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Czapiga, Matthew J.; Blom, Astrid; Viparelli, Enrica

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Jord J. Warmink, Anouk Bomers,  
Vasileios Kitsikoudis, R. Pepijn van  
Denderen & Fredrik Huthoff (eds.)

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University of Twente  
P.O. 217  
7500 AE Enschede  
The Netherlands

telephone: +31 53 489 35 46  
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www: <https://www.utwente.nl>

### Contact NCR

dr. ir. K.D. Berends (programme Secretary)  
Netherlands Centre for River Studies  
c/o Deltares  
P.O. 177  
2600 MH Delft  
The Netherlands

telephone: +31 6 21 28 74 61  
e-mail: [secretary@ncr-web.org](mailto:secretary@ncr-web.org)  
www: <https://www.ncr-web.org>

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# Impact of Weir Location on Discharge Partitioning in Longitudinal Training Walls

Matthew J. Czapiga<sup>a,\*</sup>, Astrid Blom<sup>a</sup>, Enrica Viparelli<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Delft University of Technology, Department of Hydraulic Engineering, Faculty of Civil Engineering and Geosciences, Delft, The Netherlands

<sup>b</sup>University of South Carolina, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Columbia, South Carolina, USA

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## Introduction

A pilot project completed in 2015 replaced existing groynes with longitudinal training walls in the Dutch Waal River. The design seeks to mitigate river bed erosion and improve river function for navigation and ecology (Havinga, *et al.*, 2009). The change expanded the total flow width and separated the primary channel  $P_1$  from three consecutive auxiliary channels  $A_1$ ,  $A_2$ , and  $A_3$  with longitudinal walls and fixed-elevation entrance side weirs. Figure 1a shows the field site spanning from Rhinekilometer (RK) 911 to 922, highlighting the location of channels, walls and entrance weirs. Water enters auxiliary channels via the weir at low flows and additionally via in-wall notches (broad-crested sections below the wall top), and wall over-topping at higher discharges.

This design seeks to increase low-flow depth and decrease both flood-flow depths and riverbed erosion in the primary channel. These factors relate to how discharge is partitioned between primary and auxiliary channels. Experimental results in a straight channel show that increasing discharge drives a larger proportion of flow into the auxiliary channel (De Ruijsscher *et al.*, 2019); a similar result is found at entrance  $A_3$  in our field site (De Ruijsscher *et al.*, 2020). However, while discharge partitioning increases with depth over the weir at low flows, it is unaffected by weir design when the wall is inundated (De Ruijsscher *et al.*, 2019). We focus here on how discharge is partitioned to all three channels along a meandering river planform to determine how the position of the entrance weir affects discharge partitioning to auxiliary channels across a range of flow discharges.

## Discharge Data

All weirs and walls were initially set relative to a reference water surface elevation, as to maintain equivalent relative elevations. In May 2018, weirs at  $A_1$  and  $A_2$  (Figure 1a) were

raised by approximately 2 meters (Sieben, 2020). Discharge was measured at adjacent cross-sections along the primary channel and auxiliary channels over a range of flows from  $632 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  to  $3482 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$  (approximately bankfull flow) during 2017 and 2018. The four largest discharge measurements ( $Q \geq 1443 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$ ) were collected before the weir change and the two lowest discharge measurements ( $Q \leq 962 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$ ) were collected after two weirs were raised. Flow in the auxiliary channel  $Q_A$  is normalized by the total discharge entering the domain  $Q_{tot}$  indicating the percentage of discharge shifted to auxiliary channels.

## Results and Discussion

The discharge partitioning  $Q_A/Q_{tot}$  along the channel is plotted at six discrete total discharge values in Figure 1b. Line color shifts from red to blue as discharge increases and lines are segmented at the junction between walls. As total discharge increases, the percentage of flow shifted to auxiliary channel increases, but spatial trends vary among channels and at different discharge levels. The effect of weir height and position are entangled in our measurements at low-flow conditions, so this is omitted here.

At bankfull flow, all auxiliary channels convey about 25% of the total discharge on average (blue line in Figure 1b). However, the down-channel pattern in discharge varies among auxiliary channels and trends magnify as total discharge is increased. Channel  $A_2$  gains discharge downstream, while  $A_3$  loses discharge downstream, and  $A_1$  shows a combination of these trends. Flows via the notches and wall over-topping, when active, tend to counterbalance weir flow as to maintain a common discharge value in all channels. As such, weir position does not affect the average discharge partitioning magnitude when the wall is over-topped, making the wall height a more relevant design parameter for these discharges.

These spatial patterns relate to how much flow can enter via the weir, so we consider the differences between weirs that leads to such opposite trends. Traditional factors controlling weir flow include the height, location, shape,

\*Matthew J. Czapiga  
Email address: M.J.Czapiga@tudelft.nl (Matthew J. Czapiga)



and length. Relative weir depth is not a factor, as the high-flow data was collected pre-2018 when relative weir submergence (versus a select reference profile) was equal in all channels. All weirs are broad-crested side weirs, while the weir to  $A_2$  also bends to connect to the adjacent bank (Figure 1). Regardless, the weir is still parallel to flow due to deflection from an upstream ferry quay, suggesting shape difference is not significant. All weirs are approximately the same length. All channels lie along an inside bank, but  $A_3$  is positioned just downstream of a curvature crossover and collects the most flow at all discharge levels (Figure 1b). Therefore, weir position is the only relevant variable to explain these trends.

**Conclusions and Future Work**

Our analysis of a field experiment illustrates that side weir position in meandering river planform affects how water enters into the auxiliary channels, but does not strongly affect the average magnitude of partitioned discharge when the wall is over-topped.

The former result will be expanded in future work as it implies important morphodynamic consequences. The way water enters an auxiliary channel directly affects the grainsize, magnitude, and regime of sediment transport leaving the primary channel. Additionally, spatial patterns of erosion and sedimentation will vary depending on weir position, which can affect

how engineers maintain these channels from common problems such as sedimentation.

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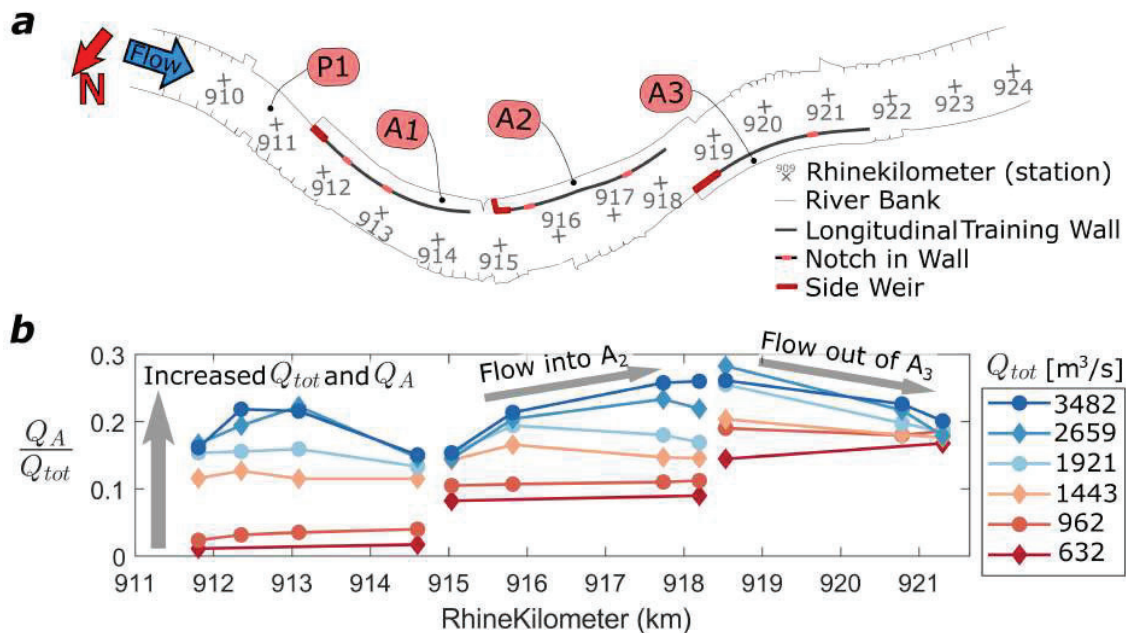


Figure 1: a) Plan view schematic of Longitudinal Training walls in the Waal River at Tiel, Netherlands. b) Proportion of measured discharge in the auxiliary channels  $Q_A$  relative to the total measured discharge upstream  $Q_{tot}$ .