate midpoint of the field at the edge-of-field. Both tile flow rates and surface runoff were determined using simultaneous measurements of flow velocity and water depths in each of the pipes at the edge-of-field using Hach Flo-tote sensors and an FL900 data logger (Onset Ltd.) (Table A1, Appendix A). Continuous measurements of velocity were included due to the potential for impeded drainage under very wet conditions or caused by the accumulation of snow and ice around the surface culvert in winter. An additional barometrically-corrected pressure

transducer (U20, Onset Ltd.) (Table A1) was also used for periods when the flow sensors did not function using a rating curve developed from the depth-velocity sensors. The water table position was measured using a baro-corrected pressure transducer (U20, Onset Ltd.).

Air temperature, wind speed, air relative humidity, incoming solar irradiance and rainfall were also measured at the site at 15-minute intervals and used to force the model. Variable names and their symbols in CRHM are listed in Appendix B. The air temperature, wind speed and incoming solar radiance measurements were collected 1 m above ground using a Temperature Smart Sensor S-THB-M002, Wind Smart Sensor Set S-WSET-M002 and a Solar Radiation Sensor (Table A1). Rainfall and relative humidity were measured via a tipping bucket rain gauge (Table A1) and an RH Smart Sensor (Table A1). These observations were continuously recorded throughout the study period, except for brief periods of instrument failure and maintenance, when data from nearby stations (Table T1, Supplementary Material) was substituted using the double mass analysis method (Searcy and Hardison, 1960).

Although rainfall was recorded continuously at the field site, snowfall data was not. Snowfall data was obtained from nearby stations (Wroxeter-Davis and Wroxeter, Environment Canada, 2021), located 31.7 km from the field site. Periodic snow surveys done at the site throughout the study period found that data from the nearby stations was a close approximation of snow at the field site (Plach et al., 2019). Hourly snowfall observations from Wroxeter-Geonor were used for the period between 2015 and 2018, whereas daily data from the Wroxeter-Geonor were used for the 2011 to 2014 period, reconstructed to hourly snowfall time series based on the method presented by Waichler and Wigmosta (2003).

2.4 Development of the new tile module

A Tile Drainage Module (TDM) was developed within CRHM with the goal of adding the ability to simulate tile flow and the resulting saturated storages (water table) at an hourly time scale. CRHM was forced with hourly precipitation, air temperature, solar radiation, wind speed and relative humidity to calculate hydrological states and fluxes in HRUs and the basin. The model requires parameterizations that specify the hydraulic and hydrological properties of the soil, including its thickness, saturated hydraulic conductivity (K), and surface cover. CRHM calculates water storage and fluxes between HRUs, as well as vertical fluxes amongst different hydrological compartments (within each HRU) that include snow, depressional storage, different soil layers, and groundwater.

Using the simulation of soil moisture performed by the original CRHM "*Soil*" module, TDM calculates the dynamic tile flow rate that, in turn, feeds back to soil moisture at each time step. The presence of a capillary fringe (sometimes referred to as the tension-saturated zone within the soil profile) and its effects are considered by limiting the amount of drainable soil water. TDM uses site-specific information regarding the tile network, such as tile depth, diameter and spacing. Information regarding site-specific details regarding tile depth, diameter and spacing may be obtained directly from landowners or can be estimated based on standard design and installation guidelines for the region. This information was used to set up the model together with parameterization to translate the hydrological effects of the soil capillary fringe (CF), if present, through two state variables, CF thickness and CF drainable water (discussed in Section 2.5). These two state variables are used to limit the fraction of the soil moisture that can freely drain to the tiles.

2.4.1 Soil moisture and water table position

The TDM uses the water quality soil module or soil module (*WQ_soil* or *Soil*), which divides the soil column into two layers: a recharge layer where evapotranspiration and root uptake generally take place and a deeper layer that connects to the groundwater system. Since CRHM's state variable for soil moisture is soil water storage volume (Fig. 2a), the model results were converted into water level elevation above the semi-permeable layer (Table B1, Appendix B; see Fig. 2b for comparison with water table observations) by dividing volumetric soil moisture content (Table B1) by soil porosity (Table B1) for the cases with no capillary fringe above the water table. Additional steps were taken for periods when a capillary fringe developed (discussed below).

2.4.2 Capillary fringe and drainable water

Soil moisture in the capillary fringe is equal to the field capacity (θ_{fc}) (Bleam, 2017, Sect. 2.4). Therefore, while the positioning of the capillary fringe responds dynamically to the matric potential, the saturation profile within the capillary fringe remains constant, as well as its thickness because it only depends on the pressure head (capillary forces) that are related to the grain size distribution and field capacity (h_{fc}) as introduced by Twarakawi et al. (2009). Therefore, the drainable water in the capillary fringe becomes the difference between saturation (θ_s), computed dynamically in CRHM, and θ_{fc}, which corresponds to the water held by capillary forces at field capacity (Fig. 2). Accordingly, Fig. 2 shows the schematic soil characteristic curve for the three water level conditions contemplated in the model.

1. *Condition 1* is when the matric head is at the surface and the soil is completely saturated;

2. *Condition 2* is when the matric head drops but the upper boundary of the capillary fringe is at the soil surface; and
3. *Condition 3* is when the water table drops further and the upper boundary of the capillary fringe drops beneath the surface.

In essence, the soil is completely saturated (θ_s) in *Condition 1*. Between *Conditions 1* and *2*, the capillary fringe occupies the entire soil column above the water level; thus, it can only release the volume of water corresponding to θ_s-θ_{fc} or φ_c (dimensionless). Between *Conditions 2* and *3*, two layers with distinct hydraulic characteristics develop: (1) the top one at θ_{wp} that releases water up to θ_{fc}-θ_{wp}, and (2) the lower one that corresponds to the capillary fringe and can release up to the volume of water corresponding to θ_s-θ_{fc} or φ_c.

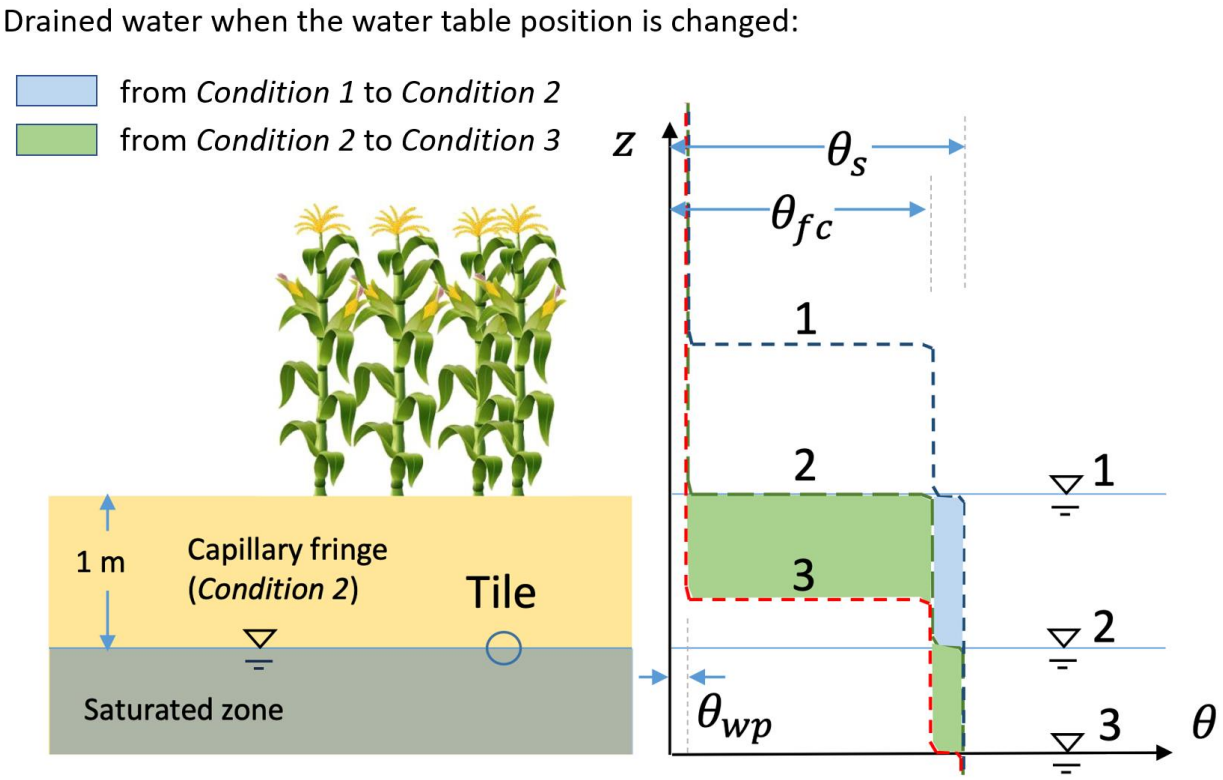


Figure 2. Schematic representation of the capillary fringe above the water table assuming a 1-m thickness (for demonstration purposes). The soil characteristic curves are shown for the three water level conditions considered: water level at the (1) surface,

(2) intermediate depth, and (3) deeper depth. Two transitional drops can be seen in the characteristic curves, one from saturation (θ_s) to field capacity (θ_{fc}) (between *Conditions 1* and *2*) and one from field capacity to wilting point (θ_{wp}) (between *Conditions 2* and *3*). The coloured areas (green and blue) of the right panel correspond to the amount of water that can be released between *Conditions 1* and *2* (blue) and between *Conditions 2* and *3* (green).

2.4.3 Tile flow calculation

A modified version of the Hooghoudt equation was used to calculate tile flow (Smedema et al., 2004), which presumes no surface ponding, an assumption that generally holds at the study site (Eq. 1), where water ponds only during very wet periods and on a small portion of the study site (see Fig. 1b). Hooghoudt's equation (Hooghoudt, 1940) is a steady state, physically based equation for saturated flow toward the tile drain. Flow estimates are provided based on the hydraulic conductivity of the soil and matric potential. It allows different saturated hydraulic conductivities for the layers above (AL) and below (BL) the tile (Fig. S1). In the particular case of the case study site, soil surveys have reported almost the same soil type (Loam) down to the depth of 90 cm (*e.g.*, Van Esbroeck et al., 2016; Plach et al., 2018b), which was parameterized in the model set up as,

$$q = \frac{8 \times K_2 \times d \times h}{L^2} + \frac{4 \times K_1 \times h^2}{L^2}, \quad (1)$$

where K_1 and K_2 are respectively the saturated hydraulic conductivity in the upper and lower layers in mm h^{-1}; L is the tile spacing in mm; h is the water table elevation above the tile in mm, d is the lower layer thickness in mm (Fig. S1), and q is the predicted tile flow in mm h^{-1}. The

only variable that is dynamically updated by CRHM is h. Equation (1) is used to estimate the tile flow.

2.4.4 Calculation of the effect of tile flow on soil moisture and water levels

The simulated tile flows (see Sect. 2.3.3) are subtracted from the soil moisture. To calculate saturated storage (water table or groundwater elevation head level) from soil moisture calculated by the model, a threshold soil moisture content (sm_t) is defined, which consists of drainable water in the soil when the upper boundary of the capillary fringe is at the surface (*Condition 2*, Fig. 2) and was calculated as:

$$sm_t = sm_{max} - (C_t \times \varphi_c) \quad , \tag{2}$$

where sm_{max} is the maximum soil moisture and $C_t$is the capillary fringe thickness in mm. However, since the hydrological conditions of the soil are markedly different between the two transitional situations described in Sect. 2.3.2 and Fig. 2 (*Condition 1* to *2* and *Condition 2* to *3*), a step function was deployed for determination of the matric potential:

$$WT = \begin{cases} \frac{sm_t - \left(C_t \times \left((\varphi_s - \varphi_c) + \theta_{wp}\right)\right)}{\varphi_s + \theta_{wp}} + \frac{sm - sm_t}{\varphi_c} & , if\ between\ Conditions\ 1\ and\ 2 \\ \frac{sm_{max}}{\varphi_s + \theta_{wp}} - \left(\left(\frac{sm_t - sm}{\varphi_s}\right) + C_t\right) & , if\ between\ Conditions\ 2\ and\ 3 \end{cases}, \tag{3}$$

where WT is water table elevation (or soil saturated storage, SSS) in mm from the bottom of the soil, and sm is soil moisture (both saturated and unsaturated storage) in the given time step in

363 mm. Equation (3) is determined based on soil moisture curves in Fig. 2 and water level
364 *Conditions 1-3* discussed in Sect. 2.3.2. In Fig. 2, the first and second parts of Eq. (3), which
365 refer to *Conditions 1* to *2* and *2* to *3*, respectively, correspond to the volumes of soil water
366 highlighted in "blue" and "green."
367
368 *2.4.5 Lower semi-permeable soil layer and periodicity in annual groundwater levels*
369 This model application focused on the study site field without including other adjacent areas.
370 This was possible because years of field monitoring at this site have demonstrated that there is no
371 observable surface flow into the site from adjacent farms. The tile network is restricted to the
372 field and is not connected to tile drains or surface inlets in adjacent fields. However, field soil
373 water table observations show evidence of annual groundwater level periodicity/fluctuation (Rust
374 et al., 2019) that are sinusoidal in nature and cannot be neglected. Some studies predict the
375 annual groundwater oscillations or the annual responses of groundwater to precipitation by using
376 sine and cosine functions (De Ridder et al., 1974; Malzone et al., 2016; Qi et al., 2018). De
377 Ridder et al. (1974) studied the design of the drainage systems and described the seasonal
378 groundwater fluctuations observed in wells using sinusoidal curves. Malzone et al. (2016) used a
379 sine function to predict annual groundwater fluctuations in the hyporheic zone. Qi et al. (2018)
380 and Rust et al (2019) used a cross-wavelet transform, consisting of the superposition of sine and
381 cosine curves, to predict shallow groundwater response to precipitation at the basin scale. This
382 approach was used in this application to simulate annual fluctuations in groundwater water
383 tables, in Eq. (4), with a period of 1 year, minimums around the middle of the growing season
384 (mid-July), and maximums in the cold season (early February). This translates into the lowering
385 of the matric potential during the growing season, causing soil water seepage, and an elevated

386 matric potential during the non-growing season, causing an increase in the soil moisture
387 consistent with field observations. Thus, a sine function representing the annual fluctuations in
388 groundwater water table ($G_{y,i}$) is defined as below:
389
390 $$G_{y,i} = \left[A \times sin\left(\frac{(T_s - D_d \times 24) \times 360}{24 \times 365.25}\right) - B\right] \times f_{y,i} \quad (4)$$
391
392 where T_s is the time step number, D_d is a time delay in days, A is the amplitude of the soil water
393 table (WT/SSS) fluctuation, and B is an intercept factor. $f_{y,i}$ is a seasonal factor. The sine
394 function coefficient (D_d, A, and B) and seasonal factor were adjusted for the whole period and
395 for each year through model verification and shown in Table 1. Appendix C provides more
396 details on the implementation of Eq. (4).
397
398 *2.5 Model application and multi-variable, multi-metric validation*
399 The study site is a relatively small field, and 2 HRUs were sufficient to capture its hydrological
400 dynamic in CRHM. The HRUs represent (1) the area immediately upstream of the outlet where
401 surface ponding occurs (depression storage); and (2) the remaining field (Fig. 3). The maximum
402 ponding capacity of HRU 1 was estimated using the spatially distributed hydrodynamic model
403 FLUXOS-OVERFLOW (Costa et al., 2016, 2020b). The CRHM model and new TDM module
404 were set up using the information described in Table 1. Soil textures at the LON site measured in
405 a 25m grid across three soil depths (0-25 cm, 25-50 cm, and 50-100 cm) averaged 29% sand,
406 48% silt, and 23% clay (Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Soil Team,
407 unpublished data). This soil grain size distribution corresponds with a soil-saturated hydraulic
408 conductivity of ~ 0.56 cm h^{-1} (~$10^{-2.5}$) (Garcia-Gutierrez et al., 2018), which was implemented

409 in CRHM (0.5 cm h^{-1}), corresponding to a field capacity of 0.03 and h_{fc} of ~0.8 m (Twarskawi
410 et al., 2009, based on a drainage flux of 0.1 cm d^{-1}).
411
412 A robust multi-variable, multi-metric model evaluation strategy was deployed to verify the
413 capacity of the model to predict tile flow and its impact on the local hydrology. The state
414 variables examined were tile flow, surface flow, and matric potential. The multi-metric approach
415 contemplated five different methods, namely the Nash-Sutcliffe efficiency (NSE), Root-Mean-
416 Square Error (RMSE), Model Bias (Bias), Percentage Bias (PBias), and RMSE-observation
417 standard deviation ratio (RSR). See Appendix C for more details about the methodology used. It
418 is generally assumed that NSE>0.50, $RSR \leq 0.70$, and $PBias$ in the range of $\pm$25% are
419 satisfactory for hydrological applications (Moriasi et al., 2007). Hourly values were used in these
420 calculations, which departs from the daily and monthly analyses typically reported for these
421 types of models. Although this is a challenging proposition, it is an important one as it
422 constitutes a necessary step forward toward more detailed, accurate, and advanced models for
423 these regions. For example, Costa et al., (2021) noted that the successful extension of
424 hydrological models to water quality studies relies on their ability to operate at small time scales
425 in order to capture intense, short-duration storms that may have a disproportional impact on the
426 runoff transport of some chemical species such as phosphorus – in essence, to capture hot spots
427 and hot moments for flux generation.
428
429
430 Table 1. Key model parameters in CRHM for representation of the LON site.
431

Model Parameter	Value	Unit	Source	Adjusted/Calibrated	Comment
Soil depth	2	m		No	Assumed
Semipermeable layer depth	3	m		No	Assumed
Tile depth	0.9	m		No	Farmer/Blueprints of the field
Corn root depth	0.5	m		No	Online sources
Soil recharge zone thickness	0.5	m		No	Based on the root depth
Tile spacing	14	m		No	Farmer/Blueprints of the field
Soil porosity (soil drainable water) φ_s	0.045			Yes	Adjusted
K in below layer	5	mm h^{-1}		Yes	Adjusted
K in above layer	5	mm h^{-1}		Yes	Adjusted
Capillary fringe thickness	0.8	m		Yes	Adjusted
Capillary fringe drainable water φ_c	0.03			Yes	Adjusted
Surface depression in small area close to farm surface flow outlet (HRU2)	35	mm		Yes	Calculated
Surface depression in rest of the area (HRU1)	0	mm		No	Calculated
Surface area of HRU1	79000	m^2		No	Field observations and DEM
Surface area of HRU2	1000	m^2		No	Field observation and DEM
Soil module name in CRHM	WQ_soil			No	
Infiltration module name in CRHM	GreenAmpt			No	
Soil type in GreenAmpt module	5			Yes	Adjusted
Saturated K in GreenAmpt module	6	mm h^{-1}		Yes	Adjusted

Soil wilting point	0.025		Yes	Adjusted
A, in sine function	0.025	mm h^{-1}	Yes	Adjusted
B, in sine function	-0.005	mm h^{-1}	Yes	Adjusted
D_d, in sine function	15	d	Yes	Adjusted
$f_{2012,2}$ (Seasonal factor, sine function)	2.0		Yes	Adjusted
$f_{2015,2}$ (Seasonal factor, sine function)	1.8		Yes	Adjusted
$f_{2016,2}$ (Seasonal factor, sine function)	2		Yes	Adjusted
$f_{2017,2}$ (Seasonal factor, sine function)	1.4		Yes	Adjusted
$f_{y,i}$	1		No	By default for $y =$ 2012 *to* 2017 and $i = 1, 2$

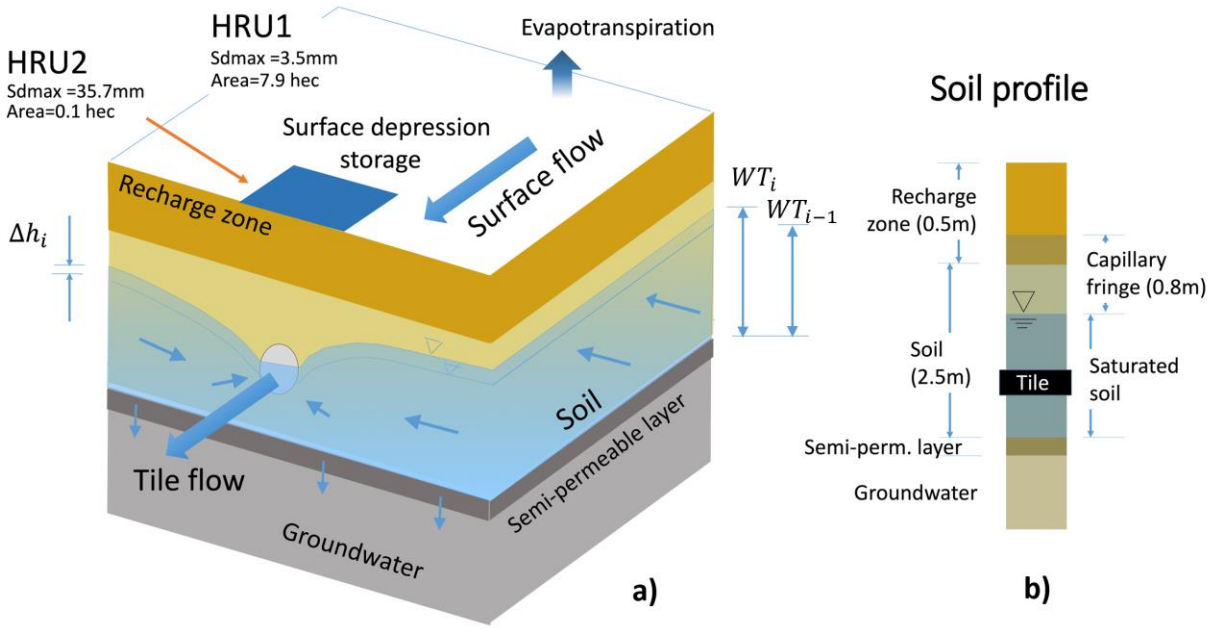


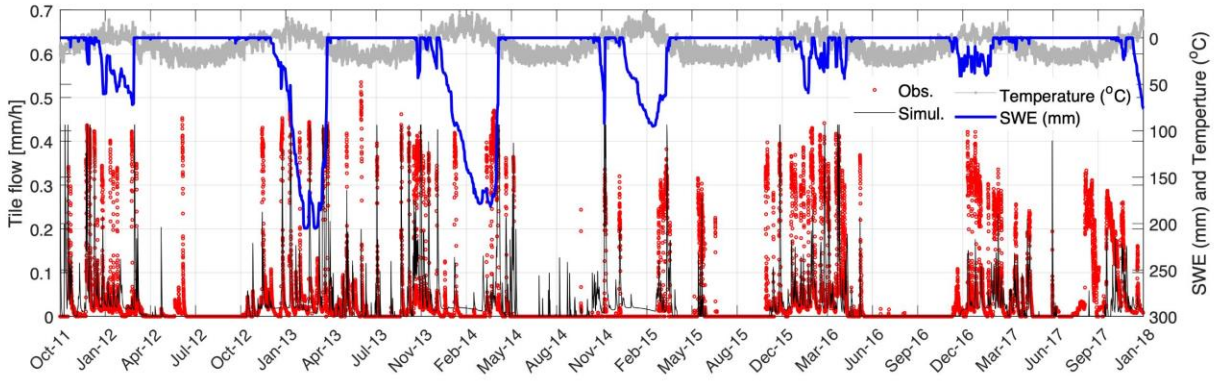
Figure 3. a) Schematic conceptual view of the CRHM model configuration, including soil layers, water table (WT/SSS), groundwater, and tile flow.; and b) soil profile, including the capillary fringe and its location relative to the soil and tile.

3. Results

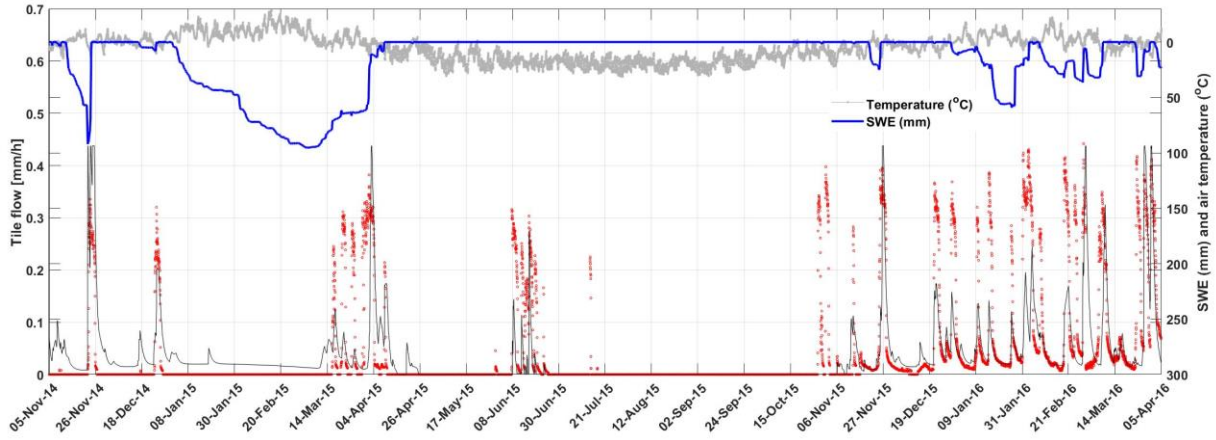
3.1 Tile flow

The model was able to capture most tile flow events, both in terms of the timing and magnitude of peak flows and the most important seasonal patterns (Fig. 4). For example, the almost complete absence of tile flow during the growing season (May to September) was captured. The simulated flow peaks generally had a good agreement with observations, as well as the low flow or base flows during cold periods (December-March). The ascending and descending limbs of the response signal were also adequately predicted.

Results show that tile flows generally occur during snowmelt events, as indicated by the synchrony between snow water equivalent (SWE) depletion and tile flow. The maximum snowpacks (or snow water equivalent, SWE) were markedly smaller during the winters of 2016 and 2017 when compared with those of 2013 to 2015. However, this did not necessarily translate into lower tile flows as precipitation also occurred as rain during these seasons. Although the magnitude of tile peaks was not always assessed accurately, the model was able to capture the annual trends of both an absence of tile flow during the summer months (growing season) and the ascending and descending limbs of the tile hydrograph during events (Figure 4).



a)



b)

Figure 4. Comparison between observed and simulated tile flows, simulated SWE (snow water equivalent), and observed air temperature in the LON site.

3.2 Water table or soil saturated storage

Simulated soil saturated storage and the observed water table are compared in Fig. 5, alongside air temperature and precipitation observations. Despite the observation gaps, the model agrees well with observations. Above tile drains, water table fluctuations are controlled by infiltration/recharge, tile flow, groundwater flow, and matric potential that affect the drainable water from the capillary fringe. This causes flashier storage responses above the tile that are

captured well by the model. In contrast, tiles do not withdraw water from the soil layer below the tile pipe and thus do not control water table fluctuations when levels are below the drain pipe, and tile drains simply do not flow during such periods. During the growing season, both the observed and simulated water table (or saturated storage) drops abruptly because of the seasonal lowering of the regional groundwater water table. In the growing seasons of 2012, 2015 and 2016, which were dry years, large declines in the water table and saturated storage were observed, whereas in wetter years such as 2013 and 2014, seasonal water level declines were smaller. The seasonal declines in water level during the growing season led to a cessation in tile flow in most years (Fig. 4, 5), even following rainfall events. For example, there was a large precipitation event (~35 mm) in the growing season of 2016 that did not produce tile flow (apparent in both model and observations).

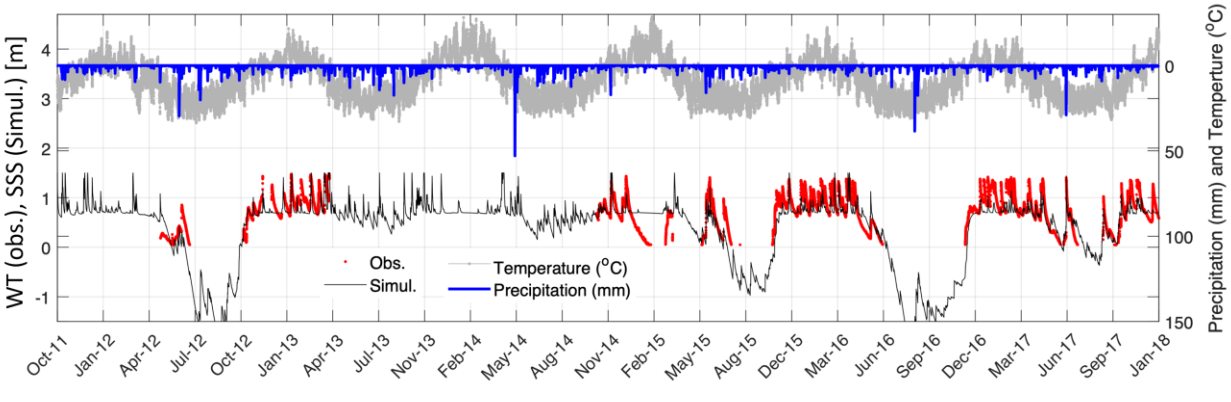


Figure 5. Time series of the simulated saturated storage and observed water table (groundwater table) along with the observed temperature and precipitation. The horizontal line shows the depth of the tile pipe.

3.3 Surface flow and total flow

The model was not always able to capture the observed surface flow as satisfactorily as it captured tile drainage (Fig. 6a). Some of the possible reasons are uncertainties in the measurements of surface flow due to ponding in surface depressions on the field, which impeded

the drainage of some of the surface runoff prior to when it exited the field through the culvert (see Fig. 1), or due to uncertainty in field estimates of SWE. However, the model performance improves considerably when both runoff and tile flow are combined (referred to as total flow, Fig. 6b). Indeed, most of the flow from the field was through tile drains (80% in 5-year average) rather than surface runoff (20% in 5-year average, Plach et al., 2019). The underestimation of both cumulative total and surface flows during 2017 and 2018 is possibly due to the removal of the blockage in the tile pipe in early 2017, which may have affected both surface and tile flow.

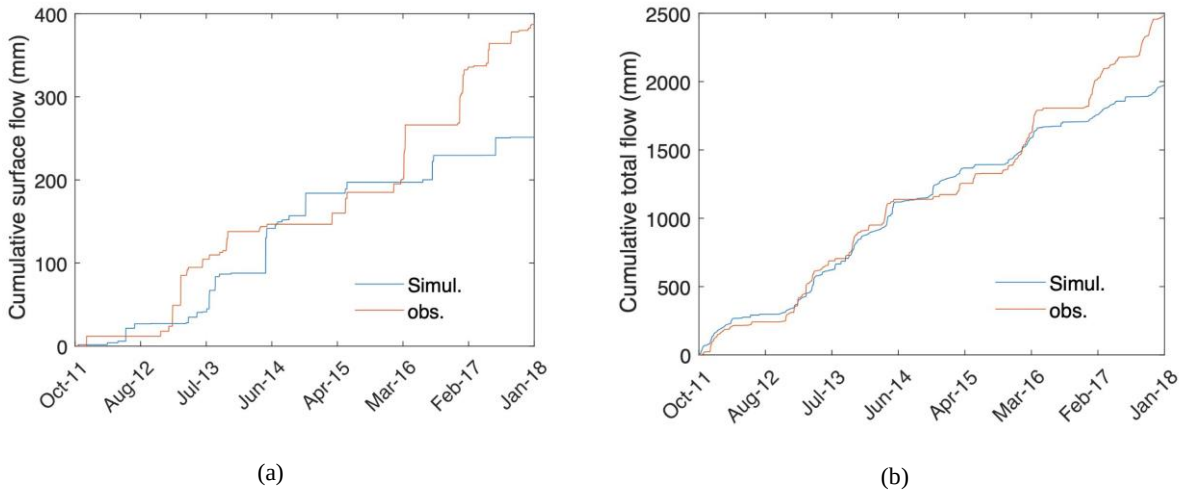


Figure 6. Observed and simulated cumulative surface flow (a) and total flow (b) with their performance coefficients.

3.4 Overall model performance

The model performance was calculated based on hourly data for various model outputs (Table 2). The results confirm that the model is robust in the sense that it can capture the main patterns of tile flow, surface flow, and matric potential levels. The PBias values are below 25% for most of the fluxes and cumulative fluxes. The RSR values are also generally below 1.0. The NSE values are positive and above 0.3 for most fluxes, except for surface flow, where the model exhibited some difficulties.

Table 2. Performance coefficients for surface flow, tile flow and water table (WT/SSS), as well as total (tile + surface) flow, for the simulation period of October 2011 to January 2018. The coefficients were calculated for both hourly and daily flow rates.

Performance coefficients	Surface flow	Tile flow	WT (SSS) (m)	Total flow	
NSE*	-2.29	0.31	0.49	-1.38	Coefficients calculated for hourly flow rates ($mm\ h^{-1}$)
RMSE^	0.27	0.08	0.26	0.30	
Bias#	0.54	0.24	0.14	0.28	
PBias$	21.77	17.91	10.46	18.63	
RSR&	1.82	0.83	0.71	1.54	
NSE	-0.73	0.29	0.50	0.01	Coefficients calculated for daily flow rates ($mm\ d^{-1}$)
RMSE	2.04	1.72	0.24	2.92	
Bias	0.35	0.20	0.09	0.22	
PBias	35.11	19.63	9.33	21.73	
RSR	1.31	0.84	0.70	0.99	

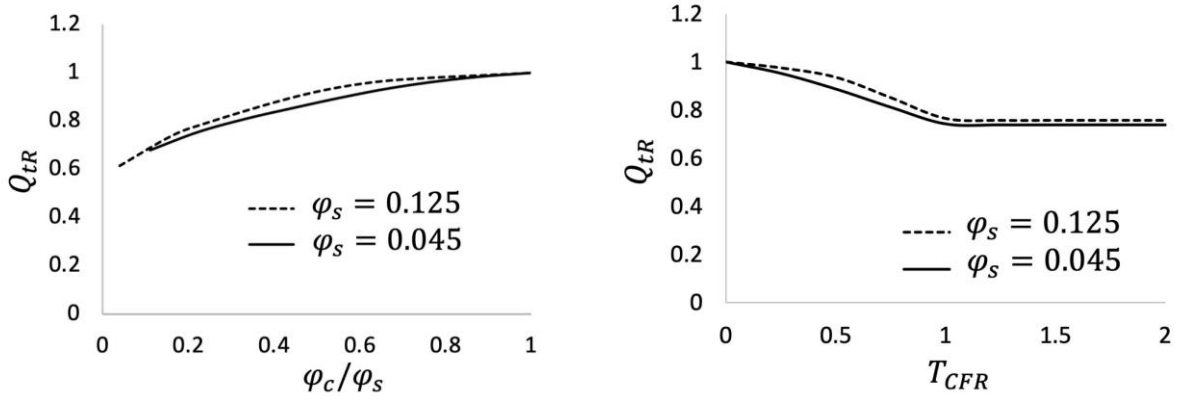
* Nash-Sutcliffe efficiency, ^Root-Mean-Square Error, #Model Bias, $Percentage Bias, &RMSE-observation standard deviation ratio

3.5 Presence of capillary fringe: effects and hypotheses

Results show that the thickness and vertical positioning of the capillary fringe have a strong impact on the amount of drainable soil water that can flow into tiles. To investigate this effect further, the response of tile flow and soil moisture to changes in the capillary fringe was investigated. It should be noted that although this thickness may slightly change depending on the soil type and water retention curves (Skaggs et al., 1978), the model assumed a constant value given the catchment-scale nature of the simulations and myriad of processes contemplated. However, despite the simplification, the vertical positioning of the capillary fringe was still computed and enabled a dynamic (time-dependent) calculation of the drainable soil water that is available for tile drainage over time.

Effect of capillary fringe on tile flow

Figure 7a relates the simulated normalized total cumulative tile flow (Q_{tR} , total tile flow divided by the total tile flow when there is no influence of capillary fringe) to capillary fringe drainable water ($\varphi_{cR} = \varphi_c/\varphi_s$) for two different φ_s values (0.045 and 0.125). The values were normalized for comparison purposes. As expected, the model indicates that tile flow increases with drainable water, but the relationship is non-linear, likely because as tile carrying capacity is exceeded more frequently, there is more opportunity for groundwater seepage and evapotranspiration. The direct effect of φ_s (comparing the solid and dashed lines) on tile flow is small because the amount of water that can effectively drain to the tile is controlled by the capillary fringe and the associated drainable soil water. Figure 7b looks at the impact of the capillary fringe thickness on tile flow. Here, the values are also normalized. Results show that Q_{tR} decreases with increasing normalized thickness of the capillary fringe, T_{CFR} ($\frac{T_{CF}}{D_t}$, capillary fringe thickness divided by tile depth), but only while the T_{CFR} is less than 1 that is when the capillary fringe position is above the tile but has not reached the soil surface. Beyond this point, increments in the capillary fringe thickness have no impact on tile flow because *Condition 1* has been reached (see Fig. 2), which essentially means that the capillary fringe has reached the soil surface.



a) b)

Figure 7. Comparison between normalized tile flow (Q_{tR}) and (a) normalized drainable soil water (φ_c/φ_s) and capillary fringe thickness (T_{CFR}) for different maximum soil saturation values (φ_s), by drawing the model prediction lines.

Effect of capillary fringe on soil moisture

Observations and model results of WT (or SSS as an indicator of soil moisture) reveal a bimodal frequency distribution (Fig. 8 and 9, respectively) with peaks at 0.85 m and 1.25 m depth, with the former corresponding to the depth of the tile pipe and the second peak reflecting capillary fringe thickness. In the simulated soil saturated storage (SSS/WT) frequency distributions (Fig. 9), the first peak highlights again the efficiency of the tile in removing soil moisture. In contrast, the second peak indicates a strong model response to differences in the capillary fridge thickness. It shows that when there is near-constant discharge from the bottom of the soil layer, the matric potential varies the greatest while it remains between the tile depth and the soil surface. While the matric potential fluctuates faster and is more unstable within this range, it also remains there for shorter periods. This bimodal response tends to push the matric potential below the tile.

The bimodal behavior of the observed water table and simulated saturated storage demonstrated here provides the opportunity to quantify the thickness of the capillary fringe using continuously monitored water table position. The capillary fringe thickness determined using this method can then be used as an input to the TDM module.

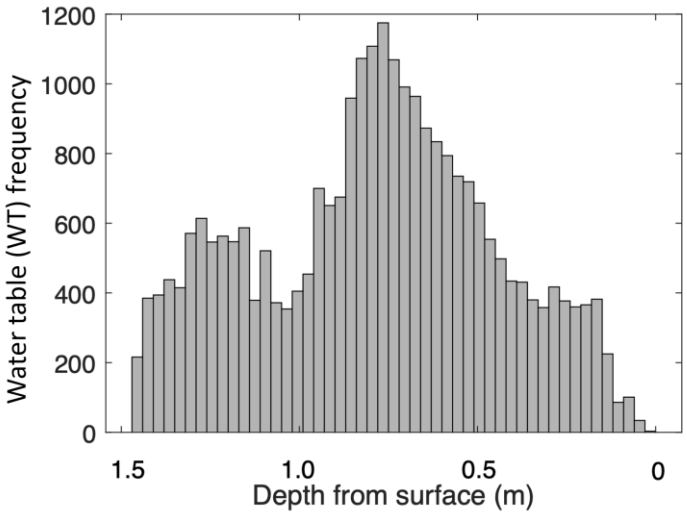


Figure 8. Histogram of the observed water table distribution for the period pf 2011 to 2018 in LON (Londesborough).

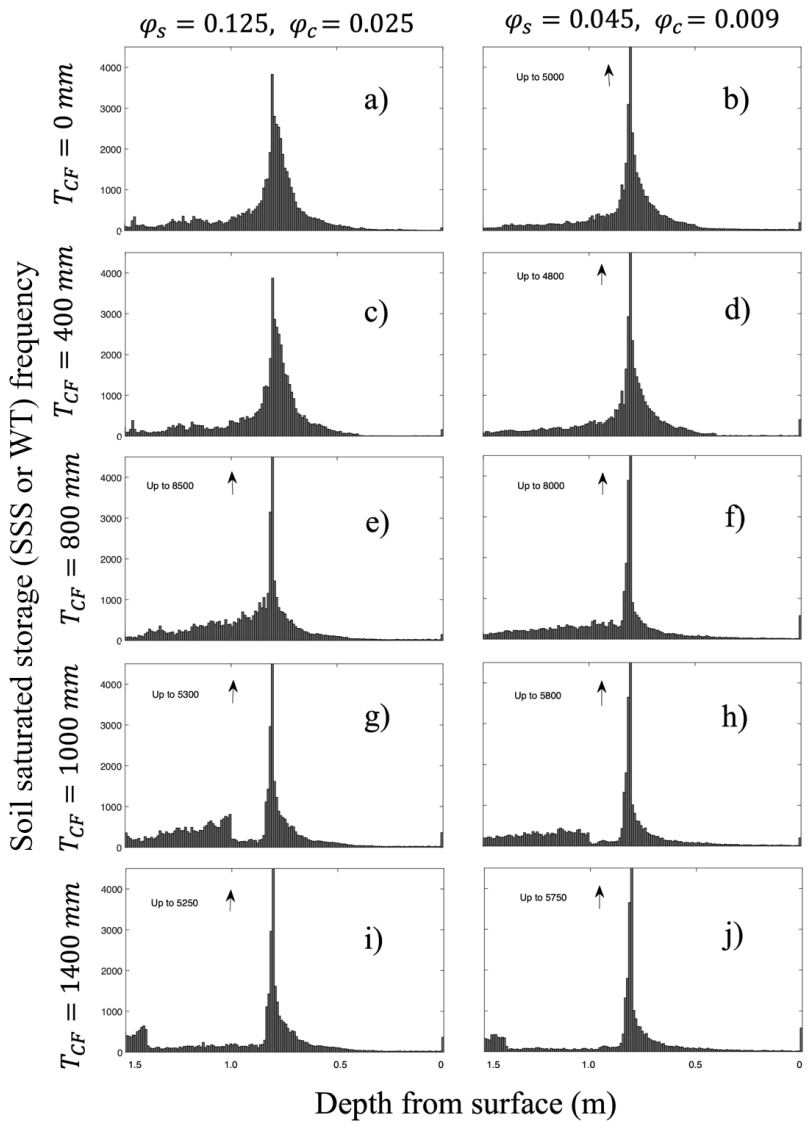


Figure 9. Histograms of the simulated soil saturated storages (SSS or WT) for the capillary fringe thicknesses of 0 (a,b), 400 (c,d), 800 (e,f), 1000 (g,h) and 1400 (i, j) mm and for the φ_s and φ_c of 0.125 and 0.025 (left column)as well as 0.045 and 0.009 (right column).

4. Discussion

The new TDM module developed for CRHM was able to capture tile drainage flow and its effect on the hydrological patterns of a farm field in southern Ontario. This module helps extend the existing capacity of representing the effect of tile drainage in the hydrology of agricultural cold

regions, from the colder Canadian Prairies to the more temperate Great Lakes region. Tile drainage is prevalent across much of the cultivated lands in the Great Lakes basin and adjacent regions from southern Canada to the upper US Midwest. It is expanding in the eastern Canadian Prairies as well. The new TDM module will also permit simulating the impacts of a changing climate on runoff processes in these landscapes. In addition to this potential, the development of the TDM has also provided insights into hydrological processes in tile-drained landscapes. These are discussed in more detail below.

4.1 Insights into key control mechanisms of tile flow for catchment-scale simulations

The model suggests that tile flow may not be accurately predicted exclusively based on the matric potential and soil saturated hydraulic conductivity as suggested by the steady-state flow assumptions of the Hooghoudt's equation (Hooghoudt, 1940). Our results indicate two additional controls: (1) the amount of drainable soil water in the soil, which has also been identified in some field studies (*e.g.*, Skaggs et al., 1978; Moriasi et al., 2013) and (2) fluctuations in the groundwater table (GWRD) are equally important to account for in catchment-scale simulations. However, the relationship between drainable water and tile flow rates is non-linear, as demonstrated in Fig. 7a. This is because the residence time for groundwater seepage and evapotranspiration increases when the hydraulic tile carrying capacity is exceeded. Comparatively, the effect of soil drainable water, φ_s (see also Fig. 7a) on tile flow is small because the capillary fringe and associated drainable soil water control the amount of water that can effectively flow to the tile.

591 The verification of the model also indicated that the slopes of the rising and falling limbs of tile
592 flow hydrographs and WT were very sensitive to (1) the ratio between K and drainable soil
593 water; and (2) the net outflow in the soil through tile flow and groundwater level fluctuations
594 (GWRD). This is supported by previous studies showing rapid responses of tile flow to
595 precipitation events (Gentry et al., 2007; Smith et al., 2015) and others that have related rapid
596 responses in tile discharge to antecedent moisture conditions (Macrae et al., 2007; Vidon and
597 Cuadra, 2010; Lam et al., 2016a; Macrae et al., 2019), which can be affected by the development
598 of a capillary fringe and its holding capacity.
599
600 Results show that large fluctuations in WT (or SSS) and tile flow during the cold season, when
601 the water table tends to be above the tile, are primarily triggered by the development of a
602 capillary fringe that reduces the amount of drainable soil water. Model sensitivity tests showed
603 that a small amount of drainable soil water produces steeper rising and falling responses (and
604 with larger fluctuation amplitudes) in both the water table (saturated storage) and the tile flow.
605 Indeed, this pattern can be observed by exploring differences in tile drain responses in clay loam
606 soils with larger field capacities (and correspondingly smaller drainable water) and smaller
607 hydraulic conductivity which are more likely to experience pronounced oscillations (*e.g.*, steeper
608 rising and falling response curves) compared to tile drain responses of sandy soil, which is
609 characterized by reduced capillary forces, lower field capacities (but correspondingly larger
610 drainable water) and higher hydraulic conductivity. Notably, both model and observations of
611 WT/SSS (as a proxy for soil moisture) reveal a bimodal (*i.e.*, two peaks) frequency distribution
612 when examined in relation to the tile depth and capillary fringe thickness (Fig. 8 and 9,
613 respectively). The two peaks (*i.e.* most frequently observed WT or SSS conditions) correspond

614 with the (1) depth of the tile pipe (0.75 m), which demonstrates the efficacy of the tile at rapidly
615 removing excess soil water, and the (2) the capillary fringe thickness (for the depths of 1.0 and
616 1.4 m, Figs. g, h, i and j) beyond which the amount of drainable water above the water level
617 significantly increases.
618
619 These findings align well with studies such as Lam et al. (2016a) that recorded soil moisture near
620 saturation after tile flow had ceased, suggesting the development of a capillary fringe. Combined
621 experimental and modeling works, such as in Moriasi et al. (2013) and Logsdon et al. (2010),
622 also discuss the impact of drainable soil water ("drainable porosity" or "specific water yield") on
623 tile flow and note that the drainable water is, in turn, dependent on the soil type, soil-water
624 dynamic and water table depth. However, these studies did not explore the dynamic nature of the
625 capillary fringe and its thickness relative to the soil column above in determining the transient
626 amount of drainage soil water that will impact the WT distribution and tile flow differently over
627 time (*Conditions 1* to *3*, see Fig. 2). Herein, while a capillary fringe with a fixed thickness that is
628 generally related to the soil properties was assumed, its vertical positioning was simulated
629 dynamically, which allowed determining the drainable soil water based on the evolution of
630 pressure head corresponding to field capacity. Thus, the development of the TDM has provided
631 a step forward in the modeling of tile drainage and suggests that in loam soils such as those at the
632 study site, the effects of a capillary fringe on tile flow should be included. Soil moisture (soil
633 unsaturated storage) measurements from the study site by Van Esbroeck et al., (2017) between
634 November 2011 and May 2014 from depths of 10, 30, and 50 cm (using EC-5 Soil Moisture
635 Smart Sensor) showed that almost 90% of the gravitational soil moisture drains out with 0.5 to
636 2.5 h.

637

638 *4.2 Importance of capturing seasonal patterns in groundwater to improve tile flow*

639 *predictions*

640 The GWRD changed dramatically between seasons affecting soil moisture (both saturated and

641 unsaturated storage of the soil) and tile flow patterns. Both observations and model results show

642 that low precipitation and higher evapotranspiration rates tend to produce little tile flow during

643 the growing season. These seasonal patterns in precipitation and evapotranspiration are

644 accompanied by a reduction in soil moisture (both unsaturated storage and saturated storage)

645 that leads to a substantial storage capacity in fields. Even following moderate and high-intensity

646 storms during the growing season, rapid soil moisture increases are observed (both saturated and

647 unsaturated soil storage); however, tile flow rarely develops, suggesting that the soil is able to

648 hold the water (Lam et al., 2016a; Van Esbroeck et al., 2016). In contrast, tile flow is often

649 observed during the cold season, even during smaller rainfall-runoff and snowmelt events

650 because of reduced soil storage but also a seasonal increase in GWRD (Lam et al., 2016a;

651 Macrae et al., 2007, 2019; Van Esbroeck et al., 2016). This concurs with several studies

652 throughout the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence region that have reported stronger tile responses

653 during the non-growing season, with the summer months often showing little to no tile flow

654 (Lam et al., 2016a, 2016b; Jamieson et al., 2003; Macrae et al., 2007; Hirt et al., 2011; King et

655 al., 2016; Van Esbroeck et al., 2016; Plach et al., 2019).

656

657 These results (the controlling effect of soil drainable water and groundwater level fluctuations on

658 tile flow) suggest that while soil moisture (both SSS and unsaturated storage) is largely

659 controlled by tile flow rather than GWRD in the cold season, this reverses in the growing season

(*i.e.*, soil moisture controls tile flow), with soil moisture (both SSS and unsaturated storage) being also impacted by evapotranspiration. The controlling effect of groundwater fluctuations in the growing season has also been studied by Hansen et al., (2019). The model indicated that the rapid drops observed in WT during the growing season could not be explained by evapotranspiration alone as well as the crop root depths, thus pointing to the role of GWRD. Johnsen et al. (1995) and Akis (2016) also showed that the effect of groundwater accretion was more effective on tile flows than surface runoff. Also, Vaughan et al. (1999) found that tile drain flows in their study site in San Joaquin Valley of California were better explained and related to nonlocal groundwater appearance than to local variations in irrigation amount, evapotranspiration, variation in water storage or tile drain blockage.

5. Conclusion

A new tile drain module within the modular Cold Regions Hydrological Modelling platform has been created and tested at the field scale to support the management of agricultural basins with seasonal snow covers. The model was tested and validated for a small working farm in southern Ontario, Canada, and presents a step forward in the dynamic simulation of tile flow and its effects on the hydrological cycle in cold climates. Observations and model results showed that the dynamic prediction of tile flow and soil moisture at catchment scales needs to account for (1) the amount of drainable soil water that can be affected by the development of a capillary fringe and (2) fluctuations in the groundwater water table, in addition to the typical (3) matric potential above the tile pipe and (4) the soil saturated hydraulic conductivity considered by the steady-state flow Hooghoudt's equation.

683 The groundwater table and matric potential changed dramatically between seasons, affecting
684 patterns of soil moisture and tile flow. Observations and model results showed that low
685 precipitation and higher evapotranspiration rates caused minimal tile flows during the crop-
686 growing season. Conversely, tile flow was often observed during the cold season, even during
687 small rainfall-runoff and snowmelt events due to a seasonal increase in the groundwater table
688 and soil saturated storage.
689
690 Model sensitivity tests showed that the capillary fringe strongly affected the amount of drainable
691 soil water flowing into the tile. Tile flow increased with drainable water, but the relationship is
692 highly non-linear likely because, as the tile carrying capacity is exceeded more frequently, there
693 is more opportunity time for groundwater seepage and evapotranspiration. Finally, observations
694 and model results reveal a bimodal soil saturated storage response in the presence of tiles, which
695 is controlled by the relative positioning of the capillary fringe in relation to the soil surface and
696 the depth of tile drains below the soil surface. Capturing these dynamics is a critical advance
697 enabling the accurate prediction of the swift hydrological changes caused by the presence of tiles
698 in models.
699 The TDM was developed as a first approximation from a single field site. Given this limitation, it
700 is not widely applicable across multiple field sites yet. However, the development of this module
701 has provided valuable insight into the potential for hourly time-step simulations, as well as the
702 importance of regional groundwater table fluctuations and simplifying the capillary fringe
703 parameters within models in some landscape types. Future work will include building on the
704 model and adapting it for different soil textures such as those in clay soils, where preferential
705 flow can have a strong impact on soil saturated storage and tile flow. Also, explicit

representation of unsaturated flow will be needed to enable the use of the model regions where groundwater is disconnected from surface water, as commonly happens in arid and semi-arid regions. Subsequent steps include the development of water quality modules.

Code/Data availability

The tile flow and soil water table data are not publicly available and will be provided upon request to the data owner, Merrin Macrae. TDM code is not completely implemented in the main version of the Cold Regions Hydrological Model platform and is provided only upon request to the corresponding author.

Author contribution

MK and DC developed the model code and performed the simulations. MM prepared the data and supported the field work. MK, DC and MM prepared the manuscript with contributions from JP and RP.

Competing interests

The contact author has declared that none of the authors has any competing interests.

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Appendix A

Table A1. Instrument names and descriptions

Instrument name	**Description**
Hach Flo-tote and FL900 logger	Flow velocity and water level measurement
U20, Onset Ltd.	Barometrically-corrected pressure transducer
Temperature Smart Sensor S-THB-M002	Air temperature measurement
Wind Smart Sensor S-WSET-M002	Wind speed measurement
(Silicon Pyranometer)-S-LIB-M003	Solar radiation sensor
Tipping bucketrain gauge, 0.2 mm Rainfall Smart Sensor – SRGB-M002	Rainfall measurement
RH Smart Sensor(S-THB-M002)	Relative Humidity measurement

Appendix B

Table B1. Parameter names and their symbols in CRHM platform

Parameter symbol	**Parameter name**

Tair	Air temperature
Wspeed	Wind speed
RH	Relative Humidity
Qsi	Incoming solar irradiance
R	Rainfall
WQ_soil	Water Quality soil module
WT	Water table elevation above the semipermeable layer
SSS	Soil saturated storage or the saturated part of the soil moisture
soil_moist	Soil moisture
Poro_soil	Soil porosity
AL	Above layer
BL	Below layer
GWRD	Groundwater level fluctuations, groundwater recharge and discharge

Appendix C

We show how we assess seasonal factors ($f_{y,i}$) for different years in this study. Equation (4) can be written as:

$$G_{y,i} = G \times f_{y,i} \quad \text{(C1)}$$

For each year (y), $f_{y,i}$ for the first ($f_{y,1}$) and second ($f_{y,2}$) part of the sine function (G), where $G \geq 0$ and $G < 0$ respectively, were defined as:

$$\begin{cases} if\ G \geq 0\ \ [i = 1\ ] then\ f_{y,1} = x \\ if\ G < 0\ \ [i = 2\ ] then\ f_{y,2} = y \end{cases} \quad \text{(C-2)}$$

G is the sine function representing the annual fluctuations in water table (WT/SSS). So, for n years there are $n \times 2$ $f_{y,i}$ values. The default values for $f_{y,i}$ are 1 and the default values can be changed for each year and for first and second parts in each year independently. Calculated $G_{y,i}$ in each time step add or subtracted to or from the total soil moisture depend on the its sign. The values for the sine function parameters are in Fig. C1. The verified sine function time series along with time series of temperature, precipitation and calculated evapotranspiration are shown in Fig. C1. In this figure it is obvious that in years 2012 and 2015 to 2017 the warm season amplitudes are larger. The ET values are happened more in the warm seasons (growing seasons). Also, it can be seen that the seasonal oscillation in sine function is very similar to the temperature general oscillations.

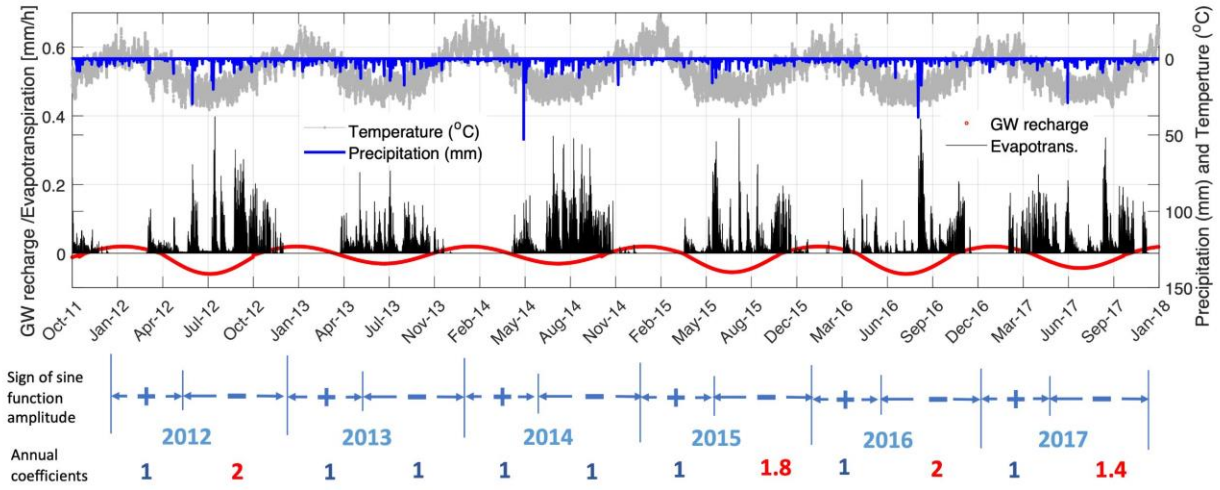

Figure C1. Time series of the adjustable sine function along with the time serioes of calculated evapotranspiration, temperature and precipitation during the study period from Oct 2011 to Sept 2018.