Development of a reservoir morphology dataset to inform greenhouse gas emissions for U.S. reservoirs.

Hollister, Beaulieu, Deemer, and Schroeder

Understanding ecological processes in lentic systems, such as reservoirs, often requires the quantification of metrics of the waterbody’s shape and size (i.e. morphology). In support of ongoing efforts in the United States (U.S.) to better characterize greenhouse gas emissions from reservoirs, we have expanded past efforts (e.g. in NHD Plus), and are building a database of lake morphology for U.S. reservoirs. We use publicly available datasets to first build a database of U.S. reservoirs and then calculate the metrics for each using open source geospatial software. Existing databases with relevant reservoir morphology metrics, such as LAGOS and the National Inventory of Dams, are also included. The database currently includes estimates for 147 reservoirs measured as part of the Survey of Greenhouse Gas Emissions project led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Efforts are underway to expand the number of included reservoirs. We currently calculate 13 lake morphometry metrics in the database current including metrics for lake shape (e.g. area, shoreline length), depth (e.g. mean depth, volume), and fetch. These reservoirs had an average size of 516 hectares, predicted mean depth on average was 10 meters, and average maximum fetch was 2762 meters. We review our procedures for developing the reservoir database and approaches for calculating each of the metrics. The final database will be publicly available and will initially support modelling of greenhouse gas emissions.