

***Interactive comment on* “Short Communication: A simple workflow for robust low-cost UAV-derived change detection without ground control points” by Kristen L. Cook and Michael Dietze**

Anonymous Referee #2

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This is an interesting study on the possibility of improving the comparative accuracy of multiple surveys by co-processing the image sets when stable areas can be found and matched in a particular area. Rather than the workflow itself (which is hardly a proper workflow but just a modification of the standard SfM pipeline), I found the greatest merit of this work drawing the attention to this co-alignment possibility, that in many cases may be discarded or overlooked and can help to improve the quality of the results. My main comments to this work are the following (please check the annotated pdf for specific comments throughout the manuscript): 1. I would strongly suggest to include in the manuscript title the main limitation of the workflow. i.e. the presence of stable areas. The authors have acknowledged this in the limitations and

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conclusions sections and should be specified in the title since is a major requirement. 2. The authors are too focused on the geomorphological settings (cliffs, rivers and such), which is not bad, but a relevant part of the SfM community works on more artificial environments such as agricultural settings where hardly stable areas can be found. How applicable would be the co-alignment in these cases? A quick literature review could give the authors a general view of the types of scenarios in which the SfM approaches are being applied and maybe they could comment in more detail to what extent their method is feasible to be applied. 3. I recommend checking the comments on the annotated pdf. There are some inconsistencies in the structure (like not following the order in the study sites), lack of information in the figures and poorly structured information (like in Table 1). A correction of these formal aspects can produce an improvement of the manuscript.

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

<https://www.earth-surf-dynam-discuss.net/esurf-2019-27/esurf-2019-27-RC2-supplement.pdf>

Interactive comment on Earth Surf. Dynam. Discuss., <https://doi.org/10.5194/esurf-2019-27>, 2019.

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