

ReadMeFirst

BLACK CANYON OF THE GUNNISON DECISION SUPPORT SYSTEM

What you have

A compressed (zipped) directory **BCG** containing:

1. A subdirectory **UserGuide** with a text user guide
2. A subdirectory **InputDataFiles** with example input files and text description of those files including Description_InputFiles.doc providing an overview of the files.
3. An EXCEL workbook
BCG_DSS.xls the main decision support system (DSS)

What to do

1. Extract or unzip (and perhaps subsequently move) the whole directory **BCG** to a convenient location on your computer. *The program is set up to default to accessing input files within the **BCG** at the root of the C drive (C:\) but you use any location you want.*
2. Open **BCG_DSS.xls** in EXCEL, make sure macros are enabled, modify as necessary the location of example input files (or enter location of your own input files), execute, and examine output.

Common problems

1. Macros must be enabled. Exactly how to do this will depend on your operating system, security settings, and the version and settings of EXCEL. An automatically displayed help screen is provided when opening **BCG_DSS.xls**.
2. Locations of input data are not properly specified. A full, correct path must be provided before program will execute. You may need to edit the default locations which are set as being within an **InputDataFiles** subdirectory of **BCG**.
3. Input files are not complete or properly organized. Refer to example files and documentation for details. Get the program running with one or more of the example input files before trying to use your own input files.
4. Insufficient memory. At least 3 GB of RAM is recommended.

Further reference

The section “Structure of Decision Support System” in the User Guide provides more detailed information on basic use, input data, and execution. You should read this section before going too far in exploring the DSS, or if you encounter any problems.

The first part of that section is repeated here:

Basic Use

The system is implemented as a Microsoft Office EXCEL workbook, with embedded macros, entitled *BCG_DSS.xls*. It currently runs within either Microsoft Office EXCEL 2003 or 2007. The workbook, a set of input data files, and supporting descriptions can be downloaded from <http://www.fort.usgs.gov/Products/Software/>. Macros must be enabled when opening *BCG_DSS.xls*, which may require setting a general security level and perhaps enabling macros when opening the workbook. Immediately upon opening the workbook, a title window appears that is cleared by clicking **Ok**, which then activates a **Main Menu** window (fig. 2), which contains a **Display General Instructions** button for the first-time user.

Navigation among worksheets and the execution of the calculations for alternatives are performed through a user interface of clicking buttons and selecting from drop-down menus. The EXCEL toolbars and spreadsheet display structures remain visible and functional. They can be used as an alternative means of navigation among worksheets, as well as for EXCEL operations such as cut-and-paste, resizing, altering graph symbols, and data entry.

The basic steps to use the decision support system are listed below.

1. Specify inputs of alternative flow regimes to be evaluated (**Specify Inputs** button). Entries for example input data sets are filled in initially. You may need to change path locations to match where data files reside on your machine and can substitute different entries for other scenarios that you may provide.
2. Execute the calculation of indicators associated with these regimes (red **Execute** button).
3. Examine the input data as it has been read into the decision support system (**Display Input Data** drop-down menu).
4. Display output as graphs (**Display Indicator Output** drop-down menu) and tables (**Tabular Output** button on graph pages).
5. View descriptions of the indicators (**Display Indicator Descriptions** drop-down menu).
6. View and potentially alter the parameters being used in the calculations (**Display Parameters** drop-down menu).